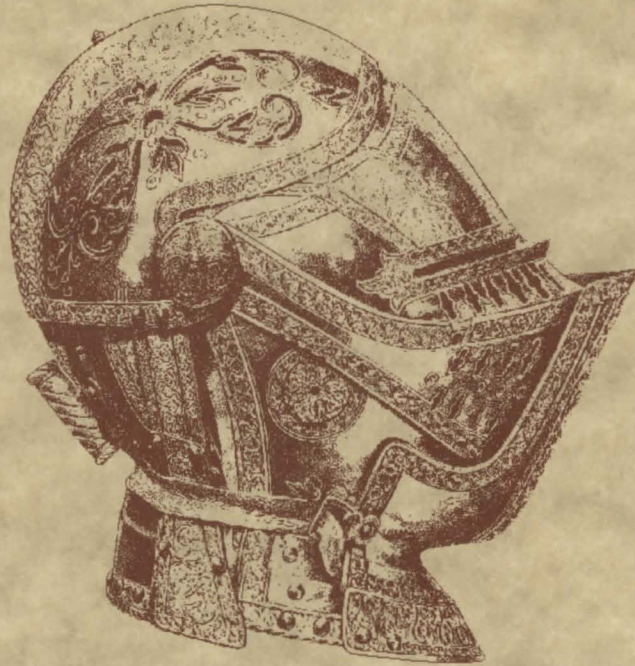


The Premier Adventure Game Journal



Enchanted Realms™

An Exhaustive Resource
Devoted Exclusively to the
Amiga & MS-DOS Adventurers



Issue 10

March - April 1992



The Premier
Adventure
Game Journal

Enchanted Realms™

Editors

Executive Editor
Chuck Miller

Associate Editor
Millie Miller

Contributing Editors
Michael J. Ballenger
Rick Henly
Zach Meston
Marci Rogers

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It's a known fact that not all pirates come with patches, peg legs and parrots, or sail the seven seas. Copying software illegally is more than just a shame. It's a crime. Please be a responsible user and support the software entertainment industry. Don't be a pirate!

I Corinthians 10:31



Enchanted Realms™

The Premier
Adventure Game Journal

Devoted Exclusively To The
Adventure Experience

Issue 10

March-April 1992

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* These adventures have received the *Enchanted Realms™ Distinctive Adventure Award*. This recognition is only granted to adventures that have earned an Overall Score of Excellent (90-100) in the process of receiving a full review (games that are reviewed in *Conversion Castle* and *Taleteller's Sanctum* are exempt from this award).



Proclamations

MUSINGS FROM THE LORD OF THE REALMS

Life in the Technological Fast Lane

Technology is accelerating rapidly. It's an undisputed fact. If you ran down to your local computer dealer today, or dialed up your favorite mail order mogul, and purchased a shiny new Amiga 3000 or 486/33 PC compatible, it would already be technologically outdated before you boot it up for the first time. 'Tis Sad, but true.

That's not to say that there's anything wrong with either of these "new" machines. Just that technology is moving much faster than anyone can really keep up with. However, there is at least one benefit that this ever increasing technology does achieve. It raises the standards both for what we want and even need today. In our case, this means higher quality adventures in which to immerse ourselves.

The truth of the matter is that the next generation of games (as well as the present one, to a limited extent) is going to provide us with significantly enhanced worlds of adventure to explore. However, it will also require most gamers to at least upgrade, if not replace their current systems. There is just no getting around it.

Downshifting for the Upgrade Ahead

So, what does this mean for the digital adventurer? Well, the Amiga owner had better prepare for several upgrades. To begin with, a hard drive is no longer a luxury. It has reached the place of being a necessity. Adventures have just grown too large to conveniently play from floppies. Sierra and Dynamix have recently released Amiga conversions with as many as TEN disks filled with compressed files. Three to five disks are becoming the minimum with many other vendors. Not even systems with two floppy drives will be able to alleviate the trauma and pain of DSS (Disk Swappers Syndrome), not to mention the delay of extremely long load times from floppies.

Processor accelerators will also become the norm in the near future, as will a minimum of 1MB of CHIP RAM. Yes, that's right, CHIP RAM. The increase in the amount of data being manipulated will soon require this extra boost to eliminate the delays involved. In addition, games are being developed now that will either require or use, if available, extra CHIP RAM for improved graphics and animation. While you are at it, you should also plan on upgrading to AmigaDOS 2.04. The upgrade to the new DOS and the enhanced chip set will set you back several hundred dollars, but will be worth it in the long run. Version 2.04 of the operating system is far superior to version 1.3, and almost all new games being released are 2.0 compatible. Of course, the optimum setup would be to add a ROM board that allows you to switch between 1.3 and 2.0. This way, you can still play all your old games that won't run under the 2.0 system.

Adventuring in the MS-DOS environment will require even more of a monetary investment from serious gamers. SVGA (Super VGA) is now the standard to buy. The first games employing SVGA will begin to appear this year and will offer a significant graphic improvement over standard VGA. Also, make sure to get a video card with 1MB of RAM. 512K is no longer sufficient.

Though hard drives are standard on the MS-DOS platform, storage capacity has now become more of a factor. Plan ahead and settle for no less than a 200MB hard drive, especially if you use Windows. Oh, and while you're at it, 4MB of system RAM is the absolute minimum. A 386-based system is also becoming the de facto standard for gaming.

The next generation sound cards are here now, as well. However, it will pay to plan your purchases here wisely. If you are anticipating an upgrade to CD-ROM, make sure that you don't limit your choices. Some of the newer cards have a proprietary CD-ROM SCSI, such as the Sound Blaster Pro, and will only work with a limited number of drives. Make sure you have all the facts before you invest.

And, of course, this brings us to CD-ROM. Multimedia is here to stay (at least until the next technological plateau is reached). Several game manufacturers are planning CD-ROM adventure releases for 1992. Sierra is finally ready to ship *King's Quest V* on CD-ROM, followed by a conversion of *Space Quest IV*. Lucasfilm Games is readying a full voice version of *Loom*, with plans to follow its release with CD-ROM versions of *Monkey Island*, *Monkey Island 2* and *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis*. Virgin Games is also preparing a CD-ROM only adventure for release this summer entitled *Guest* (please see *Mortaine's Caldron*). While CD-ROM is not a necessary upgrade now, the end of 1992 may provide a different story. Regardless, it is wise to plan your present upgrades in light of future expansion.

It's quite evident that adventure games are changing — improving and increasing in complexity — and that many serious adventurers will need to plan some system upgrades for 1992. Few advances come without attendant costs. Yet, we believe that the costs are far outweighed by the quality of the experiences these new technologies have to offer.

Protecting Your Investment

Now, let's turn our attention closer to home. Just as game manufacturers have successfully striven to improve the quality of adventure games during the past year, we have sought, with similar success, to continue improving on the quality of *Enchanted Realms™*. It has been our goal from the start to provide you with the highest quality adventure resource available — a goal we believe we have been able to achieve in many respects. To do so, though, we have always pushed the envelope of quality and content at a much faster rate than distribution has been able to match, especially in light of the recent tightening of economic belts that we have all experienced.

As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, the cost of producing *Enchanted Realms™* has almost doubled since our first issue, without any corresponding increase being passed along to our readership. We have purposely avoided doing so because we believe the current subscription rates are already at their maximum. However, economic concerns have dictated that this matter be addressed. This leaves us with several alternatives: increase our distribution (something we

(Continued on page 35)



Audience Hall

LETTERS FROM THE CITIZENS OF THE REALMS

Dear ER:

I got the disk for **Issue 8**, and it's great! You really have a good magazine, and when I saw that you answered personally in hand writing, I was overwhelmed that there are magazine publishers who care so much about their product and not just about making money.

I also appreciated the **Eye of the Beholder** hints; they were great for extra experience and weapons.

Thank you,
David Wood
Saskatchewan, Canada

*Thanks, David! We appreciate your kind words. And, yes that personal touch is important to us, whether by mail or phone. We do care about our product and believe that is reflected not only in our personal response to correspondence, but also in the quality of **Enchanted Realms™** itself. Few other publications with the limited circulation that a niche market provides offer an equivalent product in quality or size.*

*For the benefit of our other subscribers, David received his **Issue 8** with the disk trashed, courtesy of the postal system (whether U.S. or Canadian, we don't know). If you experience the same misfortune, please let us know so that we can get a replacement disk on its way to you.*

Dear ER:

I've had my Amiga for just a bit over a year, and have some advice for other Amiga gamers (particularly new ones) concerning hints for games they may see published in **QuestBusters** or other publications which are not strongly Amiga-oriented.

Any hint obtained from such sources should not be viewed as gospel since they are generally derived from the MS-DOS version of a given game, and during the conversion process the location of items, map layouts and other details may have been changed. In addition, most of the backdoors and other cheats which were present in the MS-DOS original will also have been cleaned out.

One recent example of this I can recall was in **Champions of Krynn**. A reader-supplied hint stated that Dust of Disappearance was to be found in the hideout or the sewers, and was "essential" to completing the game. I came across this hint a week or so after making a hack-and-slash dash through said sewers and (I thought) covering them fairly thoroughly — but no Dust had I found. Just to be sure, I loaded a saved game from just before entering the sewers and carefully walked through every square and rechecked my map — still no Dust. A short time later, I completed the game with no problem, so not only was the wondrous Dust not necessary to do so, it was apparently non-existent in the Amiga version of **Champions**.

Sincerely,
Raymond N. Rayl
Albuquerque, NM

*We appreciate the advice, Raymond. However, I would go one step further and advise all gamers to view cautiously any game helps, backdoors or cheats regardless of their source — even **Enchanted Realms™**! The reason is simple. There is just not enough time or resources available to verify each and every hint submitted. We, like other publications, must assume that our readers are supplying accurate information when they send us their hints. (We have personally found **QuestBusters** to be a helpful publication over the years, especially with the improvements in design and layout they have made during the past year.) Of course, if we played every adventure ourselves, we could verify each help submitted. However, even the editors at **Enchanted Realms™** are limited, mortal beings (you knew that, right?) and can only complete a finite number of quests per year. It's inevitable that some incorrect hints will slip through the cracks. Walkthroughs, rest assured, are another matter, for each is verified as to its accuracy.*

As far as changes made during the conversion process, it is most unlikely that a major vendor is going to make a significant change in gameplay requirements or puzzles employed when bringing their game to another platform. SSI, for example, provides clue books for each of their adventures. I have yet to see any indication in these that any differences exist (though I am certainly not infallible). Without a doubt, there are changes relating to bug fixes and general code clean-up, often involving the removal of cheats and backdoors from the original release version (which may have only been left in by oversight in the first place).

Another possible explanation for what appears to be missing or misplaced items in an adventure is that some games make use of routines for random item placement. There is a "shuffling" that takes place each time you restart a game. So, the Wand of Illusion appears in the Store Room one time and in the Alcove the next.

More often than not, discrepancies are the result of incorrect information or randomizing elements rather than changes made during conversion. If, however, you do discover that a hint we published is in error, please let us know and we will relay the correction to all our other readers.

Dear ER:

I recently purchased an IBM compatible and would be very interested in seeing an article comparing the strengths and weaknesses of the Amiga and IBM. I have an Amiga 500 with 3 megs of RAM and a 20MB hard drive. My compatible is a 486/33 with math coprocessor and 200MB hard drive.

Keep up the good work. The news, the reviews and the walkthroughs are all excellent.

Sincerely yours,
Robert Ladlam
Milford, PA

Well, Robert, you're not alone. We have heard from many adventurers who have (or plan to acquire) both an Amiga and MS-DOS compatible. As you will note beginning with this issue, we will strive to keep our readers informed on the differences between Amiga and MS-DOS versions of each adventure whenever possible. We will also keep your article in mind for the future. ER



Court Herald

TIDINGS OF NEW ADVENTURES FROM HITHER AND YON

Today the wind is howling and the snow is blowing off the shores of the frozen Great Lakes. Frigid! Burrrrrr! There's no better way to describe it. Well, in spite of the cold front blanketing the midwest, a large portion of the computer entertainment community was able to bask in the warmth and camaraderie of yet another Consumer Electronic Show (CES) in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Each winter, CES is traditionally held among the casinos of this fast-paced desert town. This season was no different, save for the new products being introduced, and some rather interesting developments. Our own Zach Meston was present on the show floor to bring you the following report. So, pull on a sweater, grab a cup of Ovaltine, relax and enjoy!

The 1992 Winter CES Report

Let's start with the good news. The upcoming Summer 1992 CES, to be held in Chicago from May 28th to May 31st, will be opened to the public for the first time in its 25-year history! This means that you, the consumers, will be able to check out the hottest new products firsthand (CES will be open to the public the last two days of the show). For more information, call (800) 388-6901. And be sure to look for me at the Prima Publishing booth, located inside the Electronic Arts booth. I'll be there to plug my numerous videogame strategy books (heh heh). Now then, on to the new games. I've arranged my report alphabetically by company for user-friendly reading.

Accolade signed a distribution deal with Legend Entertainment (**Spellcasting 101** and **Timequest**) just before the show. The first game to be distributed by Accolade under this new agreement is **Spellcasting 201: The Sorcerer's Appliance** (MS-DOS).

Star Control II: The Ur-Quan Masters, another Accolade product (MS-DOS and Amiga), looked great. This sequel is much more an adventure than an arcade game, while **Star Control I** was the other way around. In fact, **Star Control II** has some major gameplay resemblances to **Starflight** (Electronic Arts). The game will still include ship-to-ship combat, and there are now even more types of spacecraft.

Gateway (MS-DOS), from Legend Entertainment, is based on a series of science fiction novels by Frederick Pohl (**The Heechee Saga**). There are some gorgeous VGA graphics to be had, but I wasn't able to experiment with the game itself. It sure looks promising!

I couldn't help but notice **Virtual Reality Studio** (MS-DOS and Amiga), the American version of **3D Construction Kit** (see **Issue 9** for a review). I was quite amused, though, to see one paragraph on the back of the box where **3D Construction Kit** was used instead of **Virtual Reality Studio**.

Finally, Accolade was showing Delphine's **Cruise for a Corpse** (MS-DOS and Amiga), being distributed through U.S. Gold. The first two Delphine games (**Future Wars** and **James Bond: The STEALTH Affair**) were imported to the U.S. by Interplay. In fact, Interplay was demo-ing **Cruise for a Corpse** at the last CES! Some strange legal maneuvering must have gone on during the past half-year.

ASCIIware was showing an early version of **Spellcraft: Aspects of Valor**, an MS-DOS adventure game which they also plan to port to the Super NES videogame console. The graphics weren't particularly inspiring, but the gameplay uses a wide variety of spells (not too surprising considering the title). There was also a bitchin' graphic demo announcing **Forgotten Castle** (MS-DOS), which shouldn't be out before sometime in 1993.

