



FROM BEYOND

ISSUE 7 - JULY / AUGUST 1991

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THE PRICE OF 'FROM BEYOND' THROUGHOUT THE WORLD IS AS FOLLOWS (Including Postage and Packing).

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The address to send your contributions,
subscription forms, and enquiries to is...

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36 Globe Place
Norwich, Norfolk
NR2 2SQ
(United Kingdom)

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FROM BEYOND ISSUE 7 July/Aug 1991

ROLL OF HONOUR :

Okay, my excellent chums who helped create and shape this issue are: (in no particular order of excellence) Gordon Inglis, Ian Brown (x 2), Jon Lemmon, Gary (Nutty) Naylor, Sharon Harwood, Les Mitchell, Sir John Wilson, Sue Roseblade, the utterly excellent Sandrunner, Steven Wraight, Scott Denyer (and Delbert Hamster too, of course) & Chris Wiggins. Not to mention Sue Medley and Jack Lockerby.

Sorry if I've left anyone out - don't think I have!

QUICK PLUG TIME :

I've taken over the running of the Speccy PD library - initially set up by Gordon Inglis, & would like to hear from you if you've got any Speccy adventures to donate to it. They must be your own games of course! (or at least your copyright).....Tim.

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ALL CONTRIBUTIONS TO FROM BEYOND ARE MOST WELCOME - ESPECIALLY LETTERS + HELPLINE STUFF! "FB" WILL CONTINUE TO GET BIGGER AND BETTER - JUST AS LONG AS YOU KEEP SENDING IN THOSE CONTRIBUTIONS!!!

EDITORIAL

'FB' 36 Globe Place, Norwich, Norfolk. 01-7-91

A BIT OF NEWS :

Well, Mike Gerrard has quit the YS adventure column, which may give you the impression that the adventure scene ain't so hot nowadays. From what I've seen of late nothing could be further from the truth. The

Adventurers Club Ltd has now officially gone... but Sue Roseblade and a few former ACL folk have decided to do their own 'thing' and are launching The Adventure & Strategy Club!

Sue Medley (of SYNTAX disk mag fame) is also getting an 8 bit / 16 bit fanzine together (called Red Herrings) which will appear on a bi-monthly basis.

There are also a whole host of new and re-released games appearing on the market from new and

old software houses. I just hope that whoever gets the YS job decides to seek out and review the great games (and not so great ones too) that are, and always have been, around !

WHAT'S IN THIS FB? :

Well, there's a conspicuous lack of the illustrated legend / fable feature (as promised last issue), mainly due to lack of space really. It'll definitely appear next issue though! Something that's making its last appearance in the pages of 'FB' is the Amiga section. Yes, I know this is only the second issue to feature it, but I'm planning to turn it into a disk magazine sometime in the future. That means that 'FB' should, from now on, contain a full 52 (or more) pages of Spectrum stuff - and if your various

contributions keep on coming in then I'm certainly happy to add even more pages to the fanzine! Sure, it'll eat into my meagre profits (which only cover the running costs anyway) but what the heck - I'm a reckless kind of guy! So keep those contributions coming and see the fanzine keep expanding!

GI GAMES & FB-PD:

Gordon Inglis has decided to pass his Spectrum PD stuff over to me to run while he gets on with the serious business of running his new adventure label GI-GAMES. So all Speccy adventure PD enquiries and orders should now come my way! (See the FB -PD advert elsewhere in this issue) All that remains to say is I hope you enjoy reading this issue!

Happy reading.....Tim

Review Sys.

An explanation of the "FB" reviewing system.

Most of the categories in the "FB" reviewing system are self explanatory - like **STORYLINE** (does the game have one?), **PACKAGING** (is there a cassette cover or added extras that come with the game?), **SCREENS** (is there one, is it good, are there clues to aspects of the game in it - or is it just a pretty picture?).

After the above categories have been reported on in each review, we move on to **THE ADVENTURE** section of the review where, naturally enough, we review the game in question.

After the review there are a further three more categories which relate to the way the actual game performed and what we thought of it... The first of these final categories looks at the games **FEATURES**.

Anything outstanding, new programming ideas and methods, or even clever ways of programming the games problems will be detailed under the 'features' heading. Next up comes... **GOOD & BAD** where the games good and bad points are brought to your attention. Finally, what better way to conclude a review than to have a **CONCLUSIONS** section? This is where you'll find our final thoughts on the game!

After the main review (including all the above round-up's of features) comes the games ratings.

The ratings are based on a % system - and cover the following aspects...

STORYLINE,
PACKAGING, TEXT,
GRAPHICS,

DIFFICULTY, EASE of USE, VALUE and finally an **OVERALL** score.

High marks in all of the categories is what you are looking for to tell you how good the game is! The 'difficulty' category is a bit of an exception to the above rule, whereby a low rating doesn't mean the game is bad - just easy to play in the reviewers opinion! A high level of difficulty is reflected in a high rating!

The 'ease of use' rating is another heading worth explaining. Basically, the easier a game is to interact with the higher the marks will be! Low marks normally mean a less than useful or helpful parser, or perhaps poor vocabulary or messy gameplay etc.

Finally, the 'overall' rating is based simply on what the reviewer thought of all aspects of the game! ★

REVIEW 1

'THE BLOOD OF BOGMOLE' Compass 1.99

Compass Software's catchy new slogan - "For a NEW direction", seems to fit the bill for just about any Compass release, as there is always something new within each new release to amaze, amuse and delight the purchaser! 'The Blood of Bogmole' is no exception! Gone is the P.I.E. System interactive arcade element & gone are the usual split-screen graphics. In their place you'll find... well, read on and find out...

STORYLINE :

Long ago, in the lands of Bolimol - evil ruled! The dwarfs who inhabited this land were being decimated by Slither - the dragon. The dwarfs, in alliance with the mighty wizard Gregor, set a trap for Slither and when the dwarf King, Eldor, lured Slither into the trap

(which took the form of a massive trench in which to entomb the dragon), the combined might of the dwarfs and the magic of Gregor did the trick, and tons of rock and earth sealed Slither's fate - entombing him forever! The mound that covered the dragon was eventually flattened and renamed 'The Valley of Bolimol'! However, the evil presence that blighted the land remained in the shape of Zogan. Zogan was a powerful and utterly evil wizard who commanded his legions of shadow orcs to march against his foes and take the land of Bolimol. So mighty was the evil wizard's power, that he entombed Gregor in a huge clay altar, killed king Eldor and turned the very land itself against the dwarfs. Prince Eldrin, son of Eldor, was forced to

flee into the relatively safe swamplands with a rag tag army that numbered just 1600... Zogan was aware that while Eldrin lived, and controlled his small band of loyal followers, he was a threat to the evil wizard's plans! Orc patrols were despatched to hunt down Eldrin in the swamps of Bolimol - while Zogan searched for the final 'unique' ingredient for a spell which would release the mighty dragon, Slither, from his premature grave, and together Zogan and the dragon would be invincible! Bogmole (that's you) is a 'swamp monster' who decides to join Eldrin after his father is killed in the war at Bolimol. You leave your homeland of Freand & make for Eldrin's encampment - wishing only to join his band and avenge your father's death! ➤

'THE BLOOD OF BOGMOLE' Compass 1.99

PACKAGING :

This side of things has always been a Compass strong point, and 'Bogmole' is no exception! What you get is a splendid & standard cassette cover in 'Bogmole Blood Red' - but it's only upon opening the cassette box that you will encounter the extra 'free' goodies. What you'll see is a small, foldover storyline and information sheet - complete with vocab examples and a small, brown envelope (yes, small enough to fit inside the cassette box too) which is sealed and has a small sticker (making sure it stays sealed) which reads:

"IMPORTANT. Do not open this envelope until you are told to by the adventure"

Okay, so it's not as astounding as early Infocom packaging, but it is free and believe you me, when you come to open the envelope after being

told to do so during the adventure, it certainly adds a new dimension (or even direction) to the game.

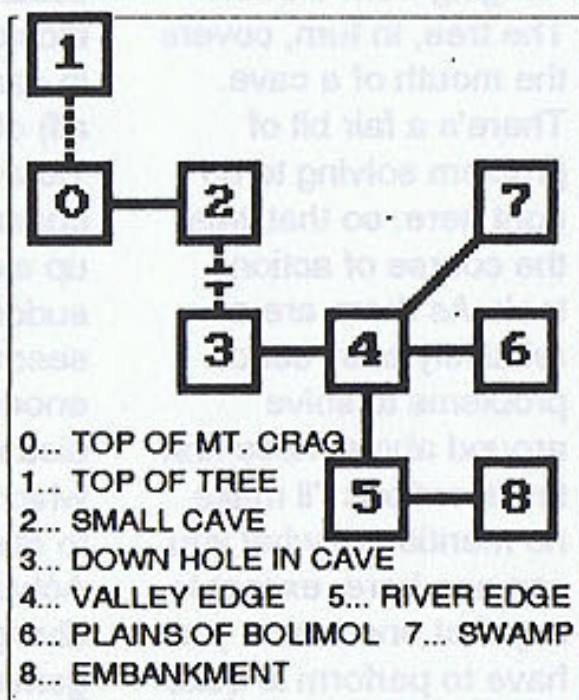
SCREENS :

Once again, another area where Compass Software excels is in their loading screens! I know they make no difference to a game, they don't effect the way the game gets marked either, but Jon Lemmon (the games author - of course!) likes doing them, and I like seeing them! Bogmole's loading screen consists of a huge portrait of the swamp monster in question! The games name and author also appear on-screen - streaked with blood, and a glaring white logo which says: DIGI SCAN resides in the top right hand corner of the screen. As I said, a SCREEN\$ doesn't do much, but I like them!

THE ADVENTURE :

The loading screen clears to show the title page, and the ubiquitous 'Press any key to continue' prompt at the foot of the screen. Pressing any key takes you into the game and the first 'DIGI SCAN' graphic greets your eyes!

A word about about these graphics is in order, so here goes... They are small, take up less than the top third of the screen and are highly detailed. There are only 5 in the game, so lovers of text only adventures shouldn't find room for complaint. Jon also informs



me that the graphics reside in an un-used area of memory, so they take no space away from the game itself! What of the game? Well, it kicks off in typical Compass fashion with a hell of a lot happening. Bogmole (that's you) stands atop Mt. Crag, looking down into the 'valley of Bolimol'. The first graphic appears at this location - and is drawn almost instantaneously! Actually, it's not the best of the graphics as it's a little 'busy' and 'cluttered' though everything is recognizable - even the spiders-web and spider hanging from a tree! The tree, in turn, covers the mouth of a cave. There's a fair bit of problem solving to do right here, so that was the course of action I took. As there are a relatively easy set of problems to solve around about these first few locations I'll make no mention of what you can see here, except to say that one action you have to perform is quite

un-usual in adventure terms, but not in reality! Exploration of the surrounding area is usually easy to do in most Comapss games, and this is no exception. What makes travel difficult is the fact that Zogan's orc patrols are abroad and the evil wizard has turned the very land against you, making things extremely difficult at times! The elements play a big part in the game, sometimes hindering you, sometimes helping. Occasionally you'll feel the shock of an earthquake tremble at your feet, opening fissures and chasms, blocking your progress in certain (though not all) directions! Another 'quake' will close the chasm - opening one up elsewhere. A sudden cloudburst will seem harmless enough, but can cause disastrous side effects which I'll leave for you to discover. Actually it's hard to divulge much about the game without giving too

much away, as the whole adventure is a kind of massive, interlinked, ever changing organism. This very statement is borne out by the battle system and interactive skirmishes that are happening while you play. As you wander around you'll see armies dashing to battles, wounded being carried away and such like. I can just imagine the nightmare of manipulating all those flags in the P.A.W to get this whole game working as a coherent unit! Talking of coherent units, you are, according to the instructions, able to find safe haven from orc patrols by joining a dwarf unit! Needless to say that if the two orc and dwarf parties meet and do battle then your immediate circumstances and future will be effected in one way or another - depending on the outcome of the resulting battle. So what happens if you get caught? ➡

'THE BLOOD OF BOGMOLE' Compass 1.99

Well, death from being captured is a bit of a round about affair...! Upon being taken prisoner (to be interrogated at a later date by 'Knife' the chief orc) you are slung into the orcs dungeon gaol. Escape, however, is possible in several ways. Each time you escape and are re-captured you will have to find a different way of breaking-out next time! The guards are an incompetent bunch, making some escape routes easier than others. Once free you can rejoin the game again. Of course things will have been happening while you were incarcerated, and Zogan's power will be constantly growing. There are all manner of characters to meet in the game, Giant's, Troll's, prince Eldrin, Orc's and a beaver called Bernard! What Compass game would be complete without an animal to meet and befriend. Bernard is just so cute! (and useful too I might add!) He'll help

out in many ways, usually comes when called and eats trees! It's difficult to say more about the game without giving away too much - so I'll shut up right here and now! Needless to say there's plenty to see, plenty to do and much to be learned from the characters in the game. It's got a unique feel to it which is hard to explain - so you'd best try it yourself to see what I mean.

FEATURES :

The games character interaction works well, the ongoing battles are well done, Bernard the Beaver also works well. Ramsave and Load and Tape Save and load are present (as per usual) as is a Picture On and Off toggle!

