

ADVENTURE PROBE

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**Must fly - Probe
is due today!**



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SUBSCRIPTIONS

Copies can be ordered monthly or in multiples up to 12 issues, sorry, no discount for quantity! Prices per issue:

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BACK ISSUES

Back issues may be ordered at the current price. Most issues are in stock, but some may have to be reprinted. Volume 1 comprise 19 issues (June 1986 to December 1987), subsequent volumes are 12 issues, January to December .

ADVERTISING RATES

All advertisements in the magazine are free for regular subscribers, i.e. 3 issues or more in advance. Trade price is £5.00 per full page.

DISTRIBUTION

Adventure Probe is distributed during the third week of each month. Copy date for contributions and advertisements is 1st of the month.

CONTRIBUTIONS

All contributions are gratefully accepted. Please keep me well supplied with computer and adventure-related material. It doesn't matter how brief it is - it may be exactly the information someone needs. 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. Contributions can also be submitted on disc, which will save me a lot of typing.

POSTAL ADDRESS

Please send all correspondence, subscriptions, and of course, contributions, to:

Barbara Gibb - Editor, Adventure Probe
52 Burford Road, Liverpool L16 6AQ, U.K.

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HALL OF FAME

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

Bev Truter, Christopher Heppinstall, Laurence Creighton,
Derek Shaw, Edwina Brown, Dorothy Millard, Kez Gray,
Doreen Bardon and Larry Horsfield

Special thanks to:

The Copyshop, Allerton, Liverpool for printing the magazine

EDITORIAL

Welcome to another issue of Adventure Probe.

The gremlins certainly got into the last issue. Edwina's letter was cut short (due to a text frame moving), Doreen noticed something wrong with her wordsearch and sent me the following correction "the letter 'D' between the 2 'P's should have been a letter 'O' - my apologies", and I was very disappointed with the quality of printing, especially for a birthday issue. Hopefully none of this spoiled your enjoyment, as they say on tv when something goes wrong, knowing full well that it *did* spoil your enjoyment!

Larry's got the website bug and has been busy putting together articles on how he started adventuring, progressed to writing and then publishing his own adventures. There is a guestbook, so don't forget to sign it before leaving! If you can't access the guest book during the day, try again in the evening. The website is at

www.fsf-adventures.ic24.net

I thought it was time to remind everyone about this year's convention, if you have Internet facilities you can visit the official Adventure2000 convention website at

www.adventureconvention.fsnet.co.uk

A booking form for this year's convention can be printed out from this site (£5 in advance, £7.50 on door on the day of the convention), or contact the Probe office. You can also read all about the previous conventions, view photographs, and even download some very interesting games. This site is still being expanded, so don't forget to revisit.

For readers who don't have access to the Internet, the convention venue is the Kenilworth Suite, Coventry Hill Hotel, Rye Hill, Allesley, Coventry, West Midlands, CV5 9PH Tel. 024 76 402151. It has 180 rooms, all ensuite with the usual facilities. The cost per room (single or twin/double) is £35 per person per night, including breakfast. To book your accommodation please contact the hotel and ask to speak to Gemma Caves in the Conference and Banqueting Dept. Tell Gemma that you are attending the Adventure2000 Convention on October 28th and mention that the room rate is £35 per person.

That's all until next month. Best wishes to everyone,

Barbara

LETTERS

The following is the second part of Edwina's letter that got chopped short when originally published in the June 2000 issue.

From Edwina Brown of Newmarket, Suffolk

I would like say that I too think it would be a sad loss, were Probe to be discontinued as a magazine. I look forward to finding it in my post box each month, and then devouring the contents with relish. But the hard work in producing it falls on Barbara's shoulders, so I am sure everyone will understand if the decision to change it into a website has to be made.

It does seem hard work some months, especially during the summer when there are other things competing for my attention. There is no fear of Probe going Internet-only just yet, and when it does I want it to be as informative as possible, probably more on the 8-bit side of things as lots of other sites seem to be covering the rest. Suggestions welcome so that I can plan well in advance. (Barbara)

From David Hebblethwaite of Huddersfield

In reply to Mary's letter in the June 2000 issue of Probe, I would say GOOD OMENS is Terry Pratchett's best book.

From Peter Smith of Waterbeach

Thanks for the latest issue of "Probe" ... and belated birthday wishes as well!

You still list your cableinet E-mail address in the E-mail addresses on the inner back page - is the Freeserve address best for non-urgent mail?

As you've doubtless seen text adventures may be in for a spot of attention thanks to the Internet spreading onto wireless portable phones. Two companies are beginning to offer the chance to users of the next generation of mobile phones to play text adventures while they wait or twiddle their thumbs or whatever. So perhaps Zenobi will ride again?

I've been playing through "The Last Express" of late (until I got as far as the last and toughest fighting sequence which defeated me.) An interesting game but to me flawed. As I'm summoning up energy to do an article for "Quandary" on it I won't discuss what I felt was flawed here but I'd like to know what other people think about the fighting. Is it just me who lacks sufficient co-ordination to get through these sequences? Various posts to the newsgroups claimed the action sequences could be skipped but what they suggested didn't work for me. Is it such a big job for game developers to provide a way for adventurers to skip the action sequences? I wouldn't have thought so.

Just playing Cryo's "China" (a DVD 'game' set in the Forbidden City.) Very distracting at first during conversation when you're watching a face moving but nothing else. But you do get used to things. Like I got used to the characters being rotoscoped in "Last Express" though it was eerie at first. And if you're watching a black and white film after a while you adjust and don't miss the colour. So long live 2D ... I'm a little afraid of what "Monkey Island 4" will look like.

I don't watch the X-Files but I have been watching Dr Who repeats on one of the cable channels. We're nearly to the end - down to Sylvester McCoy and some of the worst episodes I've ever seen. "Paradise Towers" was quite well done but "Delta and the Bannermen" was not - as far as I'm concerned.

It's getting hot again after a dose of welcome rain this morning. I don't know if it's the anti-histamine tablets I'm currently taking (the doctor decided a long lasting cough and sore throat might be hayfever) are helping but I feel very drowsy these days. I think I'm wearing out ...

My cableinet address has been very stable recently, and it is the Freeserve one that has been giving me trouble - please see my reply to Chris Heppinstall.

China is a magnificent-looking game but I couldn't get started. If it is anything like the China section of Atlantis 2 it should be great, maybe one day I will give it another go.

I take homeopathic hayfever tables which don't make me drowsy. A batch of 100 lasts a whole year and my local chemist charges less than the standard prescription cost. (Barbara)

From Dorothy Millard of Croydon, Australia

After reading the June edition of Probe I thought to myself, "What's all this about FreeCell." Obviously I had never tried it. Anyway I just had to have a look and I have now completed up to game 100. Obviously I have a VERY long way to go before I get anywhere near Isla Donaldson's 10692. It's a great time waster!

I would also like to say how much I enjoy reading the letters section and it is great to see more letters. This is my favourite section and the first I read after the editorial. What do other readers read first? I enjoyed reading Kez Gray's Ghosts, Ghouls & Things That go "Wooaah!" in the Night, and also Steve Clay's foray into the attic looking for Tewk.

Following is a list of "Battune" games that I am aware of, although there may be more. They are all written by Merle K. Goodman

1. Battune – Crimefighter
2. Battune Becomes an Actor
3. Battune Goes on Safari
4. Battune in Business
5. Battune in Wonderland
6. Battune Meets Sleeping Beauty
7. Battune the Sailor
8. Battune the Secret Agent 3
9. Battune the Explorer
10. Battune the Detective
11. Battune & the Haunted Mansion
12. Battune the Forest Ranger

Some of these are available from the GMD adventure site but others are harder to find, so if anyone would like a copy they are welcome to contact me.

If anyone can think of any other Alien, Murder or Battune games could they please let me know (my e-mail address is in the back) as this means I have missed them and I would like to track down as many as possible. Last but not least, I would like to say a BIG thank you to all those people who wrote with help on the games in which I was stuck. Your assistance is much appreciated.

Dorothy is an avid collector of adventure games and will welcome any new ones to her collection. (Barbara)

From Chris Heppinstall of Didcot

It was great to read the editorial and see the words, "my apologies if your contribution is not here - it will probably be in the next issue". It certainly shows that there are still a lot of dedicated adventurers out there, proved by the amount of letters that you are receiving for Probe. I sent a review to you a while back - to your cableinet address - of a game called, "Deep Home." Presumably, it never got through - and unfortunately I recently had to delete many files; the review being one of them.

Freecell :-

My mother, who spends from around 11pm till 1am pretty much every night playing Freecell, has reached game number: 15640. However, she has missed out 16 games so far. I can assure Isla that 10692 is possible - since that isn't one on the list. I once heard that there was only one game in Freecell that isn't possible, but after reading something about Freecell from Microsoft - I was assured that every game is winnable.

The Pratchett/The Fifth Elephant Debate :-

I've not read many of Terry Pratchett's books, except for the Diggers/Truckers/Wings series and "The Unadulterated Cat". Has anyone heard of an author called Robert Rankin? Some say he is the substitute for fans of Douglas Adams - and his books are definitely most surreal. I've read quite a few of them, and would recommend any Adams or Pratchett fan read one. I can imagine that they are not everyone's cup of tea, so getting it out of the library would probably be better than going straight out and buying one.

Terry Taylor's Pop Quiz :-

Thanks for the Pop Quiz, my family love these types of things. We once had a very long list of these, not sure what happened to it though - otherwise I would have sent it in to you, Barbara. I hope more do appear in the December issue.

Thank you for an excellent 14th Birthday issue!

Just some information I found that will no doubt be of interest to you (and many Probe readers, judging by this issue's first letter):

"BBC Campaign 2000 - Update

BBC Campaign 2000 - 04:42pm Sat 17 Jun 00

'BBC Campaign 2000' (the group defending the rights of the license-fee

paying public) has today learned that a memo was sent to BBC Information on 10th April.

The memo said that the BBC was "pursuing the acquisition of Series 7" of the X-Files. Neil in BBC Information informed me that there is a very good chance that Series 7 will follow this Autumn!!

Also, it has been officially confirmed to the 'BBC Campaign 2000' group by both BBC Scheduling and Neil in BBC Information, that Series 6 will definitely return on July 1st. This is despite the "no confirmation until next Wednesday" mask by the BBC to the public.

And it has also been learned by an interview between myself and Dan Jones at BBC Scheduling, that the real reason the X-Files was taken off was because it "wasn't doing well" in the ratings! This is in contrast by earlier statements by deputy-scheduler George Dixon, that the suspension was to "diversify the schedules".

Keith Taylor, Spokesperson, BBC Campaign 2000"

As Chris now knows I did not receive his review of "Deep Home" but he kindly sent me a review for another adventure, which *is* in this issue. My server does still have the occasional problem (especially when some idiot workman cuts through fibre optic cables when digging up the road/pavement) but generally speaking messages seem to get through during the last 10 days and it is my Freeserve account that gave me trouble recently. All attempts to login were rejected, and in desperation I emailed them for help. A reply came through about 6 hours later to say my account had been closed due to lack of use, which was a great surprise to me. First how did they know how much traffic was going in and out of it? Secondly, I login at least three times a day and there is usually at least one message waiting, so it is in constant use. I had only recently cleared out a lot of messages I no longer needed (does anyone else have trouble deleting from their Freeserve account?) because it told me there was no more space for new messages. Anyway, Freeserve told me how to reactivate the account, and after a bit of trouble I got it going again.

As most UK terrestrial viewers will know by now the BBC has resumed broadcasting The X-Files - showing 2 episodes at a time, presumably to make up for lost time in the schedules, which makes me wonder whether they originally intended to "take a break". (Barbara)

REVIEWS

A HERO FOR SORANIA

Written by Doreen Bardon

Played by Derek Shaw on a PC under Spectrum emulation

This is Doreen's second release. The first being Birthday Surprise back in the year dot. But this was well worth the wait.

The plot sees you taking a stroll along a country lane,when along comes a convoy of motorbikes. You hurriedly get off the road to avoid them. When you get yourself together again,you see a xroads that has appeared from nowhere. You explore the proximity,and enter the kingdom of Damia. Here you meet King Aldred. He tells you that a nasty witch has stolen his crown and placed it's jewels in various places around the kingdom. Seems like something a certain Hedda would do. Anyway,all you need to do is find the crown and the jewels,return them to Aldred,then you can marry Princess Sorania. But you have to find and release her first. That nasty witch has imprisoned her in a cellar. That witch has a lot to answer for.

Near to your starting point,is a river spanned by a bridge that wobbles as much as London's Millenium bridge. But,be warned. You can only cross this bridge x times before it collapses into the river. On the other side of the bridge you can explore a meadow,an area of quicksand and a grotto. So you need to perform certain tasks with certain objects at the right time. I was caught out on this one more than once,and had to make a number of restarts. Doreen's name was changed several times during this process. You need to use a number of the objects more than once,also. This caught me out as well. You'll find yourself going back and forth a lot. But that's the beauty of games like this. There's plenty of problems to keep you well occupied.

The location descriptions are good,and the game was programmed by the very capable Karen Tyers. Long may she reign. This,for me,is a great game. Very enjoyable,indeed. It should cause a lot of head scratching,and I rate it 10/10.

Nice one Doreen. Roll out the next one,please.

