

# FROM BEYOND

ISSUE 15 • NOVEMBER - DECEMBER • 1992



# IMPORTANT NOTICE

**To Games Producers:** Please make sure that you send a detailed help-sheet with the games you submit for review. **To Advertisers:** Adverts are **FREE** in FB (space permitting) though please try to supply them on WHITE PAPER and A5 in size!

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**Tim Kemp (FROM BEYOND)  
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# C O N T E N T S

**FB ISSUE 15 • NOV/DEC 1992**

The FB mailbag almost overflowed this issue, and here are the lucky people whose words and pictures will be appearing on the following pages:

## **YOUR FB REVIEWERS ARE:**

Tim Kemp, The Jester, STORM.

## **MAPS PROVIDED BY:**

SANDRUNNER!! , Bernard Wood, A.A.Gibson, and Terry Brawls.

## **'SPACEY' COVER ART BY:**

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June Rowe, Paul Cardin, Paul Neale, Barbara Gibb, Jonathan 'robotics' Scott, & Laurence 'Q-M' Creighton.

## **ADVENTURES SUPPLIED BY:**

The Guild, Zenobi, Tom Powell, Delbert the Hamster and F.S.F. Software.

## **EXTRA SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

The SQUARE ONE 'crew' for the sampler issue of 'S1' 'zine. Use the FB/S1 order form (enclosed) to get a discount on a 'S1' subscription.....Tim

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# EDITORIAL

## WINTER! Brrr!

- 22/9/92 Despite the bright blue sky outside, and the bright sun, it's blummin' cold! Dare say I'll soon be sitting here in a sleeping bag with a water bottle on my feet! (You think I'm joking?) So, what's been happening since finishing FB 14? Well, there's been little in the way of letters so far, but hopefully I'll get some soon. I'm sure the John Wilson interview from last issue will prompt a few of you to write in.
- 21/10/92 Funnily enough a few people have been putting their fanzine prices up of late. Barbara Gibb, via a letter in Phil Glover's SCAC disk mag (which is also going up in price, but then that disk-zine would be a bargain at £5.00) has said that people expected it and were happy with it. (A price rise I mean) Many people have also said that if the financial stability of Probe means a price hike then so be it. That makes sense as long as people are prepared to pay the higher price which, it seems, they are. Thinks.... should I be thinking of putting FB's price up rather than down? What do you think?
- 26/10/92 In a frenzy of mad activity FB 15 is now looking like a magazine rather than blank spaces where reviews should be. As every FB is written from where the last one left off - nothing is premeditated - FB looks decidedly 'empty' even a month after starting a new issue. It's taken two and a half years for me to be able to judge when I've got to put a spurt on to finish a particular issue, hence the 'frenzied activity' that is now taking place at this late date!
- 31/10/92 Last day of the month. PIRACY rears its ugly head. Tom Frost, via a friend, had gotten hold of a LIST of some 800+ adventures. This list was passed to John Wilson and also to the other publishers who's games appeared on it. The majority of games were obsolete oldies, ranging from ESPIONAGE ISLAND, ADVENTURELAND and URBAN UPSTART (you can't get much older than those) right the way up to the latest adventures from ZENOBI and COMPASS etc. I've been assured by the original owner of the list that most were originals that he'd bought, been given or swapped over 10 years of adventuring and that the games were all transferred to disk (which makes them copies) for his own use. It was, as he'll tell you himself, a foolish thing to let the list of his copies be passed on to anyone else. So, to those people concerned, here's his apology.

**APOLOGY: From: P.TOWNSEND (SANDRUNNER!!)**

Due to my own idiotic actions & stupidity, I find myself in hot water! My list of adventures, which was never a copying service in the first place, has been destroyed & I shall no longer supply any games whatsoever - original or otherwise.



# NEWS ROUNDUP

## ADVENTURE NEWS AND STUFF!!



• Graeme Coleman, the editor of GAMESTAR tape magazine, has been in touch to say he's no longer producing it. There was no other explanation, but I can only assume his decision to quit is because of lack of interest. Shame really as given a few more regular issues it could have become something quite good.

• BARE BONES, Les Mitchell's solutions magazine, has changed name and format. The new name is GOBLIN GAZETTE and the new format is 8bit (C-64 / Spectrum / CPC etc.). Issue 5 is out now (see advert elsewhere in this issue).

• Adventures have been appearing every issue on the cover tapes of Your Sinclair. What's more they ain't old duff ones either. Over the last couple of issues we've seen the likes of: RETARDED CREATURES AND CAVERNS and THE ANTTILIS MISSION - more goodies to follow. So, ALWAYS check out YS to see what's on the covertape. Adventures are also popular with Sinclair User / Crash too. Reports of the adventure scenes demise are a bit premature.

• A chap called Donald Hay wrote to me recently to make the very good

point concerning Zenobi's cracking adventure 'AURA-SCOPE'. The point Donald wanted to get over was that it had been released before, only then it was called 'HORRORSCOPE'. Donald wrote to John Wilson, and naturally enough Wilson was his usual generous self and supplied Donald with a couple of freebies and an apology. So now you know that AURA-SCOPE is HORRORSCOPE. I have to confess that I made the same mistake (in names) myself.

• Compass Software have just released DEEP PROBE, the follow up to THE ANTTILIS MISSION. Jon Lemmon's asked me to point out that it has a re-designed cassette cover rather than the usual 'standard' cover he's been favouring over the last few releases.

• Finally, the Adventurers' Convention awards were announced at the Birmingham gathering last month. Out of the 11 categories the 8 bit / general winners were:

**Best 8-bit Adventure:**

'The Taxman Cometh' by Steve Clay.

**Best Text Adventure Author:**

'Larry Horsfield.'

**Best Homegrown Company:**

'WoW Software.'

**Most Helpful Adventurer /**

**Helpline:** 'Joan Pancott.'

**Adventurer Of The Year:**

'Mandy Rodrigues.'

*...I have to say that I was chuffed to come 3rd in that last category. Tim.*



# THE FB REVIEWING SYSTEM

## THE FB REVIEW SYSTEM EXPLAINED

Despite having a plethora of categories to take note of when you eventually come to the scores at the end of each review, the FB ratings system is quite simple to understand. It operates on a sliding scale of 0 to 10 - 0 being the lowest score, 10 being the highest. All categories use this scale and scoring system - except the difficulty level which has 4 possible entries...

- |   |
|---|
| • Beginner • Intermediate<br>• Experienced • Advanced |
|---|

Those categories refer to the type of player that the game seems to be aimed at. The rest of the ratings all use the 0 - 10 system...

- **Storyline:** It's always nice to see the game come with a story which could detail important pre-adventure events, useful info., handy playing hints, or just something that sets the scene or helps create an atmosphere.
- **Packaging:** This rating is here to show how much effort has gone into the packaging side of the game, including Cassette Inlay design, do you get a separate info / storyline sheet etc.
- **Opening Play:** This category gives you an indication of the strength of the opening problems, the way the game starts. Has it got a well produced intro, or are things too tough to start with. We all know what it's like to be stuck in a game after only a few moves because it's far too difficult to play past the first few locations.
- **Problems:** This is worked out over the entire game and we mainly take into account the number of problems, the type, how original they were, etc.
- **Location Text:** How detailed was the location text, how imaginative was it, how lengthy etc.
- **Parser:** This one's important in that it shows you how easy it was to type in your

commands and how flexible it was.

- **Game Design:** How well was the game designed? Was it something new, did it flow, did it all come together nicely? (Or not?)
- **Difficulty Level:** Overall was the game suitable for - Beginner, Intermediate, Experienced or Advanced adventurers?
- **Playability:** This is also an important category. Low marks = you won't bother finishing, high marks = you won't want to stop playing!
- **Personal Rating:** This is where your impartial and friendly FB reviewer sums up their feelings about the game under review!

And there you have it... Quite simple when all is said and done! The following are lists of the resident FB reviewers fave games of all time.

- **Games We Like:** *This is the kind of thing the FB reviewing team like... Yes, what a normal bunch we are!*

### THE JESTER:

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. The Hobbit          | 2. Aura-Scope           |
| 3. Heavy on the Magik  | 4. 5 on a Treasure Isl. |
| 5. Terrors of Trantoss | 6. The 'Bulbo' trilogy  |
| 7. The Axe Of Kolt     | 8. Captain Kook         |
| 9. Phoenix             | 10. Laurence C. games   |

### STORM:

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Velnor's Lair     | 2. Golden Apple   |
| 3. Mutant (River)    | 4. Mordon's Quest |
| 5. Lords Of Time     | 6. Faerie         |
| 7. Quann Tulla       | 8. Earthshock     |
| 9. A Harvesting Moon | 10. Magnetic Moon |

### TIM:

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The Hobbit         | 2. Adventureland      |
| 3. Dungeon Adventure  | 4. Tower Of Despair   |
| 5. The Golden Apple   | 6. Colossal Adventure |
| 7. Impossible Mission | 8. Espionage Island   |
| 9. Velnor's Lair      | 10. Lords Of Time     |



# ADVENTURE REVIEW

## THE TEST (128k ONLY)

**Reviewed By:** STORM.

*Hey, a Ken Bond adventure, which means an Amstrad conversion. Conversions aren't always that successful so let's see what happens here.*

### **STORYLINE:**

The Elite Fighting Force (EFF) have accepted your application to join their ranks, but first you must pass an aptitude test. This involves being dropped by Parachute into an environment that has been made intentionally hostile and working your way out by means of your wit.

### **THE ADVENTURE:**

You land safe and sound in a clearing next to a white cross, wearing a jumpsuit and boots and carrying a letter you were sent that contains your instructions. Quite soon you are outside a plain wooden door of a building with access dependent on pressing four numbered buttons on a box. This at least was fairly straightforward.

Inside is a lofty room with a box suspended high above you. Getting at it though involves getting another easily found object and using another unobtainable object. By the way, the PARSER prefers PUT A IN B here, and also elsewhere. Anyway, once you've got it and its contents, it's time to leave the building and head north to the Defile with its problems, and to the

quarry. (*What's a Defile? - Ed?*) If you make a mistake here with the Chute it's a S.D.S (*That's a Sudden Death Syndrome - Ed!*) Actually there are quite a few places where you may get killed so I would advise you to regularly RAMSAVE.

Around about here there is a door you will need to get through. The bulldozer (*what bulldozer? - Ed?*) will either kill you or get you past it to the Barn with its tractor. An object found around here will be used to good effect at the meadow. Then it's past the bull to get a couple more things before you reach the Bog. This is a fairly large maze-like construction (12 locations) but seems even larger because of the inputs needed to find a non-fatal route through it.

You are near the end of part one when you reach an orchard. For me, this had the hardest sequence of moves to do. Several VERB - NOUN - PREP - NOUN inputs before saving my position and objects and loading then into Part 2.

The second half of the game can basically be split into 4 sections. First is getting the necessary items to overcome the WELL problem. Next comes the ENGINE SHED. Both need a certain sequence of inputs to be done to progress. Then, if you get through a problem with a SKI-LIFT you should be pleased as punch. In comparison, the last sequence of breaking and entering seems almost simple.



## THE TEST (128k ONLY)

### GOOD POINTS:

Both sections have about 70 locations with masses of messages covering most inputs in this PAW-ed game. Straight-forward mapping and lots of problems to overcome.

### BAD POINTS:

Well, let's start with my usual moan regarding the need for lots of verb - noun - preposition - noun or verb - under noun input. Getting through the Bog, even knowing what was needed took ages as did the sequence in the engine shed. The game is not really an 'open' adventure making exploration a rather step by step affair. Exploration / progress is dependent on solving problem A before you can enter the next phase etc.

### CONCLUSION:

Lots to do in lots of locations is a big plus point naturally. The game is somewhat tricky in certain areas due to the intricate nature of the solutions meaning you will definitely be kept

busy over several long, dark winter evenings.

### • THE TEST •

*The Guild*

760 Tyburn Road

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PRICE: £3.50 (tape - 128k only)

£5.00 (disk)

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GLENDA COLLINS.

### RATINGS:

PACKAGING	6
STORYLINE	7
OPENING PLAY	7
PROBLEMS	7
LOCATION TEXT	4
PARSER	5
GAME DESIGN	6
DIFFICULTY	EXPERIENCED
PLAYABILITY	6
PERSONAL RATING	7

## ADVERTISEMENT

### SQUARE 1

THE Fanzine for lovers of SCI-FI and FANTASY.

If you enjoyed the cut-down sample issue that comes FREE with this issue of FROM BEYOND then you'll love the real 'full-size' item! Use the special **SQUARE 1** order form (enclosed) to get a discount if you subscribe.



# ADVENTURE REVIEW

## THE LIFE OF A LONE ELECTRON

**Reviewed By:** TIM.

*I've had this game for a little while and have purposely NOT had a proper play until I could find time to fully take it in. Y'see the concept is a bit unusual - playing the part of an Electron, and I liked Gareth Pitchford and Scott Denyers last collaboration - MICROFAIR MADNESS so I really cleared the decks, made sure I had nothing to disturb me and started to play...*

### **STORYLINE:**

You play the part of EDMOND the ELECTRON. Rather stupidly you've crashed your 'orbital' (that's an electron's form of transport apparently) in the city of ELEKTRONZ - demolishing a goodly sized chunk of it as you did so! So, you find yourself stranded, miles away from home, and all you have to help out is your wits. The actual point of the game is to try and get home and you do that by wandering the city streets and finding out just what a lone electron is capable of. That's about it really.

### **THE ADVENTURE:**

A few mandatory key-presses takes you past the optional storyline and intro screens and on into the game itself. Scotty D. makes a point of saying that the game was by Gareth Pitchford though the corrections, debugging, etc. was down to Scott himself. At the first location you discover the

wreckage of your crashed orbital - what a wreck. The damage stretches over to Alphasigma Road - note the name - there's lots of them to be seen - all with scientific names (you know what I mean). Examine your craft and you'll see that it's a complete write off. Examine it again and you see that it's got a bonnet. It might be a good idea to type HELP here and see what the author has to say about things.

There's a good bit to be done and subsequently had at the first location, so spend as much time as you like in pursuit of a couple of objects. One point I'd like to make (before I forget) is that the games cursor is made up of a positive and negative blob (for want of a better word). Why mention it? Well, the game is all about Ions, Protons, negatives, positives and techie stuff like that.

Anyway, getting back to the story... Pay close attention to the names of objects - mostly they seem to have a double meaning. The same goes to any location names, characters etc. Travel around (you are relatively free to do so) and see what's what. Make a map if you like - you won't need a big bit of paper.