GOOD and BAD :

The packaging of the game is particularly good - especially the little envelope containing a surprise! Game design is excellent, as is the

implementation of the problems and features! My only quibbles are; the slight lack of substantial 'old fashioned' problems, an occasional wish for the orc patrols to be less good at capturing Bogmole and for the general pace to relent somewhat!

CONCLUSIONS :

It'll certainly challenge you that's for sure! See the 'Help-line' for a useful game enhancing tip from the author!

AVAILABLE FROM :

Compass Software
111 Mill Road,
Cobholm, Gt. Yarmouth
Norfolk. NR31 OBB
PRICE : 1.99

RATINGS %

STORYLINE	82
PACKAGING	88
TEXT	72
GRAPHICS	82
DIFFICULTY	77
EASE of USE	80
VALUE	90
OVERALL	84

NEWS

Whats new on the Adventure scene...

NEW COMPANY 1 :

Scott Denyer (who previously wrote Arnold the Adventurer which can be found on the Balrogs box of delights compilation tape from Zenobi) has just released his first adventure on his own label (Delbert the Hamster Software) entitled 'Desmond and Gertrude' (reviewed in this issue). Scott has a load more games on paper, in progress and almost complete - so prepare for a Delbert the Hamster adventure-filled summer.

NEW COMPANY 2 :

GI GAMES is the brainchild of Gordon Inglis - famed throughout the land for his secondhand spectrum adventure wheeling and dealing and also his spectrum PD Library - recently set up to make

available as many adventures as possible for a tiny sum of money. 'The Extricator' and 'The Energem Enigma' are out now on the GI-GAMES label for just 1.99 each. Look out for re-released 8th Day and Walter Pooley games from GI-Games!

NEW COMPANY 3 :

Gordon's going to be busy with GI-GAMES, so he's passed the running of the Spectrum PD library over to me! So FB-PD=Spectrum. (well it does if you see the advert in this very issue!)

IN THE PIPELINE :

Jon Lemmon of Compass Software is already getting stuck into the second and final part of 'The Blood of Bogmole'! Zogan, the evil wizard from the first game (reviewed in this issue) is back - and

he's mighty angry! Look out for forthcoming Compass ad's for a release date.

ACL NEWS :

ACL, according to ex-ACL reviewer Sue Roseblade, are now definately 'No More'! All ACL members are promised membership refunds!

JACK'S BACK :

Jack Lockerby's new game 'Treasure Island' is out now! It's a 2 part affair and follows R.L.Stevenson's original very closely. Price: 2.95, & available from: J. A. Lockerby 44 Hyde Place, Aylesham, Canterbury, Kent. CT3 3AL. Jack's also released a 4 game (Spec+3) disk compilation featuring: Hammer of Grimmold, Mutant, Davy Jones & Into the Mystic for 4.95. *More news next issue!*

'FB'

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MICRO DRIVIN
THE REALM
THE DAMNED FOREST
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NEW SHADOWS OF THE PAST

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REVIEW 2

'DESMOND & GERTRUDE' D.T.H.S. 2.99

Delbert The Hamster Software (D.T.H.S) is a new name on the adventure scene, and the brains behind this outfit (and game) is Scott Denyer - who wrote 'Arnold the Adventurer' for the Zenobi 'Box of Delights' compilation! Scott tells me that 'Arnold' was well liked by many people, so what's his first 'own-brand' game like?...

STORYLINE :

Princess Gertrude is in love with Desmond! Desmond, however, is a gentleman of the lower orders (a peasant in other words) and as such isn't going to be allowed to marry his one true love! King Norbert the 4th (Gertrude's dad) has erected a huge green wall down the centre of the village to make sure the two love-birds don't meet! However, what

the king doesn't know is that Des and Gert had already planned to meet at the mouth of the secret cave and elope! The only spanner in the works is the fact that Gertrude has been confined to her bedroom and is being closely guarded...

PACKAGING :

The packaging is very Zenobi influenced - being heavy card, with a fold out cassette cover flap containing loading instructions and a gold name and address sticker on it! The front of the cassette cover is computer printed with a 'parquet tile' pattern with company name at the top of the cover and small picture of Delbert the Hamster in the middle! (& what a fine figure of a hamster he looks too!) The game name is neatly printed on the edge of the

cassette cover as well. Along with the game comes two A4 size pieces of paper - one has a drawing of Des and Gert on it, along with a few other characters from the game, the other contains storyline and notes!

SCREENS :

Merely the names of the software house & game title! - No picture!

THE ADVENTURE :

To begin with you can either read the games story or get straight on with choosing the character you want to start with. Desmond begins the game standing in the gutter - which just happens to be his home! That didn't appeal much, so I opted to start off in control of Gertrude. She, as previously mentioned, is now ➡

locked away in her bedroom in Norberts plush mansion!

Escape, at first, seems impossible for Gertrude as her father has secreted a security camera in the corner of the room! All attempts to leave via the only exit causes Norbert to stop Gertie - and ends the game! Fortunately, objects in the room suggest their uses well, and escape from the cameras gaze (& indeed the confines of the room) will soon be effected.

Once Gertie escapes from her room, you'll see that she is relatively free to wander around the palatial mansion without too much trouble, collecting various assorted

goodies as she goes.

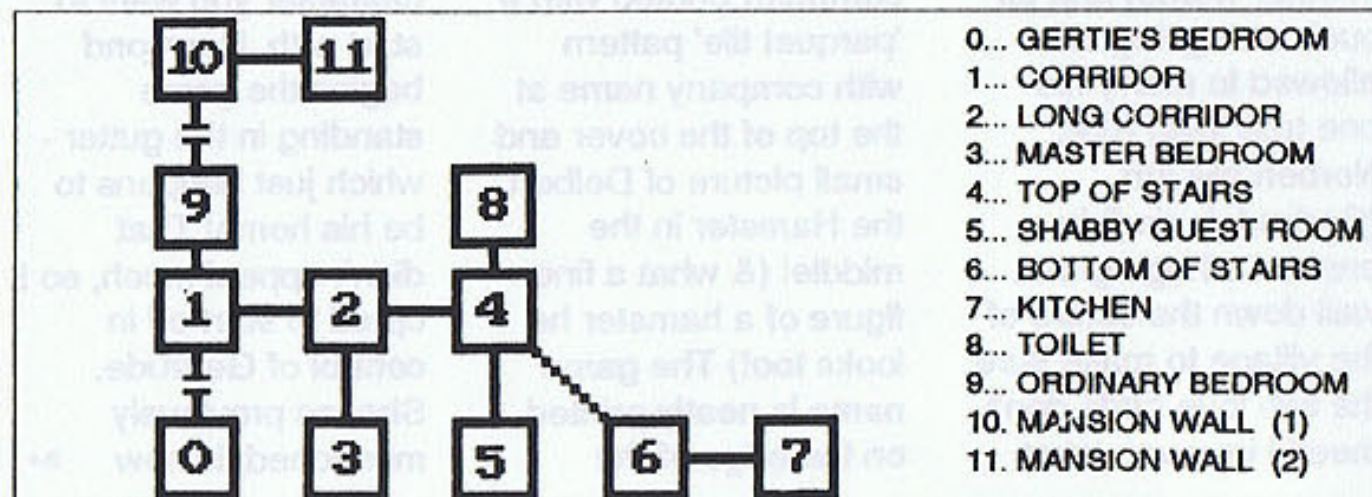
Some actions Gertrude needs to take will cause reactions elsewhere in the game, so examine everything of interest as thoroughly as you can and see what can and can't be done! Most interesting things in this part (area) of the game can be manipulated in one way or another.

I noticed one or two spelling mistakes in the main body of the text on a couple of occasions, and the odd word or two are sometimes repeated from the end of one line line (like that - Ed.) and onto another, but as they don't interfere with the game (as far as I could see) there's no need to make a big fuss about them!

Despite the fact that the

adventure and storyline have a somewhat 'funny' feel to them, the game doesn't set out to force any form of humour on the player.

There are a few funny objects, happenings, characters, responses etc., but in the main it's the situations that the player finds themselves in which are funny. This means that you aren't expected to sit through screens and screens of 'jokey' text! That type of humorous adventure tends to mean that the main body of the game - i.e. the problems themselves, are the first to go 'out-the-window'. Anyway, as you know, Gertrude's adventures are only part of the game... Typing 'SWAP' will effectively see control passed over ➔



to Gertrude's erstwhile beau - Desmond!

Des has a lot of characters to deal with... most of whom are tuppence short of a groat! Even the clever ones are a bit slow, but that's peasants for you I suppose!

Once again, Desmond is reasonably free to wander around (just like Gertrude) and examine everything for objects and clues etc. Characters such as: 'Demented Dave', 'Mad Ron' - who owns a night-club (and who you owe money to), 'Freda' the cafe owner and a particularly idiotic village idiot (to name but a few) will all help or hinder you along the way. There are plenty of objects to be found, and Des should have no trouble in working out what does what by the objects description alone! Helping Des and Gert 'get together', as it were, is a very enjoyable task. Jokes aren't rammed down your throat every 5 seconds, and there is plenty to see and do

(and even chuckle at on occasions). It's not a big game, not a hard game, but it is fun and bodes well for future D.T.H Software releases!

FEATURES :

Character swapping is fun & is definately a good feature! There's the usual RAM SAVE and LOAD as well as TAPE SAVE and LOAD too. 2 screen modes are available - Mode 1 sees the location text staying on screen, while the input text, messages, commands etc., scroll underneath, or Mode 2 where everything scrolls up the screen!

GOOD AND BAD :

The games main strength lies in the fact that it manages to be humorous - but at the same time doesn't use masses of text to tell a joke, or force the joke home - meaning that there is space for more problems than you may have come to expect to

see in a 'spoof / funny / humorous' type game!

CONCLUSIONS :

2.99, at first glance, seems to be a bit over priced, and indeed would have been if there hadn't been another game - 'Aunt Velma is coming to Tea' on the other side of the tape! Price aside, I'd still recommend you buy 'Desmond & Gertrude' as it's a pleasant, likeable, well produced happy-go-lucky game.

AVAILABLE FROM :

Scott Denyer
9 Orchard Way
Flitwick, Beds.
MK45 1LF
PRICE : 2.99

RATINGS	%
STORYLINE	59
PACKAGING	64
TEXT	57
GRAPHICS	
DIFFICULTY	50
EASE of USE	90
VALUE	70
OVERALL	70

LETTERS

Sometimes controversial - sometimes not!

June Rowe's letter from the last issue has apparently spurred John Wilson into sending in the results of a survey he carried out on around about 200 of his new-ish mail order customers. The results make interesting reading, and are printed here with John's permission...

Of the adventurers sampled - 84% expressed a preference for the 'two-word' input against the multi-command used in PAW games.

76% were not fussy whether a game had a fancy loading screen or not, as long as the game loaded first time.

86% expressed a dislike of interactive characters and of 'PSI'. Though if you were to split this into sexes then 91% of all females preferred the player to

be the only 'active' character in the game. 65% expressed a preference for 'serious' adventures, though a number of these also had a liking of 'humorous' games when they felt the need of some 'light' entertainment.

82% said that they did not consider the omissions of a 'ram save' or 'ram load' option to be a minus factor, as long as there was an option to save a position to tape. In fact 37% said that they felt that the 'ram save' option could make a game TOO easy to complete even when it was featured in a game they chose to ignore it.

57% expressed a preference for the option to change the character font as sometimes the one chosen by the author was not suited to them

or the display of their monitor/TV.

68% said that they preferred their games to be 'light-hearted' rather than gloom-ridden and the vast majority of the females liked a fantasy element in their adventures.

On a more personal note.... 72% said that they liked the so-called 'standard' Zenobi inlay (so called by me, mostly - Ed!) as it meant that there was a certain uniformity about the cassettes when stacked on the shelf or desk where they were normally kept.

77% actually found the numerous A4 leaflets that come with any Zenobi order to be both 'informative' & 'useful' and 40% said that they used the 'reverse' side of the leaflets to jot down notes and maps on ... a use I never thought of.

➡

Sometimes controversial - sometimes not!

23% hated the 'special loader' used on some Zenobi titles for the simple reason that the first time they saw it they thought the game was not loading correctly and rewound the tape and tried again.

88% loved the 'one-location' adventure as featured in the 'BEHIND CLOSED DOORS' saga and of these, they all expressed a preference for the series to continue.

Lastly...

44% expressed a preference for the 'multi-part' game such as 'AXE OF KOLT' as they felt that it gave them good value for money.

61% stated that they would be sticking to their faithful old Speccy for a while yet... though of these 36% said they were contemplating buying a 16-bit machine. J. Wilson

Thanks for making

those details available John... I think they make interesting reading! Most of the results are hardly surprising - though the 82% of people who didn't mind the absence of a RAM save / load option in a game was a bit of a turn up for the books!

Moving on, I had a letter from Sharon Harwood concerning my contemplative ramblings in last issues 'comment column'...

Dear Tim,

I was interested in your Comments (contemplative ramblings) on Adventures. Perhaps I got the wrong idea, but I do feel that you are rather taking it for granted that none of us have tried anything new before deciding on what we prefer in an Adventure.