[Available for Spectrum (tape and +D disc), Amiga 500/500+/600/1200, and PC (under Spectrum emulation) - **only £2 from Adventure Probe**]

COMMON GROUND

Written by Stephen Granade

Reviewed by Christopher Heppinstall on a PC

Common Ground is different. Let me explain...

Firstly, I downloaded Common Ground from the familiar GMD site after realising that I hadn't played an adventure game for a couple of months, and was feeling desperately deprived. After quickly getting hold of the TADS interpreter required to run this game (having deleted it during a mass HD clean-up), I opened it up without any real expectations.

My hopes for the game were shattered when I saw that it called itself 'Interactive Fiction'. I know that this seems to be the generic term these days, particularly across the Internet, but it still strikes feelings of disdain into my heart, implying a lack of puzzles and adventure. However, this was not a false judgement - for Common Ground is indeed one of those games that doesn't tax the neurons but tries to do something a little differently. I personally feel that in this area, it succeeds.

As you start the game, "ONE" appears on the screen and then you see a brief introduction suggesting that your aim is to get ready to go out with a friend that evening. It didn't take me very long to complete this task, and soon I was hopping into a car and speeding away. "Fine," I thought, "now what happens?"

"TWO" the screen printed and I found myself back in the house, with the aim of fixing a toaster. After a brief moment of confusion, I realised what it is that the game does differently. As you progress through Common Ground, your character changes - and so you get to play the same period of time as a different person. In the first section, you play Jeanie, a teenage girl, and your task is to get your make-up on and leave the house. Section two puts you in her step-father's shoes, trying to fix a toaster and dealing with Jeanie's interruptions. And in the third section, you play the mother, returning from home with the shopping. The best thing about these character-changes, is that you get to experience what each person feels about the situation. You might have an obnoxious teenager's viewpoint when having a conversation with your step-father, but then turn the positions around and you come to understand the step-father's view.

An even better game would have saved your actions as one character, and then repeated them when you play the others - so that a real crossover is evident. Unfortunately, this would probably be impossible to program using TADS.

I still feel rather let down by the lack of puzzles, for the novelty wears off after a couple of plays and you come to realise how linear the game actually is. Needless to say, what Common Ground does, it does very well. I wouldn't especially recommend it to anyone who enjoys text adventures, because of the new approach, but it is worth a look if you are intrigued.

In conclusion then: Common Ground is different.

(Get hold of Common Ground at <ftp:gmd.de/if-archive/games/tads/ground.gam>) (You will also need a TADS interpreter) [If you don't have access to the Internet and would like a copy of the runnable game, send £1.50 or a blank PC disc plus postage to the Probe office..... Barbara]

SPACE ALIENS LAUGHED AT MY CARDIGAN

Reviewed by Bev Truter on a PC

I bought this old AGT text adventure about a decade ago from our local PD Software shop, and for some reason or other, never got around to playing it. In tidying up and delving around in my old collection of games-on-floppies last week I unearthed CARDIGAN, and decided to play it. Wrong move! It was neither an enjoyable experience, nor an enjoyable game; in fact, I tend to agree with two other reviews I've read of this game - it's so awful it's almost a classic example of how NOT to write an AGT game. But then, as someone once pointed out, no-one is forcing me to play these ancient old horrors, so I've only myself to blame if I persevere to the end and get all cranky and bad-tempered in the process. Anyhow, the introduction to CARDIGAN is about the best bit of the game, and hints at comedy/adventure/mystery to follow...

You play the role of a child of indeterminate age, beginning on your birthday, sitting on a swing in your back garden. You're a bit peeved as no-one has given you a decent present, and even your mum contributed only a new blue cardigan, which you're currently wearing. Suddenly an alien space ship lands nearby, two aliens emerge and are clearly amused by your new cardigan - so amused, in fact, that they point strange weapons at you, and vapourize your brand-new cardigan. Horrors! What will your mum say when she finds out about the missing cardigan? You explain all this to the two little aliens, and quick as a flash they whisk you off in their space ship, and deposit you somewhere else, which is where the adventure starts - in the centre of the village where your grandparents live.

So, the basic plot of CARDIGAN is to find the necessary goodies that will enable your granny to make another cardigan for you, and to find the alien

space ship so that you can return to your own home before your mum finds out what has happened. And from here on the game just gets worse and worse. Atrocious spelling, abysmal location descriptions, boring characters and dreadful programming make a game that simply does not work - and I mean that quite literally. Although you can 'finish' CARDIGAN and win the game there's no satisfaction in doing so.

For starters, the scoring system fails completely as the author has assigned points to objects that you have to give away to game characters; so you can never score anywhere near the ridiculous total of 7000+ points. Secondly, the programming of several game puzzles is so riddled with bugs that some puzzles simply don't work, and you can (for example) get past a couple of doors that are meant to be locked without doing the necessary actions to open them; you can fiddle about with a fuse-box without wearing any protective clothing as the programming for the security suit and pass card doesn't work either; and the whole sequence of getting rid of a dog by finding a cat for it to chase isn't possible, as the commands just don't exist for this to happen.

The spelling in places was so bad that it was almost funny - it took me a while to work out what a "sionide" pill was; and yes, it was another red herring, as there were no commands in the .CMD file to make using the pill feasible. Many characters and items in the game have no function whatsoever, and the jacket (with its clumsily programmed pocket), the pigeon, the statue and the policeman, all in the starting location of the game, are best ignored.

The author has also committed one of the cardinal sins of game-writing (i.e. giving your game-characters the real names and characteristics of people you know); so at least two characters are written into the game purely because they happen to be the author's friends, and he obviously enjoyed getting in a dig or two at their expense. This might be hilariously funny to the author, but is just irritating to anyone else.

I feel that CARDIGAN could have been a really interesting game, particularly as the introduction hinted at several possibilities and the basic storyline certainly sounded quite novel and promising. But the (very youthful, I suspect) author simply did not have the necessary writing or programming skills to create a playable game. To sum up, I'd say that CARDIGAN is one of the worst text adventures I have ever played, due to poor programming.

[Download from the Internet (<ftp://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/games/agt/cardigan.zip> or www.firedrake.org/if-archive/games/agt/cardigan.zip) or send a blank PC disc and return postage to the Probe office.]

SHANNARA

Legend

Review by Dorothy Millard on a PC

This isn't an in depth review as I am only part way through the game. Shannara is based on Terry Brooks epic series of fantasy books and is set in the time period falling between the events of the first novel, The Sword of Shannara, and the second novel, The Elfstones of Shannara.

You are Jak Ohmsford, son of Shea, and your adventure starts in Shady Vale where you meet Allanon. He tells you of the horrible Warlock Lord's return and how he has unleashed horrific monsters throughout the lands. In order to defeat him you must reforge the Sword of Shannara by uniting artefacts from each of the races, travel among the lands of the Dwarves, Elves, Trolls and Gnomes, avoid or fight the monsters and gain support from representatives of the four lands and Allanon. So you set off into the Land of Shannara and find yourself at the start of the game, sitting by the side of a stream in Shady Vale. A glint in a tree catches your eye and somehow you must get this object.

In true Legend style the screen display consists of a large picture showing your current location with your inventory below this. You can have up to six characters under your command at one time and can switch between their inventories, and in fact you must do this to complete the game. Shannara has a very well written story, realistic graphics and powerful soundtrack. Legend has created an atmosphere-filled adventure. The game interface has all major game functions handled by a click or two on the mouse which works well for movement and inventory. The main drawback of the game is the combat sequences where the only commands available are attack, retreat and defend, so where possible it is recommended that this be avoided. The combat has little effect on the game and you never die. The excellent puzzles and visuals easily outweigh any combat limitations.



On the whole this is an enjoyable game, not for RPG fans, but for adventure players who like interesting puzzles and have a little patience, which is needed to get through the combat sequences.

[I couldn't find anyone who was selling this game - so if anyone can help, please let me know... Barbara]

STARSHIP TITANIC

Published by Simon and Schuster Interactive

Author: Douglas Adams and The Digital Village.

Published in April 1988.

Reviewed by Mandy Rodrigues using PC AMD K6-2 450 MHz with 64 Mb RAM

Being an old Infocom fanatic I jumped at the chance to play an adventure game written by Douglas Adams, famous among other things for writing *The Hitchhikers Guide To The Galaxy*. It might seem a little weird, I thought, but it must be good.

The Plot: An advanced alien civilisation have built a luxury cruising starship called *Titanic* which is unsinkable or should we say will never develop faults, according to all the blurb within the packaging - there is quite a bit to read. But of course it all does go horribly wrong. In fact the whole starship crashes into your house, completely demolishing it. As you pick yourself up a hatch opens, a ladder unfolds and a strange robot (I thought he looked rather like a cross between Mr Burns of the *Simpsons* and a penguin) appears to demand that you come aboard and fix the ship.

The starship is manned by a most annoyingly unhelpful bunch of robots who are all dotty, or should I say malfunctioning. I found the robots, and especially a noisy parrot the most annoying and frustrating creatures I have ever found in a game. (Bring back Floyd with his purple crayon from *Planetfall* and *Stationfall* anytime).

Most of the game interaction is via the PET (Personal Electronic Thing) which is quite easy to handle after a little practice. The PET holds your inventory, enables conversations, saves and loads the game etc and keeps track of the locations you have visited.

The packaging announces that conversations are held via SpookiTalk which is supposed to be a natural language text parser. I was NOT impressed, I couldn't even hold a simple conversation with any of the characters. In fact I found the whole thing so frustrating that I would have cheerfully ignored everyone of them except that you have to interact sometimes to solve the puzzles.

The artwork is wonderful, the packaging is excellent and the puzzles are good - but not good enough to keep me interested. The game has absolutely no atmosphere whatsoever and I struggled to keep myself going. I managed to keep going through three quarters of the game and gave up.

I just couldn't be bothered to carry on.

[You may have to do a lot of searching to find a copy as I couldn't find anyone offering it, even the official website (www.starshiptitanic.com) wasn't responding when it tried.... Barbara]

TALISMAN OF LOST SOULS

Written by Tony Kingsmill

Reviewed by Doreen Bardon on a PC under Spectrum emulation

I downloaded this game from the 'WOS' site, (World of Spectrum). It consists of about 68 locations, well described. You start off in a village, after talking to the only inhabitant, a young child, you learn that you need to find the Talisman which will bring back the Lost Souls of the village.

Leaving the village you will encounter a friendly gnome, he will only talk if you pay him, so give him a coin and heed his warning. There are quite a lot of sudden deaths lurking around all corners, so save regularly. There is a small maze which can be mapped in the conventional way. Beyond this a man needs some water, be kind and get him some, what he gives you will need to be deciphered to enable you to enter a Palace. A little bit of digging, rubbing, and pulling comes in handy too. There are only two small puzzles to do in the Palace, but these are very important, as without two vital objects you aren't going to get much further. Cast a spell in a quarry, find a password, unlock a door, then cast another spell, to be confronted by Zorcon the evil magician. Tell him the password to be rewarded with the Talisman.

I saw a couple of spelling mistakes. This is a simple adventure. Could be completed in an evening, if you haven't anything else to do.

[Download from The World of Spectrum (<http://void.jump.org>) or send a blank PC disc and return postage to Probe office.

I have it amongst my collection, so if anyone would like it on Spectrum (tape/+D disc) or for the Amiga under Spectrum emulation, just let me know.... Barbara]

THE DAY THE LIGHTS STAYED OUT

Written by Mark Le-May (1986)

Review by Dorothy Millard on a PC under C64 emulation

When I first looked at The Day the Lights Stayed Out, I thought what a great title, could be interesting. I was sadly mistaken as this is a "sorry" little game. Written with GAC you start your quest in your bedroom, where you see that the wallpaper is scorched and the window is smashed, covering the floor in glass. Taking into consideration that this is a very early GAC game, it is abysmal. Vocabulary is limited. You can examine only a few objects but not any of the scenery. If you pick up any of the objects you cannot drop them again. This is problematical because when you get to the wall you need to be carrying the ladder to pass, but if carrying anything else you cannot pick up the ladder! There is a wallet containing keys and your ID which is needed on the other side of the wall. Maybe I've missed something, but I can see no way in which you can progress, as you automatically climb the wall if carrying the ladder which is dropped on the other side, so there is no way back for the ID. The keys allow you access to the locked toilet, but I'm still wondering why as there's nothing in there. Additionally you can enter the toilet, even if not carrying the keys – not that there's anything in there. When you go to the end of the street you receive a message that you have been robbed but still have all your inventory intact! Why bother?

I didn't finish this game as once past the wall with nothing in my inventory due to the above ladder problem, I needed the ID from the wallet, a gas mask or boots to continue and the latter two were nowhere to be found, probably in the area where you need the ID to pass. On the whole the game is extremely badly programmed with inappropriate messages and information contained in location descriptions which is no longer relevant. Some of the writing made me laugh, for example on the landing you are confronted by overturned planets (plants) and broken pictures. In the conservatory the game talks about a "pain of glass" – yes it sure is painful. Pity, it had such a great title too.

If anyone can get anywhere in this game I would like to hear about it!

[Dorothy has sent me a copy of the above game as a disc image for use with a C64 emulator. If anyone would like a copy just send a blank PC disc and return postage to the Probe office. You will, of course, also require a C64 emulator for the PC Barbara]

FOURTEENTH BIRTHDAY QUIZ by Ken Webb

All these things happened on the fourteenth, but do you know the correct date.