As you wander, explore, examine, search and map (and collect things to use too) you'll see that the land of Elektronz has a lot in common with most other places. There are streets, houses, everyday objects etc. This is



# THE LIFE OF A LONE ELECTRON

where I got my first shock. You see I thought that a game featuring such an unusual theme would be set in an unusual place, but to have it set in the everyday world was a disappointment. The same goes for having only everyday objects to use too - even if they have got unusual names they are still everyday items. You'll see what I mean later on in the review.

After 20 minutes of adventuring I'd come to a few dead ends though at the same time I'd seen roughly half the game. In that time I'd also experienced a couple of semi-sudden deaths (although to be fair they were slightly sign-posted) and had collected an armful of useful items. A few of these items had been almost instantly usable and allowed progress to be made into uncharted areas of the game. Some of the other objects in my possession however were baffling. I admit here and now that I had to have a couple of looks at the help-sheet at a couple of points, but once I learned that there is a way to progress by using your loaf then the help-sheet was duly cast aside and progress from here on in was down to me and my massive intellect.

If you didn't believe that last little boast I don't blame you. You see it's like this, the game is okay as far as it goes, though after you learn that almost all the problem solving that you have to do in the game comes through play on words and puns (and making the connection between object

names and problems) then solving it is somewhat easy.

Don't get me wrong, everything is well programmed, works nicely and there are a few good problems to solve and laughs to be had, though things do tend to be a bit one dimensional. By now you'll know what I mean by that. What, you don't know? Okay, I'll tell you. What you do is examine things, get objects, examine them, find out their use via a message or their description which then shows what does what and, if you've paid attention to location descriptions etc. you'll know where, or on what, to use the object. There's the odd bit of object combination/manipulation to be done, but mostly it's straightforward get + use = objective achieved.

The only really difficult part of the game is making the connection between objects and their names and their uses. For instance: To make progress at one stage you need distract the attention of a character (for want of a better word). With a bit of luck (more like searching and examining) you'll have a woolly jumper in your possession. This object does what its name suggests, i.e. jump. Well, it is a jumper. That, believe it or not, is the key to the game. Just think of similar connections between what you carry and what you need do and you'll be well away. It won't take Einstein to work out what an Ion, Pi (Greek Pi at that), Fan-belt or other double-meaning object does.



# THE LIFE OF A LONE ELECTRON

When I realised how to solve the problems I started to enjoy the game a bit more as up till then I really was wondering just where the game was going. It's a bit of a shame though to learn that it's not a very big adventure and is hard to see where the FULL memory went as from what I gathered there's actually not a huge amount of text to take up the memory. No flashy sonics or graphix either.

## GOOD POINTS:

The best bit about the whole game is undoubtedly the puzzles. Having said that there aren't that many, but it is fun trying to work out what does what and what connection the objects have with one another given that their names mean one thing but may have an altogether different use.

## BAD POINTS:

There's nothing really bad about the game. It's nicely programmed and is different to everything that's been released for a couple of years. However, because it's a small game and the problems are relatively easy it will soon get solved. I used the helpsheet three times in total and finished it in about 8 hours - including stopping to make notes. Probably 50p too expensive - especially when Delbert's got the likes of the multi-part FAIRLY DIFFICULT MISSION on offer for £1.99

## CONCLUSIONS:

The fact that everything in the game is small or easy to do or slightly uninspired does nothing to make it

stand out in my opinion. However, what there is of the game is good. Given more problems, more locations & a general expansion of the whole kit and kaboodle I might just have been going bananas over it. As it is the chance to have some fun with an unusual theme and unlikely hero/central figure has been missed. Okay if you want to play something different. Okay as a 'stocking-filler' for Christmas, but not a patch on 'Microfair Madness' and as a standalone product it failed to impress. Sorry Gareth and Scott, this is the new TOUGH TIM you are dealing with here!

## • LIFE OF A LONE ELECTRON •

*Delbert The Hamster Software*

*9 Orchard Way*

*Flitwick*

*Beds MK45 1LF*

PRICE: £2.50 (tape)

Make Cheques and Postal Orders  
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Outside UK please add 50p per order  
or £1.00 for airmail.

## RATINGS:

PACKAGING	6
STORYLINE	5
OPENING PLAY	8
PROBLEMS	7
LOCATION TEXT	6
PARSER	8
GAME DESIGN	6
DIFFICULTY	BEGINNER
PLAYABILITY	7
PERSONAL RATING	5



# ADVENTURE REVIEW

## ARNOLD THE ADVENTURER III

*Reviewed By: THE HIT MAN.*

*Hey, what's happening out there in adventure land? Looks like Scotty D is not content with bringing out some wicked titles on his own Delbert The Hamster label, he's also still writing for Zenobi and is continuing his wild and wacky 'Arnold The Adventurer' series - so here goes with Arnie three - did it thrill me? Read on and see...*

### STORYLINE:

The wizard is spotted red in bed and will end up dead unless Arnie can get the fabled Goblet of Goodness from the Land of the Flower People. You know he can do it so let's get right to it.

### THE ADVENTURE:

Arnie starts in the wizard's shack with the wiz-man flat on his back. After a short chat with the dude, Arnie decided to try opening a magic cupboard. What was needed was something absurd, just a word before he got the contents and went outside. Being cautious, Arnie checked his inventory. What!!! No Uzi 9mm machine gun. Arnie always needs his gun to have some fun. PHONE CALL. Okay, so this is another Arnie. Hey, it's cool to be a fool, sometimes. Okay? This games Arnie has been described as 'The Prat in a Cape' - dare you to say that to the other Arnie!

So Big Arnie looked around outside. Mr. Squirrel was playing with his nuts

but reckoned he had one to spare. South of the tree was a pillock (!) of a hillock with rolling stones stopping you getting any satisfaction at the summit. By the riverbank, there are some more stones (Stepping this time) with a talkative frog. It's got probs with its bum while elsewhere there is Fido who wants Arnie for his chum... literally. Then all of a sudden we have an S.D.S (Sudden Death Syndrome). Hasta LaVista Arnie. ANOTHER PHONECALL. Later. Still reckon he should at least have a grenade-launcher. So Arnie got across the river and was minding his own business when he got jumped by some robbers. Bit tricky this prob but these Boyz don't like noise. Round the corner is Gerbilsbury, a quiet little place. Checked out Reg the Veg stall owner. Weird dude, only selling cabbages for food. To the east is a Toll Troll who just wants Arnie's money, honey. Arnie needed to explore elsewhere first.

There was a guy who asked Arnie for a favour at the Bowling Green. Arnie said Yes and got him out of a mess, before heading west to the pit and the circular tent containing some serious firepower. The Balrog Brothers were in dispute as to who (whom?) to shoot. Guess who volunteered? Wise move! Next time Arnie tries to make sure he has something for his head because he learnt that it's no fun being dead. Oh, while I remember. Don't forget the occasional search, or you'll be left in



# ARNOLD THE ADVENTURER III

the lurch. Later on Arnie felt the tension mounting and had to smash a few things up to break the boredom. That and play on a mean fruit machine. The broad near the pit, proved quite a hit and the guy said bye only after showing his appreciation for Arnie setting him free.

Eventually, Arnie got to the Flower People and was rewarded for his consideration with... an Uzi sub machine gun. Well, perhaps not, though what he got helped the wizard a lot and Arnie got back through the door, ready for more in Arnie 4.

## GOOD POINTS:

Lots to do in this PAW-ed game. No probs mapping and with the parser. There's an easy beginning to get you going. Lots of messages. Some even cover either friend or lover. I like it when, space permitting, authors put little hidden messages in when the player types certain famous names - try it yourself, Scott, and think about who's name you left out!

## BAD POINTS:

Not enough people to blow away on the day. What? Well I enjoy the bloodshed. Why do you think I got the name HIT MAN? Anyway that aside, there are a couple of tricky problems/solutions that may cause some grief, chief. Also only about 40 locations which is a bit too few.

## CONCLUSIONS:

A pleasant game from The Hamster (Scott Denyer). I wasn't there with

the other pair (of Arnold games) so I can't compare. I know I preferred Brian and the Dishonest Politician but don't ask me why. I don't know, bro. Perhaps it'll grow. Anyway, as Arnie usually states... "I'll be back." (*unless dear boy, the editor, that's me, gives you the sack!*)

• Over the coming issues of FB we may well be experimenting with reviewing styles. Some games lend themselves to different approaches, so you may see the odd Espionage game reviewed by James Bond, or Fantasy game reviewed by Merlin. What do you think? Feasible? Worth doing? What? Why not have a go yourself! Prizes for the best entry!

## • ARNOLD THE ADVENTURER 3 •

Zenobi Software

26 Spotland Tops

Cutgate, Rochdale

Lancashire OL12 7NX

PRICE: £2.49 (tape) £3.49 (+3 Disc)

Outside UK please add 50p per order or £1.00 for airmail.

## RATINGS:

PACKAGING	6
STORYLINE	5
OPENING PLAY	6
PROBLEMS	7
LOCATION TEXT	6
PARSER	7
GAME DESIGN	6
DIFFICULTY	INTERMEDIATE
PLAYABILITY	6
PERSONAL RATING	6



# ESPIONAGE STORY

## AGENT TWO: by June Rowe

AGENT TWO  
by June Rowe.

To: M.  
From: N.S.

Top Secret - Highly Confidential.  
(for M's eyes only)

As instructed, I kept a close watch on the agent known as Two. I was disguised, of course, so that I wouldn't be recognised as an U.N.C.L.E. agent, and I was fortunate enough to hear Two talking to someone. I was not able to discover who this was, but as he was a small, weedy sort of man, it was definitely not Two's partner, One, who, as we know, is a well-built, muscular type.

I did discover, during the course of their conversation, that the head of Two's organisation has the code name of Tartan Tam. It seemed that when T.T. was on holiday, two had come into possession of a mysterious parchment and suspected that it was connected with the missing viridium crystals.

(These, as we know, had been stolen from a M.O.D. Research establishment and their recovery was essential, but U.N.C.L.E. had been unable to discover their location.) Being a very intelligent agent, Two decided not to report this to T.T.'s second in

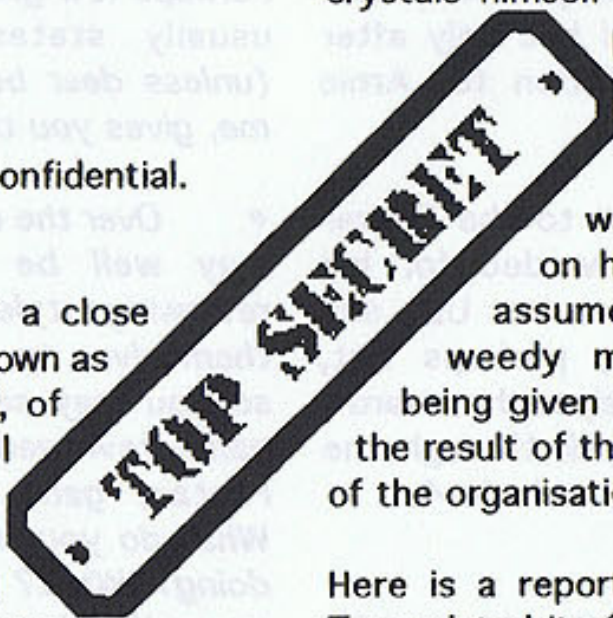
command, a woman with the code name of Lorna, but to retrieve the crystals himself with the help of his partner. I got the impression that this was a VERY secret mission, and T.T. was to be told about it on his return. I therefore assumed that the small, weedy man was a courier, being given the task of reporting the result of the mission to the head of the organisation.

Here is a report of the mission, as Two related it: *(In the style of a Tom Frost / Tartan Software adventure.)*

I knew the writing on the parchment to be Gaelic and to get it translated, I took it to a professor attached to the British Museum. It turned out to be a poem called 'The Seven Hunters'. I recognised this as another name for the Flannan Islands, which are in the Outer Hebrides.

On further study of the poem, I realised that it contained a coded message - a submarine belonging to a foreign power would stand by to collect the crystals. The date given was two days hence - the plot was discovered in the nick of time!

We flew to Lewis and there persuaded a local fisherman to take us to the islands, but before we embarked, we purchased diving suits and oxygen





## AGENT TWO: by June Rowe

apparatus, telling the fisherman that we were scientists investigating marine life. We arranged for him to pick us up again the next day.

The fisherman landed us on the smallest island, telling us that the only inhabitant was a sheep farmer who would put us up for a suitable payment.

We found the farmer to be a surly type, but once we had given him the supply of Scotch whisky we had purchased on Lewis, he became friendly and provided us with a map showing the seven islands.

He was unwilling to lend us his dinghy, but One was able to steal it while I plied the farmer with drinks. When he had got to the happy state where he wasn't taking much notice of me, I disconnected his telephone, to prevent communication with the outside world, and we hid our unwanted diving suits and apparatus in the barn. Then, using One's strength and endurance, we travelled round the islands in the dinghy, until we found one with a long narrow building which looked quite new.

There were only two doors into the building. The one at the north end was securely fastened with a stout padlock, but a door at the south end of the building was only locked. I dispatched my colleague to search an out house we had seen, while I walked round the building to ascertain if there were people inside. I could hear voices

beyond the locked door, so I waited until One returned with some tools he had found. I then asked him to lift me so that I could see through a window. I noticed that the door was locked on the inside and the key was in the lock. There were several people inside - two of them looked like scientists, and the rest were burly, ugly-looking types who were evidently guards, as they were armed with machine guns. We ourselves had guns which fired hypodermic darts. The solution in the darts would cause instant unconsciousness on penetrating the skin.

having seen this group, I decided it would be best to break in at the north end of the building. It did not take One long to force the padlock, after I had padded it with my jacket to deaden any noise.

Inside this end of the building there was no light, so I sent One to search the outhouse again. After a time, he came back with two torches, so we were able to proceed.

There were several rooms leading from the long corridor in which we found ourselves. One of them was an office, in which I found details of the crystals and discovered that they could only be handled while wearing thick leather gloves, and had to be in a lead-lined box for transport.

Outside the other door, I could hear snoring coming from the inside. I opened the door quietly, and looking



## AGENT TWO: by June Rowe

through the crack, I saw a guard, asleep. I told One to shoot him as I opened the door, which he did. Ignoring the now unconscious guard, I searched the room and found a cupboard containing a supply of leather gloves. I took two pairs and gave one pair to my colleague, but we found that while wearing them, we were unable to operate the delicate triggers of our weapons.

The guard had, in his pocket, a slip of paper with figures written on it. I decided this was the combination of the safe which we found in yet another room, but on opening the safe, we saw to our disappointment that it contained only an empty lead-lined box. This I asked One to carry, because it was quite heavy.