I suppose that if I were to make a list of things I like to see in a game it would be:

- 1...40-50 Locations.
- 2...Text only.
- 3...Detailed Storyline.
- 4...2.50 price tag
- 5...A true life or sci-fi theme
- 6...A wide range of problems - easy to hard.

however, like you, this doesn't stop me from trying games that don't strictly adhere to the list and in fact my favourite game 'Axe of Kolt' only satisfies 3 of the required elements, but I have also had disappointments:

Having always found Jon Lemmon's games fun - even though they don't meet my chosen requirements - I had no doubts about ordering 'Micro-Mutant' when it was released. Now, I enjoy playing arcade games with my son, but I really didn't like having my train on thought interrupted by the continual need to enter the arcade section, and it is for that reason that the game has been relegated to the shelf. As someone who ➤

Sometimes controversial - sometimes not!

doesn't like to throw her money away, it is highly unlikely that I would order another game which contained such a feature and I am glad to note that Jon's new game doesn't.

None of us like to see authors, or indeed fanzines, being overlooked, but, on the other hand, not many of us are in the position where we can afford to buy these things for the sake of it and for that reason we have to pick and choose which we order and which we ignore. Unfortunately this may mean that some games don't sell the way the author would like but then 'Thats Life' and I'm afraid that unless the author is prepared to give people what they want instead of what he / she likes, they are not likely to get the support they are hoping for.

I really don't think that we (the public) should be pressurised into buying games we don't like just because

'progress' calls for graphics, sound effects, arcade sequences, etc... In fact, let's face it, the Adventure scene would be dead already if we had 'gone with the flow' and bought the games the 'big companies' had wanted us to buy.

On that note I shall end, but I would just like to say how much I'm enjoying the fanzine and what a great job you are doing. Keep up the good work and I hope to have the chance of meeting you at the next Probe convention. It was really good last year so do come if you can.

Sharon Harwood
Southend-on-Sea
Essex.

I was very pleased to see that you (and I'm sure most other responsible adventure players) do indeed try all manner of games - even ones that might not seem to appeal to you at first sight. It's fair enough that if you don't like what you see then

repeat purchases from the same author aren't made! The choice to choose what you want to buy is, of course, entirely up to you, the purchaser. It was certainly NOT my intention to presume that you, the players, have never tried anything new before and don't know your own minds - what you like, dislike etc...

I would just like to add though that if you do buy a game from anyone, and you don't like it for any reason, then please write to the author and tell them. I know Jon Lemmon (and more than likely most other adventure writers) take a lot of notice of what people want to see, and hearing just what your likes and dislikes are will indeed help them give you what you want! Unfortunately, new authors don't have a 'track record' of games to judge them by, so, at the risk of sounding pushy, I'll remind you to support 'new' authors

→

Sometimes controversial - sometimes not!

by buying their games - regardless of whether or not they meet your specific likes or needs! If, after playing the game, you don't like it then let the author know about it! It puts me in mind of the time Mike Gerrard returned one of Jon Lemmon's (Compass Software) games saying it wasn't as good as Jon's usual efforts so hadn't made it into Mike's column! A few days work on the game saw everything tightened up and improved... new plot, storyline, game structure etc... and when returned to Mike again, it got a blummin' good review - proving that adventure authors are willing to change games and writing style as long as they feel the criticism is valid. (So write and tell the games authors what you like and dislike about their games - feedback is all important !)

Okay, getting off, and putting away my soap-box for one second... here's a letter from my

pal Gary 'NUTTY' Naylor...

I have just started playing adventure games so I'm still just a novice in some ways. Some games I find very hard to map, or solve problems in. Some I just stop dead in my tracks for a week! But some games - like 'Cloud 99', 'Agatha's Folly' and 'Mixed-up Shymer' I have no trouble with... till the very end! That's the kind of game I like! I'd very much like to hear from anyone else out there who is a novice adventurer (to help solve problems, swap ideas etc.). Please write to me, Gary Naylor, at: 3 GLENDALE AVENUE LOSTOCK HALL, PRESTON, LANCs. PR5 5XY.

(p.s. Please write another game Linda Wright - if you are out there!)

Gary Naylor.

The beauty of being a novice adventurer is that there are so many games to choose from.

It might be an idea for would be 'pen pals' to suggest a few of their fave titles for Gary to have a stab at in the future! As for Linda Wright writing any new games, that seems unlikely as last time I heard from her was when she returned my 5.00 cheque which I sent her for the start-up package of her Play By Mail game 'Arcania' which I was hoping to review some time ago. Linda has had a few problems of different kinds and had, at that time, no plans to write more adventures - which is a pity as 'Jade Stone' and 'Cloud 99' are constantly mentioned by 'FB' readers when quality adventures are under discussion!

Moving on... This next letter comes from Chris Wiggins of Dagenham, Essex, who has this to say on the 'what makes a good adventure' debate...

Dear Tim, I read with interest your article ➡

Sometimes controversial - sometimes not!

concerning what makes a good adventure. I must confess to being something of an 'adventure junkie' although my number of unsolved games far exceeds those that I have completed.

Nevertheless I would like to add my 'twopenny worth' to what is a very interesting topic. So here goes !

STORYLINE : I prefer a Fantasy / Sci-Fi theme as I'm sure do most adventurers. After all adventures are a form of escapism. In this sort of game the author can give his imagination free reign & is not subject to the normal 'rules' of the 'real' world

LOCATIONS : I prefer a large number of locations as in Level 9 games. Part of the fun of playing the game for me is mapping it out. However, location descriptions should be imaginative with the length varied. The locations themselves should be logically connected & relatively easy to map. In this

way it is possible to feel you are really exploring a cave network (or whatever).

PROBLEMS : Once again these should be logically thought out and not too difficult to begin with. At the start of an adventure I like to be able to have a good look round seeing what problems there are lying about! I don't like 'sudden death' type situations in adventures and much prefer to be given a chance to try different ways of solving the problem knowing that the worse that will happen is that I cannot get past a certain location and will have to go in another direction. If 'search' and 'examine' commands are available they should give appropriate clues for example:-

➤ Search Straw...
You find an Iron bar...
➤ Examine Bar...
It's Magnetic !

This immediately suggests a solution to a problem.
To sum up the game

should above all be fun to play, after all we play adventures to enjoy ourselves.

Chris Wiggins.

You are absolutely right, Chris! Most people do play adventures just for fun! I agree with all you said in your letter - though personally the size of a game doesn't matter to me. The fact that you most enjoy games with a fantasy or sci-fi theme comes as no surprise, as most people who have expressed a preference to me have also said they liked that type of game best too... (Me included I must confess.) That, I feel, has a lot to do with another point you raised, in that escapism and getting away from the confines of the real world is an important factor that can make or break a game. Everything in the end though rests on the authors storytelling skill and ability to convey his thoughts & captivate his or her audience...

Tim.

COMPASS SOFTWARE

111 Mill Road, Cobholm Island, Gt. Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR31 0BB.

Fantastic legends, fabled lands, dark creatures and mysterious tales await you in... 'THE BLOOD OF BOGMOLE'

Dear adventurer,

Compass Software are pleased to offer you our latest adventure game, which will take you off to a magical land where our swamp monster (That's you!) will battle ferocious beasts and evil wizards in the eternal struggle between good and evil! Compass Software transports you to the lands of Bolimol. You'll encounter many creatures: Wizards and Demons, Dwarfs and Dragons, Giants and Trolls, Orcs and Ogres and many more!

NOTE: This adventure uses all of the Spectrum's memory and has NO arcade elements. It does include the new DIGI-SCAN system which means you have some of the best colour graphics you are ever likely to see on a Spectrum! This adventure also includes a real battle system! So, orcs and dwarfs are fighting and moving around the lands while you are on your own QUEST!

THE BLOOD OF BOGMOLE!



You have reached the plains of Bolimol. Before you nine shadow orcs scream as pools of blood pour from cracks in the ground.
EXITS: ♦ ♦

WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

EXAMINE THE ORCS

A PRINTOUT OF THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is for the 48K spectrum and all 128's in 48 mode. It has over 60 locations and over 200 messages.

THE STORY SO FAR.....

Long ago, in the lands of Bolimol evil ruled! Slither, the dragon scoured the land destroying the good dwarfs who lived there. Gregor, the wizard of Bolimol using his magic powers tricked the dragon into a trap, set by the dwarfs! Slither while hunting down Eldor the dwarf king, followed him into a giant trench where the dwarfs were waiting! As the dragon entered the trench, hundreds of dwarfs pushed down tons of soil, rocks and boulders down on top of him, burying him alive for all eternity! The giant trench was then flattened and renamed the valley of Bolimol by the dwarf king. After decades of peaceful living, the evil wizard Zogan amassed great armies of orcs and shadow orcs and marched into Bolimol. As the dwarfs and orcs fought, Zogan used his magic powers to entomb the wizard Gregor inside a huge clay altar. He then killed Eldor the king and turned the land of Bolimol against the dwarf army. Earthquakes caused huge chasms to open and swallow up great numbers of dwarfs. It was at this time that prince Eldrin, son of the dwarf king took command of the remaining army, which now numbered only 1600 men. They retreated to the swamp where they would be safe from any further attack and where he could plan his next offensive! Now, Zogan having control over the lands sent forth many orc patrols to hunt down the last of the dwarfs while he searched for the unique ingredient to a spell, which once cast would release the dragon from the weight of the land that imprisoned him. Together they could move into the neighbouring lands and control the whole province! You are Bogmole, the last of the swamp monsters! You must try and make contact with prince Eldrin, and then help the dwarf army to destroy Zogan....

This adventure costs just £1.99 including post and packing!
Make cheques or postal orders payable to COMPASS SOFTWARE.

Down through the years it has been the way of things that some poor unfortunate has been, for want of a better word, lumbered with some onerous task. Generally something that anyone with a modicum of sense would have skilfully avoided and most certainly something that any sensible person would have declined at the slightest opportunity. However there are always those individuals who either cannot see the pitfalls to be encountered or else just do the job for the sheer hell of it for these souls there can only be pity, for such tasks usually involve great hardships and immense dangers. There is always the consolation that should they succeed they will become 'HEROES' but on the other hand failure will almost certainly result in, at least, their efforts being forgotten and their names only being mentioned in quiet whispers in the darker corners of the taverns of this land.

Such was the task that was to become known as "DEEK'S DEEDS", a task so awesome in its scale that even such legendary heroes as Ramsbottom Smith quivered in their boots and slunk off whenever it was mentioned. However every age has its ultimate hero and DEEK McDEEK was the one for this time. Armed with only a selection of five 'useful' items, DEEK must make his back through time to the Medieval age and once there utilise all his undoubted skills to rid Acton Trussell of the evil "REG THE BAD" ... local 'head honcho' and part-time pet torturer.

Such was the brief laid down by the 'powers-that-be' at RETROCHROME, the establishment that young Deek had just joined. An organisation dedicated to ridding the 'Past' of evil, disease and Mike Yarwood (in that order). So set out now, along with young Deek, to those thrilling days of yester-year and see if you can assist him to dispose of the evil "REG THE BAD" and make Acton Trussell a safer place for hamsters and gerbils alike.

DEEK'S DEEDS

NOTES : At the start of the game you will be shown a list of NINE objects that Deek may take with him through the teleport, so choose wisely as only the CORRECT five will enable you to complete the task in hand. Choose the wrong items and you will have as much chance of surviving as a chocolate fireguard on a cold winter's evening (well almost true!!)

Owing to the fact that this tale is set in Medieval times, there is no RAM SAVE option, instead you will just have to resort to the more antiquated SAVE and LOAD to store and recall your game positions a tape deck and a blank tape would also come in very useful!!!

This game will recognise most commands, or at least the ones that it is author could think of and spell correctly. Any others may be tried but the management deny any liability in case of unforeseen consequences ... you have been warned!!

Abbreviations = L-Look, I-Inventory, G-Get, X-Examine.

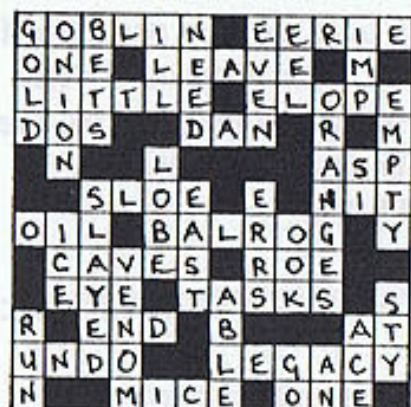
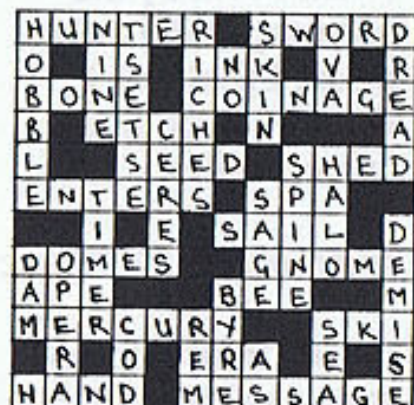
Spectrum 48K/128K+2.



Loose Ends

Competition winners, etc...

X-WORD SOLUTIONS



WINNERS :

The rules of the competition were that the more elements you got right of all the four competitions the more

times your name would be entered in the draw, thus giving anybody who completed all four parts of the comp 4 chances to win rather than just 1 for doing 1 part. Anyway, the 5 lucky winners of 'Best of the Indies 1', 'BOTI 2', 'One of our Wombat's is Missing' and 'The Micro Mutant' packs are: Steve Clay, Neil Currie, Margo Porteous, Phil Glover & Barbara Gibb.