EVENT

1. The Gregorian calendar was adopted.
2. Macbeth murdered Duncan.
3. The first football match played under floodlights took place at Sheffield.
4. Captain Cook was stabbed to death by natives in the Sandwich Islands (now Hawaii)
5. The battle of Hastings was fought on Senlac Hill.
6. The largest mass wedding took place in Seoul, South Korea, when 5,837 couples were married simultaneously.
7. Edmund Halley, English astronomer, died.
8. The St. Valentine's Day massacre took place in Chicago.
9. A Journey Through Europe, or The Play of Geography, the earliest dated English board game, went on sale, priced 8 shillings (40p.)
10. The speed limit for motor vehicles in Britain was raised from 4 mph to 14 mph.
11. Cologne Cathedral was completed, it had been started in the 13th century.
12. An expedition led by Roald Amundsen became the first to reach the South Pole.
13. During a visit to Britain, King Kamehameha II of Hawaii and his Queen died of measles.
14. Napoleon entered Moscow.
15. The Titanic hits an iceberg.
16. The first Henley Regatta took place.
17. The storming of the Bastille.
18. Walcher, Bishop of Durham and Earl of Northumberland was murdered. William I consequently ravaged the area.
19. Mrs. Isabella Beeton was born.
20. France became the first country to introduce vehicle registration plates.
21. Alfred Nobel demonstrated dynamite for the first time at a quarry in Redhill, Surrey.
22. The submarine Monarch laid the first underwater telephone cable.
23. 439 are killed in a pit disaster at Senghenydd in Glamorgan.
24. Coventry Cathedral was destroyed.
25. Henry IV of France was assassinated.
26. Owen Glendower assumes the title of Prince of Wales.
27. Puccini's opera Tosca was first performed in Rome.
28. The Battle of Barnet took place in the War of the Roses.

DATES

- a. August, 1880.
- b. January, 1900.
- c. July, 1789.
- d. October, 1983.
- e. March, 1836.
- f. April, 1471.
- g. February, 1929.
- h. March, 1897.
- i. August, 1040.
- j. October, 1066.
- k. September, 1812.
- l. July, 1867.
- m. November, 1896.
- n. May 1610.
- o. July, 1823.
- p. September, 1752.
- q. November, 1940.
- r. January, 1742.
- s. June, 1839.
- t. October, 1878.
- u. September, 1759.
- v. June, 1404.
- w. April, 1912
- x. May, 1080.
- y. February. 1779.
- z. October, 1913.
- aa. December 1911.
- bb. August 1893.

BRAIN TEASER

Marriage

Our Princess is in a quandary. Her wicked Uncle has decreed that she must marry one of his sons Tiny Tim, or Midget Mike. She must say one statement. If that statement is true, she must marry Tim. If it is false, she must marry Mike.

What did she say to ensure her single status?

COLLECTABLE COMPUTERS by Steve Clay

Back in the mists of time (September 1990) I wrote my first letter to Probe. In it I pondered on the possibility of the software of that time becoming the collectors items of the future. Well as we are now all millionaires, with not a single tape or disk left in the cupboard or loft, then we all know the answer to that.

What brought this old letter to mind was another advert I came across in the classified section of our local free paper during my research for my second-hand computer article. The advert read:

"Commodore Pet. Antique, full working order. Ideal for collectors, all offers considered. Tel."

Antique?? I suppose in the relative history of computers it is. I wonder what offers he/she had and whether or not it was sold.

Getting back to collectables. A few years back the ZX81 and rubber keyed Spectrums were being snapped up as the treasure of tomorrow. The market seemed to dry up as people realised there is little sentiment to be found in a plastic box of micro chips. The reason anybody gets sentimental about a computer relates more to the games they played on it or program they wrote on it. Even so with emulators available for everything everyone will soon remember playing those 8-bit classics on a PC. Maybe in thirty years these early machines will become sought after so maybe now is the time to buy.

Moving back to software, the reason behind my original letter all those years ago. At that time I wrote that any software could be collectable as a snapshot of the infant years of a growing industry. I don't half talk some twaddle at times. So now is the time to revise my first opinion. My advice now, with a bit more knowledge regarding collectables, is go for names. By this I mean TV/Film tie-ins and collaborations with other collectable areas.

Beginning with films. There was a constant stream of film licenses in the 8-bit heyday and reviews of these games more often than not ended with the phrase "another disappointing film conversion." There were a few James Bond titles at that time and 007 is nothing if not collectable. In a recent collectors advertisement I saw a Spectrum version of a James Bond game selling at £12. Not a vast amount but how many of your Spectrum games would raise that amount? Also of note with James Bond is the bundles that actually include the computer. I know there was a special edition 128 Spectrum with a James Bond box and game package.

Also recently the Nintendo 64 was released in a special Golden Eye package. Star Trek has always been collectable and there have been a number of games released after an initial reticence by the license owners to allow games to be produced.

Of all the collectable games to look out for those with Disney on would be your best bet. Disney collectors range from those who stick to Mickey Mouse or another single character to those who will collect anything with the Disney name on it. The Megadrive and other sixteen bit machines were well supplied with Disney material including; Jungle Book, The Lion king, Aladdin and a few Mickey Mouse/Donald Duck titles. Other film related tie-ins include Alien, Batman, Indiana Jones, Judge Dredd and many more.

Television related material is equally, if not more, collectable than film. Thomas the Tank engine is widely collected and I know of a number of Amiga product available include games and educational packages. Dr Who has been sorely neglected by computer games producers but I know of at least one game out there. Thunderbirds had an 8-bit game released during the period when the series became the vogue once more. Like the previously mentioned James Bond game this is selling well among collectors. Other TV tie-ins include The Smurfs, Noddy (lots of collectors out there), Count Duckula, Sooty, Dangermouse, even South Park. (The list is endless, well obviously not endless, but you get my meaning)

Other software related items worth looking for include specially designed joysticks (Remember the Alien one?), mouse and mouse mat sets recently released for Star Wars, promotional game controllers for the consoles or even memory cards with cheats on them for particular games.

LIMERICK

sent in by Laurence Creighton

There once was a fellow from Yuma,
who told an elephant joke to a puma.
Now his skeleton lies
under hot western skies,
The Puma had no sense of huma!

GHOSTS, GHOULS & THINGS THAT GO "WOOOAAH!" IN THE NIGHT

by Kez Gray

This month: CULTS!

Just what exactly IS a "cult" anyway? The dictionary definitions of the word state: "Cult - from Cultus (Latin) to worship or protect. A system of worship or devotion to a person or thing. A system of religious belief. An unorthodox or false religion. A great (often excessive) admiration for a person or idea." In its' historical (original) sense the word "cult" was used to describe any kind of organised religious group. However, in our more modern nineteenth century jargon, it has come to mean a fashion, a fad or a popular activity that will probably not last. (eg: Vegetarianism has been referred to as "a cultish fad", Cassius Clay regarded as "a cult figure"). The truth of the fact is that no-one ever considers their own religion as a cult - and a lot of religious orders get extremely upset about being called thusly.

The thing is, no matter which way you try to package it up and make it all sound so pretty, for certain individuals (and sometimes whole families) being part of a cult can prove to be a heart-breaking, dangerous (and in a number of cases, tragic) experience. Stories told by former cult members ARE often genuinely heartrending; many mistakes have been made, there is so much misunderstanding and lack of proper communication. Parents who feel they have lost their beloved child(ren) to a cult generally find very small compensation in the fact that they are alive, not tortured by drink or drugs - and may even be quite happy in their new lifestyle. Such tragedy represents only part of the story - there is generally a good/bad side to the majority of cults. However, it is something that has (and in some cases STILL does) happen from time to time, and due to gossip, rumours and various types of bad press.....well, let's just say that 'mud sticks'!

The main danger with cults lies in "Theomania" (addiction to God(s)!) which (depending on the manner it has been achieved) has all too often tended to create barriers rather than bridges. Much of the 'bad press' of various cults/religious groups happened in the early days due to some being too 'over-enthusiastic' in their methods of gaining (and keeping!) converts, along with carelessness or lack of concern for the well-being of their (often naive) flocks.

The following are some of the best known and longest established of these organisations which have come to be known, perhaps in some cases unfairly, by their adversaries as "cults":

The Mormons The Church of Scientology* The Unification Church (Moonies)* The Family of Love (formerly "Children of God")* The International Society for Krishna Consciousness* Nichiren Shoshu (Soka Gakkai)* The Jesus Fellowship* The Church of Christ* Rajneesh* EST (Erhard Seminars Training)* TM (Transdental Meditation)* Worldwide Church of God* The Baha'i Faith* Judaisim* Jehovas' Witnesses* The Exclusive Brethren* The Salvation Army* The Seventh-Day Adventists* The Church of Christian Science* Sufism* Subud* The Aetherius Society* Rosicrucians* Divine Light Mission* The Way International* Satanism*.

WHERE DO THEY RECRUIT? = *On the University/College Campus * In buses and on Tube Trains * Door to door * On the street*.

WHAT DO THEY OFFER? = *Instant friendship* A caring community* A goal in life* A sense of personal involvement* A chance to change the world* A hotline to heaven*.

WHO JOINS? = *Almost anyone is susceptible, and no age is exempt* More men than women* More middle class* More white than black* 85% of recruits have had a religious upbringing* The homeless & jobless seeking a new family* Singles & families*.

THE NEED? = *Spiritual seeking* A need to belong* Food and shelter* Adolescent independence* Security* A vehicle for energy & enthusiasm*.

Recruits are by no means always from unstable or unhappy families/ backgrounds. Sometimes young people feel unable to match the expectations or dreams their parents have set for them, which in turn can make them feel inadequate and/or guilty - due to this a cult may appeal to a person as it seemingly offers more 'attainable' goals.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A POTENTIALLY DESTRUCTIVE/ DANGEROUS CULT!

*A powerful leader who claims divinity or a special mission entrusted to him/her from above.

*Revealed scriptures or doctrine.

*Totalitarianism & consequential alienation of members from family or friends.

*Indoctrination by sophisticated mind-control techniques, often based on the concept that once you can get a person to behave the way you want, then you can also make them believe what you want.

*Deceptive recruitment.

*Slave labour (eg: Use of members on fundraising or missionary activities for little or no pay to line the leaders' pockets.

*Misuse of funds and the accumulation of wealth for personal or political purposes at the expense of members.

*Exclusivity - 'we are right & everyone else is wrong'.

Sometimes there are also serious charges against specific groups (eg: sexual abuse of children, international arms/drug dealing, political power games, bribery, theft and even ritual or organised murder.).

BRAINWASHING!

The vivid word 'brainwashing' (meaning 'thought reform'), was first coined by an English journalist named Edward Hunter in 1951 as a translation from the Chinese phrase "Hsi-nao" or 'wash brain', meaning 'purify thoughts'. It was his way of trying to describe what happened in the Korean war camps when American prisoners were 'induced to change their minds about the evils of Communism'. The word implies disapproval and has now become one of the most common rods with which to beat the 'cults', with regard to their recruits/converts rights and civil liberties! Someone whose ideas have been changed/affected in a way we do not agree with is said to have been 'brainwashed'. If we are happy with the result of their change of mind or heart - then it is said that they have been 'persuaded'. No-one really believes that recruits to the "Moonies" or even the "Children of God" are held by physical force like the Korean war prisoners. But it IS believed that restraint is achieved to the same effect, by subtle psychological methods of mind control. Psychiatrists who are critical of brainwashing say that the use of such techniques destroys any possibility of individual choice. The recruits'/converts' mind has the power of rational thought undermined by low protein diets, increased blood sugar to befuddle the brain, lack of food & sleep, disorientation, isolation from familiar surroundings and information overload. What happens to potential recruits will depend greatly on their personality and state of mind at the time they join the movement. Lonely, unhappy adolescents CAN be more vulnerable because they cannot handle the overload of new experiences!

For the majority of people the 'experiment' of joining a cult is short-lived and does little damage. However for a few, the experiment is disastrous and in some cases, even leads to death.

In groups which practice celibacy (repression of sexual activity), everyday human contact can become difficult - especially with members of the opposite sex. Those where sexual freedom is practiced can have much the same results. Many people cannot cope with constant chanting, which can produce a hypnotic effect which in turn creates an uncontrollable state of trance. Sometimes paranoia, confusion and even hallucinations can set in. Many movements have no facilities for coping with recruits who fall ill -

thusly the sick recruit is sometimes driven out or abandoned. With no home to go to and no job or money, fear of the outside world and the supposed loss of their deities' love, can prevent some from eventually 'making the break' and leaving the cult.