I now realised that we were approaching the room where I had seen the two scientists and the guards. We had to get rid of the guards before we would be able to approach the scientists and locate the crystals. I told One to go to the north end of the building, where we had entered, make a loud noise and then quickly run to the south end, where I would let him in through the door. I then hid in one of the rooms to wait, with the door open slightly so that I could watch the corridor.

After the guards ran past me, I quickly ran into the room where the scientists were. I held them at bay with my gun while I unlocked the door to let my partner in, then I allowed

One to threaten them with physical violence in order to persuade them to disclose the whereabouts of the crystals.

One of the scientists soon gave in and handed over the key to a door in the west wall. Leaving One to guard the scientists, I entered a small room and found the crystals lying on a lead-topped table. Realising that I would have to drop my gun in order to wear the gloves, I returned to the other room and told One to go and get the crystals. He gave me his gun, and I shot both of the scientists with darts to render them unconscious.

When One came back with the crystals safely in the lead-lined box, we made our escape through the southern exit before the guards came back. We then returned to our haven on the smallest island to await the return of the fisherman.

The crystals have now been sent back to the M.O.D. Research establishment and the Royal Navy alerted to watch for the submarine.

End of Agent Two's report.

Conclusion - Agents Two and One seem to be a very competent team. Therefore I request permission to recruit them into the ranks of U.N.C.L.E. agents, if they can be persuaded to leave Tartan Tam's organisation.

*Anyone got any more stories?*



# ADVENTURE REVIEW

## SCARY MANSION

**Reviewed By:** TIM.

*Ah yes, an old ZODIAC SOFTWARE re-release via DELBERT THE HAMSTER. A smart move on Delbert's part methinks, because as far as funny games go I think the Zodiac productions were my faves. Fairly Difficult Mission tickled my fancy some time ago - and that was by the ZODIAC'S too, so let's hope this effort is half as good (or should that be twice as good?).*

### STORYLINE:

The storyline, such as it is, is quite simple. A murder has taken place at the Scary Mansion and it's up to you as the super-sleuth to find evidence, question suspects and help the bungling police wrap the crime up. See, told you it was simple.

### THE ADVENTURE:

This two part 48k adventure, by one of the only programming teams to produce good quality spoofs and parody's, starts off well if a little slowly. The laughs don't begin with the software though, oh no, as the cassette cover is one of the feeblest attempts I've ever encountered. But that means nothing as far as game quality and overall impression / personal rating goes, so we'll just say that the cover has some letters on the front, though to be fair you do get a storyline on the inside cassette flap as well as a little pull-out sheet with character profiles on it. The last few

Guild games I've had have all had a really good 'standard' cover with a wizard's profile and spellcasting hand on it... come on Scotty, now is the time to either do a standard cover or something a trifle better. Hang on there Tim, stop your useless space-wasting waffle and get on with the review. Okay, hold on to your hollihocks, here it comes...

Well, the loading screen disappears and then we have the usual author names, 'thanks to...' etc., then it's on into the game its self. You find that you are in your bathroom complete with reasonable split-screen graphic. A couple of objects catch your eye and the bathroom description should have you chuckling - especially when you see what you and your housekeeper Mrs. Stebson get up to in there! Your chuckles should give way to a loud banging on the front door... it's your lifetime pal Dr. Flotsam. When Mrs. S. reaches the door he asks whether 'Rogers' (that's you) is coming out to play?

Before long you are exploring your house (not really all that much to see in it) and Flotsam is spilling the beans about the murder which you will soon be off to investigate! While having a wander round your abode a few neat 'n' tidy and quick to appear graphics will pop up and you'll also discover one annoying aspect of the game which I'm afraid runs throughout. Dr. Flotsam will keep following you.



# SCARY MANSION

That's not a drawback, but the programmers have seen fit to make you press a key in order for the 'Flotsam enters the room' message to appear. This means that you often end up moving from location to location, then having to press a key, then reading about Dr. Flotsam's entrance. Not so bad you say to yourself. Well, on more than one (one hundred perhaps?) occasion I found I'd started my input not realising Dr. Flotsam was waiting for his key press (in the wings as it were) so my input ended up missing the first letter. This in turn caused me no end of retyping of commands because the first keypress I made merely allowed the 'Flotsam Enters' message to be displayed leaving my input in tatters. The moral of this little tale is check the screen when you leave a location to see if you need press a key to allow Flotsam to enter etc...

That aside, progress is relatively swift, and before too long you'll have gotten everything from the house (red herrings included) and will be ready to stride out towards the Scary Mansion. That happens to be in part two, so you can take it from me that part one is not all that long. What is long, however, are the numerous humorous descriptions of locations, events, happenings, conversations etc. Needless to say, and as is so often the case with funny adventures, the problem solving takes a back seat while the witty lines take over. That's all very well if it works (i.e. if the humour is enough to hold your

interest)... fortunately it does in this game!

Best graphic of part one is undoubtedly the interior of the dark room. Naturally enough you'll need a torch to appreciate it!

Hopefully by this time you'll have been outside your house - situated in Quaker Street (where else?) to see what lies ahead of you. Movement throughout part one is reasonably unrestricted (apart from a couple of locked / barred locations) and before Dr. Flotsam has another chance to make another annoying sentence destroying entrance you'll be off to New Scotland Yard and a few other unusual places that call for a cunning detective to use all his powers of subterfuge and disguise. Then it's a final trip of part one to the choo-choo station where your journey begins - yet also ends. It ends because it's the end of part one and you'll be off to the Mansion and naturally enough the beginning is that of part two! Here we find ourself facing the dilemma of digging out a blank tape on which to save part 1's data! Hope you've done everything and gotten everything before you reach the point of no return. Me, I favour the kind of game that simply won't allow you access to a password to part two unless you have successfully completed part one first. Personal preference of course, and there's nothing wrong with the method used here to start part two.

In part two, once your data has been



# SCARY MANSION

loaded from part one, things carry on in pretty much the same style as before. There are more characters here to talk to, and thankfully it is just a matter of 'TALK TO *character*' rather than a lot of TELL ME ABOUT 'x' or ASK 'x' ABOUT 'y'. Okay, this is a Quilled game so the TELL ME convention that is used here is probably about as complex as things go anyway. There are also more locations to visit - or so it seemed, and in general there is just more to do. You'll have met the local police and the Scotland Yard twerps by now, and that means one Inspector Retard will have asked you for your help in solving the case. What he actually means is will you solve the case for him - about par for the course really. One word of warning when examining 'likely looking' objects and that is to use 'CE OBJECT'. The 'CE' means Carefully Examine. It works too and is a good abbreviation.

But hang on... where's the stiff? Once in the Mansion you can't miss it. There are a few folk to question - all of them appear to be guilty as hell and with alibis as thin as a gnats eyelid! You'll begin to put the pieces of the jigsaw together as you play, mainly because the messages you get from conversations and examinations will give you plenty of clues as to who done what, why, and to whom why what was done then? (what?)

At one stage in the proceedings things get pretty desperate. The authors see fit to put in the easiest problem ever

to appear in any game (and it's appeared in a few before I can tell you) - but even then they give it a twist by saying that reviewers who are playing the game should mention the fact that this particular problem is so poor that they should mention it specifically in the review. So I have! Then there's the kitchen to check out. Its description says it's a large kitchen. I'll say it is. Just look at the picture that goes with it! Strange stuff indeed - yet it still managed to make me chuckle.

Well there you have it, the end of the game isn't far away, and there's not that many problems to tax your brain. A couple of twists are introduced towards the end which I appreciated and sort of bring the game to a satisfying if rather mad conclusion.

## GOOD POINTS:

Very cheap and cheerful game that will raise more laughs than it does frowns. There's not an awful lot to do in it except read the 'funny' text. That, however is good enough reason to buy the game I think as it is the main reason for it being here! (If you get my existential drift?) The graphics are good and some are funny in themselves or help complement the text / joke of the moment. In all you do get more problems than others see fit to put in their so called 'spoofs' so things can't be all bad.

## BAD POINTS:

Flotsam's annoying way of entering the room really irritated me towards



# SCARY MANSION

the end of the game. Having said that there's an even worse case right at the start where he and Mrs. Stebson insist on coming and going at such a rate that you literally end up pressing 'anykey' while they come and go about 8 times before you can type a command. We also have the fact that the game is SMALL (in number of locations and objects contained therein) despite being a two parter.

## CONCLUSIONS:

Despite my sometimes harsh criticism of the way some aspects of the adventure works, it still is a funny game with just about enough going on in it to see you still smiling at the end. I don't think it'll take you long to reach the end, and that is its only real failing. The price tag saves the game somewhat (a hell of a lot actually) as does the humour which is never really smutty but is almost always quite funny at least - some very witty observations are made throughout the game, with everyone from BR to taxi drivers taking some stick. Despite a low-ish PERSONAL rating of only 6, it's still a game that must be recommended if only to play as an amusing 'filler' between more serious

pursuits. It's funnier than most funny games which in the end is all it tries to be. For a far funnier, far more meaty parody adventure then try one of Delbert's other Zodiac games. Fairly Dangerous Mission is one I'd recommend wholeheartedly and without reservation.

## • SCARY MANSION •

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PACKAGING	6
STORYLINE	4
OPENING PLAY	7
PROBLEMS	4
LOCATION TEXT	7
PARSER	9
GAME DESIGN	9
DIFFICULTY	BEGINNER
PLAYABILITY	8
PERSONAL RATING	6

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# ADVENTURE REVIEW

## DELBERT'S WHEEL OF FORTUNE

**Reviewed By:** STORM.

*As this is a tape containing 4 games as opposed to the usual one, I'll do the review slightly differently. Larry the Lemming and Snow Joke are actually by Scott Denyer while Quest for the Holy Snail and First Past the Post were written by Gareth Pitchford but programmed by Scott.*

### QUEST FOR THE HOLY SNAIL:

This game has Arthur sending Sir Godfrey of Glastonbury to find the fabled mollusc in the castle on the other side of the town. One of the early locations is the Prancing Prat Inn. If you are thorough here, you should be able to acquire a lamp from a local shop which will help you with a sword in a stone problem. After several other obstacles being overcome, you should be able to bypass the Bleak Night guarding the castle. Then things start getting more complicated. It has about 35 locations, aimed at the INTERMEDIATE adventurer, with a playability and personal rating both of 7.

### FIRST PAST THE POST:

Ernie Spludges has an argument with his fiancée, Rose Cheques and after breaking off the engagement, sends her a vile letter. Then they get back together again. The problem is that the letter is in the post and it must not reach her. This game gave me the most problems until I went over my moves a second time, and acquired a

couple more objects. Try various inputs and if it works, try it a second time. After which it is hunt the letter and make certain it doesn't get to rose. Again about 30 locations, aimed at a more EXPERIENCED adventurer, with a playability of 7 and a personal rating of 8.

### SNOW JOKE:

Driving through the snow, your car stalls and refuses to start despite your efforts and your swearing. Before you assume the worst, the offending word is 'SUGAR', which in my books is okay. Your problem is therefore to avoid freezing to death, and to either restart the engine or failing that, leave the vehicle. Oh, by the way, the door is frozen solid. This is an adventure with only one location - inside the car. If you check everything out, I would assume you would escape (and thus finish the game) as quickly as I did. This game is aimed at the total BEGINNER. The parser was somewhat unfriendly regarding a box of matches but hopefully this should have been sorted out by the time you get it.

Also I remember criticising another game several issues ago when the author left over 7000 bytes spare in the PAW database instead of making certain messages etc. more substantial. Snow joke had what must be a record number of unused bytes - some 20255, possibly even more if compression hadn't been used. I know it is only one location but that is one



## DELBERT'S WHEEL OF FORTUNE

hell of a lot of unused memory.  
Playability 5 and personal rating = 4.

### LARRY THE LEMMING:

Sorry, no information available on this as I was unable to load it. I was also unable to load the database into the PAW. Before you pass comment Scott, I've got a 48k and a 128k, and I also tried my friends 48k. (I did ask Storm to return the game to you Scott, as you asked me to do when I found a duff loader, but he didn't! Tim)

### CONCLUSIONS:

Four adventures for £2.99 works out at about 75 pence each which in my

books is very good value if the games are just average. However, these are of the same quality as Scott's and Gareth's other games which in my opinion, are definitely above average in most aspects, most of the time. In other words, possibly the best value for money currently available.

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# ADVENTURE REVIEW

## MAROONED

**Reviewed By:** THE JESTER.

*What does L.C. stand for? Like a Challenge? Lots of Conundrums? Lives in Capetown? All three? No, L.C. can only mean one thing - the man's back!*

### STORYLINE:

An unexpected windfall gives you the chance to fulfil your life's ambition - to win a yacht. You set off on your maiden voyage (did you name it "Titanic"?), and after three days of carefree sailing it happens - a tropical storm! Your little sea-faring knowledge is useless - the yacht is wrecked; you are thrown into the icy sea; and you can't swim!

### THE ADVENTURE:

As in all of Laurence Creighton's games, straight away you're up against it! The old adage, that if you sink for a third time you never come up again, certainly applies in this game - so some quick thinking is needed. There is also a legend amongst sailors that a certain cetacean comes to the aid of a drowning man - believe it!

Once out of the water, you find yourself on the beach of an "uncharted island" (author's words - not mine). Great, I thought, time to play at Robinson Crusoe (by the way, did you know that Robinson Crusoe is the only man who ever got all his work done by Friday?!). Not to be, I'm afraid. As the game unfolded, I found

the island contained a deserted village (complete with shop); a church; a BRICK building with a STEEL door (with a KEYPAD to open it); a house, surrounded by an ELECTRIFIED fence; a laboratory; refrigerator; laser gun etc. - obviously SOME-ONE has charted it!! However, leaving aside this one-word anomaly, let's get on with the game - where was I? Oh yes, on the beach - and at the foot of an unscalable cliff face, from the top of which a rope is dangling - out of reach, of course! No problem though, provided you managed to salvage something from your wrecked yacht before reaching the shore.

After mastering the cliff, the game opens up. Close by is the church, with the hands of its clock stuck at 1:30 (significant?) - a little exploring will bring to light some of its secrets. A few locations to the east is a dead tree in a clearing, with an old dying man at its base. Be quick, or he'll soon be as dead as the tree! However, get the inputs right and he'll tell you about the treasure hidden somewhere on the island - at least, the object of the game. He tells you "*your quest must begin at...*" (why do dying people always 'tail off' before they can tell you the important bit?); and cryptically adds "*Ibenez will help you!*"

Trekking further east, you encounter a native guard, who prevents entry to the burnt-out village. There are two



# MAROONED

ways of passing him and, needless to say, I chose the wrong one - as I found out many moves later (typical Laurence again - I should have known better!)