The 5 runners up are: Diane Rice, Andrew Gibson, Paul Cardin, Sharon Harwood and Sue Medley - who each get a copy of 'Wombat'! The 'Cephalopod' comp (open to all subscribers who returned the comp. entry form) has been won by: Angie Cobbold. My congratulations go to the winners.

SPECIAL THANKS :

I must thank John Wilson of Zenobi

Software and Jon Lemmon of Compass Software for donating the games for the 1st birthday mega-comp! Don't know what I'd have done without you lads!

PUZZLE THING SOLUTION



The famous name you should have ended up with was 'The Rochdale Balrog'! Question G1 saw you come up with some alternative answers like: MAZES, THORN, WALLS, CLUES and TRAPS which all counted as they all fitted the clue! (Though DOORS was the answer I really wanted!) Anyway, this issues comp is also on a seperate sheet, so do it & send it in..NOW!

Help-Line

A medium sized dose of adventure help!

Welcome to the Help-Line! This issue sees a good dollop of helpful hints from 'FB's' readers for adventures like...

AGATHA'S FOLLY :

Gary Naylor has supplied these tips - (read backwards and from left to right for the solutions as per usual.)

Want to break the chair? Simply : TIS NO TI. Having trouble getting the Hairgrip? All you have to do is:

RAET DRAOBDRAC XOB which will provide you with some strips with which to accomplish the task.

Looking for some keys? They can be found if you : ENIMAXE ECEIPELTNAM.

Want something to do whilst in the study? Why not: KOOL REDNU KSED. There will be more 'Folly' hints next issue...

THE MICRO MUTANT:

This is a red-hot tip from the horses mouth (well the author, Jon Lemmon's mouth actually - Ed.) which means you can bypass the need to play the arcade game whenever your energy is too low to mutate etc... Simply type SID THE RAT and you will have full power. You will, however, have to play the arcade game as a grand finale when you complete the game - but that's only fair if you ask me. I'll give a prize to the first person to write in and tell me who Sid the Rat is (or was), and what Compass game he first appeared in!

PUZZLED :

This hint comes from Sharon Harwood who says: If you are having trouble finding the password simply: ENIMAXE YEK. If you

can't get out of the yellow brick road locations?... try the following at the safe place: ENIMAXE EHT ROOLF which may prove useful.

HODGKIN'S MANOR :

Having trouble fixing the stairs? What you need are some: SLIAN, SKNALP and a REMMAH and WAS. Can't find the password for the computer? Why not go to the wall on the lawn and: ENIMAXE LLAW.

'KWAH' REDHAWK II :

This solution from Steven Wraight isn't quite complete, but will help you overcome most obstacles. It's printed NORMALLY, not backwards, so skip it if you don't want to know the solution...

1. Once in the house you will see Dr.Lee ➡

A medium sized dose of adventure help!

2. Say 'KWAH' & get the key/s.
3. Say 'KWAH' again & you'll be gassed, then find yourself bound & in a cell.
4. Press play on recorder to escape
5. Use pass to open door, slide it under the door.
6. find the yellow goo, the guard has it, & blue flask. When mixed these will produce the pills for green finch and Rik.
7. Find Rik.
8. Find & enter the lift. Insert card (which is on the guard).
9. Go up.
10. get out, press record on recorder, drop recorder, go west.
11. wait for a while.
12. Go back, not forgetting to take the weight with you, (you must be Redhawk to do this), you can change back once you have the weight.
13. get recorder, press play. (which will give you the password to the next level.)
14. The doors will open once you say the password, then you can

- enter the next area.
15. Find 'Redduck'
16. Find and fire the laser at yourself, you must be Rik.
17. Change to Redhawk
18. Use Redduck to press switch in lift.
19. Go to animal lab centre once you get to the next level.
20. Enter maze by standing on the 'X' and saying to Rik 'Pull Lever'.
21. Once in maze find access hatch
22. Open it with screwdriver, which you should have got earlier.
23. go to rocket bay, enter rocket, drop weight, go back to maze.
24. Once you've found the original maze start position, say to Rik 'Pull Lever'.
25. Find violet lift.
26. Go up. (Last level)
27. Go into reception, then you have won, but only score 85%!!!

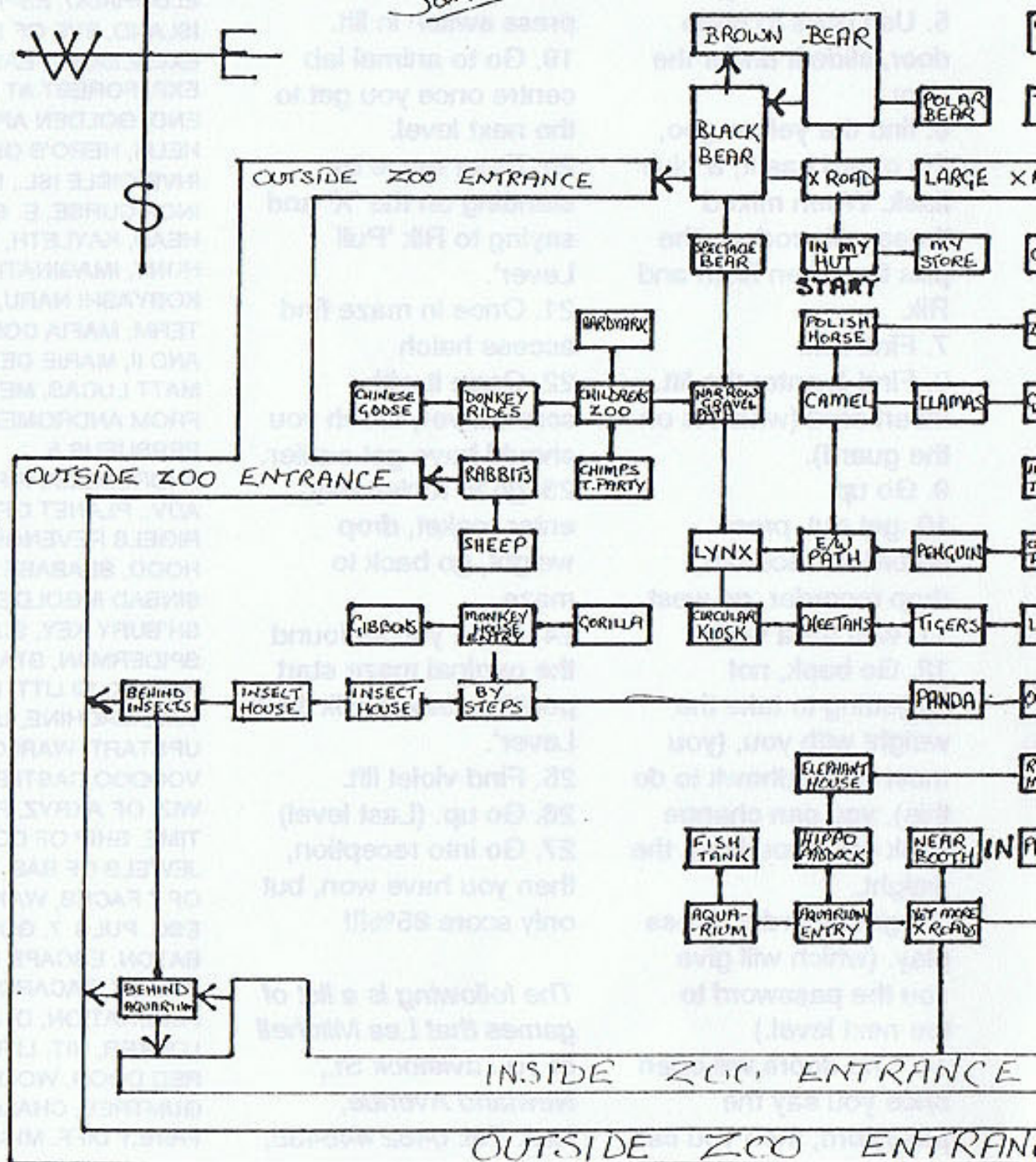
The following is a list of games that Les Mitchell of 10 Tavistock St., Newland Avenue, Hull. Tel: 0482 445438,

can give hints on: (send an S.A.E or phone Les between 6pm & 8pm (not Mondays)

AFTERSHOCK, ARROW OF DEATH (1), CIRCUS, COLDITZ, DANGER MOUSE ELDORADO, ESPIONAGE ISLAND, EYE OF BAIN, EXCALIBUR, FEASIBILITY EXP, FOREST AT WORLDS END, GOLDEN APPLE, HELM, HERO'S OF KARN, INVINCIBLE ISL., INFERNO, INCA CURSE, E. SMITHS HEAD, KAYLETH, WITCH HUNT, IMAGINATION, KOBAYASHI NARU, LIFE TERM, MAFIA CONTRACT I AND II, MARIE CELESTE, MATT LUCAS, MESSAGE FROM ANDROMEDA, PERSUEUS & ANDROMEDA, PIRATE ADV., PLANET OF DEATH, RIGELS REVENGE, ROBIN HOOD, SEABASE DELTA, SINBAD & GOLDEN SHIP, SH'BURY KEY, SUB-SUNK, SPIDERMAN, STAR WRECK, 10 LITT. INDIANS, TIME MACHINE, URBAN UPSTART, WARLORD, VODOO CASTLE, ZZZZ, WIZ. OF AKRYZ, RIFTS OF TIME, SHIP OF DOOM, JEWELS OF BAB, CURSE OF 7 FACES, WAXWORKS, ESC. PULS. 7, GOLDEN BATON, ESCAPE INDUS VALLEY, ZACARON MYST., FEDERATION, D. JONES LOCKER, HIT, LIFEBOAT, RED DOOR, WOLFMAN, UP GUMTREE, CHALLENGE & FAIRLY DIFF. MISSION.