In a lot of the more horrifying cases of 'religion gone wrong', it is usually the most innocent of innocents that suffer. I'm talking of course about children. Some groups use children as a means of boosting numbers, and then there's other groups who encourage celibacy. If dad is a Krishna devotee it can mean a 4am jump start to the Temple, or if you've been born into "The Family of Love" bedtime romps all round. In most cases the parents' personal formula for rearing their offspring is untouchable by law, and there is an elusive borderline between what is socially unacceptable and actually illegal. But where adults are living in a community and children tend to be isolated from contact with the outside world, rumours begin to fly. Sometimes with real reason, there is concern. The rules governing home tuition are loose and often difficult to enforce, it is difficult to know if certain cults' child education standards are up to scratch. Discipline is necessary - but physical and sexual abuse is notoriously difficult to locate & root out. In Britain & America experts are increasingly alarmed at the amount of child abuse. The Los Angeles Police Department have a special section to investigate reports of Satanic ritual and alleged animal & human sacrifice. In Britain, Diane Core (the founder of Childcare) claims personal knowledge of children participating in suburban Satanism. It is really a subject too sensitive to be dealt with as part of such a general write-up as this, and calls for an independently researched book.

KIDNAPPING & DE-PROGRAMMING

Ted Patrick is notorious for having served several terms in jail for his long-standing campaign against what he sees as mind control. Of his tactics he says, "It is like turning on a light in a darkened room or bringing a person back from the dead. It is a beautiful thing...like seeing a werewolf turn into a man.". Parents have paid him huge sums of money to rescue their offspring from a cult, often with force through kidnapping. Since he first began his 'crusade' in 1971, Ted Patrick has been condemned by almost everyone - even anti-cultists - for methods of 'de-programming', which are more overtly aggressive and controversial even than those of his 'enemies'. His language is raw and his tactics are designed to 'jerk' members from their trance-like allegiance to the cult, through intense psychological pressure. This for the kidnapped cult member often means solitary confinement, abuse of cult leaders, sleep deprivation techniques, lack of food/sustenance and interrogation. The end result is to wear down the resistance, through physical & emotional fatigue, humiliation & guilt. His methods worked about 50% of the time; for the rest, families found

themselves paying counselling fees for essential rehabilitation therapy to offset the effect of the de-programming trauma. Sometimes the patient 'floats' for two or three days, sometimes for weeks, a number of them may never recover. Doctor Elizabeth Tylden (a British psychiatrist) feels that psychiatrists are not treating ex-cultist members correctly. "I want them to realise that drugs are not the answer. They need tranquil discussion. I am also against de-programming - two wrongs do not make a right and de-programming is worse than the original indoctrination."

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOUR CHILD JOINS A CULT?

1. Although it is tempting to believe the worse, do not panic. Your child is probably not a zombie.....such a decision by a young adult is guaranteed to (and probably designed to) get your attention. It is not a time for becoming hysterical but for focusing thoughts & energies.

2. Present no ultimatums, do not intimidate, do not throw a tantrum. The most important asset you have in the coming months or years is to keep the lines of communication open.

If communication has been severed:

3. Research the group concerned from objective, scholarly sources. The new 'language' your child is using may be easier to interpret than you think.

4. Show interest and willingness to discuss. Conversation should be honest but not hostile. Show respect for their right to engage in such an endeavor. This may be a desperate move to overcome a sense of failure. It is dangerous to attack faith (however strange it is) when the believer has shown signs of discouragement in facing life.

5. Do not communicate the idea that the young person is deviant or defective or a total disappointment (eg: "Any child of mine would know better than this!"/"I am worried sick about you"/"Anyone who gets into this must be crazy"). If you teach a young person that they are a loser then a loser they will become.

6. Communicate confidence in the persons' ability to find their way and learn from experience. Be positive. (eg: "Whatever our differences now we will continue to love each other", "I recognise your wish for your own lifestyle. I may not agree with you but you must be getting something out of it."). Options for the future should be left open.

7. Do not turn automatically to your doctor. Joining a group does not always mean a need for psychiatric care.

8. If there were genuine signs of psychological problems before joining, consult a family therapist. Religious conflict in a family can sometime point to problems elsewhere. With family therapy everyone can be involved and the 'cultist' is not the focal point.

9. Be honest with yourself. Try to understand the difference between fear for the child's welfare and disappointment at their rebelling.

10. Remember the normal traumas of growing up. Reading and discussion with specialists will make you more compassionate.

11. If you cannot find your child, seek help to establish trust. You will not establish trust by kidnapping or de-programming.

12. Seek an independent mediator.

13. If your child remains in the group but returns home do not act as though a U.F.O. has landed in your living room. Be natural, whatever they wear or do. Beware of overpraising siblings who have remained at home.

14. If the child decides to leave, respond positively. Most members do leave of their own accord. Don't be afraid to offer limited financial or moral support and as soon as possible encourage them to leave home and stand on their own two feet.

WHERE TO FIND HELP!

There are organisations who will help anyone in trouble. For those who want to break away from present beliefs/groups and are afraid of facing the world, talking may help to put things into perspective. For families torn apart, a third party may re-establish contact and build bridges without anyone losing face.

*Doe Gloria Outreach, Sleds House, 212-220 Addington Road, South Croydon, Surrey, CR2 8LD. Telephone: 651 6246.

*FAIR (Family Action Information Rescue), BCM Box 3535, PO Box 12, London, WC1N 3XX. Telephone: 539 3940.

*Cultists Anonymous, PO Box BM 1407, London, WC1M 3XX. Telephone: (Hull) 443104.

UNMETERED INTERNET ACCESS? by John Ferris

Ever since the dawn of the so-called "Information Age" UK residents have cast envious eyes over the water to our American cousins who enjoy free local telephone calls. Admittedly, prices in the UK have dropped dramatically over the last five years thanks to increased competition and the telephone ombudsman.

Actually, the users in the USA do pay a much greater line rental than in the UK, I know, I had to pay such bills when working out there a few years back. I think it was like paying our quarterly line rental each month. So I can understand why they use the phone so much.

By the time you read this, one of two major changes will have taken place. I speak of course of BT's Surfetime package for Internet users. The other change in the air concerns BT's monopoly of the local loop. BT have lost the monopoly on which telephone company you might use, but unless you have cable you still have to go through their local loop to reach that telephone company. This is the line that goes from your telephone to the local telephone exchange. It's like living in a little village with one exit over a single bridge. Inside and outside the village you can do whatever you want, but to get in and out you have to pay the bridge toll.

At the time of writing, there is some talk about BT losing this monopoly, but the outcome is yet to be settled.

So what is this Surfetime?

BT has been building a second, "Internet only" communications network alongside the existing POTS (Post Office Telephone System) voice network. Although Surfetime is launched on June 2nd, the network will not be completed until September. I assume the Southeast and Central England areas are working now, but the nether regions of Scotland, Wales and darkest Cornwall (I'm being ironic) will probably be waiting for a while.

The new network is supposed to be designed to carry data traffic and so should deliver faster speeds and better connectivity. However, if your local loop is pretty noisy you probably won't notice much difference.

Alongside the new network, BT is restructuring the way the tariffs from phone charges are divided between it and the Internet Service Providers. BT says this will work out better for everyone. Sceptics say that ISP's will go out of business or at least the free, local call rate ISP's will become unprofitable. The truth lies somewhere in the middle.

How will Surfetime work? (Or how much money does it cost?)

Simply put, you are charged in two stages. First BT charges you a monthly flat rate for access to the data network. At the time of writing the charges are £5.99 a month for unmetered access (i.e. free calls) at off-peak times and weekends. For 24/7 (free all the time) unmetered access the charge is £19.99 per month. This is on top of your existing telephone bill. It is not a second telephone line, you are paying for access to the data network.

The second stage is to find an ISP who is able to offer connection to the data network (rumour has it that there are not that many). Check out your current ISP to see if they are taking part. The ISP will then charge you for their services (use of their equipment, e-mail, newsgroups etc.) per month. This cost will vary from ISP to ISP. Do not be surprised if they quote a price equivalent to that which BT is charging for line rental. Some may charge as little as £1. The answer is to shop around for the best price and not be afraid to change ISP's, although for website owners this might prove difficult.

Is it any good and is it worth it?

I'm sure there will be teething troubles, but only time will tell how good this new network will be. In theory it HAS to be a vast improvement over POTS. BT has the resources to make it work.

Each user will of course have to sit down with a calculator and a pile of old phone bills and decide for themselves if they need to change. How much do they spend on Internet calls? Is it usually more than the Surfetime and ISP tariff added together? Do they really need 24/7 access? If their current ISP is in the Surfetime scheme, can they keep my existing Web and e-mail addresses?

Are there alternatives?

The simplest alternative is to maintain the status quo and do nothing. But there are alternatives to Surfetime, but they will likely be using the POTS system. (which will benefit by a lot of users switching to the data network) or be on cable. Cable is a Good Thing as it bypasses the local loop and many companies are using fibre-optics for very fast speeds. One thing to watch out for is hidden "minimum spend" clauses which state that Internet calls are free if you spend over £X on voice calls each month. Some values for X are as high as £10, which is a lot of calls in a month (for Jonny no-mates me anyway.)

Other alternatives include LineOne who are offering 24/7 access. However you must buy a Quip! (a new low cost telephone company) adapter for £20 and spend more than £5 in voice calls per month. I believe this is on top of your existing BT rental charges (because they own the local loop, no local loop = no telephone wire = no calls.)

Other companies are offering a one-off connection fee and a yearly payment of between £20 and £60, depending on the level of service required, for unmetered access via freephone numbers. Examples of such companies include Libertyserve (who I believe are building their own network), RedHotAnt and many others (see ispreview.co.uk link at end.) The quality of service provided varies a great deal, with most having problems with engaged tones.

Just before I e-mailed this off to Barbara, I discovered FRIACO has just been announced. This is Flat Rate Internet Access Call Origination and will be available at all telephone exchanges capable of supporting BT SurfTime on 1 June 2000. Little is known at the moment but OFTEL has just given its blessing. This is a direct competitor to SurfTime, theoretically being 60% cheaper. It will be interesting to see what happens. Maybe it will be wise to wait for developments.

Are there any hidden dangers with 24/7 access?

Yes there are and they can be potentially very damaging.

The first is to consider the effects of increased Internet time upon you and your family home life. For the Jonny no-mates amongst us it might actually increase their social life, but for the rest there could be problems. A work colleague already has enough problems with his sons and online games, currently they are into Half-life (which is understandable) and my colleague has difficulty regulating the time they spend online, although they are seeing sense. He will be going unmetered in the near future simply to protect his phone bill, but he prefers the kids to be out in the fresh air with their mates as opposed to being huddled around a PC with their mates. Or doing their homework.

Think of yourself, do you have the self-discipline not to spend all your free time on the net? You might think so, but it is very addictive and I speak from personal experience.

At least have the mobile phone turned on when you are online. With some of the pay-as-you go mobile phone deals available today this could work out cheaper than a second line.

There is a more sinister aspect. Have you ever come back to your car and found that you had forgotten to lock it? Yes, so have I, even overnight sometimes. There are millions of cars on the streets and relatively few car thieves. You can leave the car unlocked on the road and the majority of people will walk past and not notice. Some will notice, tut to themselves and continue. The chances are that you will return to the car and drive off before a thief comes along because you rarely leave the car unlocked.

Imagine for a moment that you never lock the car, even overnight. Because the thieves are always on the lookout, always trying the handles on cars as they walk down the streets, they now stand a much better chance of finding your car. Statistics demand that they will.

When you go online, you open a 2-way channel to the outside world, to send and receive data. In the majority of cases, your ISP assigns your PC a random Internet address from the selection it has available. You spend 10 minutes downloading e-mail, perhaps the odd adventure from ftp.gmd.de and definitely a contribution to Probe (*I'm doing my best, Barbara!*) and that is it. You log on again the next day and your PC has another address. This way you are very hard to find.

As you have a 2-way channel and a network address, it is possible for someone else to find and access your PC. It is possible to do this by brute force. A hacker can have a program that sends a signal, called a "ping" (same idea as active sonar in submarines) to thousands of potential network addresses. Most of these will be dead ends, but if an active one is found it gets an echo, or a pong. The hacker can then start to try and access this address to see what is there.

It is possible that, given enough time, the hacker can by various methods access passwords, personal information, financial data and suchlike. However, weight of numbers combined with the low time online and random network addresses means most people are relatively safe. If a hacker does find you and manages to upload, say, a keystroke logger, he or she will probably never find you again to retrieve the log file (which can be searched for password/credit card numbers in amongst the dross.)

However, if your PC is connected 24 hours a day, seven days a week, then it is open season. Whilst you are asleep some hacker could download your entire hard disk, or the contents of the CD ROM you left in the drive. Would you like to wake up to find your PC is full of material that would be worthy of a prison sentence?

This threat, perceived or real, has resulted in anti virus companies branching out into the security software sector, traditionally known as

"Firewalls" which basically block any unauthorised data sent from or to your PC. Basically, if your data's not on the list, it ain't getting in (or out.)

Norton has "Internet Security" which includes their latest anti virus software. Not wanting to spend money, I downloaded ZoneAlarm from the web which is free for home users. It's a relatively small program, quite easy to install and sits in the background until something untoward happens. I've been using this for a few months and after the program had been taught what to allow through, I've been quite happy with it. Often an alert will be nothing more than a web page that you looked at ten minutes ago trying to send you data because it still thinks you are looking at it. I've had a few pings from unknown sources, but they never get a pong from my PC, it's as if I'm not there! I pointed my browser at one address (perhaps not recommended) from which the ping came from and it appeared to be someone's ICQ page.

Why should an adventurer be interested in unmetered access?