In the village itself you'll find a group of naive men, whose help you'll need to enlist for one task; a quarry and a dusty, boarded-up shop, each of which holds its own "goodies" - and there's the ubiquitous well! This one still retains its cross-piece - but the rope is missing. "I know where to get that!", I thought; so off I went to get it! And I succeeded - but in doing so, lost another item which, of course, I needed later (tricked again - I'll never learn!).

Across the ever-present pit, you'll meet the eccentric old man, with the strange black box, who tells you that *"the world must turn four times"* (what on earth can that mean? 'Scuse the pun!) ALL you have to do then is get into the laboratory; deal with the wolf; deactivate the electrified fence; suss out the house; avoid the ravenous rat; take a boat ride; cross the swamp; get through the narrow crack in the rock - and the treasure's all yours! nothing to it really!

I don't propose to say much about the presentation of the game - as with all Laurence's, it's written with the QUILL/PRESS, and has the usual PATCHED effects. It contains a RAM SAVE/LOAD facility (which you'll need), and the abbreviations can be learned from the "playing tips" found early in the game.

## GOOD POINTS:

Well up to Laurence's usual standard - plenty of problems to overcome, many of which "trick" you into doing things in the wrong order, and then force a re-think. After so many games, the fact that he can still "mislead" players with such regularity is a tribute to Laurence's writing ability.

## BAD POINTS:

Apart from the "anomaly" mentioned earlier, not a lot really. There is still the odd object that cannot be examined unless it's carried - only a little "niggle" but that's about it.

## CONCLUSIONS:

Not as difficult, I felt, as some of his previous games; enjoyable though.

### • MAROONED •

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PACKAGING	6
STORYLINE	5
OPENING PLAY	6
PROBLEMS	6
LOCATION TEXT	5
PARSER	7
GAME DESIGN	8
DIFFICULTY	INTERMEDIATE
PLAYABILITY	7
PERSONAL RATING	7



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## Dragon : Corya the Warrior - Sage.

**CORYA THE WARRIOR-SAGE: DRAGON** by Anthony Collins

Upon the holy mountain of Ianel-An-Uthen stands the citadel of the Ancient Ones. A fortress impenetrable by normal means, within the few are taught the way of the Warrior-Sages. Taken from their families when young the new priests of the Temple of Wisdom would learn the virtues of wisdom, the prowess of the warrior and the power of the sages. As they reached manhood they took the final test, the trial of Cutar, the death-walk. To perish now would mean oblivion for their soul, to survive would earn them the title of Warrior-Sage.

Seldom would a priest venture forth into the world of man, but this is the tale of one such man, of Corya the Warrior-Sage. Having left the mountain Corya travelled within the realm of Tannan for many years. Knowledge of a Warrior-Sage leaving the mountain spread like wild-fire throughout Tannan, but seldom was he seen unless the need was great and he would appear, always where he was needed most, always where only he could help....

.....Barley shut up the tavern a little before midnight and slowly made his way to the kitchens. Pouring himself a tankard of warm ale and seating himself in his favourite chair he settled back to ease his aching back. Exhausted from a hard days work he dozed in his chair, his head nodded and slowly dropped, resting his chin on his chest he slept.

The screaming from the village woke Barley with a start. He quickly got to his feet and the half-full tankard clunked as it fell to the floor. He half ran, half walked to the front of the tavern and opened the arched door that led to the village. All around pandemonium struck the village, buildings were ablaze, lighting the midnight sky with a red glow. Everywhere villagers ran, none seeming to now which direction to run, all trying to escape from something, but what. Horror gripped him as out of the sky, silhouetted by the fires all around, swept the dragon. An inhuman cry screeched above the sounds of panic and the crackling of the fire. Barley, shaking with fear, was rooted to the spot as the monster swept down towards him. A second soul-rendering cry was the last thing Barley heard as a ball of flame engulfed him, burning him to ash within seconds.

The dragon lifted and flew upwards, circling the village, aying its devastation. Several more times it circled above the village then content, made its way towards the mountains, the darkness cloaked it and it was seen no more.

The village was a shambles. Villagers spent the remainder of the night putting out fires, trying to stop the red menace spreading to the few untouched buildings. At first light the true cost was apparent. Three-quarters of the village was burnt to the ground or unsafe and crumbling. Many villagers where dead, burnt trying to save their homes, or simply engulfed by the beast as it attacked. The surviving villagers gathered at the great hall, itself without a roof and one corner badly damaged, but as safe a place as any. There they prayed for help, prayed for hope of a miracle.

Atop a small hill overlooking Ermahal stood Corya looking down at the devastation, he heard their prayers, he had come....

Dragon: Corya the Warrior-Sage is available on Spectrum Tape for £2.50, +3 Disk for £4.50, Commodore 64 Tape or Disk for £3.00. The Spectrum version is in two parts and the Commodore version is in three parts.

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## THE DARK TOWER

In the small store-room of the monastery stood a large oak chest, adorned with bands of copper and held together with tiny brass bands nailed in place with small iron nails. Inside this chest lay a green-leather book, its pages yellow with age and as brittle as a leaf on a cold autumn morn. On these pages, in dark blue ink, had been scrolled the annals of the 'Age of Shadows' and of the fate that befell the monastery of Draghag at the hands of marauding Orcs.

The book told of a time when there was a bitter struggle between humans and orcs, of a time when the 'Dark Lord' was slain and the orcs put to flight. It also told how many of the orcs split into small bands and spent their time roaming the countryside intent on pillaging and looting. One such band had attacked the monastery and stolen, amongst other religious artifacts, the legendary 'Golden Chalice'. They had then retired to the safety of the 'Dark Tower', a secure citadel situated somewhere beyond the Shadow Mountain. They also took with them the leader of the unicorn herd and after subjecting the poor creature to barbaric treatment, turned it loose in the forest.



**Spectrum 48K/128K+2.**

One day the abbot sent for you and informed you that even though you were but a mere novice it had befallen you, as the youngest and the bravest, to seek out the orcs and their infamous 'Dark Tower' and to recover the the stolen items. You were also instructed to find the unicorn, as that would be your only means of returning to the monastery.

The abbot and several of the monks accompanied you as far as the edge of the forest, but when an orc archer was spotted amidst the trees they all turned tail and left you to your own resources.

You wandered around aimlessly for a spell, then suddenly spy a wisp of smoke rising lazily over the tree-tops. Striding northwards, you head in the direction of the smoke ..

## ADVENTURE

**NOTES :** In order to put an item into a container simply input PUT HORN INTO BARREL or PUT APPLE INTO BAG. You can also PUT ALL INTO BARREL or GET ALL OUT OF BARREL. That is provided that you can find the barrel and something to put into it. Use RAMSAVE (RS) and RAMLOAD (RL) to store a position to MEMORY, but always use the standard SAVE and LOAD to store a more permanent record to TAPE. It is also possible to use the following commands - STUFF, PUSH, TURN, SPIN, PADDLE, POINT, STRIKE, RUB, MOVE, READ, EXAMINE, SEARCH, CLIMB, OUT and even to GET ALL EXCEPT followed by the name of the item you do NOT wish to pick up.

**HINTS :** Nests serve more purposes than just keeping eggs warm - sacks can prove very useful for disguising things - a mantelpiece is a good place to store things.



# Delbert Haber Scott

"It is with great sadness that I bring the news that DHHS is about to shut up shop... or shut up cage, as it were. Due to my ever-increasing workload, it is impossible to continue DHHS and supply you with the top service that is synonymous with DHHS (ahem!). Therefore, DHHS will cease trading as of the 30th November 1992. No plans have been made as yet as to what will happen with our catalogue, except to say that all authors will receive the rights to their games back, along with any outstanding royalty cheques. Please note, this is not an advertising gimmick, and that if you wish to purchase any games from us then do so before the closing date. No orders will be dispatched after the closing date, and any cheques will be returned.

Due to the astounding number of friends I have in the adventuring business, it is impossible to write to each of you singularly to break the above news, but if you wish to write personally having now read the above then of course I will reply to you all. Regards." S.Denyer, Managing Director, DHHS International.

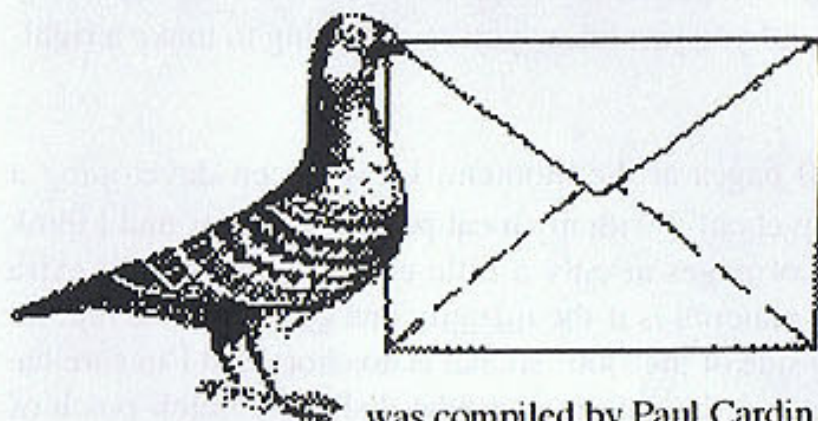
PS Just because that lazy bl\*der Delbert has shut up shop, doesn't mean you've got rid of ME that easily!!!

*Scott*



# READERS WRITES

## THE FROM BEYOND MAILBAG



*Great, only a few days after FB14 hits the streets an envelope marked FOR PUBLICATION arrives... It's from Paul Neale but sadly is only short, still, it is a letter for publication at least...*

• Dear Tim, Issue 13's crossword was compiled by Paul Cardin and won by June Rowe, who, by the way, has won the FB crossword before. The adventure game 'Jester's Jaunt' (ZENOB1) was co-written by Paul Cardin and June Rowe. I'm thinking "FIX or What??" Have a nice day...

**Paul Neale**  
**Barrow-in-Furness**  
**Cumbria**

*When you say it like that, Paul, it does sound rather fishy doesn't it? There have been other FB readers who have won on more than one occasion too. The reason for their apparent 'luck' is easily explained. Firstly June enters just about all (if not EVERY) competition. She also tends to get the answers right. Secondly there were under ten entries for the last crossword competition, half of them featured incorrect answers so were disqualified (natch!). That left only a few possible winners. I can promise you that had June not been the lucky winner plucked from the FB hat, it would have been another regular competition entrant and previous winner who would have won! What this means is there are a regular 'group' of people who bother to enter the competitions. Combine that with a hard crossword and you tend to end up with just a few people - usually the same ones (i.e. the really smart ones) who tend to end up winning! That's why we also occasionally run a more general 'easy' competition too. The easier the competition, the more entries we receive, and the more entries we get means there's more chance of seeing a new name as a winner.*

*Gosh, a letter from NEW PROBE editor **Barbara Gibb** has just landed on my desk (via the doormat), and Barbara's got one or two interesting things to say, so here goes... (starting with a reference to the trimmed-down Your Sinclair adventure column)*

• Dear Tim, What can you put on one page after the graphic artist has taken a sizable chunk of space? Probably no more than "Hello, Tim here, Goodbye." If the glossies cut back any further, and persist in preaching that the 8-bit machines are dead, eventually we'll all start to believe it!



# THE FROM BEYOND MAILBAG

Automapping in DRAGON SLAYER (reviewed last issue)! It is an 8-bit adventure not a PC one - and anyway, what is wrong with pencil and paper? Much more fun, especially when rapidly approaching one edge and you just know you're not going to make a right-angled turn until it is too late.

I know Adventure Probe is only 40 pages at the moment. I have been developing a friendly relationship (on a business level only) with my local photocopy shop, and I think I can afford to increase the number of pages at only a little extra cost (plus 10p extra postage) but I will only do this if the material is of the quantity and quality to warrant the extra typing. I love the editing/typing side of the "job" so that is no chore, but I'm sure the "lovable and cuddly" John Wilson is not the only reader who dislikes a hotch-potch of material each month.

Actually, I thought Probe had developed a format that suited most readers, but obviously not all! Excluding the cover, contents, and advertisement pages, August's issue will have about 32 pages x 60 lines of text, which is quite a lot! I try to make it as relevant to adventuring as possible, because I for one keep them as reference books long after I have read the reviews and letters pages.

When I get more proficient at TIMEWORKS DTP program the magazine may take on a different appearance, maybe larger print which means more pages if I'm at least to maintain the present level of information published each month. No doubt the reliable but aging 9-pin Citizen 120D will have to be replaced some time in the future which will probably help to improve the general appearance of the magazine.

Now for something a little more immediate. May I appeal to those who wrote to Tim about the demise of Probe, to put their points to me if they are still coy (see ad. for address) or to June Rowe, Letters Editor, 46 Hurdon Way, Launceston, PL15 9HX if they wish their letters to be published.

Surely I don't have to state the obvious. Unless I know what you think, I can't even try to make changes. I'll listen to anything constructive. General criticism may be valid, but not very helpful when it comes to the bottom line. My advertisement says "Run by enthusiasts for enthusiasts" and that is how I see Adventure Probe. I'm not a jack of all trades, so have to rely on readers to contribute (just like FB) but they are free to say what they like about the magazine. What I don't think is fair, is to condemn something before sampling it.

Keeping all the readers satisfied all the time would make me very happy, but we all know that is impossible. I have no axe to grind, no loyalty except to adventuring, and I subscribe to and support other adventure publications - long may we all continue.



# THE FROM BEYOND MAILBAG

I am in danger of hogging the entire letters column, so I will finish (?) with a bit of praise for your new reviewer The Jester who appears to have an excellent knowledge of adventuring, and occasionally likes the same adventures for the same reasons as myself - unlike you, Tim, but we have already agreed to differ. It is healthy constructive opinions that keep the mind, and hopefully the fanzines, alive.

I seem to have strayed back to my main theme. All I can say is, try Adventure Probe and let me know what you like, dislike and can just about tolerate, and why! If something is thrown out, what would you like in its place. I will go to great lengths to produce the goods, but bear in mind I only have a small corner of the living-room, an Atari, a 9-pin printer, and a part-time job which pays £13.00 per week. many of these points will be made in my Editorial in the August issue of Adventure Probe. I am waiting to hear from you and will refund postage on request.