Bullfrog was showing the MS-DOS version of **PowerMonger**, and a very **SimCity**-ish game called **Global Effect** (Amiga). **Global Effect** uses a top-down view and a unique interface, along with the usual beautiful Bullfrog graphics. I wasn't able to learn much about the gameplay, but the game looks very hot.

Electronic Arts was showing a few games under its own label. **The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes** (MS-DOS) features the elementary dude himself, along with Dr. Watson. The VGA graphics looked quite fine, and the interface resembled that of LucasArts (AKA Lucasfilm) games. **Populous II** (Amiga), the sequel to the most successful Amiga game of all time, had shipped just before the show, and it's already receiving rave reviews in European magazines.

GameTek had a thickly-accented Englishman dressed in adventure garb show me **Daemongate**, a very promising adventure game for MS-DOS systems. The strength of **Daemongate** is its interactive system, which allows the player to ask a wide variety of questions to NPCs using a point-and-click interface. GameTek also plans to release a hint video — yup, a video, not a hint book — for the game.

Konami has come out of nowhere to establish themselves as one of the biggest Amiga publishers around. They're bringing in waves of outstanding European Amiga products (along with MS-DOS versions, of course). **Legend** (MS-DOS and Amiga) is from the creators of **Bloodwych** (one of the most underrated Amiga adventures ever). **Lure of the Temptress** (MS-DOS) has a great title, but the game itself seems only average. **The Killing Cloud** (MS-DOS and Amiga) is a vector-graphic arcade/adventure game from Europe (where it's received good reviews). **Utopia** (MS-DOS and Amiga) is a fantastic "god game" from Core Design. It uses the isometric viewpoint of **Populous** to excellent effect. Buy this game!

Lucasfilm Games was showing their sequel to **Monkey Island**, **Monkey Island 2: LeChuck's Revenge** (MS-DOS), along with **Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis** (MS-DOS). Their major announcement was the iMUSE sound system (somewhat like LucasArts' home version of the THX sound system used in theaters).

New World Computing had **Might and Magic III** and **Planet's Edge** at their booth. Both products are currently for MS-DOS only. **Might and Magic III** is already shipping, with **Planet's Edge** due "any day now."

Ocean didn't have any true "adventures" being shown, but two of their more interesting arcade-adventures were there to be seen. **Epic** (MS-DOS and Amiga) is a vector-graphic space-combat game, while **Elf** (MS-DOS and Amiga) is a platform romp with adventure overtones.

Origin had several guaranteed hits on display. **Ultima VII: The Black Gate** (MS-DOS) is as much of a technological leap over **Ultima VI** as **Ultima VI** was over **Ultima V**. It uses an intuitive point-and-click system and features outstanding VGA graphics. **Ultima Underworld: The Stygian Abyss** (MS-DOS) was (in my humble opinion) the neatest game of the show. **Underworld** uses scaling and rotation effects to present the most realistic dungeon environment I've ever seen.

Sir-Tech was showing off **Crusaders of the Dark Savant** (MS-DOS), the sequel to **Bane of the Cosmic Forge**, along with another MS-DOS game just past the conceptual stage, tentatively titled **Ambush**. The storyline is pretty silly (it involves breakfast cereals and the Food and Drug Administration), but the game has promise. You are placed in command of a group of mercenaries fighting against enemy forces on a small island. You've got to lead the mercs through a series of 30 missions before you can claim victory. The gameplay, at this early stage, has components of **RoboSport** (Maxis) and hex-grid wargames. Ian Currie, the lead programmer, hopes to have it ready by the end of the year.

SSI had the usual barrage of cookie-cutter adventure games. **Matrix Cubed** (MS-DOS) is the second in the series of Buck Rogers games. **Treasures of the Savage Frontier** (MS-DOS) is the sequel to **Gateway to the Savage Frontier**. **Tales of Magic: Prophecy of the Shadow** (MS-DOS) was at the show in name only (no demo version), but it's rumored to be the start of a new AD&D adventure series.

UBI Soft was showing some recent European imports. **Celtic Legends** (MS-DOS and Amiga) is an adventure-strategy-wargame hyphenate with similarities to **Battle Isle** (which was also being shown). **Celtic Legends** was, at one time, going to be copy-protected with a dongle, but the head honchos at UBI Soft realized what a colossal mistake that would be, and yanked the dongle (ahem) before release. **The Koshan Conspiracy** (MS-DOS and Amiga) is really **B.A.T. 2**. The graphics are much improved over the first **B.A.T.**, and apparently, the copy protection from Hell that plagued the Amiga version of **B.A.T.** has been dropped.

Virgin Games was showing a CD-ROM product that blew the collective socks off everyone that saw it. **Guest** (MS-DOS) places you into a haunted house with the simple goal of escaping! The product is a gigabyte in size, and will ship on TWO compact disks. However, don't expect to see this puppy before summer.

The version of **Dune** (MS-DOS) that I saw had some spectacular visuals that were largely based on the ill-fated David Lynch film. There will be another version of **Dune** with its roots in the Frank Herbert novels.

Now it's time for those odd bits of information that just didn't fit anywhere else in this write-up, so I wedged 'em all into one section. Amiga owners may want to skip the next paragraph (gulp).

Most game companies I talked to were blunt about the Amiga market: there's not much money to be made. Piracy, and low unit sales, are really killing the Amiga. Even the mighty Psygnosis, which is undoubtedly the staunchest supporter of Commodore's mighty machine, has begun to push their MS-DOS products much harder. Most Amiga gamers may need to learn the address of the nearest European import shop pretty soon...

Nintendo was estimating sales of 2.2 million Super NES systems by the end of 1991; I learned from a Nintendo third-party licensee that they only sold 1.2 million. Nintendo certainly seemed to be licking its wounds; they didn't hold a press conference for the first time in eons. Sega, meanwhile, was gloating over its unexpected success. While Sega only sold about 700,000 Genesis systems over Christmas, they

destroyed the Super NES wherever the two consoles were being sold side-by-side.

SNK Home Electronics (they of the Neo•Geo home arcade system) gets my award for the Most Dangerous Booth of the show. There was a raised platform in the middle of the booth that seemed to trip just about everybody. I counted two dozen near-falls and two real wipeouts (one of whom was a supposedly alert security guard) on one particularly bad day. SNK also gets the award for the Sexiest Booth Babe of the show; they had a Penthouse Pet of the Year signing autographs. Yowza! (Sex sells videogames at least as well as it sells beer.)

And that's the way it was in La\$ Vega\$ for the Winter Consumer Electronics Show. I hope a lot of **Enchanted Realms™** readers attend the Summer CES — that way I won't need to write another show report (grin). **Zach Meston**

Additional News

In addition to Zach's show report, we have some other news of interest, as well as further details on several of the adventures already mentioned. So, here goes.

New from SSI is **Matrix Cubed**, sequel to **Countdown to Doomsday**. In this sci-fi adventure, you need to unravel the matrix conspiracy, a plot revolving around the theory of the Matrix device, a machine capable of transforming mundane substances into the precious commodity — energy! A much expanded universe is provided, plus twice the opponents of the prequel. Characters can be imported from **Countdown**. Planned for MS-DOS and Amiga (1st QTR '92).

Also new from SSI are **The Dark Queen of Krynn**, **Treasures of the Savage Frontier** and **Tales of Magic**. **Dark Queen**, sequel to **Champions** and **Death Knights**, concludes this trilogy of adventures. Characters, wealth and items can be transferred from **Death Knights**. Graphics and sound have been improved, plus extensive underwater exploration has been added. It is scheduled for MS-DOS (April '92) and Amiga (June '92).

Treasures of the Savage Frontier follows in the steps of **Gateway**. Several new features have been added to this Gold Box adventure. Weather now affects movement and combat. NPC interaction has also been beefed up. Of course, characters will transfer from **Gateway**. Look for a March release on MS-DOS and September on the Amiga.

Most significant, however, is the release of **Tales of Magic**. This is SSI's first true in-house fantasy role-playing adventure. It is scheduled for March on both the Amiga and MS-DOS compatibles.

Amiga gamers can look for **Gateway** and **Pools of Darkness** which should be on shelves by now. **Eye of the Beholder II** should be available for the Amiga in March.

Sierra has released their **Start-Up Kit** for **The Sierra Network** (TSN). It's now available through software retailers for \$29.95. (On-line cost is \$2.00 per non-prime hour.) Included in the package is the necessary software to access the system and a \$25.00 usage credit. Select areas of **SierraLand**, a cyberspace-based theme park, are now available to users with the official opening of **SierraLand** and **LarryLand** scheduled for later in the year. Electronic Mail, Conference Rooms and Game Hints are also available. Look for a report in a future issue. An MS-DOS compatible and modem are required.

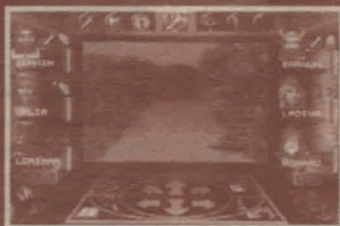
Also in the Sierra bin, **King's Quest V** for CD-ROM is almost here and should be available as you read this. Other scheduled CD-ROM conversions include **Space Quest IV** and **Leisure Suit Larry 1**. Non-adventure titles currently on this

(Continued on page 11)

Wizardry

A Fantasy Role-Playing Simulation by D.W. Bradley

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ISSUE 10





Charted Sectors

About The Companion Disk

ORDERING INFORMATION

Each issue of **Enchanted Realms™** is available by subscription with a disk of software for the Amiga computer and/or MS-DOS compatible. These disks are also available direct for those who purchase **Enchanted Realms™** through retail channels. If you did not receive the disk(s), you can use the Order Form on this page to place your order.

ISSUE 10 COMPANION DISK

Both the Amiga and the MS-DOS companion disk for **Issue 10** of **Enchanted Realms™**, **UHS Hints**, is a specially compiled collection of solution files for 40 adventure games. Some of the hintfiles are system specific, but most are available (or will be available) on both the Amiga and MS-DOS compatibles.

For those unfamiliar with **UHS (The Universal Hint System)**, it is the brainchild of Jason Strautman, and employs lightly decoded hintfile databases that can only be read on a machine that has a Reader program available. Hintfiles for this system are created by volunteer gamers with a Maker program, the complement of the Reader, which takes Topics, Questions, and Hints and assembles them into a hintfile.

Included on disk, you will find 40 adventure hintfiles (identified below), and the machine specific Reader and Maker programs for your system. Please follow the appropriate instructions below for your computer and be sure to carefully read the accompanying documentation provided on disk.

UHS HINTS - AMIGA

Amiga owners will find the **UHS Hints** disk set up for operation from the Workbench. Boot with your system disk as usual, then insert the **UHS Hints** disk into any drive. Please begin by double-clicking on ReadMe1st!. To load a hintfile, simply double-click on the icon for the adventure solution of your choice. Because of the large number of hintfiles contained on this disk, they have been placed alphabetically into two separate directories.

You may also note that the colors of the icons look reversed. This is because all **Adventure Game Treasury** disks are now prepared to look "correct" under the new 2.0 release of Workbench (which reverses the colors used under version 1.3). For specific instructions on using **The Universal Hint System**, please refer to the instructions on disk.

UHS HINTS - MS-DOS

The MS-DOS edition of **UHS Hints** is accessed from the DOS prompt. However, before trying to use the hintfiles on disk, please read the READ1ST! textfile. To do so, simply change to the drive containing this disk and type READ1ST! [Enter] at the prompt. Full instructions are contained on disk for using the hintfiles.

UHS HINTFILES ON DISK

Solutions for the following adventures games are provided on this disk: **B.A.T., Borrowed Time, Colonel's Bequest, Castle Master, Chamber of the Sci-Mutant Priestess, Countdown, Defender of the Crown, Fool's Errand, Future Wars, Heart of China, Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Hollywood Hijinks, Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, James Bond: The STEALTH Affair, King's Quest 1-5, Leather Goddesses of Phobos, Leisure Suit Larry 1-5, Loom, Martian Dreams, Martian Memorandum, Planetfall, Rise of the Dragon, Spellcasting 101 & 201, Savage Empire, Secret of Monkey Island, Space Quest 1-4, Starflight, Stationfall and Zak McKracken.**

We hope you find this disk of adventure solutions helpful in the quests that lie before you. If you would like to use the Writer program included and create hintfiles for your favorite adventures, please contact Jason Strautman before doing so as indicated in the UHSMaker.Doc. Thanks and enjoy!

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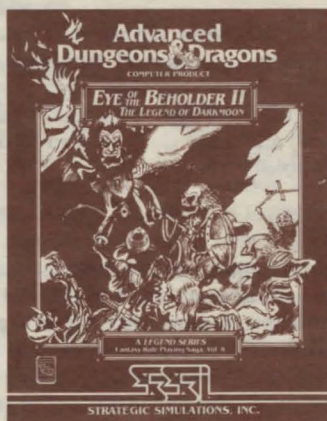
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Dimmer Dungeons

Buried Treasures

By Marci Rogers



Fog has settled around **RealmsHead Inn** tonight, a thick pewter blanket that obscures even the amethyst glow of Dragomon's wardbeams. Feeplier is curled into a padded lounge chair, reading the type of lurid best-seller that she loves. Her fox yawns and eyes you as you pass by, but doesn't move from her lap.

Lariel and Darhen converse in low tones by the fire as you traverse the taproom, but they have so little time together between adventures that you hesitate to interrupt them. Morggon, never far from those he guards so loyally, sits polishing his armor at the end of the bar. You're still not quite comfortable with the taciturn dwarf, but Maeve is nowhere to be found, and if anyone might know her whereabouts, it would be Morggon.

"Have you seen Maeve?" you ask, as politely as possible.

"Outside." He gestures toward the side door, then takes a sip of the thick dark ale he favors, the one that always makes you choke.

"Thanks," you murmur without expecting a reply, and unlatch the side exit.

Through the thick mist, you can barely discern a pinpoint of light on the western side of **Conversion Castle**. You follow the glow to the **Copse of Outdated Technology**. Maeve is there, digging in the soft earth with a steel shovel. A large cage sits near her, emitting a rhythmic humming growl.

She smiles as she sees you.

"A night for secret treasures, wouldn't you say, young one? And my newest pet can help me eat of bread I have been unable to taste before."

You take the shovel from her and help with the digging.

"What exactly is your, ah, pet?"

"I'm still learning about him, actually, but he seems to be some kind of monster that wanted taming. He had strange numbers stamped on him — 486 and then 33, and I believe he may have been ill-treated. He could speak only in grunts and squeaks until I called down a Thunder spell on him, and his singing voice can still use improvement. His memory seems faulty also, for even though my crystals show me that he has four megs, he can only make use of small chunks at one time, and he is totally unable of accomplishing more than one task at a time, although he has been trained to make the appearance of doing so. Still, he can store a great deal of information, has a flair for graphic clarity and isn't afraid of high speeds. I've grown quite fond of him in many ways, and he seems to like me."