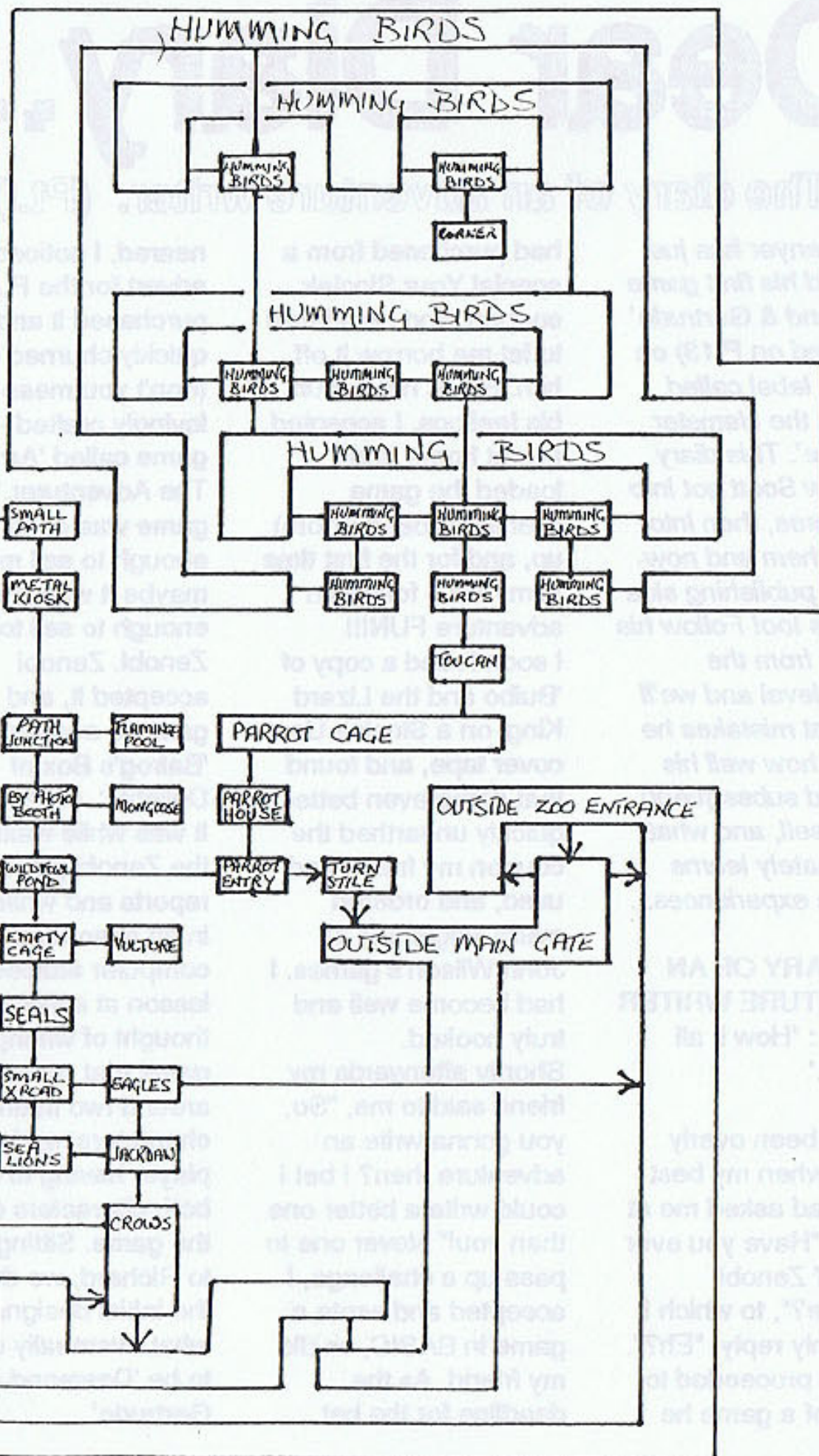
ONE OF OUR WOMBATS IS MIS

Drawn By *Sandrunner!!*




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graph TD
    A[IN THE BAR] --> B[THE BAR]
    B --> C[ROAD]
    C --> D[OWL]
    D --> E[REBRA]
    E --> F[RAPPAES]
    F --> G[INSIDE POCKET]
    G --> H[OUTSIDE POCKET]
    H --> I[LIONS]
    I --> J[FILTERS]
    J --> K[REPTILE HOUSE]
    K --> L[SARUS CRANE]
    L --> M[PHONE]
    M --> N[SMALL KIOSK]
    N --> O[MOORE X ROAD]
    O --> P[GARDEN HUT]
    C --- Q[STORES]
    Q --> R[CAFE KITCHEN]
    R --> S[CAFE]
    H --- T[PHOTO BOOTH]
    O --- U[MOORE X ROAD]
  
```



Dear Diary...

The diary of an adventure writer. (Pt.I)

Scott Denyer has just released his first game 'Desmond & Gertrude' (reviewed on P.13) on his own label called 'Delbert the Hamster Software'. This diary tells how Scott got into adventures, then into writing them and now into the publishing side of things too! Follow his exploits from the ground level and we'll see what mistakes he makes, how well his first (and subsequent) games sell, and what he ultimately learns from his experiences...

THE DIARY OF AN ADVENTURE WRITER PART I: 'How it all began...'

I hadn't been overly thrilled when my best friend had asked me at school, "Have you ever heard of Zenobi Software?", to which I could only reply, "Eh?". He then proceeded to tell me of a game he

had purchased from a special Your Sinclair coupon, and he offered to let me borrow it off him. So as not to hurt his feelings, I accepted. I went home and loaded the game (Behind Closed Doors) up, and for the first time in my life, I found an adventure FUN!!!

I soon found a copy of 'Bulbo and the Lizard King' on a Sinclair User cover tape, and found that game even better. I quickly unearthed the coupon my friend had used, and ordered every single one of John Wilson's games. I had become well and truly hooked.

Shortly afterwards my friend said to me, "So, you gonna write an adventure then? I bet I could write a better one than you!" Never one to pass up a challenge, I accepted and wrote a game in BASIC, as did my friend. As the deadline for the bet

neared, I noticed an advert for the P.A.W., purchased it and quickly churned out (don't you mean lovingly crafted - Ed?) a game called 'Arnold The Adventurer.' If the game was good enough to sell myself, maybe it was good enough to sell to Zenobi. Zenobi accepted it, and the game is available on 'Balrog's Box of Delights'. (free plug!) It was while waiting for the Zenobi playtesters' reports and while sitting in an absorbing computer studies lesson at school, that I thought of writing a game that centred around two main characters, and with the player having to control both characters during the game. Sitting next to Richard, we drew up the initial designs of what eventually came to be 'Desmond and Gertrude'. ➤

The diary of an adventure writer. (Pt.I)

I programmed it, with moral assistance from Richard, during the long summer holidays of 1990, as well as a mini-adventure too! I had planned to sell 'Des and Gert' to Zenobi also, but I keep striving for higher things (doesn't everybody?), and decided it would be a challenge to release it myself, on my own label. It would be something much more demanding than simply writing adventures and I looked forward to the challenge.

In the meantime, I had written 'Star Flaws', and yet another mini-adventure. However, by the Christmas of 1990 I was still no nearer setting up my label than before I had written 'Desmond'.

During January 1991 I wrote yet another mini-adventure, and on the 15th of February, I finally decided to pull my finger out and launch my label. I wrote 'Arnold the Adventurer' under the name 'Delbert the

Hamster', so I decided to name my software company that too! It's certainly original! It may work against me in the long run, as it doesn't have a very serious 'feel', but at the moment it suits the style of my games perfectly.

The first release is 'Desmond and Gertrude' - complete with free mini-adventure on the B-side which was written around the same time as 'D&G'.

My biggest mistake so far was leaving the launch so long, as I now have a backlog of some five games. I'll either have to release all the games in quick succession (which would take the emphasis off each individual games release) or stop writing games for the next year or two. (Which wouldn't please me as I enjoy writing games tremendously).

It was now the start of March 1991, and I went up to my 'work experience' place (they

had said 'Do please come back whenever you need to use something. The fools!) to start on the documentation. I completed the first drafts and sent the game off to my three playtesters (whose names had been advertised in YS). These reports came back and they all seemed to have liked the game, and they said it should do well. Being a perfectionist (not that it shows!), it wasn't until the end of April that I finally finished the game and sent it off for review to Your Sinclair and Adventure Probe. During the months of March and April I had also programmed another game called 'Larry the Lemmings Urge for Extinction' (Another cryptic title!), and another mini-adventure. A few days later, the latest YS came out, and in it was a section on fanzines. One of these was called 'From Beyond' and, liking the

The diary of an adventure writer. (Pt.I)

look of it, I promptly sent my game off to them for review also. Along with it I ordered the latest issue, and when it arrived I thought it was great! (Just great? - Ed.) (I would say 'buy this mag', but as you obviously have there's no need!). Obviously I have yet to see whether my game is well received by either YS, Probe or FB, and as yet await my very first order. I've yet to go through the

monotonous duplicating of the tapes, the sticking down of the jiffy bag stamps, and all the other things that adventure publishers have to do. I sit back and wonder whether I'll receive loads of orders, or only half a dozen, and whether or not I'll receive many faulty tapes to be replaced. We shall wait and see... As I sit here writing this first diary installment, I glance over at the hamster who is gnawing the bars of his

cage in a very noisy fashion, and think to myself, 'It's been bloody hard work so far, and I haven't sold a single copy yet!!!'...

Well as you can see, Scott is now up and running and awaiting his first order/s... Next issues 'Diary' will show how things are going, 'sales-wise' and what Scott thinks of the various reviews that 'D&G' receives. (If it gets reviewed elsewhere that is....Tim)

**ALL SPECTRUM
ADVENTURES BOUGHT!**

**NONE
REFUSED**

**CLEAR THOSE SHELVES! ALL SECONDHAND SPECTRUM
ADVENTURES BOUGHT! NONE REFUSED!**

**WANTS LISTS SERVICED.
WHAT GAME ARE YOU AFTER??**

**SAE FOR
CURRENT LIST**

GORDON INGLIS 11 WEST MAYFIELD EDINBURGH EH9 1TF.

Zenobi Software

ADVENTURES

As a child, JOHN CRESTON had been raised in the tiny village of POLNANTY in Cornwall and had spent many a happy hour in the company of his brother. Together they had roamed the countryside in search of adventure, armed with little more than a bottle of water and a 'make-believe' treasure map. They had swum in the clear, blue waters of the many tiny coves that peppered the nearby coast-line and spent countless hours in search of sunken-wrecks and the promise of hidden wealth they contained. But time passes and as John attained manhood, he set aside the toys of children and set off to earn his way in the big city to the east. His brother however stayed true to his roots and remained within the confines of the village.

HOB'S HOARD

Spectrum 48K/128K+2.

Throughout the years that passed John often wrote to his brother and confessed a longing to return to both Polnanty and the ways of their childhood, but the pressure of business was always too strong to allow this.

Suddenly, one dark and dismal morning, a telegram arrived that was to change all that and the dreadful news contained within its buff envelope caused John to return to Polnanty and the brother he loved so dearly.

Heavy of heart, he travelled back to settle the affairs of his brother ... his beloved brother ... who had been killed in a 'hit-and-run' accident. To John fell the task of sorting out his brother's affairs and ensuring that all was in order before laying him to rest in the small graveyard on the hill.

Whilst sorting through the various papers John chanced upon some evidence that seemed to suggest that his brother had found certain clues to the hiding-place of a hoard of treasure. THE TALE CONTINUES

NOTES : In order to solve this adventure it will be necessary to engage certain characters in conversation. To do this simply type in whatever it is you wish to know .. there is NO need for quotation marks to be used. Simply type TELL ME ABOUT THE VICAR and if that character has any such information to impart they will do so. If you think there is more they can tell you then just type TELL ME MORE and if they can they will. If at any time a character asks if they can help you, then take advantage of the offer.

As you go about your business TIME will pass just as in real life, so remember that at lunch-time the shops will close and the villagers will return to their cottages. WAIT - will allow time to advance by about ten minutes approximately.

The input TIME will display the present time as shown by the village clock.



ADVENTURE



THE DARKEST ROAD

As the great 'sadness' spread over the land and the 'darkness' drew ever closer from the north, the whispers around the camp-fires were of some strange dark magic dispensed by the evil one known as the 'BLACK WANDERER'. Far to the north, over the Darklen Moor and beyond the Eagleshorn, were where he was said to dwell. In a vast grotesque fortress known as 'The Pinnacle'. From within its confines the 'Black One' dealt out his awesome powers and covered the land in the creeping 'darkness' that threatened to envelop all who occupied it ... even the beast of the field and the fowl of the air were not safe from this malignance.

Then one morn as the sky grew ever greyer and the sun ever weaker, a stranger entered the village ... ragged and drawn he begged for sustenance and was grateful for the warm bread and cold milk that was offered him. In return he told of the 'darkness' and of the 'BLACK WANDERER' and his thirst for power. However he also told of the means to prevent this happening and of the one person who could carry out this task. He told of the power of 'SILENT SONG' and of the bearer of this power. Of the person who could use this power of YOU ... for you possess the gift of 'SILENT SONG' and YOU alone can drive the 'darkness' from the land.

'SILENT SONG' was a gift inherited from your father, an elf from beyond the 'Forest of Forgiveness', and your mother, Sharra, a princess of the winged elves from the 'South Shores'. It was something you had always sensed you possessed but knew not what it was for nor how to use it. For many hours the stranger instructed you in its arts and how best to impart its power, then finally he turned wearily to you and said ... 'I have done my bit, it is now all down to you. Go forth and defeat the evil one who is controlling this 'darkness' and return the land to its rightful state.' With that he clasped your hand and smiled slowly ... 'Goodness will always prosper!' Then turning slowly he made his towards the spreading gloom and the coldness of the north.

YOU must now take the 'Darkest Road' and seek out the 'BLACK WANDERER'. Once you have located him use the magic of the 'SILENT SONG' to send him back to the festering pit that spewed him forth



NOTES : Some useful words are STORE or RAMSAVE for temporary storage of your game positions, RECALL or RAMLOAD to recall these stored positions or SAVE and LOAD to store and recall the game positions to and from tape. Also remember that 'temporary' storage will vanish when the computer is switched off.

The top of the screen will display THREE things ... the area of land you are presently in, your current score (top left) and the number of time units left until the darkness falls upon the land (top right). Take great note of the latter, as you must complete your quest BEFORE that reaches zero.

The programme will support THREE different fonts for the text to be displayed in, so simply use the commands FONT1, FONT2, FONT3 to activate the display of your choice.

Spectrum 48K/128K+2.

Zenobi Software

ADVENTURES

REVIEW 3

'HOB'S HOARD' Zenobi Software 1.99

'Hob's Hoard' is a rare beast indeed. Why? Well, it's been written with the aid of G.A.C. which is, I'm sure you are aware, a wholly unfashionable and unfancied utility. Can a Graphic Adventure Creator creation hold its head up among its more prevalent P.A.W counterparts?... read on and find out...

STORYLINE :

You play the part of a guy called John Creston who was raised in the tiny village of Polnanty in Cornwall. As a child you spent many a happy hour in the company of your brother, Martin, playing happily in the idyllic countryside that surrounded your home, where pirate stories abounded, and secret coves beckoned young daydreamers... As time passed, and you left home to work in

the big city, the past pleasures of childhood soon began to fade into mere memories, but the dream of returning was something worth holding on to. Sadly, John Crestons return to Polnanty was to settle the affairs of his dead brother - killed in a hit-and-run accident. Out of this tragedy came to light some evidence that Martin had found certain clues to the hiding place of a hoard of treasure...

PACKAGING :

If you look at the results of the Zenobi survey in this issue (on the letters page - Ed.) you'll see that 72% of people liked the 'standard' Zenobi cassette cover - stating that there was a certain 'uniformity' about them when stacked on a shelf! Having amassed quite a few titles myself, I have to say they do

look rather 'neat' when viewed in this way... need I say more? The game also comes with an A4 storyline / note sheet.

SCREEN\$:

A massive compass dominates the loading screen for part one of this two parter, but the author, Dennis Francombe, also manages to incorporate the games name, a small passport photo sized picture of 'you' (I presume?) and also a majestic Galleon!

THE ADVENTURE :

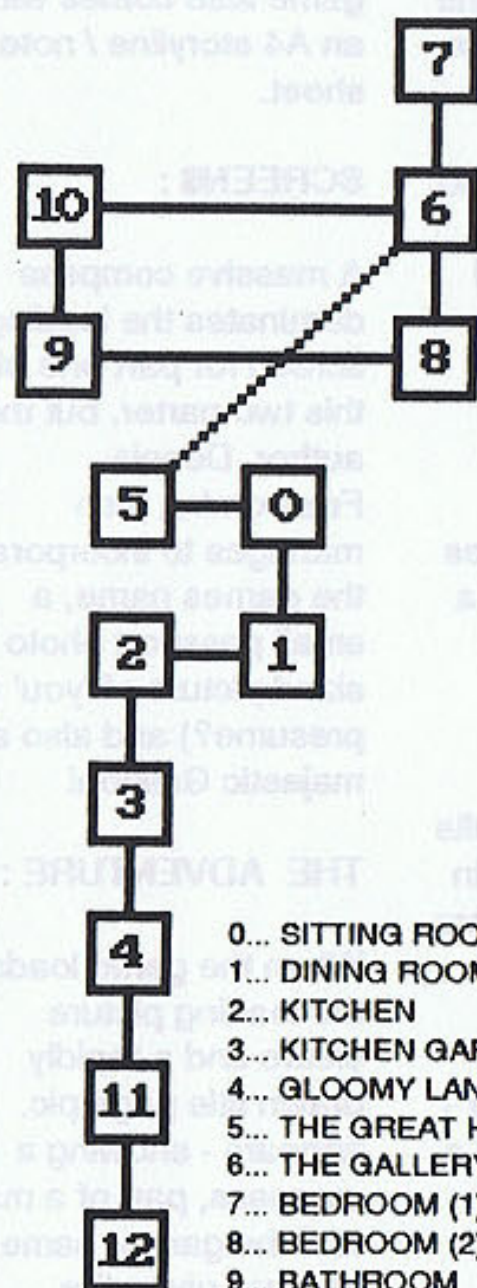