Besides not having to worry about the expense of downloading huge files and lengthy chat sessions, I suppose online gaming is perhaps the only other reason for an adventurer or role-player to venture online. Most recent games have an online option and some, like EverQuest:Ruins of Kunar and the Ultima Online games are only online games (additional charges apply to some.) There are adventures that can be played via the web and we must not forget the good old MUD (Multi User Dungeon) in it's various forms. I've always wanted to wallow in MUD and now I can afford to. Almost worthy of an article, perhaps.

Further information can be found online at:

<http://www.unmetered.org.uk> Unmetered access news.

<http://www.zonelabs.com> Firewall software

<http://www.ispreview.co.uk> Lists & reviews ISP performance (good)

<http://www.bt.com/netgeneration/BT> Surfing time info

The following are two examples of unmetered access ISPs. Full lists available on ispreview:

<http://www.libertysurf.co.uk> LibertySurf homepage

<http://www.redhotant.com> RedHotAnt

Please note, any mention of any company or service is by way of information and is not a recommendation of said company or service. Any opinions and observations are from my own experience, the reader's experience of the same may yield different opinions.

WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

This month's website is suggested by Dorothy Millard who has found one for the movie being made of TOLKIEN 'S TRILOGY at

www.lordoftherings.net

In 1997 The Lord of the Rings was voted Book of the Century. Now New Zealand director and screenwriter Peter Jackson is bringing JRR Tolkien's epic ground-breaking saga of good and evil to cinematic life. But fans need not wait for its release, a visit to will be enough to whet the appetite.

Once there, you can bone up on the history and the story so far with production. The Trilogy browser allows you to delve deeper into Middle Earth by customising your web browser in look and function. Post questions to Peter Jackson and if you purchase a copy of the book from the New Line Cinema studio store, it includes a bonus letter from the man himself. But the icing on the cake has got to be an exclusive preview of the film itself.

[I had trouble viewing this website, and asked Dorothy if she was experiencing the same problems. She sent the following replyBarbara]

I had no problems at all when I logged on to the LOR site. I use Explorer, but I don't think Netscape is your problem. I have a fast cable connection but the site is very intensive - it loads in Real Player for a speech. It also loads in Quick Time Player for a movie. I think your problem with the sound may be because it isn't coming in fast enough. On my screen the colour was olive green and when I clicked on the pictures it loaded a movie and a speech. It's possible you don't have the right programs like Real Player and Quick Time to view this material. I feel a lot of people will have trouble accessing this site.

[I have Quick Time 4 and the shareware version of RealPlayer which works okay with other websites, and eventually realized it is because LOR requires a processor speed of at least 450 Mhz, and mine is 233 Mhz Dorothy kindly grabbed some of the more interesting text for me and I thought readers may also like to read it....Barbara]

BELOW IS SOME OF THE TEXT FROM THE SITE

In 1997, The Lord of the Rings trilogy was voted Book of the Century. Now the world is about to experience this groundbreaking tale of good and evil brought to life.

This long-awaited screen presentation of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy will be shot exclusively in New Zealand over a period of 18 months, with post-production adding yet another year and a half. At three years in the making, this will be the largest production ever to be mounted in the Southern Hemisphere.

Written by Oscar-nominated screenwriters Peter Jackson & Fran Walsh, with Philippa Boyens and Stephen Sinclair, this technically challenging production will assemble an international cast, utilize over 20,000 days of extras, employ a full crew of over 300 (including award-winning, high-profile technicians from both within and outside of New Zealand), and will feature 1,200 state-of-the-art computer generated effects shots.

Peter Jackson's Wellington-based production company, Wingnut Films Limited, together with the special effects company WETA Limited, have been involved in developing and designing this realization of the Tolkien classic for more than two years. During this time a stunning array of miniatures, creatures, prosthetic effects and armor have been created to bring the grandeur and spectacle of Tolkien's richly evocative Middle-earth to life on the screen.

WETA Limited, New Zealand's leading Special Effects house, continues to focus all of its efforts on this one project. Dedicated to meeting the exacting visual and technical requirements of Director Peter Jackson, WETA Digital is developing its own proprietary programs and using state-of-the-art motion control, blue screen and forced perspective techniques to achieve his vision. The people and creatures who populate Middle-earth, as well as their homes, cities (and lairs) are being conceptualized by WETA Workshop with the guidance of Alan Lee and John Howe. Alan & John are internationally recognized Tolkien artists.

New Zealand is Middle-earth. Geologically a young country, New Zealand is a wild mix of diverse terrain, which brings with it a sense of grandeur and antiquity. Peter Jackson will use the peace and tranquility of New Zealand's rolling pastoral farmland, the rugged beauty of the North Island's volcanic plateaus, and the majesty of the South Island's snow capped Southern Alps to bring the screen his interpretation of how Britain, Tolkien's Middle-earth, might have looked 7,000 years ago.

Since the public announcement by New Line Cinema in August of 1998, international interest in this project has been overwhelming. Internet sites devoted to the trilogy have attracted a record number of hits and thousands of approaches have been received by the production company from people wanting to be involved in the project both behind and in front of the camera.

NEWSDESK

NEW CAT UPDATE AVAILABLE

The update will still run databases created with previous versions.

NEW VERSION

*Improved the game text scrolling. *NEW 'wmess' action lets you put a message in the window titlebar at any time *NEW 'dmess' action lets you put a centred dialog box on screen with caption and message. An 'OK' button clears it from view. *NEW Colour Settings Editor lets you select startup defaults for text colour, background colour, 'Press <Return>' prompt colour and 8 possible fontstyles) *NEW 'ink', 'paper', and 'prompt' actions for changing text colour, background colour, and 'Press <Return>' prompt during game. *Help File updated to include the new details.

KNOWN BUGS:

When printing out hard copies of individual entries or lists of entries from the Response, Tableone and Tabletwo Editors the program may occasionally lock up necessitating a reboot. This sometimes happens with particularly large coding entries which work without problem in the adventure itself. Solution: Highlight any entries in these 3 Editors for printing and from the 'Edit' menu COPY the required entries into Windows WordPad or other text editor and print out from there. :) Thanks to those who reported this. I plan to code in better editors for data entry in future versions.

ADVICE

Always save data before testing an adventure or before printing out Editor entries or lists of entries.

WAP PHONES AND WEBSITE

Chris Heppinstall sent the following as an email. "I thought this might be of interest. I got it from teletext (it still lives on, despite the Internet!): "My big handheld hope for the future lies in a new deal made by Nokia. Ancient games such as Zork may be ported for WAP phones, so stuff like 'search bed' and 'use door' will become the text messages of the future. Anything that surreal has got to be good. And, as long as the game phone of the future aren't solely used to swap Pokemon, I'm happy." (Violet Berlin, from Teletext). Oh, and I have a little Probe site set up at

<http://members.aol.com/AdventureProbe>

UPWIRE NEWS HEADLINES (Special Reserve)

Lara Croft and Eidos are reportedly on the verge of being bought out by French rivals Infogrames.

HELP WANTED

Does anyone have any information on Mikro Gen's "SHADOW OF THE UNICORN"?

Does anyone have a solution (or even part solution) for the following games?

FOURTH PROTOCOL (C64 version)
TREASURES OF MEATHOS

DOGBOY
OPERATION NIGHTINGALE

If so, please contact the Probe office. Thank you.

DIARY

28th OCTOBER - ADVENTURE2000 convention at Kenilworth Suite, Coventry Hill Hotel, Rye Hill, Allesley, Coventry, West Midlands, CV5 9PH, U.K. Saturday, 9am to 6pm.

TIP OF THE MONTH by Dorothy Millard

I have just come across the following information which I think will be of interest, using CCS64 emulator.

Alt+F11 Loads a frozen emulator state from selectable filename.
Alt+F12 Saves a frozen emulator state to selectable filename.

ANSWERS TO POP QUIZ (Vol. 14 Issue 6)

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Def Leppard | 8. Orchestral Manouevres in the Dark |
| 2. Britney Spears | 9. Little Richard |
| 3. Bucks Fizz | 10. Counting Crows |
| 4. Sisters of Mercy | 11. Rainbow |
| 5. Area 51 | 12. Ink Spots |
| 6. Spinal Tap | 13. INXS |
| 7. Freddy and the Dreamers | 14. Cher |

OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

TALISMAN OF LOST SOULS played by **Doreen Bardon** -
available on **Amstrad, Spectrum, Amiga(e) and PC(e)**

GOLD PIECE	GIVE TO GNOME
ROPE	TIE TO JUG
JUG	FILL WITH WATER
SPADE	DIG GROUND
GNOME	HEED HIS ADVICE
MAN	GIVE JUG OF WATER
NOTE	READ IT, DECIPHER WORD
STATUE	RUB FOOT
PEARL	CARRY FOR STRENGTH
LOG	MOVE IT
BONE	GIVE TO DOGS
AMULET	GIVE TO GUARD AT DOOR
FREEZE POTION	CAST ON QUARRY WORKERS
GUARD ARCHWAY	SAY DECIPHERED WORD
FOOD	CAN EAT
HERBS	NOT USED
BEGGAR	LEAVE ALONE
KEY	TO UNLOCK DOOR
TREE	PULL BARK
ZORCON	SAY PASSWORD
GHOST	LISTEN TO HER



GETTING YOU STARTED

DEVIL'S ISLAND played by Edwina Brown on a Spectrum

EXAM BED, GET SHEETS, STAND ON BED, PULL BARS, GET BAR, D, OPEN DOOR, W (there's a pie here - if you get it don't eat it yet), D, KILL GUARD, GET GUN, EXAM GUARD, GET KEY, DROP BAR, N, E, CLIMB ON BED, TIE SHEETS TO BARS, SQUEEZE THROUGH BARS, GET SHEET

KRAZY KARTOONIST KAPERS played on a Spectrum (128K) - also available for PC(e)

Start outside Kilmoore Castle. I (nothing), X DOOR (see a large ornate doorknocker), KNOCK ON DOOR WITH KNOCKER (door creaks open and you enter - now in the entrance hall of the castle), CLOSELY X PORTRAIT (see a small button), PRESS BUTTON (portrait moves to reveal a secret tunnel), S, S,E (meet Joe the Jazzman), X JOE, TALK TO JOE, ASK JOE ABOUT KEZ (he just keeps playing his clarinet), LISTEN, HOWL SOFTLY (Joe gives you a magic flute), GET FLUTE, W, W (now in some sort of time machine - see Doctor Wot), X WOT (carrying a half-eaten brick), GET BRICK (will swap it for a red stone), E, S (dead-end, see two undertakers), ASK TALL UNDERTAKER ABOUT KEZ, SEARCH CORPSES, E, E, X BEHOLDER, ASK BEHOLDER ABOUT KEZ, TALK TO BEHOLDER, LOOK, SEARCH GOO (see a worn-out mat), LIFT MAT (now have a key), W, N, N, N (back in entrance hall), SEARCH TABLE

WHY IS THE WORLD ROUND ANYWAY? played on a Spectrum - also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

Part Two

Start in entrance hall. I (should have blue failsafe), W, IN (sulphur factory). Grizelda may be here, if not she isn't far away. S, S, S, E, E, E, E, E, READ SIGN, E (Grizelda pulls you back. Rene la Mar is also somewhere around here and travels on a specific route through the corridors. Go W, W, W, W, W, N, N. To prevent Rene from going east, CLOSE DOOR, now R until Rene and Grizelda meet. S, S, E, E, E, E, E, E (now beyond sign - Grizelda is too busy to prevent you)

STARSHIP TITANIC played on a PC

Introduction

Look at the computer, open the CD Tray, and put the Staship Titanic Disc in the tray. The ship will crash into your house, and the DoorBot will ask if you will help. Answer whatever you like, take the photo of your house when prompted, and once you're in the elevator, press the top button. Once in the Embarkation lobby, go to the plinth, and press the button for the opening credits. Finally, go to the DeskBot, answer all her questions, and get your Super Galactic Traveler class room.

Mother (Requirements: SGT Class)

Go to the Parrot Room, grab the parrot, then leave the room. You'll be left with a feather. Go to the service elevator (it's in the Embarkation lobby), and head to the Bilge room. Here resides the Mother Succ-U-Bus, who's not feeling well. Activate it, put the feather in the tray, and press "Send". Surprise, it's Brobstigon! Grab Titania's Olfactory Center and the Blue Fuse.

Disarming the Bomb

*Note: If you don't touch the bomb, it won't go off. If you touch it, you'll have to solve the puzzle. Well, maybe you don't *have* to, but it's annoying if you don't. Requirements: SGT Class

Just off Titania's room, there's a bomb with a friendly red button to press... You pressed the button, didn't you? Okay, well, there are literally millions of possible combinations, and having the bomb taunt you while you try them doesn't help much. Or, maybe it does... Perhaps you should listen to the taunts now and then.

Upgrading to 2nd Class (Requirements: SGT Class)

Go to the appropriate elevator and head to your floor (either read it from your Designer Room Numbers or just select My Stateroom on the Remote Thingummy in the elevator). To find the room, just look up and click on the various doors until you find the correct one. You will probably need to use the small elevator to get to your room. Once in your room, use your PET to Deploy the personal maintenance hub, horizontal worksurface, the horizontally mobile storage compartment, and the fully recumbent relaxation device. Inflate the bed, operate the visual entertainment device, get on the bed, and look at the TV. Turn it on, and turn to channel 3. Exit the room and head back to the hallway. Go to the Succ-U-Bus, and press "Receive" to get your magazine. Head back up to the Top of the Well and the Embarkation lobby, go to the DeskBot, activate her, and give her your magazine.