Your shovel clanks on a chest.

"Wonderful!" Maeve exclaims. "You've found a trove.

Bring my pet into the tower, would you, and we'll look at these together where it's warm."

She scoops up the chest and lantern while you lumber after her, burdened by the heavy, bulky cage.

"Open it," she says, indicating the chest, "while I get us some hot tea."

The five packages within seem to glint up at you as you take the steaming mug. You catch her excitement as she explains....

There are a number of chests within that grove, young one, but only a few of them contain such treasures as these. I have not unearthed them before because, alas, none of them were ever available in Amiga format. Still, tales of their worth have spread to my ears, and I am delighted to find I can still travel the worlds they hold.

A Recent Find

The one in your hand is quite young, and the only graphic adventure, with a richness of text found in the old Infocom's and a warm sense of ironic humor. It's called **Spellcasting 101: Sorcerers Get All the Girls**, and its EGA graphics are so smooth they can rival some VGA products. Your character is Ernie Eaglebeak, a true nerd who has visions of grandeur, and glandeur. He escapes his evil stepfather to enroll at Sorcerer U., where things go as badly as can be expected in any fine storyline. Steve Meretsky's puzzles range from punnish to fiendish, with a "naughty" as well as a "nice" mode to fit those of varying tastes.

As Ernie, you will romance beautiful girls and lustful housewives, travel to incredible places on a magic surfboard, and attempt to survive your freshman year. Ernie is currently back as a sophomore in **Spellcasting 201: The Sorcerer's Appliance**, so you can guess he triumphs, but it's such fun to help him get there, especially with Legend's point-and-click mouse interface that makes the game resemble an Amiga product.

The soundtrack with varied music and digitized voices adds to the overall effect, but unfortunately doesn't support some soundboards. That's a small flaw, however, in such an entertaining experience, so let us fill out our applications.

A Tale of Two Sims

Those two on your left are both simulations and both Microprose products, although one is near the age of **Spellcasting 101**, and the other a deal older. **Covert Action** is a modern spy "thriller" based more on imitating James Bond than simulating actual espionage work. Your character, Maximillian (or Maxine) Remington, is called upon to prevent

crimes organized by minds so diabolical they have defeated the entire staff of the CIA. Success is rewarded by praise from the President and the admiration of the lovelies (or hunks) in the secretarial pool. (Your assistant isn't so bad, either.) If you capture all 26 Masterminds, the government will even send you on vacation, but whether it's to the Bahamas or the laundromat depends on the quality of your work. It's all break-in, wire-tapping, decoding and car-chasing fun glamorized by lively sounds and VGA graphics.

The second simulation is older, with less sounds and sparser music, although it does support VGA. **Sword of the Samurai** is an excursion into 16th Century feudal Japan, where your character strives to rise from humble samurai to Shogun. As might be expected, honor is of paramount importance, but there are ways to deal with your rivals secretly, and a nasty, conniving bunch they are, too! (Your father-in-law is liable to send Ninjas the day after your wedding if you're the Hatamoto's favorite.) The manual provides some interesting notes on Japanese clans, and is clear and informative. This is also true of **Covert Action's** documentation, although the lore of the **Samurai** has a richer texture. Both of these games will support keyboard and joystick, but not mouse. This is also true of the last two treasures which you just placed on the table. They are keyboard only products with minimal sound effects and simple graphics.

Choosing a Role to Play

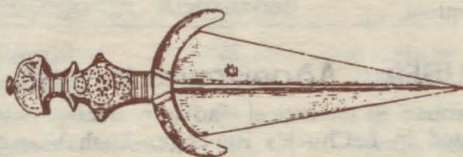
Broderbund's **The Dark Heart Of Uukrul** claims to support VGA, but the effects are far from lavish, and the overwhelming set of commands needed to engage your characters in the simplest combat is daunting. Mindcraft's **The Magic Candle, Volume I** is limited to EGA, and improves on the command interface by only a little.

However, both of these games are role-playing delights, and well worth the effort required to explore them fully. Plots are laden with puzzles and character interaction as well as monsters and treasures, and each offers an original ending which is NOT a SASTEW (Seek and Slay the Evil Wizard).

During the course of each adventure, your characters will develop skills unique to their professions, including complex magic systems. Weapons and tactics can be varied for those who like battles, while the wealth of NPC's present will involve those who like intensive plots. Many hours can be spent in Eriosthe and Deruvia, and happy will be the spending.

There is one additional bonus to the last three treasures we have unearthed. Many software houses have reduced their prices to the \$15.00 range, making it possible to collect all three for the cost of one newer program!

As you watch these treasures coruscate in the lamplight, Maeve's monster seems to grow friendlier. You watch as she feeds the arcane volumes known as disks onto its hard drive. Soon you and she may travel to a land of wonders you might not have otherwise reached. Surely the monster's growl is not so fierce as you first feared, or perchance it is not a growl at all, but simply another form of purr. ER



format include **Mixed-up Mother Goose**, **Jones in the Fast Lane** and **Stellar 7**. On another note, **King's Quest V** for the Amiga is now undergoing its final quality control checks and, barring further problems, should be on dealers' shelves by the time you receive this issue.

From Dynamix, we eagerly look forward to the next installment in the **Space Quest** series. **Space Quest V**, using the same game development system as **Rise of the Dragon** and **Heart of China**, is set for a Fall '92 premier. Their sequel to **Willy Beamish** is scheduled for the first part of '93.

Out of This World is Interplay's latest adventure import. This action adventure was released in December on the Amiga with a January release scheduled for MS-DOS. A nuclear experiment gone wrong hurtles a scientist through space and time into another world, a very hostile and strange one at that. **Out of This World** employs a polygon graphic system that allows the generation of real-time, rotoscoped animation. The demo we have seen exhibits extremely smooth and lifelike action. It is hard drive installable and retails for \$59.95. **Star Trek** and **Lord of the Rings II** (MS-DOS), we are told, will ship at the end of January.

Paragon has several new titles in the works. **Spellbound**, an original RPG not based on a pencil and paper product, is due out in May on MS-DOS machines, while **MegaTraveller 3** is due out this August (MS-DOS). Summer will see the release of a compilation pack including **MegaTraveller 1, 2** and **Space 1889** for MS-DOS compatibles.

As we expected, FTL Games has yet to release the MS-DOS version of **Dungeon Master**. **Black Crypt**, from Electronic Arts, is still in development though we anticipate seeing it very soon, probably by the end of March. **Magic Candle II** and **Planet's Edge** (MS-DOS) have not shipped to date (both are scheduled for the next few weeks). However, a playable demo of **Magic Candle II** is making the circuit. Neither **Magic Candle I** or **II** have arrived yet for the Amiga.

Several other products are still in a holding pattern, too. **Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis** is now set to ship late in April for compatibles. Microillusions "vaporventure" has still not seen light of day, nor will they disclose any further information concerning it. This is our last mention of it until we have a package in our hands. **Vikings: Fields of Conquest (Kingdoms of England II)** is to ship for the Amiga at the end of February, followed by an MS-DOS version in about 4-6 months.

Summing It Up

Well, that's the latest adventure news for another issue. However, I am beginning to feel like I should start printing a disclaimer concerning release dates with what has been transpiring in the industry of late, but.... Actually, I would rather see a product's release delayed, than receive a game before it is really finished. I fully realize that game manufacturers have a difficult task planning release dates and advertising schedules, especially with escalating technology and greater constraints on the development process. Yet, I do believe that much could be gained, especially with regards to consumer goodwill, by being more conservative when setting release dates. Hopefully, vendors will begin paying more attention to their programmers' estimates concerning development schedules, than to those determined solely by the marketing departments. Consumer trust could certainly stand the boost.

Enjoy the adventure experience. Until next we meet, may all your adventures be good ones! ER

LeChuck's Revenge

MONKEY ISLAND 2

Reviewed by Chuck Miller

Time passes, as it has a perpetual habit of doing, and Guybrush Threepwood has rested on the laurels of that "LeChuck thing" about as long as anyone's willing to stand. It seems that he just can't drum up any interest in hearing his famous, fizzing, root beer evaporating pirate story any more. So, with little else left to do, Guybrush determines that he will simply have to pull off some other worthy-of-renown piraty daring do so that he has a new story to tell. Big Whoop time! No, Big Whoop is not a method of partying (though it could be misconstrued to consist of just that). It's the pirate treasure of all treasures. And, Guybrush is determined to find it.

When We Last Left Our Hero...

In *The Secret of Monkey Island*, Guybrush Threepwood had successfully completed his first high seas adventure, dispatching the evil Ghost Pirate LeChuck, and attained his lifelong dream of becoming a pirate himself. The world was rid of another evil villain, the sky was filled with fireworks and Guybrush and Elaine (Governor Marley, that is) shared a brief romantic moment together under the pyrotechnically lighted heavens. Wow! Is that an ending, or is that an ending? Well, actually, it is and it isn't. You see, LeChuck was only temporarily dissipated, or rather his essence was. However, being what voodoo can do and what voodoo done did, he's now back in a rather wretched, rotten state of decomposition, with a disposition to match! And, he's after Guybrush in *Monkey Island 2: LeChuck's Revenge*.

Old Gang — New Crew

Several of the original cast make an appearance in this new episode. Governor Marley, Guybrush's heartthrob, has returned. The three Men of Low Moral Fiber and their rat are back (this time you get to catch the little rodent). Stan, of Stan's Previously Owned Vessels, has made a switch from selling ships to palming crypts — previously owned models, naturally. The Voodoo Priestess with her assortment of pins and potions also returns to lend a hand, and sundry other parts. Even Herman Toothrot pops in for a brief meditation. And, of course, LeChuck plays a prominent role, making the move from ghostly apparition to ghostly incarnation.

New and memorable faces making an appearance are attached, in most cases, to the bodies of Largo LaGrande, LeChuck's right-hand henchman, Wally the Farsighted Cartographer, Rapp Scallion of the Steamin' Weenie Hut, Captain Dread of Captain Dread's Ship Charters (ja owner of the Jolly Rasta, mon), Jojo the monkey and Walt the dog.

And Now for a Little Island Hopping

In the first adventure, Guybrush spent most of his time on either Melee or Monkey Island, but could not freely move from one to the other. In *LeChuck's Revenge*, our intrepid hero travels between several different islands: Scabb, Phatt, Booty and Dinky. For most of this quest, he can freely sail back and forth between Scabb Island, where pirates are free to be pirates; Booty Island, the Mardi-Gras-all-the-time island; and Phatt Island, home to the bloated fascist dictator of the same name. In fact, he will have to do a fair amount of island hopping in order to complete his quest for Big Whoop!

Yucks Amuck and Guffaws Galore

Humor, never a weak point in Lucasfilm adventures, again runs rampant in *Monkey Island 2*. I never did laugh so hard that milk came out my nose (as indicated that it would on the box), but the game did provide an abundance of yucks and chuckles. Much of the humor, as gameplay, is puzzle related, so I will refrain from spoiling your gaming fun.

Without a doubt, the spitting contest proved to be my favorite sequence. I can honestly say that it met all my expectations. In this droolish little episode, the object is to spit far enough to win first place, a feat that requires the greatest of skill and cunning (read that as luck and cheating), plus sufficiently thick and gooey spittle! Appropriate sounds are included, as well. You get to Swish-swish, Hooooooock!, Chwwwwwwk! and Ptooie! to your hearts content. Hey, it's a great day for spitting! Just ask the Spitmaster.

Now, if you're appalled by such goings on, there's more. Actually, there is quite a lot of spitting and drooling in this game. You spit and drool in the above contest, Largo LaGrande spits on the wall of The Bloody Lip, Wally ends up dripping with spit and LeChuck himself spits and slobbers all over the place. Even Walt the dog drools a little.

Besides all the spitting above, you have the opportunity to take part in a drinking contest, employing your wits rather than your stomach. Other humorous events include the antics of Jojo the monkey, Rapp Scallion the recomposing and decomposing corpse, dancing skeletons and giving LeChuck a wedgie. Of course, most conversations are appropriately seasoned (depending on your sense of humor) with rib-tickling content.

An iMUSEing Adventure Indeed

Numerous technological advancements have been implemented in *LeChuck's Revenge*. Lush VGA graphics add to the visual beauty of this adventure, providing a

noticeable improvement over the original **Monkey Island**. Light and shadows are used to great effect as characters move from dimly to well lighted areas of the screen (and vice versa). Animation is also well refined, being quite smooth and lifelike. The inventory has even been spruced up to include icons in place of text, providing visual images of the items you are carrying. Not only is this more pleasing visually, but it makes object management much easier as well.

However, the greatest improvement to the SCUMM system is audible, rather than visual. With **LeChuck's Revenge**, Lucasfilm Games debuts their new sound system, iMUSE (Interactive Music and Sound Effects), supporting all major sound cards. iMUSE provides interactive musical and sound accompaniment for an entire game, not just parts of it. In essence, you have interactive audio throughout gameplay in response to the actions of your on-screen persona, resulting in an appropriate musical change in tempo, style and/or mood. In fact, the implementation is so seamless and subtle that many players are likely to miss it entirely. No one, however, will miss the immense improvement iMUSE lends to the atmosphere of the game. It's truly impressive.

Bounteous Treasure

Several other improvements, in addition to those above, have been added since the original **Monkey Island**, including the option of two modes of play: The Expert Mode — **Monkey Island 2** "I want it all! All the puzzles! All the work!" and the Beginners Mode — **Monkey 2 Lite** "I've never played an adventure game before. I'm scared." Having finished the adventure in expert mode and played part way through on beginners level, I can attest that **Monkey 2 Lite** is vastly more simple to play. If you really are new to adventures, you just may want to play the easy mode first, then give the expert version a try. Otherwise, stick with the more difficult version. It is much more satisfying to puzzle your way through.

You can now save up to 99 games in progress with the new scrolling save game requester, as opposed to the first adventure's 9 save game limit. Yes, I did use all 99 positions, and then began saving over previous files. But then, I'm a very cautious player (caused by the death-around-every-corner syndrome created by so many other adventures). In this regard, I really appreciate Lucasfilm's game philosophy. I know I've quoted it before, but I believe it bears repetition. "We believe that you buy games to be entertained, not to be whacked over the head every time you make a mistake." I agree! I play adventures to be entertained, not punished. However, I will say that the style of a game contributes to how death is handled within it. In a dungeon role-play adventure, I expect death to be a greater adversary.

Monkey Island 2 comes on six high density 5.25" disks. Also in the box is a user's manual (for the uninitiated only), a reference card containing valuable information on shortcut keys, a Mix'n'Mojo Voodoo Ingredient Proportions Dial (copy

protection codewheel) and the latest copy of Lucasfilm Games' newsletter, *The Adventurer*.