When the game loads, the loading picture clears and a rapidly drawn title page pic. appears - showing a compass, part of a map and the games name! You are given the choice of seeing a 'cast list' of characters names, or getting ➡

straight on with the adventure... A wise thing to do is take a look at this so-called 'cast list' and write the names of the characters down, as a

lot of the games 'interaction' will see you questioning people, and asking them about various other characters and events. The people you come

the name of Mrs Pinniger. If you follow the advice given by the notes in the games storyline sheet, she may divulge info on a certain item of interest, though despite seeming to want to help all she can, she is less than forthcoming about other characters in the game, and will answer your questions, for the best part, with the stock answer of: "On that subject I have no information for you." After 'quizzing' Mrs Pinniger for a while, you may like to take a look around the house and grounds of Creston Manor. The dining room, where you start, is adorned with an interesting looking fireplace, a large window looking out over the coastline and a locked bureau. The interior of the house is full of promising rooms to examine, and some of the descriptive location text will suggest that many secrets lie therein! I rooted around for a good while, and

across during your travels appear to be a fairly strange mixture of 'see all and say now' folk, though some will readily offer to spill the beans on just about any subject, without too much persuasion. First things first though, and a bit of examination of your starting location will soon see you in the company of the firm and fruity house-keeper who answers to



- 0... SITTING ROOM
- 1... DINING ROOM
- 2... KITCHEN
- 3... KITCHEN GARDEN
- 4... GLOOMY LANE
- 5... THE GREAT HALL
- 6... THE GALLERY
- 7... BEDROOM (1)
- 8... BEDROOM (2)
- 9... BATHROOM
- 10. MASTER BEDROOM
- 11. CHURCHYARD
- 12. HIGH STREET (1)

before I knew it, the village clock was striking 12-noon! The promise of extracting some juicy gossip from the villagers proved to be a big pull, and leaving the confines of Creston Manor, I set off to do just that, knowing that the shops and the hopefully talkative shop-keepers would supply me with the information I needed!

After chatting with various characters (the Vicar is a good place to start) and using up 60 turns / minutes, the shops promptly shut for one hours lunch break! This left me with some time to kill until they re-opened and I could resume my line of questioning. One character by the name of Hezekiah seems to stick around for most of the time in the same spot, though at first sight he seems to have little to say - especially to 'city folk'.

During this 'recess' you are well advised to wander round and try to map the surrounding

area, as when the clues start to flow they tend to involve dashing off all over the place, and you can do it so much better if you have a basic idea of what the surrounding area is like as far as directions to and from place to place are concerned!

Now I'm a firm believer in graphics having a place in any adventure, though I fear the ones that pop up from time to time in 'Hob's Hoard' won't convert many people to that line of thinking! However, having said that, they are fairly quick to draw and are reasonably unobtrusive. In one positive way they help fix points in the game - thus aid you in finding your bearings. (Many of the graphics show shop and cottage entrances, each being slightly different.)

When first arriving at the shops and cottages they were shut for their lunch break, so I carried on exploring, mapping the reasonably easy to map village, and sampling

the delights of a trip on the ferry, manned in all weathers by Ern the ferryman.

You'll probably notice, like me, that there are a heck of a lot of clues as to what you are expected to do at certain points in the game, contained in the main body of the location description and message text. Even finding hidden clues isn't too hard, and common sense 'adventure speak' will see the most stubborn of the early clues revealed. Without thinking about it, it's quite easy to get completely carried away simply wandering around, taking in the sights of this wholly believable village. (does it exist?)

When the shops reopened I found that getting much direct information out of any of the characters wasn't all that easy. Running through the list of 10 or 12 characters and asking each person what they knew about one another

turned out to be a bit of a chore - just to receive much the same 'standard' rebuff time after time, with only the odd titbit as an occasional reward for persevering with the questioning routine! Anyway, before long, part one of the game creeps to an end, and then part two can be attempted.....!

FEATURES :

It's unusual to see a GAC-ed game nestling amongst it's PAW and QUILL counterparts these days - so the whole game is a bit of a novelty feature in its own right!

GOOD and BAD :

The good bits seem to be the fact that A: everything is laid out quite nicely, B: most elements of the game are quite 'get-at-able' without too much frustration creeping in when trying to do things and C: you get two parts on the one tape for 1.99 (which is

always a good bargain!) On the minus side I would point to the fact that you'll have to do a bit too much 'wandering' to string parts of the game and plot together and there is a lack of major 'big' traditional problems to solve, though as the game is more of a whodunnit than anything else, then perhaps the lack of substance when it comes to the problem side of things is either bearable or desirable - depending on how you look at it, or what you want to get out of the game!

CONCLUSIONS :

Examining things, questioning people and deciding where and who to visit next seems to make up the bulk of the game - though problems and puzzles can be found, but they seem to play more of a supporting role than anything else. I suppose a PAW or QUILL adventure equivalent wouldn't score higher marks in

any department, and for what it is and does the GAC system seems to work well here!

'Hob's Hoard' is pleasant enough in its own way, it starts well, progresses to a reasonable conclusion, is also quite fun in parts - though the indefinable 'WOW' factor is missing. (If anyone can describe the indefinable 'WOW' factor then please drop me a line and explain it!)

AVAILABLE FROM :

Zenobi Software
26 Spotland Tops
Cutgate, Rochdale,
Lancashire. OL12 7NX

PRICE : 1.99

RATINGS %

STORYLINE	65
PACKAGING	58
TEXT	50
GRAPHICS	38
DIFFICULTY	48
EASE of USE	87
VALUE	80
OVERALL	68

REVIEW 4

'TREASURE ISLAND' River Software 2.95

There I was, thinking that Jack Lockerby of River Software had been a bit quiet of late, when what should plop through the letterbox?... Jack's new game, that's what! If the title sounds familiar then that's because it's based closely on R.L.Stevenson's classic book of the same name. Unusually (for Jack, at least) it's a two part game and I couldn't help but wonder if Jack would still be able to stamp his own inimitable style on it, given that it's based on such a famous work of fiction...?

STORYLINE :

The plot of 'Treasure Island' must be well known by almost everybody, though if you are not familiar with it here's a brief outline. You play the part of young Jim Hawkins (he

of Har, Jim lad fame) and you are in the unenviable position of running your parents inn (the Admiral Benbow) while your father is away recuperating from a serious illness, with your mother nursing him. I say it's an unenviable position because the Admiral Benbow is the fave hangout of just about every notorious pirate in that part of the country. Sure enough, just as you would expect from such rough clientele, things start getting a bit hairy. One old salty sea dog who is staying at the inn, and who goes by the name of Billy Bones, is paying you a silver fourpenny piece each month, and in return wants nothing more from you than to keep a lookout for a dreaded seafarer with one leg! As it turns out, two men visit the inn looking for Billy, first

Black Dog and then Blind Pew. The former, who has two fingers missing is chased off by Bones, but the latter gives Billy a 'black spot', which is a piratical summons, and Bones promptly dies of a heart attack! You realise that Billy must have had something that the pirates desperately wanted - and they'll be back to get it - soon! You leave the inn and make sure a lad is sent to fetch Mr.Dance and his revenue officers, then return to keep a lookout at the cove for your unwelcome visitors! (Phew! A plot as thick as Redbeards beard!)

PACKAGING :

The fairly standard cassette cover simply bears the game and company name on it, but you also get an A4 sheet containing

the storyline, game objectives (for both parts), some hints on the commands you can use (and how to use them), notes on the way the game behaves and some vocabulary examples.

SCREENS :

Merely the games name again.

THE ADVENTURE :

The game starts with you (playing the part of Jim don't forget) standing outside the closed door of the Admiral Benbow inn. (Closed doors are always a good place to begin a game at.) Surrounding the inn are some bushes, and a path leads east and west.

Having played a good few River Software games of late I've found that it's best to follow the obvious path first of all to see what gentle problems Jack is going to lead you to! Sure enough, once inside the inn, there are

only a few actions you need take before stumbling across the first bit of interesting stuff. The stairs that you encounter, once inside, are the only way to go, so you lightly step up them and find yourself on the landing. A bedroom door leads to Billy Bones former room. Only problem is that Billy's still there! (Though I'll leave you to find out exactly where he is.)

One point I must make is that Jack Lockerby never seems to waste the computers memory by putting in reams of text where it isn't needed, while at the same time he manages to make his location descriptions interesting, with most of the objects found within the locations being well worth examining too! Knowing Blind Pew gave Bones a 'black spot', and also knowing that Bones had something Pew obviously wanted, should lead you to make a few discoveries that set you up nicely

for the first half of part one of the game. You should find that just about everything in the early section of the adventure is easy to do, and that obvious adventure words and methods of doing things will see you progress quite steadily and rapidly towards a bit of character interaction. Fortunately the characters in the game are more interested in receiving news and telling you to do things, go places, see people rather than expecting mind bending conversations which, as far as I'm concerned, never really works when I've encountered that type of interaction in other games. For a quick chat with a couple of your chums, why not try the village? The ordinary village folk won't open their doors to you, but a couple of the gentry most certainly will! However, it's easy to get the sequence of events that you need do out of step, so I'd simply advise you to →

instigate the arrival of the unwelcome guests that you are waiting for! When they finally arrived I was quite taken aback at the pace of the action, so make sure you know what you want to do when they do eventually arrive on the scene. (I think it took me 12 attempts to suss out what exactly to do.) All your ducking and diving, information retrieval, observations and conversations should eventually lead you to the ship used for your voyage to treasure island. (Shiver me timbers!) The Hispaniola will be your home for the best part of 5 weeks, so make sure you get everything 'gettable' from the earlier locations before you become part of her crew.

Life onboard is certainly interesting, and although I'm not that familiar with the R.L. Stevenson original I did notice many things about the ship and the various events that take place during the

voyage, that were much the same as those in the book! I think I'd go as far as saying that reading the book will certainly make playing the game a whole lot easier, though at the same time you can play the game without too many problems, thanks mainly to the fact that the author has used helpful messages right the way throughout the game to take into account those people who know nothing about the goings on in the book.

I mentioned that you have 5 weeks onboard the ship in which to discover things and find all the useful items! That 5 weeks is obviously much compressed, so you can't afford to dawdle! Getting objects, discovering various facts and bits and pieces of info tends, in turn, to set off other actions and events. Pay close attention to what's happening around you and you'll soon get the hang of things. Once again the

actions you need take during the voyage (as in the early part of the game) are fairly obvious, and there's nothing too taxing about this part of the game.

Before long you'll arrive at the island and will then, in my opinion, have to face a few tougher problems than in part 1. Part 2 will only commence when you load a bit of data (saved from the end of the first part) into the game...

Jack Lockerby advises that you map the interior island locations first, then do the coastline! I'll add that you'd be mad not to take that advice, as there are certainly times in part two when you'll need to get from one location to another as quickly as possible, without having to guess your current position and hope you are going the right way!

A maze rears its ugly head at one point, though if you're smart enough to befriend a mad man you

will find that it poses no problem. (Thankfully, as I detest mazes.) Having stated that the problems in part two pose a greater challenge, there are still several easier 'initial' problems to get you into the swing of things. There's one in particular involving a caterpillar and a large bird which is just so obvious that you will simply be falling over yourself to do! (Even then there's a little bit of work to be done to do things correctly.) I've completed a healthy 75% of the game so far, and feel that A: that's good enough to know what marks it's going to get, and B: I don't want to have to use a help-sheet to do the rest, as I'm enjoying it. So I'll end here and move on to the summing-up part of the review...

FEATURES :

River Software games in general tend to be pretty standard in format, layout and