HINTS AND TIPS

AURA-SCOPE (aka HORRORSCOPE) played on a Spectrum (128K) and PC(e)

LEO

Go to the village pond and examine the reeds to find some catgut.

Go south to the village green. WAIT until the Merry Band start fighting and then STEAL LYRE. You can play it but will find it is broken, so MEND LYRE (need catgut).

Go to the Meeting of the Ways and then travel west to a mountain road. Go NW to meet a little lion. Play the repaired lion to get past him. Continue NW and NE to Home and Garden/Mother Earth. SAY DANDELION (an anagram of AN ODD LINE) to obtain the new zodiac. This, and subsequent tokens must be taken to the Great Hall and put on the plinths.

CASTLE BLACKSTAR played by Barbara Gibb on a PC(e) - also available on most other computers

North Tower

Enter and go up, lighting lamp when at "stairway window" location. Take the gold ring and examine it (a diagram of a "D" encircling a closed eye etched upon it - a hint that the ring makes the wearer invisible to creatures beginning with "D" i.e. Dwarves and Dragons).

Underground Lake

Enter the mirror and find the sailing boat. SAIL BOAT (given a graphic description of the lake) to learn it is leaking. Go E and SE (near island) and BAIL BOAT (presumably with your hands). Pick up the dynamite and POUR LIQUID from the bottle to coat it with the viscous liquid making it hear-resistant. Go NE and NE to an oily cave where you will find a staff, and can FILL LAMP. Return SW, SW, BAIL BOAT (before it sinks), NW, N, N, N to a cove. Bail again and then pick up the boat. A good place to save your position.

New Cave

WEAR RING *before* going NE and E to workforce otherwise the large gold nugget won't appear.

FAULTY TOWERS played by Bev Truter on a PC(e)

Here are the tasks Sybil asks you to do, in order: (continued from last month)

4) Next you'll get a message telling you that the Health Inspector has arrived, and Sybil demands you meet him immediately in the Front Lobby. Go to the Front Lobby, GET INSPECTOR, and he will follow you around, demanding to see various locations or things. He first wants to check that the Kitchen (refrigerator) is all in order, so make sure you've disposed of the mouldy cheese in the fridge before taking him to the kitchen - GET CHEESE, then DROP CHEESE at the small backyard, where the dustbins are.

5) Getting to the water tank. This takes a fair bit of time, so make sure you've done this bit before the Inspector arrives. Collect the torch, sheets, ironing board and step ladder (the one in the lobby, referred to as 'step'). TORCH ON to light the torch, DROP STEP on the landing where you can see a trap door in the ceiling, and KNOT SHEETS to make a rope. The knotted sheets are now called KNOT, and you can only drop the torch after you've turned it off (TORCH OFF). Then get the other ladder from the shed and drop it on the front lawn, outside the bar. UP-E-E to the loft and water tank...oops! Better dispose of that pigeon before the Health Inspector sees it! Go N and drop the ironing board so you don't fall through the ceiling, then W and DROP KNOT. You can now go DOWN, if the step ladder is on the landing. I'm not sure if it's necessary, but just to be on the safe side, I dropped the pigeon at the dustbins too. When the Health Inspector wants to check the water tank, the pigeon mustn't be there, or he'll shut you down.

6) The next thing the Health Inspector wants is a biscuit, as he's feeling peckish. You can do this next bit with the Inspector in tow - he doesn't seem to notice! Go to the dining room, OPEN BISCUIT (i.e. the biscuit barrel) where you find Manuel's pet rat. Get the rat, and drop it at the dustbins. When you return to the dining room with the Inspector, he says everything seems to be in order, and you can then DROP INSPECTOR, to stop him following you around.

7) Sybil's final request is for you to fetch the suitcases down from the Honeymoon Suite, but she warns you not to use the stairs coming down, as you'll only hurt your back. Go to the suite, GET CASES (not suitcases) and go to the upstairs lobby where the dumb-waiter is. DOWN, and you arrive in the Kitchen. Make your way to the Office, then wander about between the office and Reception until the final congratulatory message pops up.

GOLDEN ARROW played by Dorothy Millard on a PC(e)

The adventure can be completed without completing any puzzles at all other than finding the correct way to go in the 35 moves allowed and answering the password at the end, which is the name of the game anyway.

You cannot examine any objects and it is a waste of time picking any up as there is no use for them.

This walk through takes you through some but not all of the locations as there is a time limit of 35 moves.

There is no need to ride the horses or do anything else with them, or to enter the boat.

If you ASK WOODMAN he shows you a secret way to the south, but there's no need.

There is no need to get or wear the uniform and the papers are unnecessary.

GOLDEN ROSE played by Bev Truter on PC(e) - also available on Spectrum and Amiga(e)

IN BAR - buy a drink (need penny), then shake the old man's hand.

CASTLE KITCHEN - examine the oven.

TREASURY - push the stone there.

CHEST - you'll need the brass key from the Hermit.

GOLDEN SHEARS - for picking the golden rose.

LOW ROOM - examine the floor to find a board.

BEDROOM - pull rope for some refreshment, and draw the drapes.

IN WARDROBE - you only need the amulet. Wear it, and it will assist you in a maze further on.

LEAVING THE CASTLE - raise the portcullis.

HARVESTING MOON played by Barbara Gibb on a PC(e) - also available on Spectrum and Amiga(e)

Clock Tower

TIE ROPE TO SPIKE and go D (now swinging in midair). SWING three times to crash through the boarded-up window. Pick up the shield and go U to return. Untie the rope as it is needed again.

Lift Maintenance Room

Throw the rope and climb up to find a spanner. Return and make sure you retrieve your rope.

Medieval Tower

From the "cobwebbed room" go U until you reach an oak door. UNBOLT DOOR (need spanner) and go N to the roof. Another handy spike is here, so once again TIE ROPE TO SPIKE and go D and SWING until you can "get a firm foothold on the ledge".

HEIST by Barbara Gibb played on a PC - also available on Amiga

Musician's Photograph

Return to the flat via the rope. Go to the landing and search the floral tokens.

Statue's Photograph - Search the cushions on the armchair in the flat.

Finding Memorabilia (secret) Room

SIT IN ARMCHAIR to hear a pre-recorded message from your uncle. WAIT until the message finishes, noting details, especially the date of his birthday party.

X CUCKOO CLOCK - this is needed to open the secret room.

Did you note the date of birth on the plaque on the coffin and the date of your uncle's birthday party? They are random, so the following is an example for the date 23rd July 1943 which equates to 23, 07, 43

TURN HOUR HAND TO 2

TURN MINUTE HAND TO 3 (cuckoo appears)

TURN HOUR HAND TO 10 (for zero)

TURN MINUTE HAND TO 7 (hear grinding sounds)

TURN HOUR HAND TO 4

TURN MINUTE HAND TO 3 (entrance revealed in the north wall)

JEWEL OF KNOWLEDGE played by Barbara Gibb on a PC and Amiga

Red Dragon

On arrival at the gate, WAIT until the Black Dragon throws you to the ground. Go W so you are midway between the entrance to the cave and the plateau - i.e. an equal distance between the Black Dragon and Red Dragon. WAIT until the Black Dragon has run out of acid and leaves (your lye impregnated coat protects you). Now the Red Dragon will throw fireballs at you but your ring protects you. When the Red Dragon is exhausted, go west. REMOVE RING, PUT RING IN SACK, TAKE BLADDER and X CHANDELIER should be the correct number of moves for the Red Dragon to get to the end of her speech. Now SHOOT ROPE WITH CROSSBOW so it crashes down onto the Red Dragon. Pick up the burning embers and put them on your coat to change its properties.

Escape

If you are carrying the bladder you can go N into the river. WAIT until the current takes you to a Pebble Beach - the coat/embers protects you from the cold water.

Hall of Ancients

X MURALS as you go through the hall - hints!

Jewel Room

You see a mirror and a jewel on a pedestal. Note responses when you examine the mirror and try to look under the cushion.

Jewel/Mirror

SAVE your position before you try to pick up the jewel. You will learn a lot, including power corrupts, plus the fact that you won't be allowed to take the jewel and live. WAIT for all the responses and death, then restore and TOUCH MIRROR instead of picking up the jewel to complete adventure.

SEASIDE SORCERY played on a PC(e) - also available on Spectrum, Atari(e) and Amiga(e)

Night time

Return to your hotel room and SLEEP.

Next Morning

Go to the pier and LISTEN to the MAN who is talking to the Troll outside the theatre.

**PROJECT NOVA (Pt.2) played by Barbara Gibb on a PC(e)
- also available on Spectrum, Atari(e) and Amiga(e)**

Abattoir

Get the gun from the refrigeration store room and go east. Fire the gun at the alien worker and then put the worker into the machine (ugh!). Now go NE and get the skin and wear it as a disguise. (Ugh! Ugh!) Leave the barrel of meat for the moment.

Police Station

Search the mat to find a key. Go IN and unlock the door and enter the office of chief of police. Take the dagger and leave. You return later for the crew.

Guard Tower

Remove the cloak before you KNOCK ON DOOR. Now WEAR CLOAK and KNOCK ON DOOR again to be allowed in. At the foot of the stairs, KILL SOLDIER WITH DAGGER. You should now be able to find a rope.

Go U to the top of the guard tower and become a serial killer - this time you should find some goggles.

You can't open the door downstairs, so PULL LEVER and tie the rope to the siren and CLIMB ROPE to escape from the tower.

**SEFTON MANOR ASSIGNMENT played by Barbara Gibb
on a PC(e) - also available for Spectrum and Amiga(e)**

In the Filing Room, PULL CABINET to reveal a hidden doorway. Enter the room and check out the cupboard to discover a wetsuit and aqualung. Change into the wetsuit and wear the aqualung.

Open the trapdoor and enter the hole (trapdoor). You can swim to escape - providing you haven't left any clues as to your activities.

Enter the boat and start its engine. STEER BOAT otherwise you won't go anywhere except in circles.

Harbour - Change into your suit etc. Search behind the boulder for the means to enter the Priory.

If you have closed, locked and replaced everything, and noted names and passwords, you should now be able to enter your own office and give your boss the names of the two traitors to complete adventure.

SOLUTION OF THE MONTH

EYE OF VARTAN

Walk Through by Dorothy Millard (Spectrum Quilled Version)

(Start on the northern plains of Acran), S, S, S (wood), W (clearing in wood), SW (by hut), OPEN DOOR, ENTER HUT, STEAL AXE, STEAL FLUTE, LEAVE HUT, N (by stack of logs), GET STAFF, E (back to clearing), S (by pond), PICK HEMLOCK, N, E, E, E (rocky slope), S, E (narrow path), ENTER CAVE (meet a large bear), STRIKE BEAR (using the staff), EXPLORE CAVE (find a large diamond), GET DIAMOND, N, N, W, N, W, W, S, S (steep slope), D, W (to where the stream flows into a hole), CRAWL THROUGH HOLE (into a large cavern), D, SE, E (bedroom where a dwarf with a large club guards the exit), GIVE DIAMOND (he leaves), W, NW, W, S (tool store), GET ROPE, N, W, S (huge crystal ball), EXAMINE BALL (see a man walking through a raging inferno), N, E, E, U, CRAWL THROUGH HOLE, E, E (east end of valley), CLIMB ROCK.

SE (wood), GATHER ACORNS, S (a wild boar blocks the way south), DROP ACORNS (boar eats them and leaves), S (by hut), ENTER HUT, GET BOW, LEAVE HUT, S (foot of vast escarpment), THROW ROPE (it hangs down), CLIMB ROPE (to ledge), GET ROPE, E, LEAP (across gap), ENTER NICHE (see stone steps leading up), CLIMB STEPS (to rock chamber where you see a large circular stone against the west wall), LEVER STONE (using the staff – it rolls to one side revealing a western exit), DROP STAFF, GET BOTTLE, EXAMINE BOTTLE (see a green haze inside and hear a faint cry for help), W, CLIMB STEPS (to an east/west passage guarded by a troll with an axe), THROW BOTTLE (hits the troll, breaks and envelopes it in a cloud of green gas... the smoke transforms into a beautiful princess who in gratitude gives you some magic runes before disappearing), W, U (top of escarpment), S (forest), E, S, W, S, E (meet a creature feeding on the lush vegetation), FEED APE (it quickly devours the hemlock and falls to the ground).

S, E, E (north of gorge), GET ARROWS, D (river bank), W, W, W (to where the river is wider), SEARCH BUSHES (find a canoe), PUSH CANOE (to the river edge), BOARD CANOE, S (south bank), S (to where a large flying reptile is attacking a man on the floor), PLACE ARROW, FIRE ARROW (you hit the creature... the man is grateful and tells you that to succeed you must enter into yourself), DROP BOW, DROP ARROW, N, E, E, E (high rock), D, D (meet a serpent about to strike), PLAY FLUTE (it is hypnotized), W, U (high rock), DROP FLUTE, DROP JAVELIN, SW, E (small cave),

GET FLINT (arrow heads), LEAVE, E, N, N, N, N, W (stone dwelling), OPEN DOOR (it's stuck), USE AXE, ENTER DWELLING, GET TORCH, LEAVE.