Dry Bones

Okay. So, is there anything wrong with this game? Not nearly as much as there is right with it. My only real complaints revolve around several more obtuse puzzles I encountered. In fact, I probably wouldn't be finished yet had I not phoned Lucasfilm for a few hints. I really can't give any examples here without spoiling the adventure for some of you (check out **'Starr Light** for some hints), but I will say that some of the puzzles were just too illogical for my thinking cap. Apart from this, I only wish the game had been a little longer and that the ending had a greater degree of resolution. On this final point, let me explain...

LeChuck Strikes Back

Most of you are probably also fans of Lucasfilm's **Star Wars** trilogy. The initial **Star Wars** release had a very upbeat, triumphal ending. So did **Return of the Jedi**. **The Empire Strikes Back**, however, had a much more unresolved, dark and open ended conclusion. You just knew there was more to the story, and you didn't exactly know what the sequel would reveal. In other words, you were left hanging. Well, **LeChuck's Revenge** is **The Empire Strikes Back** all over again. You are certainly glad you played it, and you know that the adventure is not really over yet, but you're just not sure how it is going to end. Sigh. So, tell me. When is **Monkey Island 3: Return of Guybrush Threepwood** going to be ready? Also, just what IS Big Whoop? And, what really IS the secret of **Monkey Island** anyway?

May the Wind Be at Your Back

I honestly find Lucasfilm adventures among the most enjoyable and lighthearted available. You simply won't find funnier or more fun to play adventures anywhere else. As with the original **Monkey Island**, **Monkey Island 2** is a hands-down winner for plain and simple, kick-back-and-relax fun. It improves noticeably on the original both graphically and audibly, with a stronger and less linear storyline than its predecessor. It has definitely been a highlight in my game playing, leaving me with a thirst for more.

Monkey Island 2: LeChuck's Revenge provides a potpourri of entertainment, bringing with it the reggae, piraty flavor of the original while improving technologically on its design. Do yourself a favor, mon, and grab the next ship which sets sail for the Caribbean. ER



Overall: 96

Monkey Island 2

Price: \$59.95

Category: Animated

Lucasfilm Games

Difficulty: Novice

Gameplay:	98	Graphics:	94
Interface:	90	Audio:	96
Atmosphere:	96	Innovation:	92
Documentation:	80	Mechanics:	90

Required: VGA, MCGA; 640K; 286/10 MHZ or Better; Hard Drive and High Density Floppy Drive
Supported: Roland, Ad Lib and Sound Blaster; Mouse
Protection: Codewheel **Options:** Hint Book Available

BATTLE ISLE



Reviewed by Jeff James

Speak the word "wargame" to many computer gamers, and you're likely to see a blank look of distaste analogous to one seen upon our current President's visage when he spies a plate of steaming broccoli. Computer wargaming has long been a hex-laden, stat-driven exercise, primarily suited for wargaming buffs and ex-military officers. Seen through the eyes of many computer owners, wargames involve moving tiny, strangely marked units about a graphically uninspiring playfield. Computer wargaming, on the average, has definitely not been for novices.

New and Improved

A recent trend has been to simplify and make wargames more accessible to mainstream users. The most recent attempts have been noteworthy, including Chris Crawford's excellent *Patton Strikes Back* for MS-DOS and Macintosh machines, and QQP's *Perfect General* and *Lost Admiral* for both MS-DOS and Amiga platforms. All three of these games have broken from the wargaming norm, offering brighter graphics, faster gameplay and simpler controls. *Battle Isle*, from UBI Soft, is yet another wargame attempt at keeping most of the conflict occurring on the computer screen, not between the game's interface and the user.

Available for the Amiga, it ships on three non-protected diskettes, and is fully hard drive installable. Although the program seemed rather shaky running under AmigaDOS 2.04 (locking up my system several times), running the game under 1.3 on both an A3000 and other Amiga models went smoothly. *Battle Isle* fully supports accelerated Amigas, including those with 68030 and 68040 processors. A quick reference card and three playing booklets round out the package contents. One of these manuals is the general documentation for the game, covering installation and game operation. Another is a compendium of the units available in the game, giving a short description and a picture of the vehicle in question. Finally, the included novella attempts to relate the historical fiction behind the game's setting. Unfortunately, this text was riddled with spelling and grammatical errors, making any attempt at reading its contents a chore. Surprisingly, I found *Battle Isle* completely devoid of any copy protection whatsoever.

Haven't I Seen You Somewhere...

Once installed, players are treated to a lengthy animation which introduces the player to the plot and setting of the game. The story behind *Battle Isle* is taken from one the most over-used themes in science fiction. An alien race (the Krull)

are under attack by an evil force of marauders. War-fighting neophytes, the Krull have need of a military genius to save their home planet, Chromos, from destruction. Knowing that the humans residing on planet Earth are particularly adept at warfare and bloodshed (as most aliens are already aware), the Krull place a series of computer wargame simulations on earth to find the military genius they need. The name of the simulator (of course) is *Battle Isle*. Although this storyline sounds like a cheap clone of the motion picture *The Last Starfighter* of a few years back, it nevertheless makes *Battle Isle* a tad more enjoyable and attractive to gamers who might never look twice at a wargame.

After the animation has been watched, the program finishes loading and the main menu appears. From this menu, you can select a one or two player game, set game length, change unit color schemes, toggle sound effects on and off and tailor other game options to your liking. The game consists of 32 maps, 16 of which are for play against the computer, while the rest are reserved for play between two human players. Once you've chosen your playing options, the actual combat begins. The player is then presented with a vertically divided playing field, with one side used by the player to order his units about, while the other portion is reserved for the computer or human opponent.

I was astonished to learn that *Battle Isle* relies entirely upon a joystick as its control device. Except for entering your name for high scores and passwords, the entire game is joystick driven. Although I found that using a joystick to issue commands was much more intuitive than I initially thought, the lack of mouse support is a strange omission.

As mentioned previously, the joystick is the primary input device. Issuing orders to your units is alarmingly simple. Using the joystick to move the on-screen cursor, placing that cursor over a friendly unit and pressing the joystick button allows the player to issue commands to that unit. All the combat, movement, information gathering and unit construction and repair is accomplished entirely by depressing the joystick button and moving the stick in a certain direction. Cumbersome at first, this control method gradually became second nature. Although I still long for mouse support, the joystick control is implemented rather ingeniously.

From the Halls of Montezuma to the Shores of Tripoli...

The maps are decidedly well-done, filled with over a dozen specific terrain types. Ranging from snow-capped mountain peaks to deep blue water, these terrain types profoundly affect the units that move through them. Thick

forest terrain slows nearly all ground units to a crawl, while paved roads offer greater than normal movement. Most aircraft can realistically range over the entire map with no terrain restrictions, while the three different depths of water are accessible to hovercraft and deep-water vessels. These units are stylishly drawn, appearing not as the boxes with symbols that many wargamers are familiar with, but as miniature tanks, ships, planes, et cetera. Each unit symbol which appears on the map can contain up to six individual units, all of which must be of the same vehicle type as the unit's map symbol.

Gameplay is similar in many respects to QQP's *Perfect General*. The player has only a small assortment of units at his or her disposal on the first few maps. Light tanks, infantry and troop carriers are the first units to be used, with others being added as the player moves on to the next map level. While *Battle Isle* initially appears to offer only a limited amount of units, further play reveals a surprisingly large amount. Nearly two dozen types of units can be the players to command, including three tank types, SAM missile launchers, amphibious landing vehicles, four aircraft types and a plethora of naval vessels. A massive aircraft carrier is also available for pummeling your enemy into submission. Each of these units has widely contrasting offensive, defensive and movement capabilities.

In addition to new combat units which become available on each new map, new buildings are also provided for the player's use. Besides the large headquarters building (one of which each player has in every scenario), depots (which allow units to be repaired) and factories (which allow you to create new units, as well as repairing old ones) may dot the landscape. The addition of a recoverable energy source known as "aldinium" enhances play, as players can recover this element (using transport vehicles, such as hovercraft and cargo planes) to increase the supply of energy to their factories and depots.

The goal on all the map levels is a simple one: destroy all of your opponent's units or capture his headquarters. Once you've emerged victorious over your opponent, a graph appears displaying the course of the battle. Then, at the bottom of this screen appears the five letter code used to access the next level.

Animated Animosity

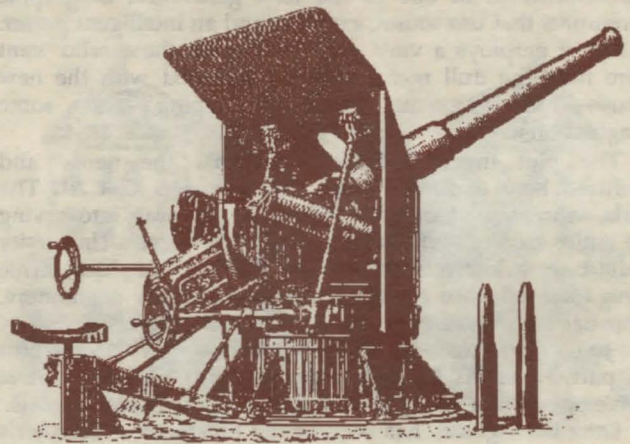
There are several types of animation employed during play. When two units begin fighting, the screen zooms up to a close-up view of the action, showing each of the individual vehicles in each unit. The vehicles in question roll, fly or sail into their fighting positions, all with the appropriate rumbling of tank treads or whooshing of helicopter blades. The units then begin to fire at each other, each with their appropriate weapons. After a few furious seconds of flying shells and exploding ordnance, the destroyed vehicles are removed from play. If all of the vehicles represented by a particular unit

have been destroyed, the unit disappears from the main map in a puff of smoke.

My favorite animation of the game is undoubtedly when an infantry unit captures an enemy factory or depot. Seen from within the building, a half-screen animation appears showing the marauding infantry cutting through the defenders heavy steel door using an energy weapon, with a looming shadow appearing on the floor as the infantry enters. Once you've either eliminated all of your opponent's units or captured his headquarters with your infantry, you're treated with an appropriate award screen. In the first case, a full-screen animation appears of a helicopter swooping in and landing in front of your opponent's headquarters, while one of your tanks rolls up and the tanker unbuttons the hatch. In the latter, a stark animation of your foe's shattered headquarters appears, replete with rolling clouds of burning smoke. In to this shattered complex rushes one of your infantry units, capturing the building amid the sounds of scattered machine gun fire.

After the Smoke Settles...

As it stands, *Battle Isle* is an immensely enjoyable and extremely playable attempt at bringing less serious gamers into the wargaming fold. Wargaming grognards may scoff at the thought of moving their legions by way of joystick, and the password access to higher levels bespeaks a "nintendoesque" influence upon game design. Modem and serial-link support for gaming against other human opponents is needed, as well as AmigaDOS 2.0 support. A variety of new terrain types (such as arctic and desert terrain) would be welcomed, and mouse support is definitely a must. However, *Battle Isle's* gorgeous graphics and animation, coupled with its intuitive playing interface make it a delight to play. If you've always wanted to play a wargame but found most to be obtuse or intimidating, *Battle Isle* is exactly what you've been waiting for. EIR



Overall: 89

Battle Isle

Price: \$49.95

Category: Strategic

UBI Soft

Difficulty: Novice

Gameplay: 90

Graphics: 88

Compatibility: Amiga 500-3000; Workbench 1.3

Interface: 92

Audio: 85

Required: 512K RAM; Joystick

Atmosphere: 79

Innovation: 90

Recommended: Hard Drive or Multiple Floppy Drives

Documentation: 80

Mechanics: 87

Protection: None Options: One or Two Players

THE SPELLCASTING 201 SORCERER'S APPLIANCE

Reviewed by Alfred C. Giovetti

Well, Eve may not be your kind of girl, but she is an innocent and naturally talented woman whose only desire is to do her creator's bidding. The plot from Legend's newest adventure by Steve Meretzky and Bob Bates is in some ways right out of a Frankenstein movie. In other ways, it's a real puzzle to solve, and offers the option of being naughty or nice.

Steve Meretzky was the author of *Spellcasting 101* and *Leather Goddesses of Phobos*. Bob Bates worked on *Sherlock: The Riddle of the Crown Jewels* and *Arthur: The Quest for Excalibur*. The latest Legend offering is equally as good as the previous efforts with some improvements in the philosophy of "more babes, more brews and more bad jokes."

In Case You Haven't Ner'd

Spellcasting 201 retains some of the best aspects of the old text adventures in one of the new generation of graphic adventures that use sound, graphics and an intelligent parser. In fact, it employs a very good parser, for those who want more than the dull menu selection afforded with the new mouse-directed games, requiring typing and some imagination to play.

The plot involves Ernie Eaglebeak, the nerdy and confused hero of *Spellcasting 101: Sorcerers Get All The Girls*, who single-handedly debauched his way into saving the entire faculty and student body of Sorcerer's University while only a lowly freshman. As the reluctant hero, Ernie saves them all once again, this time as a nerdy sophomore. Ernie has the chance to progress to the higher levels of sorcery and to use the Sorcerer's Appliance to create Eve, the girl (or sex partner) of his dreams, while saving the unappreciative University from a young faculty member and an old nemesis.

Otto Tickingclock has become the president of Sorcerer's University and has taken up residence in the president's house while undertaking extensive campus renovation and expansion. Ernie pledges the fraternity Hu Delta Phart (not too far from Eye Tappa Keg) and must deal with the normal hazing and initiation rituals at the hands of Chris Cowpattie. Otto Tickingclock has also given Ernie the task of investigating the Sorcerer's Appliance, hence the title of our game, and using it for good, not evil, purposes.

Waking Up to Revelry

The plot in *Spellcasting 201* is not linear. You may complete tasks in many different ways, with many paths to

the climax of the game where you save the president of the university and restore your school to its normal level of revelry. To remain on the winning track, you are advised to save your game at the start of every day and explore the campus side plots and possibilities to your heart's content. Then, restore the game and finish the day's tasks in the proper order. In this way, you will be allowed to experience the richness of the plot and subplots woven into the main story.

Peeking Through the Windows

The interface used in *Spellcasting 201* is a unique and well thought-out windows-type interface, which benefits greatly from the use of a Microsoft compatible mouse or trackball. The screen is split into a left hand menu which contains a parser and inventory menu, upper right hand graphics window and a lower right hand story window with status and command lines. Hot-keys are employed to enhance and speed game functions. Nine keys are assigned to game functions which allow for quick activation of commands represented by the command button menu. Tab, enter and shift-enter can be used to emulate mouse functions. You have the best of both worlds with simultaneously active mouse and hot-keys.