features, and 'Treasure Island' is no exception. Ram Save and Load, Tape Save and Load are there, and as such are features, but the main feature (if you can call it that) is the fact that the game seems to simply flow along with you at the helm, in an effortless fashion. The text looks nice on the screen, and is easy on the eye. The detailed messages that appear after examining, searching and using objects are all helpful, but at the same time manage to not give too much away!

GOOD and BAD :

As maps are mentioned a lot during the adventure, it might have been a nice touch to include a map of the island with the games packaging. (And would have saved the player having to map it themselves.) That apart, the game itself is one whole 'good bit' as it were! (Or two whole good bits, when you take into account that

it's in 2 parts.)

CONCLUSIONS :

What else can I say about 'Treasure Island'? It's closely based on the R.L. Stevenson original, has heaps of problems (ranging from simple to reasonably hard), is great value for money, is very well written and will, if you like a good 'classic' swash buckling romp, give you hours and hours of pleasure.

Tim.

AVAILABLE FROM

J.A.Lockerby.
44 Hyde Place
Aylesham
Canterbury, Kent
CT3 3AL
PRICE: 2.95

RATINGS	%
STORYLINE	75
PACKAGING	52
TEXT	78
GRAPHICS	
DIFFICULTY	65
EASE of USE	90
VALUE	90
OVERALL	82

Zenobi Software

ADVENTURES

<u>SPECTRUM ADVENTURES</u>	<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>48/128</u>	<u>128k</u>	<u>+3 Disk</u>
DEEK'S DEEDS	J. McHale	£1.99		
*HOB'S HOARD	D. Francombe	£1.99		
*THE GOLDEN SWORD OF BHAKHOR	D. Francombe	£2.49		
THE DARKEST ROAD	C. Wilson	£1.99		
THE LITTLE WANDERING GURU	C. Wilson & L. Hogarth	£1.99		
ZZZZ	C. Wilson & L. Hogarth	£1.99		
DEMIGOD	C. Wilson & L. Hogarth	£1.99		
*SE-KAA OF ASSIAH	C. Wilson & L. Hogarth	£1.99		
NIGHTWING	C. Wilson & L. Hogarth	£1.99		
*THESEUS AND THE MINOTAUR	A. Collins	£1.99		
*METHYHEL	A. Collins	£1.99		
ONE OF OUR WOMBATS IS MISSING	M. Gerrard	£1.99		
*THE LAMBERLEY MYSTERY	I. Eveleigh	£2.49		
BOG OF BRIT (Plus MENAGERIE free)	I. Brown	£1.99		
*THE CASE OF THE BEHEADED SMUGGLER	P. Walsh	£1.99		£3.49
INFILTRATOR plus PAWNS OF WAR	L. Floyd	£2.49		£3.49
*TALES OF MATHEMATICA	K. Bunyan	£1.99		
THE OPPRESSED LAND	M. Walker	£1.99		
*DIABLO	M. Cantrell	£2.49	£3.49	
*JESTER QUEST	M. Cantrell	£1.99	£2.99	
*GODS OF WAR	M. Cantrell	£2.49	£2.99	
THE MISER	J. Lockerby	£1.99		£3.49
ESCAPE FROM HODGKINS MANOR	J. Scott	£1.99		
THE SLAUGHTER CAVES	M. Jessop	£1.99		
ELFINDOR	SIGMASOFT	£1.99		
THE HOUSE ON THE TOR	A. DAVIES	£1.99		
CRACK CITY	G. CAPPUCCINI	£1.99		£3.49
LIGHTMARE (The Village of Delvhorn)	S. Johnston	£1.99		
*Dr. JEKYLL AND Mr. HYDE	Essential Myth	£1.99	£2.49	£3.49
ALIEN RESEARCH CENTRE plus HIT	S. McClure & I. Smith	£2.49		
BEHOLD ATLANTIS	L. Creighton	£1.99		
ECLIPSE	L. Creighton	£1.99		
THE LOST TEMPLE	L. Creighton	£1.99		
THE LEGACY	L. Creighton	£1.99		
PENDANT OF LOGRYN	J. Murphy		£2.49	£3.49
STALKER	A. Woods & P. Page		£1.99	
*AGATHA'S FOLLY	Linda Wright	£1.99		£3.49
*JADE STONE	Linda Wright	£1.99		£3.49
CLOUD 99	Linda Wright	£1.99	£1.99	
THE BEAST	Linda Wright		£1.99	



NOTE : The titles marked with an asterisk (*) are multi-part adventures, these may require the use of a 'password' or some 'saved' data in order to play the additional part or parts.



TAPE COMPILATIONS

	<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>PRICE</u>
DEEP WATERS ... Vol. 1 Featuring - Realm of Darkness, The Mutant, Hammer of Grimmold, Jack and the Beanstalk, Watchmaker, The Enchanted Cottage.	River Software	£4.99
DEEP WATERS ... Vol. 2 Featuring - Davy Jones Locker, Witch Hunt, Jade Necklace, The Challenge, The Lifeboat, The Cup.	River Software	£4.99
BEST OF THE INDIES ... Vol. 1 Featuring - Double Agent, Domes of Sha, Secret of Hodcome, Labours of Hercules, Cloud 99, Retarded Creatures and Caverns.	Various Artistes	£3.99
BEST OF THE INDIES ... Vol. 2 Featuring - From Out Of A Dark Night Sky, Diablo, Crack City, Gordello Incident, Bounty Hunter, The Hermitage.	Various Artistes	£4.99
BALROG's BOX OF DELIGHTS Featuring - The Boyd File, Teacher Trouble, Arnold the Adventurer.	Various Artistes	£2.49
BEHIND CLOSED DOORS ... The Saga Featuring - Behind Closed Doors (The Sequel), Behind Closed Doors, Behind Closed Doors III.	The 'Balrog'	£2.49
THE BALROGIAN TRILOGY Featuring - An Everyday Tale Of A Seeker Of Gold, Bulbo and the Lizard-King, Fuddo & Slam.	The 'Balrog'	£2.99
BALROG's BIG FOUR Featuring - From Out Of A Dark Night Sky, The Secret Of Little Hodcome, Balrog and the Cat, Retarded Creatures and Caverns.	The 'Balrog'	£2.99

DISK COMPILATIONS

BALROG's BIG DISK Featuring - Crack City, Stalker, Infiltrator, Pawns of War, Case of the Beheaded Smuggler.	Various Artistes	£4.99
ANOTHER BIG DISK Featuring - Pendant of Logryn, The Miser, Bog of Brit, The Menagerie.	Various Artistes	£4.99
YET ANOTHER BIG DISK Featuring - Agatha's Folly, Jade Stone, Arnold the Adventurer, Teacher Trouble.	Various Artistes	£4.99

NOTE : Purchase MORE than ONE game and you will be free to deduct 25p from the price of each additional game bought, or 50p from each compilation. This applies to TAPE or DISK.

ALL PRICES INCLUDE FOR FIRST CLASS POSTAGE WITHIN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND ALL ORDERS WILL BE DISPATCHED WITHIN 24 HOURS OF RECEIPT OUTSIDE THE UNITED KINGDOM PLEASE ADD ONE POUND EXTRA TO COVER THE ADDITIONAL POSTAL CHARGES. AIRMAIL PLEASE ADD TWO POUNDS ... THANK YOU !!

ALL CHEQUES/POSTAL ORDERS TO BE MADE PAYABLE TO ZENOBI SOFTWARE AND FORWARDED ALONG WITH YOUR ORDER TO ... ZENOBI SOFTWARE, 26 SPOTLAND TOPS, CUTGATE, ROCHDALE, LANCASHIRE, OL12 7NX.

REVIEW 5

'DEEP WATERS' (Vol I & II) Zenobi 4.99 each

Way back in the Jan / Feb issue of 'FB', we reported that Zenobi were hoping to release two compilations featuring the complete back catalogue of River Software games... Well, good news! 'Deep Waters' (Vols I & II) are here and each tape contains 6 rip-roaring adventures from the skillful hand and mind of Jack Lockerby... A couple of notable titles are missing from the collections, such as: 'Into the Mystic', 'The Domes of Sha' & 'The Bounty Hunter', though 'Sha' & 'Bounty hunter' can be found on other Zenobi compilation tapes - and are well worth seeking out! To say Jack Lockerby is prolific is a bit of an understatement, though he also manages to maintain a high standard throughout his games... Any one setting out on the rocky road to adventure

writing stardom could learn plenty from the style, content and playability Jack Lockerby's games... But enough of the praise, on with the review of these two compilation tapes...

PACKAGING :

Er, yes... the Zenobi standard cassette inlay is still with us! I got (and should imagine you will too) 3 A4 pages of storylines, instructions, notes etc... Volume I features the following games: 'The Realm of Darkness', 'The Hammer of Grimmold', 'The Mutant', 'Matchmaker', 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and 'The Enchanted Cottage'. To review all of vol.1 would take an entire issue of 'FB' so here, as is often the case with the various compilations we review, are the objectives of each game...

THE REALM OF DARKNESS :

You have been engaged by the king of a small island to recover treasures stolen from the vaults of his castle, or as he called it, 'his Treasury'. Any minor pieces that you find are yours to keep and dispose of as you see fit, but all the major items are to be returned to the king. On your travels you will encounter a mutant mole, a giant rat, a wounded hyena, a gentle bear, a gypsy, a poacher and of course THE THEIF!

THE HAMMER OF GRIMMOLD :

Grimmold the Dwarf King is deeply troubled. The fabled hammer, a symbol of health and fertility, has been stolen by Valk, an evil magician. In the wake of this event great

'DEEP WATERS' (Vol I & II) Zenobi 4.99 each

misery had spread throughout the kingdom and in desperation the King had called upon your services to find the hammer and return it to its rightful owners. However this will not be an easy task as you must first outwit the 'hooded' men, get past a nasty Troll and even extract the tooth of a vampire before meeting up with Valk himself.

THE MUTANT :

Twenty years ago in one of the south sea islands, the BOMB was tested. This small island has since returned to the lush paradise it once was and tiny villages have sprung up all around the coast.

However all is not well & something has appeared in the mountains! Something that no one who has seen it has survived to tell the tale of. You are the last hope. Can you track it down and destroy it, whatever it may be, before it is too late!

MATCHMAKER :

Your quest is simplicity itself... all you have to do is get the Prince and the Princess to church on time. The Prince carrying the wedding ring and the Princess dressed in her bridal gown & carrying a large bouquet of flowers. Oh & before I forget, you will also need a page-boy, dressed in a sailors suit, to be in attendance.

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK :

What more can be said about this tale, surely everybody knows what must be done to succeed in this game... but if not, just ask your Mum as I'm sure she will know what you have to do.

To end the first compilation we have...

THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE :

After years of study this is your last chance to become a professional

Sorcerer and to that end the Chief Sorcerer puts you into the Enchanted Cottage, with instructions to uncover the secret of the 'green door' in order to make good your escape. Determined to stop you are a number of cunning and vicious adversaries, including an ugly giant, Ben Gunn and a mountain goat.

Zenobi are charging a mere 4.99 for each compilation of six games... so for just under a tenner you'll be able to enjoy 12 stonking-good games! But wait... Zenobi have also discounted each compilation by 99p so each 6 game tape now only costs 4.00! (That's 8.00 for both volumes.) Anyway, enough of that - heres what you get on the second 'Deep Waters' compilation...

DAVY JONES LOCKER :

In the lifeboat there are five people and a little dog, all survivors ➡

'DEEP WATERS' (Vol I & II) Zenobi 4.99 each

of the sinking of the clipper 'Alana' off the coast of Bermuda. You bump into a floating hulk and your companions scramble aboard... and then just vanish into thin air! Your quest is to rescue them from whatever danger threatens them!

THE JADE NECKLACE :

You are Philip Mallow, private investigator, and you are busy swatting flies with a rolled-up newspaper when the phone rings and a dame on the other end of it rambles on about the theft of a necklace from her home in Cherry Tree Avenue. It is imperative, she says, that you recover it before her husband finds out that it is missing and after haggling over the fee, you agree to take the case. You drop the newspaper and...

THE WITCH HUNT :

Whilst out walking in

the woods a gentle mist descends around you. You wander about for an hour or two but as darkness approaches you realise that you are hopelessly lost... Suddenly, out of the gloom, the outline of a small cottage appears and standing at the open door is an old woman. She invites you in for refreshment and once inside places a blue hat on her head and says "If you want to see your loved ones again you must do exactly as I do."

Whereupon she spins round three times and vanishes from sight. Without thinking you do the same, and find yourself floating through space...

THE CHALLENGE :

You are Yarulla, skilled hunter and trapper. The old chief of the tribe has just died and all the villagers have gathered together to choose his successor. Normally the eldest son would be the automatic choice, but Pacheo was both a

coward and a bully and nobody liked him. So when a voice cried out "Pacheo for Chief", several voices replied "Challenge!" Not surprisingly one of them was your own, for Pacheo had sworn to banish you from the tribe when he was chief. The elders went into a huddle and after some long deliberation decided that you would be the one to challenge Pacheo... what next?

THE LIFEBOAT :

Afloat on the high seas with four companions, this adventure presents you with the chance to be rescued... if only you can remember the stories of your childhood and put to a good use the knowledge they can provide you with.

Finally on this second compilation comes...

THE CUP :

You had attended the annual "Liar's Club" dinner and prize-

'DEEP WATERS' (Vol I & II) Zenobi 4.99 each

giving. It had been a great night, with each speaker trying to top the previous raconteur with wild & improbable tales. But the best by far had been Paddy Murphy and his tale of animals in the wild, his flaming-red hair waving wildly as he recounted his adventures. You arrived home in a merry state and were soon fast asleep. Just before dawn you are awoken by an horrendous scream from the foot of the bed and glancing down you see, to your horror, a mass of red hair and a back covered in claw marks. You attempt to assist but are told to save yourself from the lion... determined to get to the bottom of the mystery you quickly dress and step outside your front door...

And there you have it... 12 excellent and very varied adventures on two super compilation tapes - each retailing at 4.99 and available from Zenobi Software. 26 Spotland Tops,

Cutgate, Rochdale. Lancs. OL12 7NX. Don't forget that there's 99p off the rrp of each compilation! All you have to do is mention that you read in 'FB' about 'Deep Waters vol I or II' (depending on which volume you are ordering) and simply deduct 99p from the asking price of each compilation - making them just 4.00 each!

It wouldn't be right to pass up the chance to review briefly a couple of the titles, so there now follows a quick review of a bit of 'The Cup' from Vol. II, but first here's a look at 'The Enchanted Cottage' from Vol. I...

THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE : (review)

Having been on a Govt. sponsored apprentice Sorcerer scheme for five years, and having still not made it to the rank of Sorcerer, your one last chance lies within the Enchanted Cottage. If you manage to escape then you will

have proved your worth... Failure will not be tolerated!