E, S, S, S, S (dark place), LIGHT TORCH (using the arrow heads), E, E (the light from the torch startles a saber tooth), E (stone slab with an inscription), E (inside cave), DROP RUNES, S (a giant spider's web blocks the southern exit), BURN WEB, S (meet huge hairy spider), USE AXE (kills it), S, W (valley but you stumble and drop the torch), E, GET TORCH, W, S, S (by building), CLIMB STEPS (door), STRIKE GONG, STRIKE GONG, STRIKE GONG (this time the door opens), ENTER BUILDING (door slams shut behind you – it is dark), LIGHT TORCH, S (east/west corridor), W, CLIMB STAIRS, OPEN DOOR (hear strange noises), S, W (a ferocious two-headed dog is tied to the south wall), RELEASE DOG (it disappears through the eastern door), E (the dog is fighting the skeleton but both ignore you so you can pass), S (small room), GET KEYS, N, N, N, D (locked door), USE KEY (door opens revealing a golden shield and a ladder), GET SHIELD, GET LADDER.

E, E, E, CLIMB STAIRS, S, E (a strong wind blows out the torch), LIGHT TORCH (wind is too strong), S, LIGHT TORCH, W, W (high priest's dressing room), DROP KEYS, GET CLOAK, ENTER MIRROR (to secret passage), DROP SHIELD, GET KNIFE, W, E, W, S (fire chamber), ENTER FLAME (the cloak protects - to large hall), S (large circular room containing a plinth on which is a golden figure), USE LADDER (see The Eye of Vartan in the idol's forehead), REMOVE EYE (using the knife), DROP KNIFE, D, N, N (back to fire chamber), ENTER FLAME, DROP CLOAK, E, CLIMB STAIRS, S, E (wind blows out the torch again), S, LIGHT TORCH, W, W, ENTER MIRROR, GET SHIELD (golden), E, CLIMB STAIRS, OPEN DOOR (a fierce Cyclops blocks the way), RAISE SHIELD (deflects sunlight into the Cyclops' eyes blinding him), DROP SHIELD, LOWER ROPE (it hangs down), D (outside temple), GET ROPE, W, N, N, E, N, N, N (cave), W, W, W, N, N, N, N, U (ledge), W, W, U (high rock), GET JAVELIN, GET FLUTE, W, W.

W, PUSH CANOE (to edge of river), BOARD CANOE, N (north bank of river), E, N, W (forest), N, E, N (top of escarpment), D, E, D, E, D, N, LEAP (across gap), W (ledge), LOWER ROPE (hangs down), D, N, N, N (wood), NW, NE, N (top of craggy slope), D, N, W, W, N, N (southern plains of Acran where a muscular man is standing ahead of you), RETURN AXE, RETURN FLUTE (he walks off), N (congratulations... on your return to Acran you are greeted by King Elsor and the Elda... the Elda immediately uses the Eye to discover whether or not it is a cure for the plague... it proves successful and news of your success spreads throughout the city and the people rejoice).

SERIALIZED SOLUTION

RAMA (Sierra)

Leave the octohedron and return to the alley where the repeating panels were seen. Notice that the octospider lair door is now visible. Notice also the shape of the two separate keyholes, into one of which the octospider talisman earned in Bangkok can be placed. The octospider lair cover will not open, however, until the other key is found.

Depart from the octo piazza using the mazes and proceed to the human piazza. Enter the piazza and explore in a counterclockwise direction, past the moat beyond which is an inaccessible door, a pair of empty alleys, the maze controller alley with its statue of a human, a complex, closed pentahedron with a tuning fork statue on one side and a skyscraper on the other, and a final alley, called Arthur's alley, down which he will walk at the end of the game. Throughout this piazza are scattered several inventory pieces: a yellow lens that has no use in the game, the blue-yellow tetra that opens the clasp holding the yellow-red tetra in the octospider artifact museum over in the octo piazza, a data cube with a hastily written memo from Francesca suggesting that she has encountered danger, and three more tetrads that will be of use in the octospider lair, namely the green-red, blue-red, and indigo-red.

Go to the front of the pentahedron. Use Tuning Fork B on fork statue. Hear a door opening sound. Turn around and look at the pentahedron. A mantis will come out of it and the door will then close. As the animation continues, the mantis will shine a blue light on a panel on the skyscraper, which will cause the skyscraper door to open. The mantis will file through this door and disappear, the door closing behind it.

Put blue lens on flashlight. Shine flashlight on panel on skyscraper door. After door opens, enter skyscraper and look around Mantis Room. At opposite end of room is a small subway car. Enter and activate subway. Disembark at first stop and enter Puzzle Room #1. Walk around and examine Puzzle Room #1.

Each of Puzzle Rooms contains the same basic set of displays. One display is a symbolic representation of the subway structure in this skyscraper. Another prominent display features blocks arranged according to size. This is a significant hint about the basic puzzle activity inside the skyscraper in the human piazza.

On the largest wall in each of the three Puzzle Rooms is a nine element row with empty frames, under which is a three element frame column. Each of the frames stacked on the column contains a picture of something from Earth. Each of the empty elements on the row and each of the frames on the column is a hot spot. Experiment and determine that the three frames on the column can be placed, one at a time, into the frame elements on the row. The player also has the freedom to remove the column frames from the row, and restack them. Thus the three column frames can be arranged in any way the player desires.

Take the three column frames and place them in three of the nine empty frame elements of the row. Then return to the subway. Discover at the next stop that the door is locked. Return to the subway and continue to the next stop. Disembark and enter Puzzle Room #2, identical to the first puzzle room except for three different Earth objects featured in the frame elements on the column. Also, there may or may not be one or more of the frame elements seen earlier from Puzzle Room #1 in place in the nine element row. Either way, the player should take the three elements from the column here and place them on the row. Then he should continue to Puzzle Room #3 and repeat the same activity.

Somewhere in this process the player will discover that the purpose of this puzzle is to verify that he is indeed a human (or someone quite familiar with life forms on the planet Earth) and to show that he knows the comparative SIZES of the nine objects (ranging from an amoeba to the planet Earth itself) featured on the three columns in the three Puzzle Rooms. When the nine element row is completed, moving from left to right will show a monotonic increase in the size of the items represented. Each time that a column frame element is placed into the CORRECT row frame, it will remain there while the player moves between puzzle rooms. Incorrect placings will be restored to the column in that room and will be there again when the player returns. At any time, the player can exit through the Mantis Room, return to the human piazza, and continue with the game.

Once the nine column frames have been properly placed in the array, each of the puzzle rooms will feature a completed array. More importantly, a door will open at the second subway stop (between Puzzle Room #1 and Puzzle Room #2) and the player can pass through that door into another subway car. This car will carry him to a place where he can activate a machine that creates a bridge across the moat that prevents entrance to the inaccessible door in the human piazza. Return to the piazza, cross the bridge to the moat.

Inspect the door to the human lair. Note the two keyholes adjacent to the door, one of which will be matched by the human talisman earned in

Other key is not yet available. Leave the human piazza by maze and return to the avian piazza. Find the beckoning approach the entrance to the avian lair.

On the central shaft of the avian lair. See the avian fly across. Note squawks and the subsequent sound of a door closing. Notice the ledges withdraw from you. Descend one level in the lair. Hear noise of ledges withdrawing. Look up once and see an open corridor. Look up a second time, at lights coming from New York, and determine that an exit from the avian lair is no longer possible.

Look down the open corridor. Notice that there is a single illuminated light above the portal, indicating that this corridor is on the first level. Look across the shaft. Observe that there is no way for the player to cross. Also note that the door to the opposite passageway is not open. Proceed down the open passageway on the first level.

Encounter a closed entryway above which are three strange written characters. Approach closer, look inside, determine that there is no way to open the door. Back off two steps, look around, find the decorated cistern. Activate the cistern by throwing the wall switch. Spend time watching the activity of the cistern. Notice that with each drop a different alien character around the cistern is illuminated. Recall from early experiences in Bangkok that these characters are myrmecat numbers. Upon departing from cistern, observe that the three characters over the closed entryway are also myrmecat numbers, in fact they are 7, 2, 15.

Leave first level in avian lair and descend to second level, where two illuminated lights are over the open portal. Notice that across the shaft, still inaccessible, is another open corridor. Enter the Great Hall of the avians by moving through the open portal. Once inside, turn in all directions and observe. Note the guard avian who prohibits departure from the Great Hall. Also note the three myrmecat numbers over the doorway (4, 12, 15).

Move forward in Great Hall. Observe avian manipulating manna melon machine. Accept manna melon offered. Cut manna melon in two pieces with knife. Eat one half of manna melon with spoon. Notice that immediately after eating melon additional new designs can be seen on the wall mosaics. Observe that these designs vanish again after a few seconds. Conclude that eating a piece of manna melon alters perception.

Offer second half of manna melon to avian. After it eats, the avian flies to a machine in the distance and beckons. Go toward the beckoning avian and take elevator ride up to where the three avian muckymucks are perched. Take squawk box that is offered. Examine squawk box in detail, noticing

that each of the sixteen individual elements emits a different sound and has a different number of little triangles around its periphery. Put squawk box in inventory and look around at other roosting avians.

Descend Great Hall elevator and return to manna melon machine. Obtain three or more manna melons and place them in inventory. Notice that guard is gone from door. Pick up mapboard near door. Examine mapboard, note layout of rooms in avian lair. Eat half a manna melon with mapboard in hand, observing that three myrmicat numbers appear in each symbolic room for a few seconds.

Leave Great Hall and second level. Descend to third level of avian lair. Observe that corridor across the shaft is inaccessible. Notice bridge controls at bottom left of third level open portal. Work bridge control device. Observe that bridge across shaft only extends part way. Enter avian theater and watch end of play. Turn around, notice number over the door (0, 4, 6).

Move forward to myrmicat benches. Look left, note that room is being illuminated by something inside a gourd. Approach gourd and add unlit gourd to inventory. Now look right and see corridor leading backstage. Enter passageway and proceed to dressing room. Look around room, encounter avian who flies away. Discover octospider lair key in pocket of costume on stand. Add key to inventory.

Leave theater. Use gourd on bridge controls. Turn controls again until bridge is fully extended. Cross shaft. Ascend to second level. Proceed down corridor to Hatchery. Wander around room. Discover niche on north side of special column. Note there is no way yet to open the door to the niche. Continue to explore Hatchery. Find jungle gym on opposite side of the column. Look up and see rest of jungle gym structure. Climb jungle gym to loft. Find rope and add to inventory. Climb down from loft. Note room number (15, 0, 2) above door upon departure.

Descend to fourth level of avian lair. Note that corridor across shaft is not accessible. Enter open portal leading to schoolroom. Wander around schoolroom floor, looking at murals and eating a piece of manna melon in front of each mural. Notice that the post-melon vision suggests a method for operating the ledges above the first level of the lair. Note in addition that one set of three numbers is associated with the visual depicting the RETRACTION of the ledges, and a different set of three numbers are aligned with the picture of the extension of the ledges.

Copy down the myrmicat numbers (6, 9, 8) from the mural representing extending the ledges.

Observe that it is impossible to climb to the podium in the schoolroom. Leave schoolroom, noting number (11, 8, 3) above door. Return to bridge and cross shaft on the third level. Climb up two levels. Approach security/defense door. Squawk door numbers 7, 2, 15 (numbers seen above door can be translated using either Rosetta Stone or quick refresher course at the cistern). Watch door open.

Enter security/defense room. Observe keypad with myrmicat numbers. Fiddle with knob until picture of myrmicat pool room appears. Note that far right sliding mechanism causes toggle in room configuration. This is very important. Also observe that numbers are illuminated while security picture is present, suggesting use for keypad.

Input new numbers into keypad. If numbers are those just used to open security/defense door (7, 2, 15), then a myrmicat message appears on screen. If numbers are those for any particular room (room numbers can all be seen on mapboard by eating a manna melon; alternately, they could have been written down by the player on a pad each time he visited a room) in the avian lair, then a picture of that room appears on the screen. Any other numbers entered on the keypad produce a response that looks like television static. If the schoolroom numbers (11, 8, 3) are now entered into the keypad, AND the sliding mechanism is used to toggle the physical configuration in the schoolroom, then the ramps can be placed so that the player will be able to reach the podium.

Approach elevator in security/defense room. Note numbers (9, 14, 7) over elevator. Look down and use squawk box on microphone to input these numbers. Enter elevator and ascend. When elevator stops turn around and walk to console. Notice slot for object as well as display featuring the ledges.

Return to fourth level, opposite side of shaft, to schoolroom. Mount podium using ramps extended while in security/defense room. Pull lever on podium. Observe again impacts of altered vision. While at podium, turn around one hundred and eighty degrees. Note broken elevator descending to somewhere. Tie rope to elevator handle. Climb down rope into myrmicat area.

Explore myrmicat domain. Go left first into pool room. Notice pools, including one that has a key in the center. Don't try to obtain it yet, or the consequences will be disaster. Instead, locate the pools control area. Push button in center of control device and notice that water drains out of the pool directly in front of the player. Next discover that the primary lever is stuck.