The menu window has lists of verbs, prepositions and objects that simplify the use of the parser and minimize the "Sorry I do not know the word" message. Using the vocabulary lists make gameplay much more effective and efficient. The graphics window can be set to display a partially animated picture of your location, an interactive map of your surroundings, your inventory, your score and number of turns taken or a verbal description of your surroundings. The parser in this adventure is so good that it recognizes one- and two-letter abbreviations. You will save yourself a lot of typing by reading the abbreviations list on page 30 of the game manual and copying them to a piece of paper to keep close to the computer while you play the game.

The on-screen perspective map is particularly useful in that it can be used in conjunction with the mouse to get from place to place without typing. The perspective map's automapping and the printed maps included in the game box make *Spellcasting 201* more of a solve-the-puzzle and less of a how-to-get-around adventure. Though the perspective map is a very useful and helpful feature of the game, you may still benefit by making your own map of the area.

The upper left hand corner of the screen, contains the command buttons which allow access to the help screen. It explains the commands of the game for the mouse or

keyboard mode, controls the graphics window display, allows for the rearrangement of windows and provides for a quick activation of the look function to give a description of your surroundings. Also, in the same location is a clever compass which instantly informs you as to which of the eight compass directions are accessible from your present position. The available moves in relation to the compass are highlighted. In addition to the compass points, you also have the up, down, in and out icons which can be selected with the mouse.

Puzzling Assistance

Many of the puzzles in **Spellcasting 201** are difficult, and you may need some hints to complete the game. The 47-page game manual, the maps and Ernie's registration card should be a good place to start. The manual is well written and contains some very interesting information. Some of the information is essential to the game. Other information, such as Steve Meretzky's biography, is interesting, but not essential to gameplay.

Other sources of information are the nationwide bulletin boards such as GENie, Legend's own 24-hour hint line (1-900-PRO-KLUE) and the soon-to-be-released \$9.95 official hint book (which I have seen). It is well written and contains all the helps needed to complete the game, along with an entertaining narrative that explains and gives more detail and insight to the story.

Nice'n'Naughty Sights'n'Sounds

The graphics in **Spellcasting 201** are good, but not at all stunning or so full of detail as to make the naughty scenes more than suggestive to the imagination. The color palette has been chosen wisely to provide a rich use of colors. Images of locations are well drawn in a semi-realistic, comic-book style, while color cycling is used for animations with VGA and EGA color monitors to change the colors in a dynamic fashion for adding variety to the graphics.

Spellcasting 201 contains numerous sound effects and musical renditions. Music sets the background and mood for scenes as they unfold. Many musical renditions become the theme music for some recurring events, such as the midnight hazing of the pledges of Hu Delta Phart. Other music is primarily for the settings of various situations like achieving success or failure in various puzzling situations. There are also a large number of sound effects that dot the landscape of the story. When activating naughty mode, a very effective diabolical laugh reverberates through your sound board and speakers. The sound is well done, complements gameplay effectively and is compatible with most major sound boards.

Complex Spells

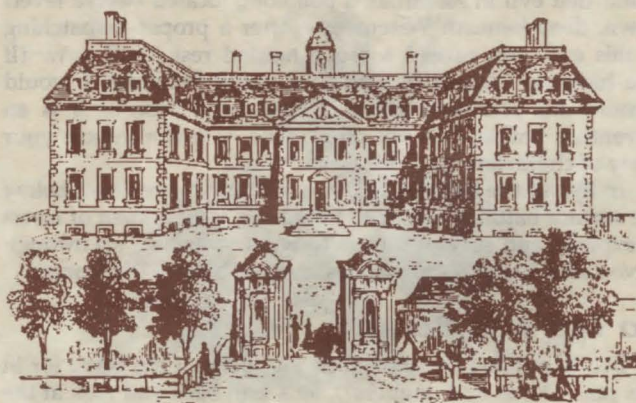
Spellcasting 201 is not a small program either, now occupying 5MB of hard drive space on my machine. Installation, though, was easy from the five double density 3.5

inch diskettes supplied with the game. A number of complex commands allow the program to "quick start" with the correct configuration for your machine. Upon installation, the program sets up a batch file which activates these commands. If for some reason you need to modify or alter the batch file due to an incompatibility, you may need to take some time to decipher the nuances of the command string necessary to boot the program correctly for your system. I had no problems in this area and you should not anticipate problems unless your system configuration is non-standard.

You are advised to save often with the well designed save routine in **Spellcasting 201**. You may have up to 128 save game files, which should satisfy the most demanding user, with each save allowing a phrase of up to 33 characters. I usually criticize games for not having infinite save game files, but **Spellcasting 201** has a virtually infinite capacity. A mouse is particularly useful in the use of the save and restore game menus. You can restore or save by typing the words or selecting them from the word menu list on the left side of the screen. The save and restore game function, however, does not have the capacity to select directories or drives other than that used for the game program itself.

Bringing the Past Into the Future

Spellcasting 201 is well worth your time and effort. Steve Meretzky and Bob Bates bring us the ideas and ideals of the past and combine them with the technology of the future to give us a unique experience in graphic adventures. Not only do we have the sounds and the graphics that the new machines and boards can provide, but we also have the use of a parser which allows for more interactive involvement with characterization and plot development. Unique and innovative features like the dynamic map and compass, which allow movement by mouse, make the game a joy to play. The puzzles give the cerebral adventurer something to think about rather than how to push a button on a wall or map his way through a maze. I enjoyed **Spellcasting 201**, and so will you. ER



Overall: 86

Spellcasting 201

Price: \$59.95

Category: Graphic

Legend Entertainment

Difficulty: Apprentice

Gameplay:	84	Graphics:	82
Interface:	87	Audio:	88
Atmosphere:	86	Innovation:	89
Documentation:	88	Mechanics:	85

Required: VGA, MCGA, EGA, CGA, Tandy; 512K; HD
Recommended: 286 or Better; Mouse
Supported: Roland, Ad Lib, Sound Blaster, Realsound
Protection: None **Options:** 5.25" HD or 3.5" DD Disks

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER II

THE LEGEND OF DARKMOON

Reviewed by Ralph P. Daltry

Lightening cuts deep into the darkened sky over the rain-soaked streets of Waterdeep. The air seems filled with a strange urgency. Then comes a knock. It is a messenger sent from Khelben Blackstaff, your friend and Archmage of the city. Once again, your services are needed.

After being ushered into the presence of Khelben, you learn of the mysteries of Darkmoon. Firelight dances in his eyes as he tells you of the events which have transpired, and of the serious nature of the quest before you. Then, in a blinding flash, you are transported to the forest outskirts of Temple Darkmoon.

The Legend Lives On

Eye of the Beholder II: The Legend of Darkmoon carries on the innovations of its predecessor in this role-play sequel on the SSI. It is the second installment in the AD&D Legend Series fantasy role-playing games programmed for SSI by Westwood Associates. A departure from SSI's Gold Box adventures, this first-person perspective quest lives up to the standards of its younger sibling, and forges ahead some, incorporating several much needed improvements.

In the first Legend adventure, your party spent the entire quest moving downwards in the sewers and tunnels under Waterdeep in search of a great evil threatening the city. You found that evil in Xanathar, a beholder, located twelve levels down, deep beneath Waterdeep. After a proper dispatching of this evil, you earned a much needed rest...until now. (If you have not already played *Eye of the Beholder*, I would recommend you work through that game first, as it is an adventure you should not miss. Plus, you can import your party of characters into the sequel.)

In *Eye of the Beholder II*, you not only move down below the surface battling evil. You now have a short span of forest to explore, and several towers to wind your way up through as you seek to solve the puzzles and evil behind Darkmoon.

An Eye for Beauty

Before moving on to the nuts and bolts of the game (or in this case, stones and daggers?), let's lean back and look at the aesthetics. Simply put, *Eye of the Beholder II* is visually stunning. The VGA graphics are gorgeous and look even better than those of the prequel. The look of the interface is elegant, yet clean and utilitarian. It is the most visually pleasing dungeon interface I have yet seen. The only drawback is the location of the on-screen directional movement buttons. They really need to be in either the lower center or right-hand side of the screen.

The introduction animation is one of the most mood setting to date. I particularly liked the opening street scene and that of Khelben by the fire, the flames reflecting in his eyes. The richness of this imagery adds immensely to the

game. In addition, the same quality of visual enhancement is used in varying locations and encounters during play. Though not animated as in the introduction, several partial-screen scenes are provided upon contact with select NPCs, and are triggered by a few key locations. The graphics employed here are excellent. I can only imagine how much more gripping these scenes would have been if only the encounters had been animated in the same fashion as the game's opening sequence.

The only aesthetic concern that seems to have been shortchanged in this impelling adventure is the music, or rather, the lack of it. The game opens with an exceptional introduction accompanied by some excellent theme and mood music, but unfortunately, the music ends just as the adventure begins. Musical accompaniment has become the norm in adventures these days (*Monkey Island 2* is an outstanding example), and I believe it to be a detriment to leave it out. This is the primary reason that *Eye of the Beholder II* does not score higher in atmosphere. Had the same quality of music accompanied play that was provided during the introductory sequence, this adventure would have rated noticeably higher! It is the only significant omission that kept *Eye II* from being a truly atmospheric adventure.

It's Party Time!

Eye of the Beholder II allows up to six characters in your party, though two must be added from within the game world as you venture through the rooms and corridors of Darkmoon. After resurrecting and/or trying several different characters for the final two slots in my party, I settled on Amber (an elf female and thief/mage) and Shorn (a dwarf male and cleric). Both helped round out my party, and gave me two spell casters in the back ranks.

The initial four party members are either taken from the default party or created before gameplay begins. I have my own band of party members I like to take from adventure to adventure, so I chose to create my adventurers from scratch. I also like the freedom designing a party provides, plus it helps me associate myself more closely with the game world.

Character creation is a relatively simple and painless process (though I wish more variables were allowed with regard to race and class selection). After selecting race, class and alignment, you choose an appropriate portrait for your character from those provided. (The one thing I really wish each game provided is the ability to edit the portraits, a la *Chaos Strikes Back*. I really like to "touch up" my characters to personalize them.) Some modification of the randomly generated "ability scores" is permitted. However, if you really want to tweak your party, I suggest a good disk editor (if you have the capabilities to use it) or a character editor like those provided by Gosselin. Once your party has been generated, you are ready to take on Darkmoon, with your characters first appearing in the forests surrounding the Temple.

Welcome to My World

The usual profundity of weapons and spells are provided for your maiming and destructive pleasure. Though there are several non-combat encounters in *Eye II*, most of the time will be devoted to solving puzzles and disposing of Darkmoon's denizens.

As usual, the best strategy is to have a pair of strong fighters in the front row. Outfit them with the best armor possible during the game. Put your spellcasters in the second row, making sure to have a powerful cleric and mage in these positions. Provide them with rocks, daggers and darts for ranged weapons. Finally, as you add new members to round out your party to six, add additional spellcasters in the back ranks. Your party will succeed well with two accomplished fighters and four spellcasters.

Visual and audible effects accompanying the casting of spells are among the most spectacular I've encountered in my dungeon delving. I especially enjoy watching Magic Missiles, Fireballs and Cones of Cold hit their mark. You will do best if you concentrate on providing mostly offensive spells, like those mentioned above. However, be sure to make provision for several restorative and defensive spells like Prayer, Remove Paralysis, Protect Evil and Cure Serious. You will need to employ these often.

Hey, Was That There Before?

Several improvements have been added to the game design. Most notably, you now have provision for six save games. While this is at least six times better than before, there is no reason to continue limiting the number of available saves. The only restriction should be available disk space.

Character interaction with NPCs has been improved a little, but still needs some additional enhancement. You will find that not all NPCs who ask to join your party are necessarily doing so to aid your quest. Recruitment must be guarded quite carefully.

I also found the game to be one of the quickest to "get back into" of those on the market. When beginning a play session, the game loads in under 10 seconds on a 386/33 MHZ machine. No long intros to wade through, and no tedious hunting for save game files. Very nice!

One significant omission in this sequel, however, which was also absent in the original, is automapping. We have reached the point where there is no longer any excuse to require the player to do all his mapping on paper. Those who want to, a very small number I might add, can continue to do so. However, for the rest of us, automapping will actually add to the atmosphere of gameplay for it will remove the distraction of counting squares (let's see, was that six spaces to the north or just five?). Automapping should be standard on all RPGs. In fact, how about going one step further and provide the ability to print out all the maps and important conversations in an adventure. Now that would be handy!

Dirt in the Cracks

There are a few annoying glitches in the game. For some reason, the keyboard equivalent for turning the party to face right, the "9" key on the numeric keypad, would become erratic at the most inopportune times — especially during or preceding combat. At these times, it would take as much as three or four frantic key presses to turn the party to the right. Serious, indeed. I often gave in and used the on-screen movement button instead. Just to be sure, I verified that this same problem occurred with other players. This should have been caught in quality control before the game was released. The real drawback here is that the numeric keypad in the most efficient way to move the party about, and to have movement crippled at crucial times is unacceptable.

The other glitch involves the use of the Spell Book or Holy Symbol on the fifth and sixth characters in your party. In many cases, clicking on one of these items (held in the left hand) triggered instead the use of the item above (held in the right hand). Thus, rather than casting a spell, I often found those characters throwing a weapon. There seems to be a partial overlap of the "hot zones" of these two buttons. Aside from these two problems, I found no other significant failings.

The Eyes Have It!

The Legend series games, *Eye of the Beholder I & II*, are in my estimation SSI's finest products to date. Award winning graphics and gameplay mark this series from the word go. They are that good.

This, of course, doesn't mean there is no room left for improvement, for there most certainly is. Greater interaction with NPCs beyond what has been incorporated into *Eye of the Beholder II* is necessary. Automapping is also another required addition, as is the provision for unlimited save games. Yet, as a whole, the true dungeon-delving role-player will be hard pressed to find a more compelling quest, both for the mind and the senses, than *Eye of the Beholder II: The Legend of Darkmoon*. EIR



Overall: 92

Eye of the Beholder II

Price: \$59.95

Category: Role-Play

SSI

Difficulty: Apprentice

Gameplay: 90
Interface: 92
Atmosphere: 89
Documentation: 85

Graphics: 95
Audio: 79
Innovation: 80
Mechanics: 85

Required: VGA, MCGA, EGA; 640K; 286 or Better; Hard Drive; and High Density Floppy Drive
Supported: Ad Lib, Sound Blaster, Compatibles; Mouse
Protection: Manual **Options:** Clue Book Available

HARD NOVA™

Reviewed by Mack MacRae

Zach Meston — not exactly a name to conjure with, but, since Zach was so kind as to give the old curmudgeon a plug of sorts in the last issue, I thought I'd return the favor. (Besides, I wanted to see how the "Z" looks in ornate script.) It comforts me to know that, as I blast off into outer space, Zach is already there. Hope he knows someplace besides the end of the universe where we can get a good cup of tea. I'll need one after the heavy mercenary work required in *Hard Nova*.