The game begins (after a couple of screens of handy hints and useful pointers on what words the game likes best to receive) inside the cottage. The walls, floor and ceiling all vibrate in a rather peculiar fashion. A green door and a cube provide you with the only things to work on. The door accepts three keys, and seemingly needs all three to open it. The cube has different coloured sides, and a label attached firmly to the bottom which, when read, should soon see you presented with 3 routes out of the cottage! At this point I'd just like to mention the screen layout. The main text is yellow on a black background - the re-designed font is one of the most legible I've come across! The exits are to be found below the main body of location and object text, on a blue, bordered background! All very easy on the eye. ➤

'DEEP WATERS' (Vol I & II) Zenobi 4.99 each

Typing 'HELP', even at the first location, will solicit a response which gets you over any trouble you might be having to begin with. The help you receive throughout the game becomes more general as you progress. I found the cryptic clues supplied were a bit too helpful, though I was glad to have some help within my grasp on one or two occasions. The thing that always seems to stand out about Jack Lockerby's games is that they 'hook' you from the first location, and keep you engrossed right the way throughout the game. Dead ends and boring bits never seem to appear in Jack's games, so you just have to keep playing, and playing and playing until you are 100% sure that you can get no further at that particular sitting! Even so you are loath to switch off the computer because you just know that a solution to one of the problems in his games will suddenly spring to

mind! (What I'm trying to say is they are pretty addictive adventures!) I think it's pretty fair to say that 'The Enchanted Cottage' is an easy game to play and to map, but you'll still find one or two problems that will have you stumped. As with most of Jack's other titles, you can happily play away until you come to a point where a certain action is called for, or specific problem has to be overcome. In this game many of the problems can be overcome by a combination of Spell-casting, carrying the right object on which the spell will react with, and also being in the company of certain of the games wonderful characters! The game is played in 'zones', with each separate zone holding various and varied surprises in store for you. You'll often find yourself going from one zone to another piecing together parts of the puzzles that Jack is so good at setting!

What particularly impressed me was that even though the adventure has a humorous feel to it right the way through, the humour never intrudes or detracts from the main point of the game, which is solving the problems that you are presented with! I laughed at most of the funny bits, and was, at the same time, impressed with the way the problems and the whole game works! (It's rare to find a game whose humour and problems don't detract from, or effect one another in an adverse way.) The games location descriptions are nicely done, the problems start easy, then remain easy - only getting slightly tougher the more you probe. To sum it all up I'd certainly only bill 'The Enchanted Cottage' as a beginners game, though having said that it makes ideal playing if you want to escape the rigours of everyday life and just enjoy yourself! Novice adventure ➤

'DEEP WATERS' (Vol I & II) Zenobi 4.99 each

authors would do well to check out any of Jack Lockerby's games if they want to see how a good game is put together...

As space is running out I'd better move on to the second of the games receiving a brief review... this time it's 'The Cup' from Vol.2 of the 'DEEP WATERS' compilation tapes...

THE CUP : (review)

Surely no more bizarre storyline ever existed in an adventure. (see the storyline printed elsewhere, Ed.) The fact that the game begins with a red haired man (who has been mauled by a lion apparently) telling you to beware the lions and find his cup gives you some indication that this is weird stuff indeed! It's with that warning (and task) in mind that you find yourself outside your house... unable to enter until said 'cup' is found and returned. The familiar street

where you live is suddenly much less familiar with every step you take, and it's not long before you realise that there is something very strange happening in your home town! For a start off there's a large tribal hut at the end of the street! Inside sits a native chief who gives you your first job. All you've got to do to please him is help him cure his sick son... all he needs is some crushed Ivory. Fortunately there's an elephants graveyard lurking in the depths of the game, which, by the way, is once again easy to map - though a bit harder to actually make positive progress in than the previously reviewed adventure! Be prepared to meet the grim reaper in a field of corn, hyena's, Abominable Snowman - and look out for Wolf country... Then there's the vicious Lion in his cave to contend with! Once again the game opens out quickly before you, and the problems are of the get

this to solve that before moving on variety! I found that there were a few too many locations to merely travel through to get from place to place, but the rest of the game was up to the usual standard. Most of the situations you'll find yourself in during the game will undoubtedly (if you live to tell anyone about them) provide you with plenty of tall tales to tell, to put you in with a chance of winning the liars cup at next years annual tall tale tellers convention!

CONCLUSIONS :

To sum up, all of the games on both tapes are well worth owning. Some are better than others, but that only means that as none of the games are of a poor quality, the best of the bunch are excellent and the not so good games are still better than most. The majority of Jack's games are brilliant, so 12 of his games on 2 compilation tapes is a dream come true! BUY THEM NOW!

RE-ANIMATOR

Amiga Adventurers Start Here !!!

We have decided to shelve the Re-Animator section of 'FB' for a while, mainly because there are loads of new Spectrum adventures appearing - and we want to do them full justice. 'R-A' will return at a later date - though in a new form!!!..... Tim

This is the last appearance of Re-Animator... (in the pages of From Beyond at least) though it will reappear at some stage - though possibly in a different format. (oo-er!) I was hoping to review a couple of adventures on the Amiga this issue, but those tortoises at 'Special Reserve' / 'NRG' seem to have gone into hibernation and have sat on my order for three and a half months - meaning the games for review have not yet arrived. Fortunately Sue Medley's disk magazine 'Syntax' for the ST is now available to Amiga users thanks to an ST Emulator disk. The Syntax review starts opposite and is our last Re-Animator review (in this format!).

Tim.

REVIEW.

SYNTAX-AM Disk Magazine.

Edited by: Sue Medley.

Price: 3.50

I'm sure that most of you reading this have seen adverts or heard of SYNTAX! - the ST adventure magazine on a disk. Reviews in most of the 16 bit glossy magazines (those with adventure sections at least) have been very enthusiastic about SYNTAX, and now, thanks to the miracles of technology, it's available to Amiga owners too! The miracle of technology that makes it run on an Amiga is an ST Emulator which comes on a disk which once loaded turns the Amiga into an Atari ST. (Well it does enough to let the STOS-written SYNTAX run without hassles on an Amiga.)

The Emulator disk is supplied FREE by Sue when you order your first copy of Syntax. Unfortunately it's a German Emulator - in German (obviously) though English translations (for key words) are supplied on an A4 sheet which will soon see you up and running. Unfortunately (again) you'll need to own an external drive to get things working!

Presuming you have an external disk drive, you'll soon find yourself staring at the green screened representation of the Atari equivalent of the Amiga workbench screen. The whole thing runs in Medium Resolution mode and to get down to the business of loading SYNTAX all you have to do is

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'Syntax-Am' Review.

'Double-Click' on the icon labelled 'disk-station B' and the contents of that disk (presuming Syntax is in the external drive) will appear in a window on-screen!

A few mouse button presses later will see Syntax loading, and eventually you are presented with a friendly menu showing 5 areas from which to choose... These are:

- 1... Information
- 2... Reviews
- 3... Special Features
- 4... Solutions / Maps
- 5... Hints & Tips

The above selections are contained in boxes which, when clicked on with the mouse controlled pointer, take you on into another set of menu's linked to the relevant selection. There seemed no better place to start than the Information box! Once selected a new menu appeared with a further 6 items on it. First on this list was the editorial section which

contained loads of editorial text. My first issue was issue 11, and the editor, Sue Medley, was bemoaning the fate of the soon to be defunct Spellbreaker fanzine! Sue also made mention of the fact that contributions to issue 11 were a bit low. It didn't seem like it to me, though to be fair Sue had contributed quite a bit of non-editorial work herself.

You can browse through the pages of Syntax by clicking on the various boxes that appear at the bottom of the screen in a status line. Forward, Backward, return to main menu, print page etc, are all catered for making access to the electronic fanzine a doddle.

I was a bit concerned that being written on an ST using STOS, Syntax may not be capable of printing to an Amiga with my particular printer hooked up to it... but it did - without a hitch! You can even print out a ready made order form for Syntax if

you like! Some parts of the disk-mag really do need a printer to help you get the most out of it... the most obvious being the Maps that appear in the Solutions and Maps section.

What you get on screen when calling up a map is a series of linked boxes complete with location numbers and connecting lines. To the left are numbered location descriptions that correspond to the numbered map boxes, while underneath appears the contents of the room or location you are studying on screen. It's a marvellous system and works like a dream. Obviously to use the maps to best advantage you'll need a printer to print them out... Very impressive! The hint section contains hints for all manner of games in a simple Problem / Clue / Blatant answer format. Depending on the type of answer you want, you just click on the relevant box to access the clue! Simple! ➤

'Syntax-Am' Review.

So what else does Syntax have to offer the would be 16 bit adventurer...? Well, take the latest issue for example... I thought issue 11 was pretty good, but issue 12 is even better - containing 12 game reviews and previews. Some of the reviewed titles are ST only - in the form of P.D. stuff. However, most 16 bit games are available right the way across all formats - PC, Amiga and ST, so anything reviewed that comes from the likes of Sierra, Infocom, Magnetic Scrolls, US Gold etc, are pretty generic. Something that I liked about the review section was that it contained some oldies being re-reviewed. (or being given a second opinion of). Nord 'n' Bert, by Infocom, was one such title under review which I thought

was one of Infocom's best games, whereas others thought it was crap! Sue, herself, reviewed Mag Scrolls newie - 'Wonderland', which just goes to show that the reviews aren't merely of old games. The two issues of Syntax I've seen to date have had pretty much the same layout and general content / features. Issue 12 has a rather interesting item about Syntax reader Dave Barker's discovery of some Infocom adventure inspired paperbacks in his local bookshop...

To sum things up I'd say that Syntax is easy to use, easy to read and contains excellent general, and detailed, coverage of adventure related items, news, reviews and features. Sue Medley bills herself as the Editor, but to be

honest she deserves a bigger credit than that as a lot of Syntax's content, style and overall feel is down to her contributions to it! The 3.50 price tag for each issue seems a bit steep, but compared to a 2.95 glossy mag that you'd buy for adventure coverage, then Syntax wins hands down in my opinion. The only thing missing from the Amiga version of the disk are the screenshots from the ST version - though issue 12 came with these printed on a separate sheet of paper to see what you were missing. Syntax for the Amiga is available from: Sue Medley. 9 WARWICK ROAD SIDCUP, KENT, DA14 6LJ, and costs 3.50 per issue. Make cheques payable to: Sue Medley. (FREE ST emulator disk with your first order!)

What's in next issues "From Beyond"?...

The usual bunch of detailed reviews, news, hints and tips... plus - the illustrated fables / legends feature that we promised you (not enough space to put it in this issue), a look back to the early days of adventuring and lots, lots more... Don't Miss It...

ATTENTION, ~~AMIGA~~ OWNERS!

Thanks to the miracles of modern technology and more than a little help from an emulator, you too can now read SynTax adventure disk magazine - on your ~~Amiga~~.

The only major difference between the original ST version and the Amiga conversion is that there isn't a screenshot section yet (we're working on it). If the response to the conversion is favourable, a true Amiga version may follow.

So, what can you expect from the magazine?

- SynTax is dedicated to adventures and RPG's and has been produced bi-monthly since July 1989.
- Each issue so far has contained and average of:
 - 10 Solutions (some with maps, some serialised)
 - 11 reviews incl. some adventure-related book reviews
 - 12 files of hints
- The SynTax 3-in-1 hints give two levels of hints - subtle or sledgehammer - depending on how desperate you are!
- Each issue has a special feature and the disks also contain various information sections, letters and news. SynTax has had favourable reviews in the major glossy magazines and the disks build up into a useful reference collection.

Just 3.50 will get you the latest issue and a free copy of the emulator plus full instructions. As with the ST version, a year's sub costs 20.00. Outside the UK/Europe, the prices are 5.25 / 30.00 by airmail. All you need is an Amiga & external drive. back numbers will be available on request. To order, send cheques and P/Os payable to S. Medley to:

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