Now go back past the elevator into the other side, the sessile room. Pick up cup that is sitting on a rock. Fill this cup with fluid from one of the pools. Pour contents of cup on pool control lever and note that it melts the residue that is at the bottom of the lever.

Push button on top of lever and notice that it lowers to a position similar to two others on the control device. Change the pointer in the center of the control device until it points in the direction of the pool with the key in the center. This pointer will be aimed at roughly eight o'clock when it is in the correct position. Now raise the lever behind the pointer and press button to drain the distant pool. Proceed to the emptied pool. Pick up the human lair key on the stand in the center. Take the key into inventory and climb back up to the hatchery, level 2, this same side of the shaft.

Locate niche on north side of column celebrating symbiosis between the avians and the sessiles-melons-myrmicats. Insert human and octospider lair keys into niche. Door should open. Take myrmicat ID card out of niche. Remember slot on console that was seen after elevator ride in security defense room.

Return to security defense room. Open door with squawk box (7, 2, 15) and activate elevator with squawk box (9, 14, 7). Ascend to special room and insert myrmicat ID card in proper slot. Enter code (6, 9, 8) to extend the ledges. Notice that the ledges do indeed extend even on the display.

Leave security/defense area by coming down the elevator and using the squawk box to open the door. Approach the shaft. Look up. Notice that ledges are extended. Exit to avian plaza.

Encounter Richard Wakefield upon leaving the avian lair. Richard, bursting with enthusiasm, informs player that nuclear bombs have been set by Heilmann et al, and that they will detonate in six hours, destroying RAMA and everything in it, unless somehow the third nuclear bomb, which is somewhere in New York, is found and disarmed. Before leaving Richard, who will himself join Nicole in also searching for the bomb, gives the robot Falstaff to the player and tells him to use the Shakespearean robot wherever necessary in his search for the bomb. From this time forward in the game, a countdown clock appears on the main game interface.

Find the maze entrance off the avian piazza and pass through the maze to the octospider piazza. Locate the octospider lair entrance and insert both the octo key found inside the avian lair and the octo talisman earned in Bangkok. Descend down the ramps of the octo lair into the atrium. Hear the noise when standing in the lair at the bottom of the ramp. Look up at the dome on the ceiling of the atrium. Notice the rotating color bands that are

laid out in concentric circles, with an octo language header in the middle of the design. Starting at the header, and moving toward the spiked, stylized pointer, an octospider number is formed by the colors on the two circles. Note this number. Note also that the number changes every time that the player stands on the pad at the end of the ramp.

Look around the atrium. Notice that there are four tunnels leading to the rest of the lair. From left to right, call these tunnels Eenie, Meenie, Mynie, and Moe. The gates to Eenie, Meenie, and Mynie are closed and locked. The gate to Moe is open. Walk into Moe. See the pair of octospiders apparently dancing. Continue into the cistern area, triggering a non-interactive animation in which the octos see the player, point at him, turn off their music, talk to each other in color bands around their heads, and scoot out the back door, which closes and locks behind them. Walk back now toward the atrium and discover that the Moe gate has been closed as well and requires a blue-orange tetra to open it. The player is trapped in Moe corridor.

Examine the cistern area. Francesca Sabatini's space suit is lying in a corner. In the pockets of her suit are three data cubes (which can be watched whenever the player desires-- they all deal, in one way or another, with the Heilmann plot to deploy the bombs) and a decryption card. Add all these items to inventory.

Next approach the two keyboards in front of the fountains. One of the keyboard sets has colored keys, and gives a refresher course in octo numbers. Pushing the colored key (which is a specific octo number) produces the proper number of light beams on the wall and spigots gushing from the fountains. The second keyboard set, all white, plays octo music, which is a combination of dancing waters and colors (since octospiders are deaf). Each white key produces a different octo "song". If the third key from the left is pushed, however, the sound of a door opening is heard. Turn completely around anytime that particular song is being played. A hidden niche, containing a cache of the tetras that are the keys to the octo gates, is now visible. To enter the niche, use the yellow-indigo tetra found earlier in the artifact museum alley of the octo piazza.

The cache includes nine tetras on a rack. Of these nine, only two are important in the game, the blue-violet tetra and the red-orange tetra. Add tetras to the inventory. None of these tetras will, however, open either of the gates of Moe. Approach the back door to Moe, the one through which the dancing octos escaped. See a blue-orange tetra lying on the other side of the gate. Activate Falstaff and place the robot on the ground. In an animated sequence, he will pass through the gate and retrieve the blue-orange tetra. Open the Moe gate and return to the atrium.

Check Mynie gate and discover both that the corridor is blocked and that none of the tetras in inventory will open it. Observe the latest dome setting and then open the Meenie gate with the green-indigo tetra found in the octospider museum in Bangkok. Proceed down the corridor and turn left into the octo gallery. Observe the stuffed Takagishi and avian, the wheel commemorative display (like the one in the schoolroom in the avian lair-- a foreshadowing of the Wheel Room in the human lair), and six photographs, one of which is a picture of a nuclear bomb with four numbers (the seventh through tenth) already entered into its side. Note also, on the far side of the gallery, an apparent door, with a lock, but no colors defined for the tetra that would open it.

Leave the gallery and continue down Meenie corridor. Approach the cylindrical descending pit. Notice that the spikes, that could be used to climb down, retract whenever the player reaches the lip of the pit. Go in the Eenie back gate using a red-green tetra picked up in the human piazza. Find the abacus alcove on the left. Examine artwork relating abacus to the numerical art of the atrium dome. Set octo abacus to the number in the atrium dome. Return to the descending pit. Notice that now the spikes protrude when the player stands on the lip.

Descend to lower level of octospider lair. Note that abacus off to left is set at same number as abacus on upper level. If this abacus is reset by the player, then the spikes retract, making ascent impossible. Walk to right into dome room. Look up at ceiling at dome similar to one in octo atrium. The lower level dome and abacus must be set to the same number for ascent.

While in dome room, notice symbolic map on wall. Recognize that this is map of upper level of octospider lair. Depicted on this map is an additional room behind the locked door in the octo gallery. On map is button which, if pushed, causes red and orange lights to fill the adjacent triangular areas, thus defining the red-orange tetra that needs to be used to enter the octo research lab behind the gallery. This is essentially a simple octo security system-- colleagues arriving by subway can simply buzz the octo researcher and it will identify the key that should be used.

Enter subway station. Inspect large, inoperable subway at one end. Find Francesca's scarf, which cannot be taken, and a portable, Polaroid-like photo of the third bomb with its four numbers already in place. This is an exact copy of the photograph hanging on the wall in the gallery.

Cross station to tiny subway. Activate Falstaff, who walks in subway in non-interactive sequence. Access wrist computer and switch to Falstaff's point of view. Note that Falstaff can turn around, come back, and see huge boot of player. This demonstrates process for deactivation of Falstaff.

From Falstaff's point of view, enter tiny subway, push control button, and watch animated sequence of subway car moving through tunnel. At other end, subway door pulls away. Observe animation of octomorphs eating in nest area. After this observation, and at any time during this portion of the game, Falstaff can turn around, return to the player, and have the point of view switch back to the player.

Step forward into nest area as Falstaff. Observe animated sequence in which huge tentacle from full-sized octo comes into nest and takes crunchie out of bowl of morph on the far right. This octomorph exhibits agitation, and then storms off to the right. The other three eating octomorphs are not affected by the action.

Turn left as Falstaff. See the giant octo eye in the window. Watch it disappear. Notice the laser gun against the wall. Add it to inventory. Turn left again. See the subway entrance and two permanently locked octospider doors. Turn left one more time and see the agitated octomorph standing in front of O'Toole's Universal Identity Card (UID). This octomorph will not move and allow the player to obtain the UID.

Turn as Falstaff to face octomorph bowls again. Take octo crunchie earned in Bangkok (if not in inventory, then crunchie can be found in research lab) and place in far right bowl. Octomorph who was agitated earlier now slithers into picture and happily eats. As Falstaff, turn right and take the UID. Notice that O'Toole has circled the month and day of his birthday, 3 and 29, and written words CODE somewhere on the UID.

Return to subway station as Falstaff, find player's boots, deactivate Shakespearean robot. As player, enter lower level dome room, observe ceiling, set abacus, and ascend spikes to upper level of lair. Enter gallery. Proceed to lab door. Notice that lock now has red and orange colors. Insert red-orange tetra and enter laboratory.

When player draws near to octo teacher, a long non-interactive sequence occurs.

During this sequence the octo teacher a) says hello in color, b) indicates that it is going to demonstrate something (also by speaking in color), c) touches the octo number for 4 on the pedestal, d) taps while four balls appear on the translucent screen, e) touches the lower part of the screen with its tentacle and the human number 4 appears, f) speaks the octo number four in color while the screen also shows the octo colors for 4, g) next says to the player, repeat after me, h) then taps five times to produce five balls on the screen, i) touches the screen causing the human number 5 to appear, and j) waits for the player to respond.

Note that the pedestal beside the teacher can spin. The octospider is waiting for the player to maneuver that pedestal, as necessary, and touch the octospider number for 5. If this is properly done, the octo teacher will react joyously. If the player does nothing for a fixed period of time, or does not respond correctly, the octo teacher will repeat the part of the sequence beginning with the octo phrase in color, repeat after me. The demonstration sequence with the 4 will not be repeated. If, after three attempts, the player has not yet correctly operated the pedestal and identified the octospider number 5, the teacher turns around and ignores the player.

The player must leave the octo gallery altogether before having another chance with the teacher. When the player returns, there will still be no demonstration sequence. This time, following the same basic procedure as before, the teacher will ask the player to find the number 7 in octospider on the pedestal. Whenever the player gives a correct response, either the first time or later in the game, the octo teacher reacts joyously, hands O'Toole's catechism card to the player, turns off its equipment, and leaves the laboratory out the back door.

Examine the catechism card. On the back is written 15, ..., ..., ..., 33, underneath which O'Toole has written, in bold letters as before, the word CODE. Having acquired the catechism card, the UID, and the anniversary photo from the octo piazza, the player now has all the clues necessary to disarm the bomb. The five numbers that should be entered (each is a four place number, so that 41 becomes 0041), and the order in which they should be entered, can be deduced from all these clues and the seventh through tenth digits already in place on the bomb. The key to the code is that O'Toole's favorite sequence beginning with the number 41 is the source for all the numbers and digits in the disarming code. Thus 15, the first number, refers to the 15th number in O'Toole's sequence. Similarly, the 33, the last number, and the 3 and the 29 from the UID, all refer to specific numbers in O'Toole's sequence.

After the octo teacher has left, explore the laboratory carefully. Find and add to inventory the following three objects: an octospider crunchie, O'Toole's crucifix, and most importantly, a wooden pocket item given to O'Toole by his family showing all the numbers in his favorite sequence. On this item 41 is identified as the first number, 43 as the second, 47 as the third, 53 as the fourth, 61 as the fifth, 71 as the sixth, 83 as the seventh, and so forth up to 1601 as the fortieth number in O'Toole's sequence. With this item the player can quickly see what the fifteenth, the thirty-third, and other critical elements in the sequence may be.

Leave the lab and the octo gallery. Return to the atrium. Exit from the octospider lair into the octo piazza. Enter the maze and cross to the human

piazza. Find the entrance to the human lair and insert both the human key found in the avian lair and the human talisman earned in Bangkok. Walk down the stairs into the Wheel Room.

Examine wheel puzzle directly in front of player. Notice that myrmicat numbers are on the wedges on the outermost of three concentric circles. In the middle are octospider numbers; the wedges of the innermost circle contain human numbers. A pointer is on one side of the wheel. Note that there exists one, and only one, number that is common to all three wheels. Move each of the concentric circles so that the identical three values are aligned with each other and with the pointer. The pistons on the right of the wheel puzzle will operate, a door will pull away, and the bomb room will be in full view.

Enter the bomb room. Survey the entire area. Hard left from the player is a crane biot with its target area out of reach. In front of the player is the nuclear bomb that must be disarmed, guarded by a spider biot that is threatening. To the right of the bomb, facing the player, is a black screen that reflects some of the light. If the player moves to his left, after entering the room, he will be able to see the target on the crane biot reflected in that screen.

The player can move right or left from his entrance point without risk. At each of the four spots (there are two more locations to the right of the player's first location-- what's against the opposite wall here is not important) the spider biot moves on a parallel course, staying the same distance away from the player, and continues to threaten. If, at any time, the player steps FORWARD, deeper into the room, the spider biot attacks and kills him. The player then goes to the spider biot death scene with Arthur.

Move to the location just to the left of the entry location. Aim the laser at the target on the black screen. Activate the crane biot. Watch the crane biot pick up the spider biot and render it harmless. Walk up to the bomb. Input the proper other sixteen digits. Notice that each time any group of the four digits is correct, those numbers lock in place and cannot be changed again. When all twenty correct digits have been entered, countdown clock on the bomb will stop, the flashing ACTIVE will change to INACTIVE, and the player will receive a vidmail from Nicole requesting that he come upstairs. Walk out of the bomb room and climb the stairs. Upon entering the human piazza, a non-interactive sequence will take over. Richard and Nicole will be in the first part of this sequence, followed by the giant colored rings of celebration emanating from the Big Horn in the distance. The player will then be taken to Arthur's alley, where Arthur will appear with all his menagerie and congratulate the player. (Next month - Blue Ice)

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