**Barbara Gibb**  
**Editor: Adventure Probe**

*I had a brief dream the other day (a day dream) that I'd won the pools. Did I want to bask on a tropical beach, doing nothing all day? No! Given enough money I'd certainly want to turn FB into a GLOSSY magazine, full of colour pictures, massive competitions etc. Sure enough it would lose money, but being able to come up with the goods would be the biz and would keep me happy. All us fanzine and software producers really want to do is do the best we can. So, as Barbara said, let US know what you want and we'll try to give it to you (bearing in mind our limited funds and abilities).*

*I must just say something about DRAGON SLAYER as reviewed in issue 14. The auto-mapping feature wasn't a feature at all. It wasn't supposed to be a feature of the game. However, I was disappointed because rather than just including a little map of the start locations, the author, Martin Freemantle, could have either left it out as it serves no purpose, or expanded it into an auto-mapper. You don't need a PC to be able to do that - or so Jon Lemmon of Compass Software says. Yes Jon, whatever happened to the auto-mapper you were going to do?*

*Next up is a letter from JONATHAN (robotics) SCOTT concerning FB.*

• Dear Tim, I was distressed to see that FB was not E.J.Pettit's cup of tea, but I can understand that some 'wrinklies' might feel uncomfortable with it. But why does he accuse the review system of being 'bitty'?! It is one of the best review systems I've seen (beats the silly one that's doing the rounds in the Arcade reviews of Y.S. at the moment by a mile - the YS one is just 'good points' and 'bad points'. At least the adventures in YS are reviewed with a decent system!). FB's review system covers everything and despite the explanation of the blighter taking up a whole page in every issue of FB it still is a well



# THE FROM BEYOND MAILBAG

worked out system. It's better being composite than positive! By this I mean that 10 different categories in the review system beats one 'OVERALL' mark. The personal rating isn't, after all, OVERALL - it's a PERSONAL rating... certain reviewers do have different likes and dislikes in adventures. Indeed, when you publish what STORM thinks of DOOMSDAY, it will give us a good picture of the varied tastes that abound amongst the FB team.

The different fonts used create a very powerful effect! Beats 'plain black text on a white background', CORPUS BOLD is classy for the headings, BRUSHSCRIPT brilliant for the contents, TRINITY MEDIUM / MEDIUM ITALIC great for the BALROG interview, which brings me on to the interview... it was a magnificent insight into this adventuring genius. The Atari ST Adventure Creator... STAC... may have been named with JW in mind. Reverse it and you have CATS... Spooky!

**Jonathan Scott**  
**Londonderry**  
**Northern Ireland**

*Oooh great, lots of points for me to comment on there. Okay, first of all I'm glad you like FB, Jon. Me and the 'Team' do our best to try and give our readers something worthy each issue. FB is more of a 'reviews' magazine than anything else. As you'll have noticed we aim to add a few letters and maps each issue too, but that's just about as far as we go. Hopefully, if everything has gone to plan, there will be a gamut of maps this issue, which are always handy I think. Of course we also try to give some useful stuff away with each issue too, and this issue (again, if all goes to plan) you get a free sampler copy of SQUARE ONE magazine. All in all FB MUST be excellent value for money if nothing else. I agree with you about the review system. It is detailed and what's more you are right, the PERSONAL RATING is a personal rating and not an indication of the OVERALL worth of the game. Hopefully the reviews are detailed enough to allow people to see what the game is like rather than having to rely on the ratings. I like rating things. When Jack Lockerby gets 10 out of 10 personal rating for one of his games it's a kind of confirmation of his skills and I'm sure it is gratifying for him to see it score well. When something scores a personal 7, the author should then try to aim for a higher mark next time, and the same goes for all aspects of the rating system. Everything in everyday life is rated to a certain degree - from political party ratings to TV programs. Why should adventures escape this treatment?*

*The point you made about 'wrinklies' erm, sort of rings true. However, I'm rapidly heading for 'wrinklie-dom' myself being almost a pensioner, well 31 anyway. The fact that FB is too colourful, lively and altogether 'not their cup of tea' for some people is okay by me. E.J. Pettit didn't like FB end of story. FB must remain a bit lively and change direction every now and then to help hold MY interest. I've said it before and make no*



## THE FROM BEYOND MAILBAG

*apologies for saying it again: When FB stops beings fun to do then I will stop doing it. So, anyone out there with a letter, idea, article, story or whatever, then send it in now! You see, I feel a yawn coming on.*

*Final letter this issue is from Laurence 'Quill-master' Creighton...*

• Dear Tim, After reading the interview with John (Balrog) Wilson in the last edition, and I specifically refer you all to Question 7, where John replied that the end of Spectrum adventures had already come and gone. We all know that if someone collapses and appears dead, we can call the paramedics who usually can revive the patient, and this patient can go on to live a fruitful continuation of his life. The same should be said for the adventure scene that we all love so much. I must assume that each pair of eyes reading this august magazine is an adventure freak/fan/writer/player or whatever - but we all love adventures. What is needed is resuscitation and even more important: to go out and enthuse new people, even if it is the next door neighbours! Who knows who could develop an interest in adventuring...

At this point in time the market is saturated - there is this handful of us who write and play and thank god for people like John who do all the donkey work in copying and distributing. But it's basically the same people over and over and over. Of course it's moribund... but not dead. I ask each single reader to put on his thinking cap, and attempt to come up with an idea HOW to bring more people into the scene. If each person can find ONE - you work it out! If you get someone remotely interested, drag them indoors and load in an adventure, something good like mine (!) and show them how it's played - you'd be amazed how it catches on - I know: that's how I started a million years ago. Aim at the parents: after their kids have gone to bed, why not play an adventure - it is adult entertainment. Publishers could re-sell games long ago wrapped in mothballs at "special" prices to entice newcomers. But the essence of my plea, is to look beyond the circle of players we have at this point in time. There are more out there (where did WE come from?) we only have to recruit them. When visitors come round who are not already adventurers, talk about it and load one in and demo it to them. A good idea (for those with Quill / PAW etc.) would be to write a simple game of say 5 locations that a cretin could solve in 10 minutes - but it would illustrate what an adventure really is. What WE take for granted may not be fully understood by the "uninitiated". Come on everyone, thinking caps ON, and maybe drop Tim a line with your ideas: All this scene needs is a bang on the chest, and a breath of fresh air - behold, revival. Only WE can do it, and it's for ourselves. No one lies down and waits to die. Hopefully this letter will be published before X-Mas so I'd like to wish everyone a Happy and Joyous festive season.

**Laurence Creighton**  
**Cape Town**  
**South Africa**

*Cant argue with that, LC. That's all for now. See you next issue. Tim.*



# ADVENTURE REVIEW

## HIRED TO KILL

*Reviewed By: TIM.*

*Hired to Kill, by Tom Powell, has been sent to me before. Well, to be more precise Tom tried to send it through the YS channels and it didn't reach me. Maybe something to do with the Mike Gerrard changeover? Anyway, it's arrived at last, so let's hope it was worth the wait.*

### STORYLINE:

Another game with a rather compact storyline. The game is set in mediaeval England in and around the city and castle of Duchester. Like all good games there's a hero and a villain. Promising start, Tom. However, a twist in the tale comes early as you discover that the evil Baron (who is bleeding the taxpayers dry - now who does that remind me of?) has hired you to kill the King who just happens to be on his way to Duchester to investigate the stories of the Baron's high rates of taxation. So it's your task to enter the castle, secrete yourself somewhere safe (like a book repository in Dallas) and do the dirty deed.

### THE ADVENTURE:

First thing to notice is the fact that there's a status line at the top of the screen which houses three bits of information. From left to right we have: a display of the time, your current HEALTH / STRENGTH POINTS (out of 255) and finally your Dirin counter which starts at 10 though can

go up if you buy and sell items for a profit. Dirin's, in case you are wondering are wot we call money!

Okay, second thing to notice is that the clock starts ticking away and things start happening from the word go. Off I trundled down the street in search of some fun. I cam across a shopkeeper - one of many who, despite my cheery greeting decided to either ignore me or babble on about things. The instructions with the game state that you can question people by saying: ASK 'x' ABOUT 'y'. If this is true then I found it hard to find a single soul early on (or even late on for that matter) who would entertain me and answer a simple question. What was worse was that I innocently picked up some hemlock and the shopkeeper shouted 'stop thief!'. I was only looking at it. Quick as a flash I dropped the item and promptly bought it from him. That was accepted, though to my surprise a gang of burly guards rushed in, carted me away and flung me in a cell! A quick look at the helpsheet (hint-sheet - more of that later) showed a way to escape the dungeon, but as I didn't have the right stuff with me (as I'd only just started the game) then I had to re-start over again. This time I made sure I bought the hemlock and all was okay. The shopkeeper still refused to talk to me, and instead I was treated to the likes of: "The shopkeeper sneezes", "The shopkeeper coughs", "he scratches" or says "stop following me"? To be



# HIRED TO KILL

fair every character in the game says those things - FREQUENTLY! I travelled around the town in search of a decent conversation or clue as to what to do next, and as the guard at the castle gate only stopped my passing him I could only ask him the same sort of things as I'd already asked everyone else, and that was: ASK GUARD ABOUT BARON. I drew a blank again. Yes, I got the usual sneezing, coughing and stop following me replies - all unsolicited too!

One early problem with the game is that unless you press the space bar (don't press enter) then messages appear at a ten second interval and time passes. You'll see people enter your location, leave, come in again, say stop following me, cough etc., etc. None of them seemed to have purpose or a fixed goal, so I left them to their wanderings. I did come across one shopkeeper who, having had his shop closed due to the Baron's high taxes, I thought would be only too keen to dish the dirt on the Baron (or anybody come to that). Wrong. ASK SHOPKEEPER ABOUT BARON got the usual flood of sneezes, coughs etc. At one point a beggar came up to me and said: "I hope there aren't any pick-pockets about". Why? Who'd want to pick a beggars pocket?

As combat plays a part (although not a huge part) in the game (hence your health-ometer at the top of the screen) I tried to duff people up. No luck again. So I decided to concentrate on problem solving. There are a lot of

problems about, many objects are laying around or can be bought and they are often combined in simple ways with other items to help you progress. After playing for several hours (even with the very useful help-sheet) I was nowhere near earning my 1000 Dirin jackpot for bumping off his majesty. Hell, I hadn't even caught sight of him.

A few days of unaided play later and I was getting nowhere fast. The main problem seemed to be that things happen and you are supposed to know about them. You are also supposed to know what does what and why without being told. What I mean is some games gently nudge you along in the right direction with the odd helpful message here and there - this game doesn't even know what HELP means. There are clues as to what to do when you get and examine some objects but they are neither plentiful or particularly helpful. The rather linear plot (i.e. solve this, then that, then something else - in sequence) means if you get stuck you'll stay stuck, at least that's what I found.

Many objects and their associated problems are rather dull and I found myself getting slightly bored. Mapping isn't a problem as mostly on the outside of the castle we have streets and shops while inside it's rooms. The location descriptions are merely that - descriptions of what you see, where you can go and what lies in what direction. A tad uninspired methinks, though at least you know what's what.



# HIRED TO KILL

There are actually 4 sub-plots that make up the whole game. You know the ones that involve entering the castle and killing the king, but the other two shall remain nameless as they at least inject a bit of interest to the main scheme of things.

A word about the screen layout is called for. It's pretty straightforward text only, with the main body being white ink on blue paper, with the status line at the top of the screen being yellow text, and then you get the odd splash of green and cyan for text highlights.

The action progresses slowly, but to be honest I couldn't finish the game as my attention wasn't held. I got a good way through it though and can basically say that with a bit of tweaking here and there things could be improved out of sight. You want to know what improvements could be made don't you? Okay, I'll tell you. Too much is made of the PAW's character interaction / character wandering routines. That's okay when the characters are controlled through a good bit of programming and play a positive part in the game. here they seem to be included for the sake of it. Taming of the real-time (ish) features needs to be done too. Problems are okay in the game, as are the general way in which the objects are used, but a general beefing up should be aimed for. For all the exploring (mainly freely) you can do the frustration of having to find things to do rather than having challenges find you is a bit hard

to take. The characters in the game were, I found, annoying to the point of driving me insane. Their constant witterings about sneezes and coughs got right up my hooter. Needless to say I gave up before the end was reached. Hey, I'm only human like anyone else (apart from ants as they are ants) and I'm not going to play a game to the very end if I'm not enjoying it (that's why the PERSONAL rating is called PERSONAL!).

## GOOD POINTS:

Now you may not expect me to list any. Wrong! There are loads of problems and objects and characters to get to grips with, and in that respect the game scores highly. The price is pretty reasonable and the odd sub-plot proves to be a reasonable distraction from the main plot too.

## BAD POINTS:

Too much wandering, not enough action or general direction to the game. Too many times I found myself trying to get some joy out of an object, location, problem or character, and discovered I was getting nowhere fast and with little in the way of friendly responses to help me out. I'd call myself a wimp for not trying harder, but there's not a lot to give you the incentive to try harder.

## CONCLUSIONS:

It's a bit reminiscent of an early adventure. By that I mean the challenges lie not so much in cracking various game aspects, but in getting used to quirks, tolerating the bad



## HIRED TO KILL

habits of the characters and learning to live with a sometimes awkward, finicky parser. Either I'm crap at adventures (*all of a sudden! Oi, whaddya mean what's new?*) or this game didn't get on with me - or visa versa. I could call it a challenging game, which it is, but the challenge is to try to struggle with the parser and illogical bits and pieces rather than being challenged by ingenious problems and puzzles.

However, so as not to be a complete party pooper I must emphasise that it is a first effort (I do believe) and as such isn't half bad if you take that into account. Hopefully Tom won't lose heart through one less than great review and it'll be interesting to see what his next game turns out like.

### • HIRED TO KILL •

Tom Powell

The Deer Park, Ivyleaf Hill

Bude, Cornwall EX23 9LD

PRICE: £2.50 (tape)

Outside UK please add 50p per order  
or £1.00 for airmail.

### RATINGS:

PACKAGING	6
STORYLINE	5
OPENING PLAY	4
PROBLEMS	7
LOCATION TEXT	6
PARSER	5
GAME DESIGN	4
DIFFICULTY	EXP./ADVANCED
PLAYABILITY	5
PERSONAL RATING	4

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# ADVENTURE REVIEW

## SOAPLAND/FOR YOUR THIGHS ONLY

*Reviewed By:* THE JESTER.

*Both written by Andy Lowe and Dave Dutton (Zodiac Software). If you've played any of their other games, you'll know that parody is their forte - these are no exception. being re-released (presumably) by "the rodent", as FYTO was written in 1987 - not sure of SL's issue date.*

### SOAP LAND:

#### STORYLINE:

The land of "soap" is under siege from a shocking wave of crime. As sergeant Roy Slow, it is your job to investigate and, hopefully, solve these crimes.

#### THE ADVENTURE:

The game is in three "parts", and the cassette inlay advises that you can freely travel between each part. That's true - but ultimately you'll need to do it in the right order.