Choose Your Sex, Then Choose Your Weapons

Before this journal is attacked by the First Amendment Terrorists of the Righteous Reactionary Rampage, let me assert that the reference to sex in this title pertains simply to gender. You may choose to play as either Nova or her masculine counterpart, Stark. However, the flavor of the plot exposition does make Nova the natural choice, and it would be hard to find a better space storming, straight shooting ship jockey in any galaxy.

Since I am a long time adventurer, I am all too aware that many adventure game manufacturers have created chauvinistic, if not downright sexist, products, and some are still doing so. The recent release of Konami's *Mission Impossible*, with nary a trace of Barbara Bain or Jane Badler look-alikes — more's the pity, is an immediate example.

The justification for this male bias is usually something along the lines of "women don't play these things." However, the lord of our illustrious *Realms* informs me that close to ten percent of our adventuring subscribers are female, as is well represented by GENIE's Scorpia and our own Estarra and Maeve O'Shee. Both Karl Buitter, the author, and Electronic Arts, the publisher, deserve praise for their refreshing

openness. (It is even possible to form an all female party of very strong characters, an ultimate revenge for those who endured the all male characters of *The Bard's Tale I*.)

Attractive and competent as she is, however, Nova's also down on her luck. Her last crew was destroyed in an explosion from which only she and her Bremar navigator were able to escape. Nova knows she couldn't have saved them, but rumors linger, and finding a new crew is top priority. Unemployed Starkiller mercs aren't worth much, and a new ship doesn't run itself.

Life's a Blast, Laser Style

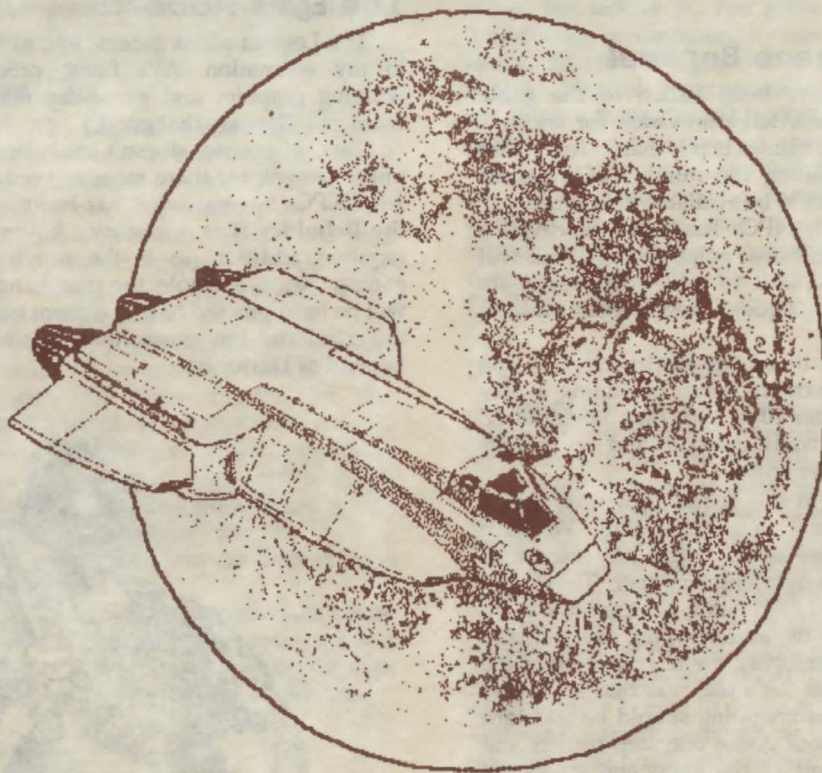
Whether you're Nova or Stark, cheer up. Things are bound to get worse and you've always been best at handling that. In fact, you'll barely have enough time to train in the combat maze and run a few smuggling excursions before your boss, Gerard Kendall, sends you on a mission to uncover a plot which could destroy the Four Systems forever.

By the way, I strongly suggest that you take a trip up to the bar above the maze in the first spaceport. You need a look at that aquarium anyway, and you can enlist Ace Elcator's help with a bit of snappy repartee. She's drinking alone in the

back, and well worth the extra money for her maze training. In fact, a trained and well armored ground team of Nova, Ace, and Rogers Amaro (Kendall will tell you where to find him) is nearly indestructible.

Blow Them a Kiss, Or Blow Them Away

This adventure offers a lot to do, with a number of side quests adding to the richness of the main plot. Its structure is also nicely balanced and open ended, allowing you to choose



a great deal of combat, both space and ground, or only a moderate amount. Every problem in the game, including all character interactions, can be approached with either a "level head" or a "leveled laser" technique.

Terminator or transactor; it's up to you. Just bear in mind that a bit of balance always helps. The trigger-happy lose out on a number of answers, while the meek sometimes get cheated out of wages. In fact, balance is a key in this game, with the combat nicely matched to the character's level, making it possible to play through without invoking Restora every few steps.

Copy protection involves entering facts concerning easily identified nebulae shown on the included galactic map. The game seems to run nicely on every system, including the 3000 (although it can lock in Workbench 2.0), and installs easily on a hard drive. The manual is clear and concise, making it assailable by novices as well as providing enough to do to please expert adventurers. While it is theoretically a sequel to *Sentinel Worlds I: Future Magic*, previous experience is not necessary. Good thing, too, as the first volume isn't available in Amiga format.

Come On, Mack, Don't Let Us Down Now

Lest those who love to hate nasty me think I've gone soft, let me add that, while there IS a lot to like in *Hard Nova*, there's a lot NOT to like as well. It's a straight MS-DOS port, and an old fashioned one at that, which means it's EGA ugly, your characters are little more than walking blobs with colored dot hats, and the grunts and greeks that pass for sound effects couldn't compete with hog-calling practice. There is some title music, which, mercifully, you can bypass quickly.

Now hold on there a minute, Mack, the back of the package says it has full 256 color VGA graphics and a soundtrack that supports both Ad Lib and Sound Blaster. Yup, yup, yup, sure does say that, but it's like a broker's estimate of profit on a foreign investment versus what you see at the bank. It loses a lot in the translation. On the other hand, if you are one of our MS-DOS readers and you haven't played this game, be advised that it's now on sale at most outlets for about \$20.00!

A Merc's Only As Good As Her Results

Overall, I was entertained and involved by *Hard Nova*, and I recommend it completely for anyone who enjoys a well balanced RPG that is strong on plot and character interaction. I may be harder to please than Gerard Kendall, but *Nova* can work for me anytime. ER

Adventure Game Drawing

Subscribing to *Enchanted Realms™* entitles you to the benefit of being automatically entered in our *Adventure Game Drawing*. Every issue, we select TWO subscribers at random who will each receive a FREE adventure game. Free games? Yes, that's right. FREE! All you have to do to qualify is become a subscriber, which entitles you to additional benefits (see the subscription data page for more details). It's that simple.

This issue, we extend our congratulations to winning subscribers **Randy Bagwell** of Littleton, CO and **Jeff Clouse** of Hilliard, OH. **Randy** won himself a copy of *Heart of China* by Dynamix and **Jeff** picked up a copy of *Vengeance of Excalibur* by Virgin Games. Thanks, guys, for subscribing to *Enchanted Realms™*. We hope you enjoy the adventures that await!

Tournament Winners

Well, the time has arrived once more to announce our *Tournament of Wits* contest winners. *Issue 9* of *Enchanted Realms™* featured our *Elvira® II: The Jaws of Cerberus™* Contest held in conjunction with Accolade. From all the entries we received, five lucky winners will take home some great entertainment. So, without further ado, "The envelope, please!" And, the winners are: **Jerry Rubemeyer** (U.S. armed forces); **Scott Haverly** of Schoharie, NY; **Joe Kinshella** of Brandon, MB, Canada; **Scott Braem** of Middleton, WI; and **Andrew Levashoff** of Merced, CA.

Our first place winner, **Jerry Rubemeyer**, will receive THREE Accolade adventures of his choice. Second place winner, **Scott Haverly**, will receive any TWO Accolade adventures of his choosing. Our three other winners will each receive their choice of any single adventure from Accolade's lineup.

As usual, we offer our sincerest congratulations to each of our contest winners! And remember, contests in the *Tournament of Wits* are open to everyone in the U.S. and Canada. Your chance of winning is based upon the total number of correct entries received. Entries which arrive after the contest deadline are not eligible. So, don't miss out. Send in your entry today!

Overall: 88

HARD NOVA

Price: \$49.95

Category: Role-Play

Electronic Arts

Difficulty: Apprentice

Gameplay: 88

Graphics: 70

Compatibility: Amiga 500-3000; Workbench 1.3, 2.0

Interface: 85

Audio: 65

Required: 512K RAM; Hard Drive or Two Disk Drives

Atmosphere: 85

Innovation: 75

Recommended: Hard Drive

Documentation: 86

Mechanics: 80

Protection: Symbol Matching Options: Hint Book

POOLS OF DARKNESS

Reviewed by Alfred C. and Amanda L. Giovetti

Beginning with *Pool of Radiance*, this four-game series has had its ups and downs, but now the final installment finishes with a flourish. It is clearly the pearl in the SSI Gold Box oyster. *Pools of Darkness* finally comes out of the dark and offers true VGA enhancements and some high quality use of those sound boards that cost us so dearly in cold hard cash. It also shines in allowing us, finally, to use all those high level AD&D spells and to test our mettle against the most fearsome characters of the *Forgotten Realms* game world.

Back Where We Started From

At the beginning of the game, the party of six adventurers finds itself in Phlan, where the *Pool of Radiance* adventure began several years ago. Phlan can and should be explored in its peaceful, but boring daily existence. It exemplifies the maxim that there is no room for heroes in times of peace and tranquillity. Here the party meets Sasha, newly appointed council-person and old city clerk of *Pool of Radiance*, who offers them employment as guards on her trip to the Lands of Thar. (As the heroes travel through the land around Moonsea, they will meet other non-player characters that they associated with in the three earlier modules in the *Forgotten Realms* fantasy role-playing epic.)

Upon leaving Phlan, the real adventure begins. Bane has been angered by the repeated thwarting of his evil plans by mere mortals. His rage exceeds his restraint, resulting in a vulgar public display of power. Bane reaches out and devastates the area around Moonsea. The good cities of Faerun become craters as they descend into the earth, while citadels of evil remain to dominate the landscape.

Elminster has survived the cataclysm and positions himself in limbo to assist the adventurous band with the quest, and the transitions into the Pools of Darkness. Meanwhile, Bane has dispatched his servants, Kalistes, Tanetal and Gothmenes to control the realms from beyond the Pools. The party must fight its way to the Pools, then conquer Bane's servants on the other side in order to restore the realms to their former state.

The Family Plot

The plot still suffers from the linear nature of many puzzles. However, gone are the mazes and towns that are only activated when the game is completed in the correct order. No longer do situations arise which yield vastly different encounters depending on when the heroes enter certain locations, as seen in the *Dragonlance* Gold Box games.

There is, though, an optimum sequence in which to complete the adventure. The hint book gives this information, which definitely makes it worth the money. A good game must have multiple plot lines and a variety of different ways to complete the same quest. While the

approach to multiple plot lines used in *Pools* is very entertaining, it could be improved.

Such a Character

Character generation, combat, magic and gameplay is much the same as in other Gold Box games. Characters can be transferred from *Secret of the Silver Blades*, rolled up as new characters or transferred from the paper and pencil AD&D game via the modify option. Newly rolled characters come fully equipped with high power magical weapons, to equalize them against the most fearsome opponents of the realms. Some equipment from *Secrets* exceeds the power of the weapons to be found in *Pools*. So, bring the +5 Silver Long Sword and Shield over with your characters from the preceding scenario. (Characters can only be transferred from *Secret* if they are disbanded from a saved *Secret* game party.)

Non-human characters cannot advance up to the maximum of 40th level, unless they are thieves (not very useful in this game). They must be replaced with dual-class human characters, such as fighter/mages and fighter/clerics. Take the human characters up to level 39 as a fighter type (paladin, ranger or fighter) or a spell caster (mage or cleric), then switch to the other type and advance to level 40.

Conjure and Clobber

Magic incorporates the higher level spells that we all have been anxious to use, such as Otto's Irresistible Dance, Energy Drain, Restoration, Resurrection, Monster Summoning and Meteor Storm. Old favorites, such as Fireball and Magic Missile, are more powerful at higher levels. Don't worry about overkill, as you will need these spells to defeat the large number of ancient dragons, Bane's minions (TSR's new name for fundamentalist reactionary demons) and pets of Kalistes and Bane's lieutenants. I found it comforting and nostalgic to reencounter old friends, and to say farewell to them one more time in the restored Phlan at the end of the game.

Combat is of the rounded type. Non-player characters can now be controlled to prevent them from going off half-cocked into battle and getting themselves killed. Often, the party finds itself surrounded by up to four groups of opposing forces. In many cases, walls and doorways must be used to limit the use of spells against your party, and to make the opposition face you one at a time. In the final battle, my party ran to a doorway to defend while eliminating those defending the doorway, and took on the remainder of the force from beyond the door.

Autocombat must be monitored closely, since the earlier problems with autocombat have not been solved. You still cannot give instructions to advance slowly while firing arrows, or to hold your ground while waiting for your target to come into view. Autocombat magic can still be as mindless and devastating to your own characters as well as the opposition. Targeting with missile weapons in autocombat is

random, and often the most dangerous minions are fired at last rather than first. SSI needs to add autocombat modifiers, so that autocombat proceeds more logically and effectively.

Retained Earnings

Strategic Simulations is to be congratulated for finally allowing the party to retain their weapons after **Secret** and to transfer those weapons into **Pools** with the character transfer option. But, SSI still just could not leave the weapons alone. **Pools** requires the party to pass through the Pools of Darkness from the realms to the netherworld, and the passage through limbo causes the weapons to be destroyed. They can be stored with Elminster upon returning to the realms, but other than certain rings (Blinking), and a Vorpal Long Sword, the adventurers arrive on the other side of the Pools naked. This adds an unnecessary difficulty to the game. The adventurers must search for substandard equipment to gain an advantage in the most difficult battles of the game. The game designers at SSI are very unsporting and unsympathetic to the importance and personal nature of artifacts gained through role-playing.

Visual and Aural Visions

Graphics in **Pools** finally take advantage of the color palette of VGA in the full screen depictions of the plot developments and precombat speeches. Monster icons, non-player character icons and combat spell explosions are much improved, with more detail and use of color than that seen in previous games. The walls, seen during first person perspective movement through the dungeons, also show better use of VGA colors and detail, as does the perspective map used for overland travel.