Part 1 sees you in the environs of John Square, with the strangely familiar "Queen Liz", launderette, cafe etc. all close to hand. get the picture? Straight away, I thought I'd be struggling - I'm happy to say that I've never watched one complete episode of that particular program! But it doesn't really matter whether you watch the soaps or not - throughout the game, knowing the characters of the characters (so to speak) isn't important in solving the

various problems (although it can help where the humour is concerned).

Actually, there is not a lot of problem solving in Part 1 - it's mainly a case of talking to the characters, and finding out what crimes have been committed. Filthy Len has had his car 'alf-inched; Scary's baby has been kidnapped; the Carpenters' house has "lost" its food 'The Band's" instruments have disappeared; Oztaxis are receiving strange "heavy-breathing" phone calls; the Doctor's medicines are missing: and there's muggings in the Square. Those are your tasks.

Part 2 produces more actual game-play, and centres around the double-dealing of on B.R.Spewing. He has a shady deal going to build a housing estate on the site of the former Albany Market, which was demolished due to poor viewing figures!! You will need to thwart him in order to retrieve one of the missing items. Also in this part, the Angrystreets Hotel (work it out) makes a brief appearance.

The problems themselves, I found, were fairly straight-forward (except perhaps for the moth, which was a little way out); and in many instances the program seems to take over - you make just one input, and reams of text scrolls up the screen; things happen, and characters come and go, without your really having done anything. Once you think you have solved Part



# SOAPLAND/FOR YOUR THIGHS ONLY

2, you must save position; re-load Part 1; load in the saved data from Part 2. There's then only a few "moves" to make before you're off again! Save position; load in Part 3; load in saved data.

Part 3 is set in Corporation Street - complete with the "Gropers Return"; Rivita and Mavis Dryly in the newsagents; Ralph Oberts and Desiree Boring in the grocers etc., etc. I must say here, that I thought the authors' portrayal of one particular character a little risky - parody it may be; but there are still libel laws!

Again, the problems weren't all that difficult - there's a talking sign with a sore throat; the animal rights activists in the pet shop (case of SDS here); and who's making all that noise gobbling the food?

Then it's back to Part 1 again; "solve" some of the crimes; then back to Part 3 for the ending.

## FOR YOUR THIGHS ONLY:

### STORYLINE:

James Smith, OOH (Think about it!), master-spy extra-ordinaire, has his bath interrupted by members of the R.S.O. (Ridiculously Stupid Organisation). he must escape, find his way back to his HQ, where 'N' will brief him on what's happening, and what his mission is.

### THE ADVENTURE:

This time the game is in two parts; but Part 1 MUST be completed before Part

2 can be undertaken.

Now that's a good start to the game - a "lusty" female, Jeanette, is in the bath with you!! There's a rather neat "inter-action menu", which you can use when you come across the various characters - you can CONVERSE; ATTACK; make a PASS at; SEARCH; OFFER: ASK to follow. Take your pick which you use with Jeanette!

Having escaped the bathroom, it's back into the house, where you find your faithful mutt, Razortooth - he comes in handy much later, so get him to follow you. Search through the various rooms and find what "goodies" you can; and who is the beggar you find dossing in the house? He's not all he seems!

Find the mechanical mole, and use it to get to your underground HQ, where you meet your boss 'N', who tells you that "R.S.O. are constructing a massive laser on the moon, which they intend to annihilate (sic) the earth with. Drive to the airport, fly to Australia, infiltrate their HQ in the outback, and use whatever they use to get to the moon and destroy the laser. The world is depending on you." (so what's new?). After being kitted out by 'P' with gadgets, the use for which is DEFINITELY not obvious, it's off in your Reliant Robin super-car to part 2.

The airport area needs careful exploration before boarding the private jet which takes you to



# SOAPLAND/FOR YOUR THIGHS ONLY

Australia. You're thrown out of the plane, and only some quick thinking will prevent a quick ending! You land in the "outback", which is a mini-maze (easy), in which you will meet the 'hip' kangaroo, and the 'noseyconk' (not as friendly).

You must then take part in an awful Australian TV games show, in order to get the items necessary to infiltrate the HQ of the R.S.O. Once inside, you find Blowfeeled (and his pussy!), and the rocket needed to get you to the moon. Disposing of Blowfeeled's henchmen isn't too mind-stretching.

On the moon, where everything seems to be able to breathe normally (the authors acknowledge this "poetic license") you must pass the pack of dogs, the R.S.O. henchmen, and Ermintrude (I'll leave you to find out about her), before a cliché eventually destroys the laser!!

Both games are written with the QUILL, and contain ILLUSTRATED graphics. The graphics are well done, and pretty quick to draw; but add nothing to the actual game-play (no clues in them etc.) They can, if you wish, be turned off by GRAPHICS / TEXT (SOAPLAND) or WORDS / PICTURES (FYTO). PATCHED effects are also included, as is a RAM SAVE / LOAD facility.

## GOOD POINTS:

Taken as they're meant - parodies - the games are well written, and contain some good, (not always) clean fun.

## BAD POINTS:

I wasn't keen on having to keep changing parts in SOAPLAND - once I latched onto what I had to do, I seemed to spend more time saving and loading than I did actually playing the game! Both games contain numerous spelling mistakes (*Just like FB, Ed!*), and appear not to have been thoroughly play-tested - when I handed over the cheque, it was still in my inventory!

## CONCLUSIONS:

Neither game is "hair-pulling" in its puzzle content; but at only £1.99 for the pair it is churlish to quibble too much. You couldn't do much better at this price for a few hours' light-hearted entertainment.

## • SOAP LAND & FOR YOUR THIGHS ONLY •

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## RATINGS:

PACKAGING	5
STORYLINE	6
OPENING PLAY	6
PROBLEMS	4
LOCATION TEXT	5
PARSER	6
GAME DESIGN	7
DIFFICULTY	BEGINNER/INT.
PLAYABILITY	6
PERSONAL RATING	6



# ADVENTURE REVIEW

## RUN, BRONWYNN, RUN!

*Reviewed By: Tim.*

*F.S.F.'s last (latest I mean) release was naturally welcomed when it popped through the letterbox. It's a 3 parter and you begin it in a pink dress and high heels!*

### STORYLINE:

Okay, the reason you wear a dress is that in the game you play the part of a beautiful Princess called Bronwynn. You are the only daughter of a doting set of parents - the King and Queen. Being a strong, independent sort of Princess, you are horrified to learn that you have been promised to Prince Timothy who, according to the blurb, is a right middle-aged twerp. No way will you marry him! So, the only choice is to run away and seek sanctuary at your cousins castle... trouble is that to run away you first need to get out of your room!

### THE ADVENTURE:

The title screen reads: A fantasy "ESCAPE" story. You start off in the main room of your apartment in the castle. It's described as being sparsely furnished, though looking around the room you see two chairs on either side of a fireplace, a table and a settee - not to mention a window and door. If that's sparse then I'm living in sparse city! Anyway, back to the game... it's always advisable to examine and search things in Larry's games, and this first location should be thoroughly examined, searched and

carefully scrutinised in every way - and that goes for the other locations too. Before you can do much in RBR you'll need as many objects as possible. Normally, should you miss anything, you will be able to go back and search for things again so if you come across a situation that demands an object that you don't have, then bet your bottom dollar that you've missed it, hence the need to be able to retrace your steps and have another look around.

The reason I mention that is simply because after you manage to leave your room - not easy due to the fact that you are under 24 hour guard, you'll come across objects and situations that obviously call for items you don't have and they will more than likely reside in places where you've been and examined, but obviously not thoroughly enough. Remember that Search and Examine are not the same, and that LOOK UNDER, IN, ON etc. may also throw up different things. On a final EXAMINE note, you'll see that a rather neat EXAMINE ALL process has been catered for. EXAMINE ALL Carried, Worn or Here - the choice is yours.

As with all Larry's games, you also find yourself bombarded with messages dealing with every eventuality. Do something right, you get a message. Do something almost right you get another message. Do something wrong... message! All the time you are nudged by these helpful messages towards your immediate or



# RUN, BRONWYNN, RUN!

ultimate goal.

It took me more than one attempt to stage my first breakout. Once free of the confines of the room you'll find yourself faced with a dilemma. You'll get it wrong a few times before you eventually learn what it is you have to do. Each wrong move, and this goes for all three parts of the game, results in a sort of sudden death. However, judicious use of RAMSAVE and the RESURRECT facility sees you back for another go before you get a chance to wonder where you went wrong.

The object of Part One is to merely escape from the castle. As I said, that's not so simple due to the fact that almost everything 'obvious' that you are led into believing will work simply doesn't, and you'll have to keep trying different ways to achieve what appears to be sooooo simple. There are quite a few intriguing objects to uncover, and their uses are all obvious in a roundabout way. If you take all three parts and put them together then you have one massive game. The only problem is that all three games suffer slightly from having a stop start feeling. You start to progress, get captured and have to go back and think about how to get round it. That's not a bad feature - it's an integral part of the game, and that's all part of the way the problems have been structured, but it does break things up somewhat. At the end of part one you need a few objects with you in order to play part two. Part Two brings with it a bit more human character interaction along

with more of the same sort of problems (i.e. evade capture at all costs) and added 'solve it / get rewarded' type actions to do. Part 3 is where things come to a head. Natch!

## GOOD POINTS:

Bloody great value if nowt else! Everything is polished to perfection. Great text (for locations, messages, encounters etc.) & problems to solve.

## BAD POINTS:

A few too many stop / start situations and probably too few objects to play around with per part.

## CONCLUSIONS:

It'll keep you busy and happy over those nasty, cold winter nights.

## • RUN, BRONWYNN, RUN! •

*F.S.F. Adventures*

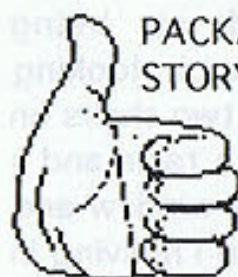
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or £1.00 for airmail (rest of world)

## RATINGS:



PACKAGING	7
STORYLINE	8
OPENING PLAY	6
PROBLEMS	8
LOCATION TEXT	8
PARSER	8
GAME DESIGN	8
DIFFICULTY	INT./EXPERIENCED
PLAYABILITY	8
PERSONAL RATING	8



# ADVENTURE REVIEW

## THE GERBIL RIOT OF '67

**Reviewed By:** Tim.

*I've heard good things about this game from quite a few quarters, and now, thanks to Tony Collins' progressive conversion plan, I've got the chance to see how good it is for myself!*

### STORYLINE:

You live in a home. Not your average home, but a home for the confused - i.e. an asylum. You were incarcerated after being found guilty of causing the great Gerbil Riot of 1967. Obviously a particularly heinous crime. But hey, look on the bright side. Your hobby is pretty much the same as Harry Houdini's - you are an escapologist. Not a very good one as your previous attempts have all met with failure. Undaunted you decided to give it one last try... cue the start of the game.

### THE ADVENTURE:

You begin (if you take my advice) by typing INFO to see what sort of words you can use. There are a couple of special 'short-cuts' to enable you to LOOK 'at', 'under' and 'in' things without having to strain yourself. That apart there aren't that many unusual words.

You kick off inside the 'Treatment Room'. A place that the other inmates associate with pain and suffering. There's threatening machinery scattered about, a cupboard (locked!) that demands further attention and... a body slumped on the floor. Naturally

you'll want to EXAM BODY - and doing so shows that you did it! There's a half empty (or full) syringe in the arm which will prove useful a bit later, but in a way that really caught me out! From here there's only one way to go, and that's SOUTH down a corridor.

It doesn't take much skill to explore the upper level of the nut-house, er, I mean complex, and in amongst the Rubber Rooms, Padded Cells and other nooks and crannies that lie just off the ever present long white corridors you'll start to find objects and inmates. One early inmate, Oswald the Ostrich, thinks he's... well, it doesn't take much to work out what he thinks he is. The interesting thing is that his head is stuffed into sand. The sand itself resides in a bucket. Without giving too much away you'll find that a few more inmates have 'associated objects' which you'll need!

Pretty soon, Oswald permitting, you can move from the bright 'upper' area to the darker downstairs locations where a character called 'Count Crackers' awaits you! Once again you'll see that there's an object to be found that is associated with the Count which, when used in the right way, gains you access to the asylum grounds. It's here that things get really strange and I got stuck.

To my mind the best problems lie outside - along with the best characters and situations. Fancy talking to a squirrel? Well you can, and what's more the item he asks for



# THE GERBIL RIOT OF '67

has to be constructed rather than just found and given to him. Most other games would have simply allowed you to toddle off and search around till you found what the squirrel wanted. In this game you have to make it, fit it and only then do you get a reward. The reward itself is not to be sneezed at!

Confession time again. I was hopelessly stuck at about the three-quarter mark in the game, and only got un-stuck when that fabbo magazine, RED HERRING, plopped through my letterbox. In it was the CPC solution which helped me finish the game - something I always like to do so I can report FULLY on the game. Glad I managed to finish Gerbil Riot of '67 as it turned out to be really very good.

After meeting with the squirrel it was back into the institution for more fun and games and then... well, you'll have to buy it to find out!

## GOOD POINTS:

Plenty of good points I'm pleased to say. The most noteworthy thing is that the objects, characters, situations and locations all intertwine with one another (to lesser or greater degrees) when it comes to solving the problems as a whole. i.e. the way a character acts, where he is, what he looks like, what his name is may well point the way to what objects need be used when dealing with him. This is a theme that runs throughout the game and is used to good effect. Good use is made of ordinary objects in unusual ways. The location text, object

descriptions etc. is also quite lively.

## BAD POINTS:

Thankfully there are no really bad points I can bother to mention... well, apart from the fun ends too soon as it's not a very big game, and there are no really HUGE problems to cause your brain to explode.

## CONCLUSIONS:

Simon Avery, the chap responsible for many Amstrad CPC games, should be pleased to see his wares converted to the Spectrum in fine style. 'Danger Adventurer at Work I and II' were pretty good, and so is this. I can't wait to get stuck into his other converted titles (that's a hint, Tony!).

## • GERBIL RIOT OF '67 •

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## RATINGS:

	PACKAGING	7
	STORYLINE	6
	OPENING PLAY	7
	PROBLEMS	8
	LOCATION TEXT	6
	PARSER	8
GAME DESIGN		8
DIFFICULTY	BEGINNER/INT.	
PLAYABILITY		9
PERSONAL RATING		8



# FB ADVENTURE AWARDS

## THE AWARDS FOR SPECCY HEROES!

• This year I've decided to nominate the FROM BEYOND Adventure Awards all by myself. The reason for this is simple, they are personal awards rather than public ones. So, without further ado, here are the 1992 FROM BEYOND Spectrum adventure awards. Make of them what you will, do feel free to comment on my choices if you like:

*The categories and winners in the 1992 FROM BEYOND adventure awards are:*

**BEST TEXT ADVENTURE: THE DARK TOWER** by JACK LOCKERBY.  
Published by ZENOBI SOFTWARE.

*A great game. I wish I'd had more space to review it in issue 11. It had everything an adventurer could wish for in it. Great problems - lots of them too, bags of character, it started off being easy and gradually got harder, was superbly designed and for a goblin bashing scenario was surprisingly different! It got a scorching set of ratings too.*

**BEST GRAPHIC / TEXT ADVENTURE: THE WHITE FEATHER CLOAK** by ST. BRIDE'S.  
Published by GI GAMES. Distributed by ZENOBI SOFTWARE.

*Great little graphics helped enhance the rich pun/riddle filled text of this game. The two parts were a tad on the small side, though the overall game was enchanting. The descriptions of the Elves that inhabited part one of the game was spellbinding.*

**BEST HOMEGROWN ADVENTURE COMPANY: COMPASS SOFTWARE** run by JON LEMMON.

*Jon is up to game 15 now, and having known him for more years than I care to remember I know that he always busts a gut (and there's quite a bit to bust in his case) in order to come up with the goods. He's always been prepared to do what a lot of other people have shied away from, and that's simply be different! Graphics, text only games, arcade games, animation, digitised graphics, cut price games... you name it Jon's done it - and usually done it very well indeed! He's been around for a long time now and looks set to stick around till the year 2000!*

**BEST COMMERCIAL ADVENTURE COMPANY: ZENOBI SOFTWARE** run by JOHN WILSON.

*The ONLY commercial adventure company! Unrivalled by anyone else. The Mighty Wilson releases game after game - always of a good quality, more often than not of exceptional quality. But you all know that anyway.*

**EMERGING ADVENTURE FORCE: THE GUILD** run by TONY COLLINS.

*THE GUILD's forte has been in converting adventures between formats. It has to be said that some of the material that was converted in the past didn't come out too well. However, a spate of good 'original' releases and some better quality conversions have seen THE GUILD's adventures get better and better. Despite TONY COLLINS leaning towards the Commodore 64 a bit more now, the Spectrum side of his outfit has plenty of goodies to offer the adventurer and hopefully he'll stick with the Spectrum for a good while longer, and grow a good deal stronger.*

**OUTSTANDING ADVENTURE CONTRIBUTION: LES MITCHELL**  
for his GOBLIN GAZETTE Adventure Solution Fanzine.

*There have been so many positive 'contributions' to the adventure scene this year. But, the winner, LES MITCHELL, has dived into a specialist market and has taken his BARE BONES (now retitled GOBLIN GAZETTE) solutions 'zine from being nothing more than a few pages of printed solutions to new heights - and all within 5 issues. Many people would have 'had a go', had poor sales and given up. Not Les! Hopefully BARE BONES will fill a gap (the one left by SPELLBREAKER) and will be appreciated a bit more in the months to come.*

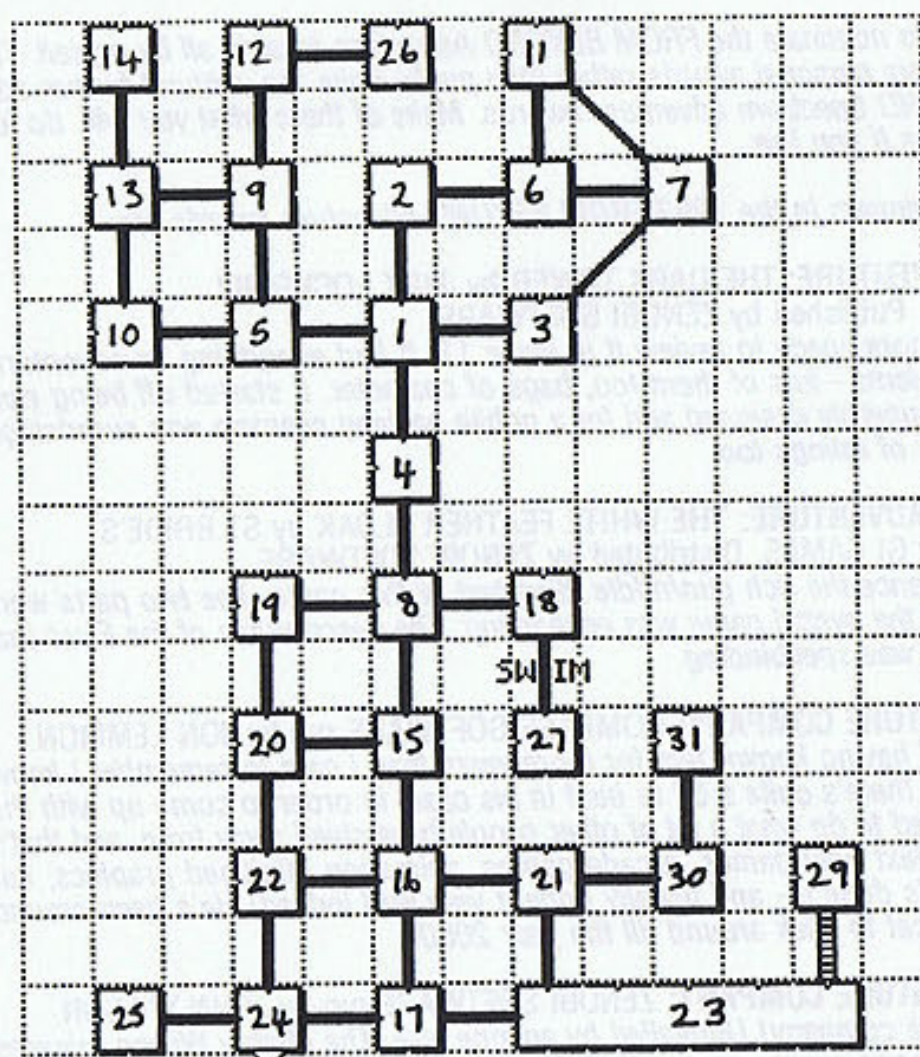
• ...So there you have it. Those are my awards to those people who I think deserved them most over the last twelve months. Super-smart framed certificates of merit are on their way to the lucky winners.

Tim.



# MAGICAL MAPS

## JESTERS JAUNT (section i)



**Maps Supplied  
By:  
Andrew Gibson  
&  
Sandrunner!!**

Both SANDRUNNER!! and Andrew Gibson supplied maps for Jesters Jaunt - Andrew's was a partial one (practically what you see here) and SANDRUNNERS!! was complete (did I expect anything else?) and will be continued next issue.

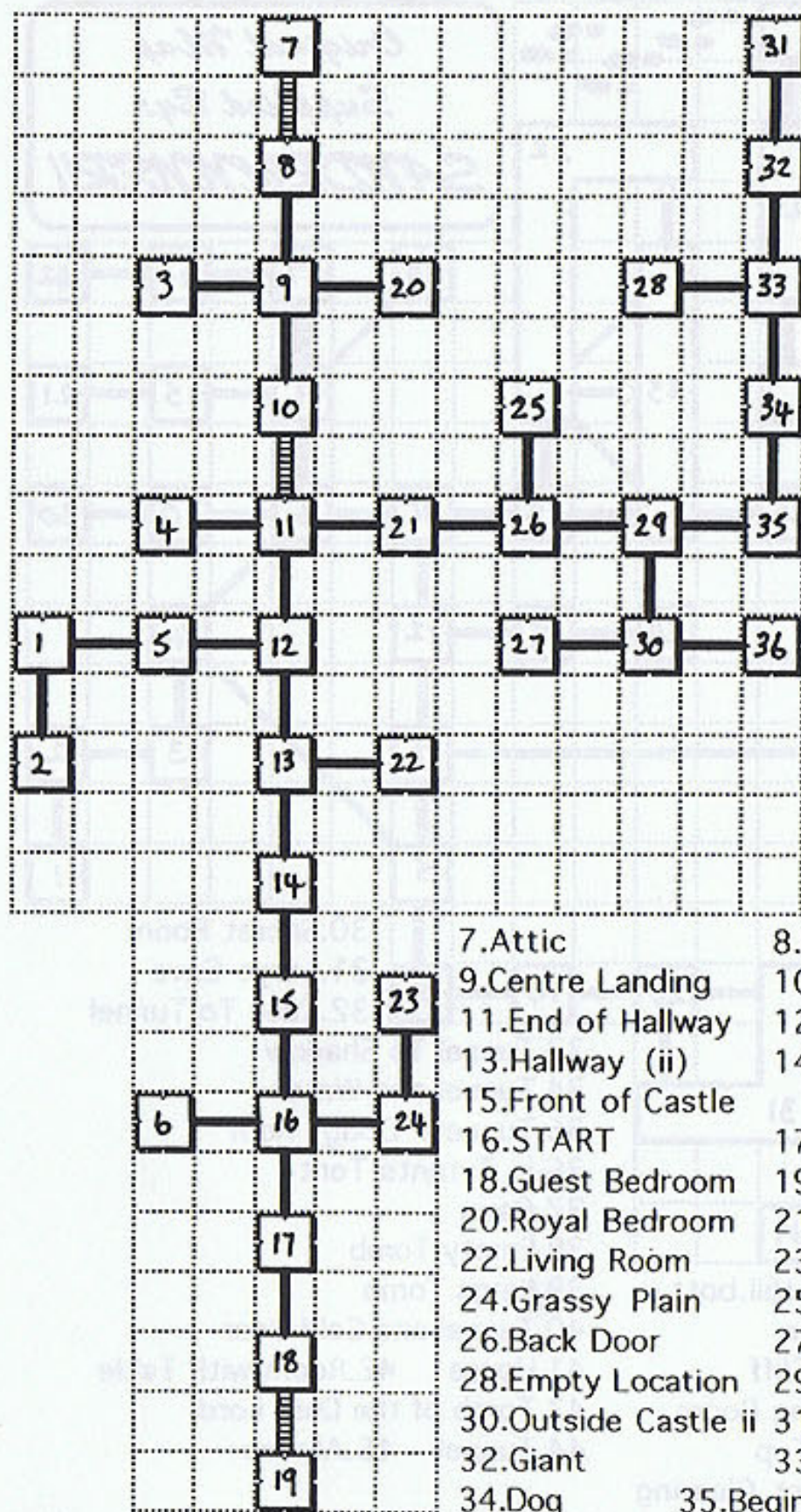
On the subject of maps, please feel free to send YOURS in, especially those older games like ADVENTURELAND etc.

All you have to do is make sure locations are named, connecting lines are connected and any special areas of interest on the map are pointed out to me so I can mention them. If possible also list where objects reside. Oh yes, and try to use black ink on graph paper or at least try to keep things nice and square.

- |                        |                          |                       |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Entrance Hall       | 2. Throne Room           | 3. Hall Annexe        |
| 4. Wide N / S Avenue   | 5. Dining Room           | 6. Changing Room      |
| 7. Regalia Room        | 8. Avenue / Path Jcnctn. | 9. Dim Narrow Passage |
| 10. Well Lit Passage   | 11. Princess's Bedroom   | 12. Prince's Study    |
| 13. Kitchen            | 14. Vegetable Store      | 15. Path and Seats    |
| 16. Path & Flower Beds | 17. Huge Iron Gates      | 18. Ornamental Lake   |
| 19. NW Corner of Wall  | 20. Orchard              | 21. Kennel and Dog    |
| 22. Berry patch        | 23. Ivy Covered Oak      | 24. Toolshed          |
| 25. Vegetable Garden   | 26. Library              | 27. In Lake           |
| 29. Top of Tree        | 30. Stables              | 31. Large Paddock     |



## QUEST FOR THE HOLY SNAIL



*Original Map  
Supplied By:*  
Bernard  
Wood.

- Bernard informs me that this is the map for the expanded version of 'Snail' that can be found on 'Delbert's Hamster Wheel of Delight' - reviewed this issue would you believe!

- 1.The Slayer
- 2.The End
- 3.Princess's Room
- 4.Stamp Room
- 5.Alleyway
- 6.Grove of trees

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 7. Attic              | 8. End of Landing      |
| 9. Centre Landing     | 10. Landing            |
| 11. End of Hallway    | 12. Hallway (i)        |
| 13. Hallway (ii)      | 14. Inside Castle      |
| 15. Front of Castle   |                        |
| 16. START             | 17. Prancing Prat      |
| 18. Guest Bedroom     | 19. Lake Shore         |
| 20. Royal Bedroom     | 21. Dining Room        |
| 22. Living Room       | 23. Adventure Shop     |
| 24. Grassy Plain      | 25. Kitchen            |
| 26. Back Door         | 27. Post Box           |
| 28. Empty Location    | 29. Outside Castle (i) |
| 30. Outside Castle ii | 31. Elephant           |
| 32. Giant             | 33. Crossroads         |
| 34. Dog               | 35. Beginning of Road  |
|                       | 36. Well               |