Sound boards are supported with digitized sounds during combat — the clang of weapons and armor, and the screams of the dead and dying. Mood music, however, which is becoming more popular, has not been employed in **Pools**. Theme music only appears at the beginning of the game, with no easy way to bypass it and the game's introductory demo. If you miss your cue and hit escape too late, the program enters the demonstration mode with no way to exit until it is over. You must either reboot the game or sit through the demonstration with your finger on the escape key. Gold Box games should allow for a simple bypass of the game introduction and demonstration. The current method is tedious and cumbersome.

You Really Oughta' Map That

Automapping while travelling in the mazes is still not available for all locations, requiring the use of pencil and paper for these portions. The places where automapping does not work are in the most dangerous portions of the maze, making it doubly important to map carefully, and to note the areas where fix and rest appear and become active

from the camp menu. Another good reason to purchase the hint book is to save you the limitations of the poor automapping system. It includes a full set of maps, except for **Dave's Challenge**.

The save game function in the Gold Box games is adequate to the task, but could be improved, allowing for saves limited only by disk size. It should also allow for a change in path and drive for the save game directory, and have the capacity for a long enough label to sufficiently remind the user of his progress.

The rule book, version card and journal are well written. Copy protection is off-disk and comes from the early pages of the journal and rule book, saving a lot of page flipping. High density disks made installation to the hard drive a real joy, with very few disk swaps.

A clue book is available, but it does not have an accurate item list, nor a solution to **Dave's Challenge** at the end of the game. Many game players feel that **Dave's Challenge** is impossible to finish, leaving the characters stuck in the maze for eternity. This is a most unsatisfactory ending, but **Dave's Challenge** is optional.

Forgotten in the Realms

Pools of Darkness ends with the heroes in restored Phlan. Elminster thanks them, but explains that all of the inhabitants of Moonsea have amnesia (in order to cope with the trauma of Bane's attack on their people, lands and psyche). Once again the heroes are left with no fanfare, no accolades, no awards, no ceremony from the kings or gods and no cheering fans: just amnesia. The ending does not do justice to the enormous feats of daring performed by your party, who must now either move on to the dungeon of **Dave's Challenge**, take a boat to obscurity from which they never return or kick around Phlan for the rest of their lives. Needless to say, the ending is less than satisfactory.

Still, stick around Phlan long enough to say goodbye to all the adventurers with whom the heroes have fought so well through all four adventures. All have amnesia, and must be sought diligently. Yet, this proves a most satisfactory event in an otherwise bittersweet ending.

A Fitting Conclusion

Overall, **Pools of Darkness** is the best of the award-winning Gold Box game series. In spite of room for improvement in many areas, the game is excellent and enjoyable. High character levels, the challenge of combat sequences, richness of plot and characterization, varied puzzles and background all give the game a unique richness and sense of completion to the earlier efforts. I recommend it highly, but only after you have played the prior three installments. **Pools of Darkness** is worth your time and money, and will give you hours of pure enjoyment. ER

Overall: 86

Pools of Darkness

Price: \$49.95

Category: Role-Play

SSI

Difficulty: Apprentice

Gameplay: 93

Graphics: 83

Required: VGA, MCGA, EGA, TGA; 640K; Hard Drive and High Density Floppy Drive

Interface: 78

Audio: 76

Supported: Ad Lib, Sound Blaster and Tandy; Mouse

Atmosphere: 95

Innovation: 89

Protection: Manual Options: Clue Book Available

Documentation: 95

Mechanics: 81

ELVIRA® II

The Jaws of Cerberus™

Reviewed by Chuck Miller

As a child, I was compelled to watch just about every horror flick that made its way onto our television. Anything with a supernatural or out of this world flavor was a candidate to keep me mesmerized for a couple of hours. Sometimes, however, the effects lasted much longer. I especially remember the chilling effect of a film called *The Skull*. I had difficulty sleeping for weeks, and avoided dark places and being alone as much as possible. I guess you could say that movie left a lasting impression on me.

Regardless, I still go in for the macabre. Maybe that's why I continue watching those old horror flicks, and why I really enjoy adventures that transport me into the supernatural and paranormal. And, I'm positive this is exactly why I enjoyed playing *Elvira II: The Jaws of Cerberus*.

Gee, What a Dog!

In this sequel to *Elvira: Mistress of the Dark*, you get to play Elvira's little "Stud Muffin" in a backlot romp through Hollywood's Black Widow Productions, Elvira's personal movie studio. From the very start of the game, though, you realize that this evening is definitely not going to be comprised of "Cadillac limos and casting couches." In fact, I would say that you are in for one dog of an evening.

According to a letter written just this afternoon by your vivacious vixen of vampiresses, it appears that poor little (?) Elvira has been leashed by a demonic three-eyed, three-headed, carnivorous canine from Hell. This super-steroid version of Benji, somewhat less than affectionately referred to as Cerberus, has snatched Elvira and plans to do her in before the night is through. Unless, of course, you can stop him.

Don't "Just Stand Around with Your Finger Up Your Nose Looking Lost and Stupid..."

To say you're work is cut out for you would be an understatement. So, since Elvira doesn't go for that "lost-and-stupid nosepicker act," you had best get moving. Your first problem is to get past the studio gate. If you're not sure what to do, take the Ernest T. Bass approach (What? You never watched the *Andy Griffith Show*?). Throw a rock through a window! Just walk one step forward, turn around and grab the rock by the side of the path on the left-hand side. Now, break the window in the door of the Guard House with the rock. The rest you can figure out for yourself.)

Once inside the studio lot, the fun really begins. Most action takes place inside the various studio sets: *House of*

Horror, *Kiss of the Spider* and *It Came From Beyond the Grave*. However, some very essential sleuthing and preparation is necessary in the sundry offices and rooms in the studio complex itself. In other words, don't even venture onto any of the sets until you have thoroughly explored the main studio. Once you have gleaned all the useful items from elsewhere, you can begin your step-by-step search for Elvira on the sets. Hopefully, you can rescue her before she becomes "Kibbles & Bits" for Cerberus. (As a helpful side note, use the entry area for the three sets as a "dump zone" for all the items you have been collecting. This way they will be handy when you need them. Also, it doesn't really matter the order in which you complete the sets as Elvira is always in the last set you complete. However, you are best off if you tackle the *House of Horrors* set first. There you will find a library containing books that will aid you in your quest.)

Boy, Have You Changed!

While the campy humor of the original game remains, quite a bit has changed in *Elvira II: The Jaws of Cerberus* over its predecessor. Most notable is the interface. Much of the screen is devoted to the view ahead, as before. However, the controls flanking both sides and below the Action Window have been "reVamped" to provide a much more attractive and usable interface. Let's scope it out.

The Movement Compass has been relocated to where it should be, the lower right corner (my apologies to lefties), and colorful icons replace most of the simple word "hot spots" used in the original. In the upper right are icons for the Suitcase (inventory), Room Scanner (items in the room), Spellthrower (which isolates all your prepared spells from the rest of your inventory for quick use), Spellbook (for the creation of spells), Combat Weapon (for selecting attack mode) and Mouth (for conversing). Below these is the Command Menu with four buttons that offer actions like Open, Close, Examine and Eat, and change depending on the options currently available. Two final icons residing below the Command Menu allow for displaying Secondary Stats and accessing Game Functions. We will discuss the Combat and Spellbook in more detail below.

Several new features are employed in *Cerberus* which simplify and improve play. A Seismic Activity Sensor (basically, a Monster Motion Detector) has been added to the lower left corner. Just above this is the Spellchecker, used for determining at a quick glance all your active spells (not for supplementing your spelling deficiencies). Also new, located in the top left quadrant, are the Health Status Indicator and Tell-Tale Heart. The Health Status Indicator displays the condition of all critical body areas and hit point totals, while

the Tell-Tale Heart represents your current state of affairs. When you panic, it speeds up. When you become injured (and you will), it slows. If it stops, you're fried, Clyde!

Tools of the Trade

Two of *Elvira's* shortcomings (*Elvira: Mistress of the Dark*, that is) were with regards to Combat and Spells. Both have been admirably addressed in the sequel. Combat options are selected from a menu including Normal, Defense, Fierce and Berserk. Once the mode of attack is chosen, you attack your opponent by clicking directly on him (her, it, whatever) in the Action Window. Be mindful, though, random clicking will do little good. These denizens are tough, so locate their "weak spot" and focus your attack there. Otherwise, you'll soon be among the esprit de corpse.

Spellcasting has improved a hundred fold. Clicking on the Spellbook Icon brings the Index Page up in place of the Action Window. From here, you select a spell to view its stats and required ingredients. To return to the Index, click on the Index Symbol in the upper right. To create the spell, click on the Mix Symbol in the upper left. This takes you to the Mix Page where you drop the proper ingredient(s) into one or more empty boxes. Clean, easy and very manageable.

Gameplay is claimed to span over 120 hours, which is probably a good approximation for those playing without the aid of a clue book, walkthrough and/or modified character. Other additions include a whole new batch of deadly inhabitants to "play" with, plus, more than 700 weapons and spell ingredients, and a smattering of other items to manage.

Supernaturally Stunning, My Dear

Graphics in *Cerberus* have definitely been improved. Imagery is rich in color and well detailed. Still, the graphics have a rather "campy" look. Don't expect to see the same style of artistic approach as employed in *Eye of the Beholder II*. The look is definitely more that of the Saturday afternoon monster matinee than a prime time movie classic.

Animation is relatively smooth and quick, and ranges from spot animation to fully animated characters. What has been provided is good, however, I found the animated sequences lacking in two regards. First, *Elvira* is only a static image this time. In the first game, her on-screen appearances were accompanied by appropriate animated motions. Not so here. The second point of weakness occurs during and after animated sequences. Mouse response seems just a touch sluggish when in animated combat. In addition, when our hero dies, or simply faints, there is an inordinate delay before action resumes or you are given the option to restore or quit. If this is a designed pause, it's much too long.

Did You Hear That?

Musical accompaniment is quite good with a major sound card installed. Each principle location has an appropriate

soundtrack added for that atmospheric touch. My only complaint is that there's no option to turn off the music if it becomes annoying, though, personally I had no problem.

Sound effects are only minimal. Noticeably lacking are appropriate screams, groans and creaks. Since this is a horror adventure, it is only fitting that these effects be provided. I would suggest that future releases be provided with the option of music, sound effects or both (where the music is muted enough to allow the sounds to be heard properly).

A Horror by Any Other Name...

In addition to my quibbles above, there are several items worthy of mention. I know it has been said elsewhere in this issue, but fantasy role-playing games should all include automapping. I simply don't have the time or desire to map out maze after maze.

I also disliked having to enter access codes (copy protection) multiple times. Once to get the gate open, and then three more times, once for each studio set. ONE time per playing session is more than sufficient!

My final gripe concerns keyboard support. Mainly, there is none. At the very least, keyboard equivalents should be provided for basic game functions, and especially for directional movement. I live by the keyboard for moving my character(s) about the game world. This leaves the mouse free for managing combat and spells.

Double Your Pleasure

Elvira: Mistress of the Dark proved to be one of last year's sleeper hits (it won a best adventure award from us). *Elvira II* may prove to be a dark horse, as well.

While I know of several other well known and respected reviewers who found the game disappointing, I did not. There are certain precautions you must take in the use of items (the library will help you significantly here), but I don't believe the shortcomings of the game to be that detrimental. It's quite difficult at points, but my suggestion is simply to purchase the clue book at your earliest convenience. It is definitely a worthwhile (even, necessary?) investment.

Those who like campy humor, a touch of the macabre and a very challenging adventure will definitely find fulfillment in *Elvira II: The Jaws of Cerberus*. However, if you prefer a more linear and guided approach, be warned. This demanding role-playing experience is enough to curl your socks and make your hair stand on end!

ER

Enchanted Realms™
DISTINCTIVE
Adventure Award

Overall: 90 *Elvira II: The Jaws of Cerberus* Price: \$69.95

Category: Role-Play

Accolade

Difficulty: Expert

Gameplay:	89	Graphics:	90
Interface:	90	Audio:	92
Atmosphere:	92	Innovation:	88
Documentation:	85	Mechanics:	82

Required: VGA, MCGA, EGA, TGA; 640K; 286/10 MHZ or Better; Hard Drive and Mouse
Supported: Roland, Ad Lib and Sound Blaster
Protection: Codewheel Options: Clue Book Available

Conquests of the Longbow

The Legend of Robin Hood

Reviewed by Zach Meston



There has been some serious Robin Hood fever this year. First, the "fourth network," Fox, showed us the simply named **Robin Hood**, a European movie turned American TV-movie with megababe Uma Thurman (and not much else). Then we flocked to the movies to see Kevin Costner do that bow-and-arrow thing in **Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves** (even if he didn't sound remotely British). Now we have Sierra's angle on the Robin Hood legend, **Conquests of the Longbow: The Legend of Robin Hood**.

On the Marx

Conquests of the Longbow was designed by Christy Marx, the same woman who created **Conquests of Camelot** (which was based on Arthurian legends). Marx is a remarkable designer who does incredible amounts of research to make sure her adventures are historically accurate. In the manual for the product, the bibliography lists over two dozen book titles!

Marx has spoken out against software theft (otherwise known as piracy), having written an article on the topic in **Computer Gaming World**. She talks about piracy in the **Longbow** manual, thanking those who have written her on the subject and re-emphasizing her stance: "Piracy is theft and piracy is wrong." Right on, Christy!

Ye Olde Storyline

At the beginning of the game, King Richard is kidnaped in a faraway land, his captor demanding a huge ransom before the good King will be freed. Unfortunately for Richard, he's a member of a heavily dysfunctional family. King John, his brother, is using every means at his disposal to make sure that Richard is never freed, and that he himself remains in power while Richard rots away in a dungeon.

The fair Queen is on King Richard's side, and she's trying desperately to collect enough money to free her brother. This is where the Rob-meister and his Merry Men come into play. They are recruited by Lobb, a cobbler, and Marian, a beautiful lady, to join the Queen's cause and obtain the money she needs. Robin Hood agrees — driven by loyalty to King Richard and an intense personal interest in Lady Marian. (It's nice to see some good old-fashioned lust in a Sierra game!)

Conquests of the Interface

Conquests of the Longbow uses Sierra's much-touted, point-and-click interface. Some people love it, some people hate it, but it's here to stay. For those readers who haven't seen the interface, it uses a number of icons to represent the basic actions available. These are: Walk, Look, Action and Talk. The interface is also designed so that each game can have two customized icons of its own. In **Conquests of the Longbow**, these two icons are Bow and Map.

The Bow icon is used to let fly with an arrow. Obviously, it's not wise to kill everyone in sight, but there are some moments when shooting an arrow into someone's heart is the best way to communicate your feelings.

The Map icon calls up a map of Sherwood Forest, the town of Nottingham and the surrounding area. As you discover important locations, they will appear on the Map. Instead of walking around, all you have to do is click on the Map, then click on the location you want to visit. A similar concept was used in **The Secret of Monkey Island**, where you clicked on a map to go from place to place.