## SOME USEFUL HINTS and TIPS

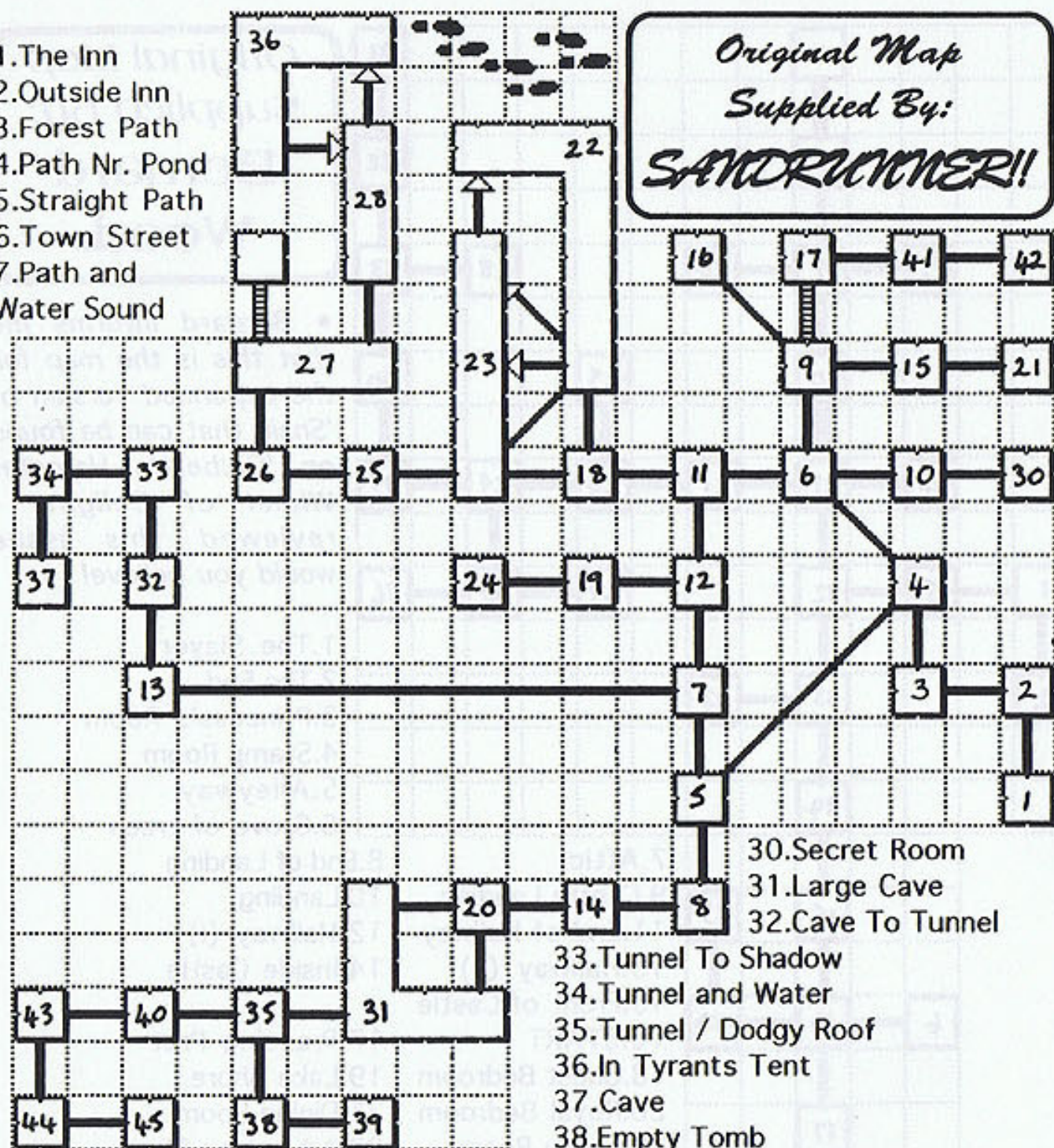
- FEEL UP CHIMNEY
- MOVE BED and FEEL GAP
- DROP COUPON IN STAMP ROOM and WAIT
- ROLL BALL in ALLEY



# AMULET OF DARATH

- 1.The Inn
- 2.Outside Inn
- 3.Forest Path
- 4.Path Nr. Pond
- 5.Straight Path
- 6.Town Street
- 7.Path and Water Sound

Original Map  
Supplied By:  
**SANDRUNNER!**



- 8.Clearing & Church
- 9.Hill.bott.
- 10.Cottage
- 11.River
- 12.Forest River
- 13.By Cliff
- 14.In Church
- 15.Sitting Room
- 16.Ration Shop
- 17.Hill Top
- 18.River Bank
- 19.Forest Clearing
- 20.Chaplains Room
- 21.Bedroom
- 22.River/Waterfall
- 23.Camp
- 24.Forest Path
- 25.Sleeping Qtrs.
- 26.Camp Store
- 27.Tower Bottom
- 28.Outside Tent
- 29.Top of Tower

- 30.Secret Room
- 31.Large Cave
- 32.Cave To Tunnel

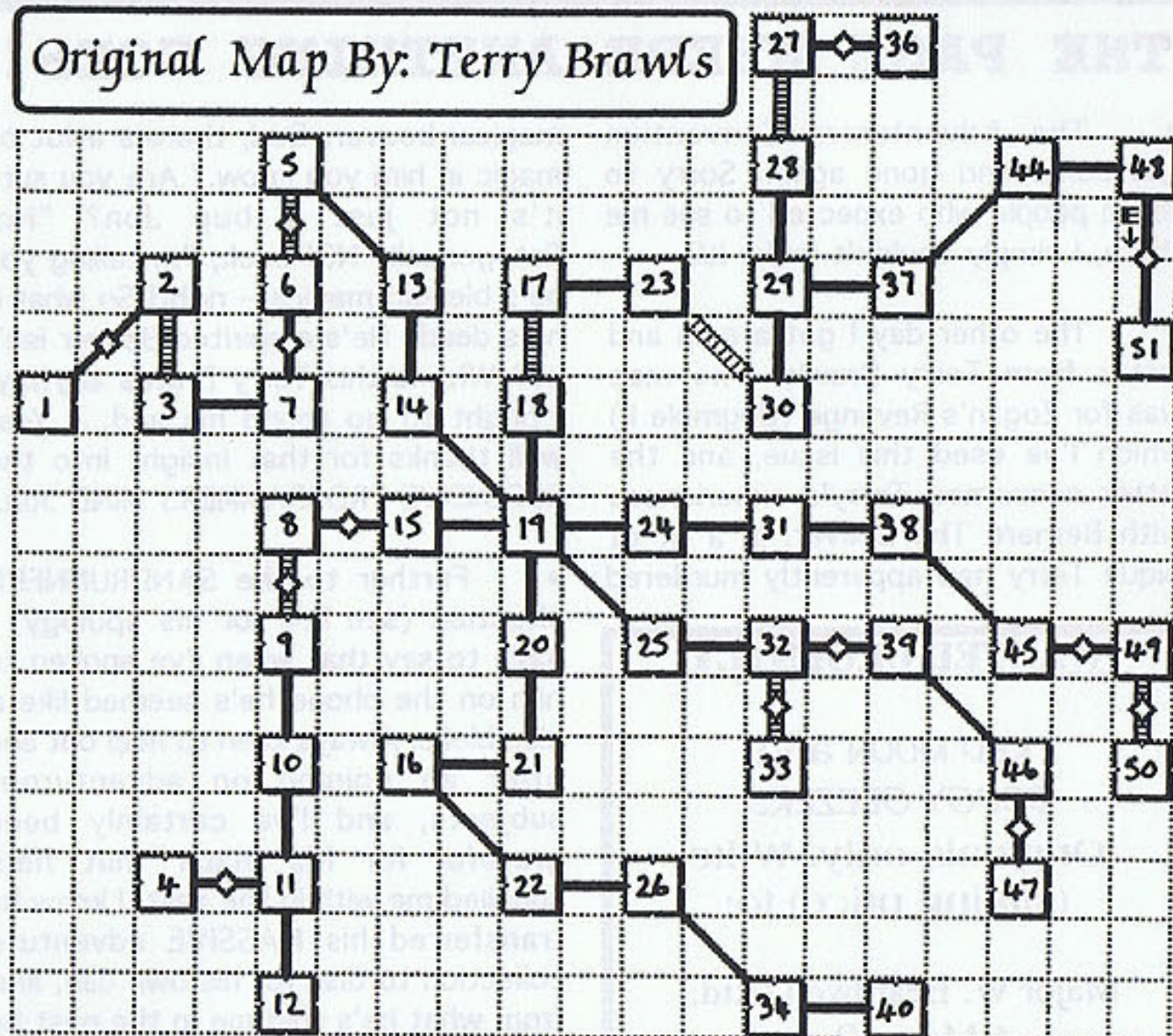
- 33.Tunnel To Shadow
- 34.Tunnel and Water
- 35.Tunnel / Dodgy Roof
- 36.In Tyrants Tent
- 37.Cave
- 38.Empty Tomb
- 39.Kings Tomb
- 40.Tunnel and Gold Door
- 41.House
- 42.Room with Table
- 43.Tomb of the Dark Lord
- 44.Tunnel
- 45.Alcove

Unfortunately SandrunnerII has gotten himself into a bit of strife with a few Software Publishers of late. Turn to the editorial (page 4) for his apology to those people concerned, then turn to page 50 (Loose Ends) for my opinion! What's it all about? Go To P.50. Tim.



# ZOGAN'S REVENGE (BOGMOLE II)

Original Map By: Terry Brawls



- |                   |                  |              |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1.Dread           | 2.Ledge          | 3.Dk.Cavern  |
| 4.Frozen Chamber  | 5.Well           |              |
| 6.Well Bottom     | 7.Narrow Hole    |              |
| 8.Roxk Ledge      | 9.Boulder Valley |              |
| 10.Rock King      | 11.Frozen Valley |              |
| 12.Cave of Echoes | 13.Valley (i)    |              |
| 14.Valley (ii)    | 15.Wall          |              |
| 16.Statue         | 17.Hill Top      | 18.Hill Base |
| 19.START          | 20.Edge          | 21.Wood      |
| 22.Boundary       | 23.Rock Circle   |              |
| 24.Desert Edge    | 25.Valley (iii)  |              |
| 26.Stream         | 27.On Tree       |              |
| 28.End of Track   | 29.Track         |              |
| 30.Far Side       | 31.Desert (i)    |              |
| 32.Eldrin         | 33.Altar (i)     | 34.Cave      |
| 35.Altar (ii)     | 36.In Hollow     |              |
| 37.Swamp Edge     | 38.Desert (ii)   |              |

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| 39.River      | 40.In Cave     |
| 41.Tunnel (i) | 42.Tunnel (ii) |
| 43.Shields    | 44.Swamp       |
| 45.Dune       | 46.Cave        |
| 47.ZOGAN!     |                |
| 48.Hut        | 49.Chamber     |
| 50.Yellow Pit | 51.GREGOR      |

**USEFUL OBJECTS (or items)  
CAN BE FOUND AT LOCATIONS:**

1, 4, 9, 16, 18, 22, 23, 28, 35, 36,  
41, 48, 49, 50, 51



# LOOSE ENDS

## THE PAGE WHERE ANYTHING GOES!

- The Adventurers Convention has come and gone again. Sorry to those people who expected to see me there, I simply couldn't make it!

- The other day I got a map and letter from Terry Brawls. The map was for Zogan's Revenge (Bogmole II) which I've used this issue, and the letter concerned Terry's experiences with Bernard The Beaver. In a fit of pique Terry had apparently murdered

magical beaver. God, there's a lot of magic in him you know." Are you sure it's not just a bug Jon? "No. Categorically NO! Look, I'm telling you he's bleedin magical - right! So what if he's dead? He's a spirited Beaver isn't he? Who is this Terry Brawls anyway. I ought to go round his and..." Yes, well thanks for that insight into the DEFENSIVE PROGRAMMERS MIND Jon.

- Further to the SANDRUNNER!! situation (see P.4 for his apology) I have to say that when I've spoken to him on the phone he's seemed like a nice bloke. Always keen to help out and offer an opinion on adventurous subjects, and I've certainly been grateful for his maps that he's supplied me with in the past. I knew he transferred his MASSIVE adventure collection to disk for his own use, and from what he's told me in the past he did so in order to enable him to load them quicker. He's a prolific mapper and game player - supplying Spellbreaker in the past with their maps. From further conversations I've had with him it seems that the vast majority of his games collection was built up since 1983 via buying and swapping originals. He also made it quite clear to me (and others) that he had been stupid as far as letting his games list reach other peoples eyes, as it was meant only for his own reference, and it was NOT a 'this is what I've got, what do you want?' list. I can only add that his apology seemed sincere enough to me. *Tim.*

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this cute and cuddly character. However, it seems that despite being an ex-beaver (this beaver has gone to meet his maker etc.) Bernard will still do your bidding. Go on, try it. Kill Bernard and then send him into wood-gnawing action. Now the funny thing was Terry's letter arrived when Jon Lemmon (the games author) was paying me a visit, so I got a first hand explanation as to why this BUG was overlooked. This is what Jon had to say: "Er, well... yes, I know, he is a



# Mapping System Explanation

The FROM BEYOND mapping system is so easy to follow that this explanation is hardly justifiable. However, just so you know exactly what's what, here's a quick rundown of the various symbols you'll encounter when trying to read a FROM BEYOND map.



Locations are represented on the map by boxes.



The boxes are linked together by these direction lines.



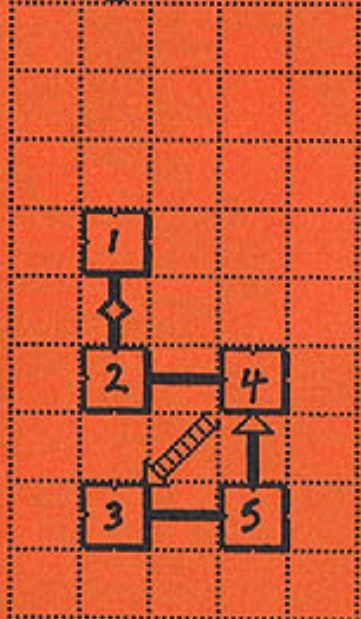
This symbol = blocked or limited travel between locations.



An arrow symbol = travel possible in direction of arrow.



A cross near a location box means death lurks here!



As most people have their own way of adding special symbols to their own maps there may be times when we have to explain what does what at certain locations. Notes appear in the list of locations when this is the case. The map on the left shows just about all the elements we use. Location 1 has a line running south to location 2. This line is blocked meaning there's something to be done before you can move south to Loc.2. From Loc.2 you can freely move east to Loc.4 - and back again (west) from 4 to 2 as the connecting line shows no reason why you can't move freely between these two locations. However, at Loc.4 apart from going west you can only go DOWN (that's what the ladder represents - up and down movement). When you get to location 3 you see that there is a way east to Loc.5 but as the ladder that took you from Loc.4 to 3 only goes down you can't go back up that way (hence the arrow on the end of the ladder). East to 5 is no problem, and west again from 5 to 3 is also okay. North is the only way to go from 5 to 4 (hence the arrowed line) and there you go. Simple or what?

## LOCATIONS:

- 1: Stonehenge
- 2: On a Hilltop
- 3: In a Valley
- 4: East of a Hilltop
- 5: Rocky Pathway



# DEEP PROBE



Two weeks ago a huge underwater volcanic eruption ripped open the seabed in the North Atlantic. Since then, several ships and three Royal Navy submarines have disappeared in that area without a trace!

The cause of these disappearances is not known at this time and

all vessels sent out to investigate have also disappeared. A five mile exclusion zone has been placed around that part of the ocean and all merchant shipping has been ordered to stay clear of the area. A robotic pod, armed with a high filter camera was sent down to investigate. Deep sonar probes from the pod revealed a massive fissure had opened up and multiple echoes within the fissure were reported.

Possible reasons for the multiple sonar echoes could be due to reflections from large underwater tunnels or caverns, although all contact with the pod was lost before this could be confirmed. The only information received, was one picture transmitted by the pod before it was destroyed. Cause of pods destruction, unknown....



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You again play the part of Captain Henson, pilot and designer of the deep salvage rescue sub 'Anttilis', which has been slightly redesigned and re-equipped for this mission.... You have been asked by the Government to make a one manned deep probe expedition of the fissure and find out what is going on down there....

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