The Days of Our Lives

The game takes place over a series of days. Each day, there are several different actions you can take. Designer Marx has done a great job of providing a large number of "plot branches" for the player to take from the beginning of the game to the end. There are even five possible endings! Of course, there is a sequence of actions that will provide the maximum possible score; part of the challenge is figuring out what they are!

The puzzles within the game are tough. Very tough! **Leisure Suit Larry 5** was the easiest Sierra game ever released with the point-and-click system; **Conquests of the Longbow** is the hardest (although **Police Quest 3** was quite a tough nut, as well). Even the puzzles that have the answers in the manual are tough! If you thought that point-and-click interfaces couldn't be used to create tough puzzles, you haven't played **Longbow** yet.

Robin Don't Play That

Conquests of the Longbow includes several arcade sequences, but the player can use a control to set the difficulty level of these sequences. You can even turn the sequences to "auto-win," but if you do this, you won't get as many points as you would by playing (and winning) them. This is perhaps the best method I've seen yet of handling arcade sequences in adventure games. I myself appreciate "action breaks" in adventures, but I also regularly play console videogames (Sega, Nintendo, et al), so I don't mind them.

The best game-within-a-game sequence is **Nine Man's Morris**, which isn't an action game, but a boardgame you must play to win a stone that is vital to your quest. This game is quite playable, and Sierra has even included a small **Nine Man's Morris** board inside the packaging, presumably so you can crush your friends at the game after beating the computer.

Looks Good, Sounds Good

Most American software developers have been possessed with the use of digitized graphics, and Sierra's no exception. Here's a quote from the box for **Longbow**: "The detailed video-captured animation is fluid and varied; most characters you meet have unique animated portraits."

My definition of "fluid animation" is the main character in *Prince of Persia*, an arcade game from Broderbund (if you don't have it, go get it, you'll love it). The animation in *Longbow* isn't at that level, but it's quite nice. The animated portraits are also well done.

There are a few points where I thought the digitized backgrounds could have been cleaned up a bit, but for the most part, they're beautiful. The 256 colors of VGA allow Sherwood Forest to be rendered with a wonderful spread of greens and browns. To quote a certain beer commercial, "It doesn't get any better than this."

The sound effects and music are excellent. I especially liked the introduction sequence, where a bard plays his instrument as he belts out the tale of King Richard. The tunes in this sequence are played slowly enough that you can sing the lyrics in time with the music (although you'll admittedly look really goofy).

He Steps On The Soapbox

Since I'm nearly at the end of this review, and since there's only so much you can say about a new Sierra game, I'm going to use this space to let my feelings on one particular topic be known: Sierra's Amiga conversions. (Although Chuck Miller expressed some concern over this matter in his preview of the Amiga version of *King's Quest V* in the previous issue, there are several points I would like to add or expand upon here.)

I consider myself a veteran Amiga user. I've had my Amiga for four years, and I still use it heavily; in fact, I'm using it to type this review right now! Yet I think that Sierra's graphics are now at the point where porting down to the Amiga's 32 colors doesn't do them justice. *King's Quest V* on the PC looks great, but in 32 colors, it looks (clench your teeth, Amiga users) really, really bad. Same thing with *Heart of China*, from Dynamix: very pretty on the PC, pug-ugly on the Amiga by comparison.

An item published in Sierra's own magazine, *INTERAction*, mentioned that Sierra is about to drop EGA support in all of their adventures, concentrating solely on VGA. EGA is a 16 color mode. Thirty-two colors are better than EGA, true, but not by much. If Sierra feels that 16 color graphics aren't worth the effort, how long before they decide 32 colors aren't worth the effort?

Sierra should do one of two things; use the Amiga's 64 color extra halfbrite mode, or use the Amiga's HAM mode. The 64 color mode doesn't work on some Amiga 1000s; this is the excuse that Dynamix used to explain why *Rise of the Dragon* and *Heart of China* weren't ported to this mode. The HAM mode is notorious for its fringing, so the graphics

wouldn't be as sharp as VGA, but they would certainly reproduce VGA better than 64 colors.

Now, I know that this is much easier said than done. HAM mode is difficult (but by no means impossible) to animate, and HAM pictures take up lots and lots of disk space. Sierra has already had to double the size of their boxes to hold the amount of MS-DOS disks they ship with each product; how many disks would they have to ship for an Amiga adventure in HAM?

I still think that Sierra should make the effort. Dynamix, which recently joined forces with Sierra, has hired on some of the best American Amiga programmers around, such as Rhett Anderson, the creator of the Sliced HAM graphic format. These programmers are working hard on including animated HAM graphics within Dynamix's next few Amiga products (*Nova 7* and *A-10 Tank Killer Enhanced*). Sierra should try the same.

There! I've said it! I don't know about you, but I feel better. Back to our regular review...

Game of the Year?

I don't think Sierra has come out with a below-average adventure since *Gold Rush* (remember that one?). They know how to design very entertaining, very involving adventures, and *Conquests of the Longbow* is certainly no exception. If you're going to buy just one game this year — you should get a better-paying job. Or, you should buy *Conquests of the Longbow*, quite possibly the best Sierra On-Line adventure game to date. ER



Enchanted Realms™
DISTINCTIVE
Adventure Award

Overall: 93

Conquests of the Longbow

Price: \$59.95

Category: Animated

Sierra On-Line

Difficulty: Expert

Gameplay:	91	Graphics:	93
Interface:	92	Audio:	89
Atmosphere:	91	Innovation:	85
Documentation:	92	Mechanics:	90

Required: VGA; 640K; 286 or Better; Hard Drive
Recommended: Mouse
Supported: Roland, Ad Lib, Sound Blaster, ProAudio
Protection: Manual **Options:** Clue Book Available

STARFLIGHT 2

TRADE ROUTES OF THE CLOUD NEBULA

Reviewed by Jeff James



The sequel to *Starflight*, *Starflight 2: Trade Routes of the Cloud Nebula*, picks up where its progenitor left off. Just like the original, one must band together a stalwart crew to pilot a starship across the nether reaches of the galaxy, negotiating or blasting your way through alien encounters.

Revenge of the Purple, People-eating Potatoes

Based nineteen years after the completion of the first *Starflight*, *Starflight 2* offers an interesting plot twist. It seems that the alien race known as the Spemin, (who strongly resemble purple, sentient potatoes skewered with toothpicks and covered in slime) craven cowards in the first *Starflight*, have discovered powerful ancient technology which makes their warships effectively invulnerable. This dastardly race of tuber look-a-likes has demanded that the people of Arth (your home planet) surrender and grovel before them, or face destruction. Obviously not content to worship aliens which so strongly resemble a staple foodstuff of the human race, the government of Arth has decided to send a band of space-faring adventurers on a mission to discover the secrets of the Spemin's newfound technology.

Where No Amiga Has Gone Before (Well, Almost)

Set in a remote outpost in a newly discovered region of space, the game commences with the player forming a six-person crew to fill familiar-sounding crew positions. You'll need a captain and a ship's doctor, as well as crewmembers for science, navigation, engineering and communications. Not restricted to the prosaic selection of humans alone, such exotic races as the insectoid Veloxi, the saurian Thrynn and the willowy race of plant life known as the Elowan are available to fill these positions. De rigueur for any game in the science fiction genre, an intelligent android is also available for selection as a crew member.

Characters, just like in many other adventure games, have skills which can be improved over time. Each crew member is rated on a scale of 0-250 for each of five different skills, which include: science, navigation, engineering, communications and medicine. In addition, each crew member has a durability rating ranging from 2 to 10, and a learning rate skill which varies from 0 to 10. Each of the first five skills corresponds to each of the stations aboard your spacecraft, while the durability rate indicates toughness (akin to hit points) and the learning skill adjusts the rate at which the character can learn new skills. Each of these skills is adjusted by the character's race; for example, the hardy yet slow-learning insectoid Veloxi begins with a durability of 8 and a learn rate of 6, while the plant-like Elowan begins with a fragile durability of 2 and an astonishing learn rate of 10.

Some races are also more adept at some tasks, resulting in a higher maximum skill value. No single race is the best for all tasks, a feature which is a welcome change from the selfishly human-centered norm of computer role-playing.

Once you've created and assigned your crew, several locations at the outpost offer special services. The ship configuration module allows you to modify, repair and name your spacecraft. Shields, armor, engines, missile launchers and laser cannons each are rated on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 being the most expensive and powerful level of technology available. While the Spemin may have the biggest weapons on the intergalactic block, your ship can be fitted here with two powerful technological developments. Blastopods, latched on to your ship like standard cargo pods, are powerful weapons which almost invariably destroy any ship at which they're launched. Jump pods make hopping all over the galaxy much easier than before; just pick your destination on the starmap and jump. Of course, they don't always work correctly (or accurately), yet I suppose a price must be exacted for living on the technological leading (or is that bleeding?) edge. The operations module serves as a bulletin board for messages from the outpost commander. The bank (naturally) serves as a place to store funds, and the docking bay takes you into your ship.

A Surefire Way to Go Prematurely Gray

After you've passed the copy protection (involving a large map and an included cardboard viewer), you're off into space. Once in your ship, a row of buttons on the right side of the screen allows you to access each of your crewmen and their corresponding stations. The science officer scans and analyzes planets and ships, the navigator handles ship movement, the engineer repairs and maintains ship systems, the communications officer communicates with aliens, et cetera. The playing interface provided is one of the slickest I've yet seen in an Amiga role-playing game. It sports the new beveled Workbench 2.0 look, with all sorts of shaded buttons and gadgets to click on.

Gameplay mostly involves landing on and exploring planets, searching for clues to the Spemin's meteoric rise in power, and secrets to their new technology. Besides zipping around the galaxy and dashing into and out of solar systems, the ability to actually land your ship on a planet is especially rewarding. To see your planetfall unfold before you as you plunge towards the planet is a novel idea, but is unfortunately marred by extremely sluggish graphics. Before you land on a planet, the game will ask you if you want an "open viewport." Answering yes to this question, even on an A3000, results in a painfully slow zoom towards the planet. Keep your hair from turning gray and just say no when you're offered an open viewport.

Once you're planetside you can disembark from your ship in your terrain vehicle (T.V.), which is essentially a souped-up

moon buggy with cargo capacity. With your T.V. you can mine minerals, pick up alien life forms and trade with sentient aliens. Your buggy even sports a laser weapon to fend off the unwelcome advances of hungry beasts who see you and your crew as a moving aluminum can of tasty hors d'oeuvres.



Schmoozing with the Natives

One of *Starflight 2*'s neatest features is the way in which the game handles communication with aliens. Once you've blundered into some aliens (and you can do plenty of blundering; there are more than two dozen different alien races to converse with), your communications officer takes over. If your communications officer is a novice, everything will come across as pure gibberish. A skilled communications officer (preferably a Thrynn or Elowan) is a must. Most races respond best if you take a friendly stance, although some aliens will react more positively if you assume a hostile or a meek position. Experimentation is the key to success here, and communicating well with every alien race you meet is absolutely imperative if you plan to complete the game.

Of special note here is the communications replay feature. Unlike many other adventure games which require that the player spend an inordinate amount of time scribbling down everything that a non-player character says, *Starflight 2* simply records all of the communications you've ever had with an alien race, allowing you to browse through their comments at your leisure.

Aside from communicating with all of the new races, two other aspects of *Starflight 2* stood out to make it a truly enjoyable game: an open-ended plot and the ability to trade with aliens. While the outcome of the game is based upon how well you deal with the Spemin problem, the open-ended nature of the game allows you to simply range across the universe, exploring the planets you wish in any order. While engaging in such frivolous activities may delay the eventual completion of the game, it nevertheless added immeasurably to my gaming enjoyment.

How Much is That Tandelovian Happy Juice in the Window?

Unlike the first *Starflight* (where the player was forced to land on planets and mine precious minerals for funds), most of the revenue-generating activity deals with trading. As well as exchanging trade goods for funds, several alien cultures possess powerful artifacts of technology which can aid you in your mission. In the first *Starflight*, you basically had three options with any aliens you met: negotiate, destroy them or be destroyed. The addition of even more races and the ability to exchange trade goods with them adds immensely to the enjoyment of the game.

Other touches enhance playing enjoyment, such as five saved game positions and a toggle to turn off all sound and music. The game is fully hard drive installable (with the included pair of hard drive installation programs) and features off-disk copy protection. Multitasking is also supported, allowing players to run a word processor in the background for taking notes (or to write a game review, as I'm doing now!). The game runs fine on any Amiga with at least 1MB of RAM, and it was respectfully compatible when running under AmigaDOS 2.0.

Please Don't Feed the Ng'Kher'Ahrla!

While the graphics, sound and animation will be nothing earthshaking (or is that "Arth"-shaking?) for Amiga owners, *Starflight 2*'s immense gaming universe and the correspondingly copious amounts of playing time required to finish the game make it a must buy for any science fiction fan. If you've been looking for a good role-playing game in the science fiction setting, look no further. Besides, the Ng'Kher'Ahrla will be disappointed if you don't show up for dinner. ER



Overall: 82

Starflight 2

Price: \$49.95

Category: Role-Play

Electronic Arts

Difficulty: Apprentice

Gameplay: 80

Graphics: 75

Compatibility: Amiga 500-3000; Workbench 1.3, 2.0

Interface: 87

Audio: 70

Required: 1MB RAM

Atmosphere: 78

Innovation: 69

Recommended: Hard Drive or Two Floppy Drives

Documentation: 80

Mechanics: 83

Protection: Symbol Identification Options: Clue Book

LES MANLEY IN: *LOST in L.A.*™

Reviewed by Michael J. Ballenger

Tinsel Town...nut and fruit land...a person from the eastern metropolis of New York is entirely out of his depth on the west coast, so Les Manley becomes lost in L.A. How could this happen to such a nice computer nerd?

Well, you see, one of Les' best friends is the diminutive actor, Helmut Bean. Once a freak act in a circus, he is now one of the hottest properties in Hollywood. (His tiny size makes it possible for him to perform stunt double work on miniaturized sets, saving his employers a bundle.) Along with his latest flame, the physical fitness queen, LaFonda Turner, Helmut disappears—the latest victims of the celebrity kidnaper that has been plaguing the rich and famous of L.A.

When Les arrives, invited to the west coast as Helmut's guest, he finds Helmut missing. True friend that he is, Les dives into the sordid underbelly of L.A. searching for the despicable kidnapers that are snatching Hollywood's celebs. You, the player, are now invited to help Les Manley in his noble quest.

Is It Real...OR Digital?

From the opening sequences of this game, you will realize that you have gotten hold of something that is a little different from last year's adventure game. The first frame of opening art is nicely rendered VGA graphics, but the next is a combination of rendered image and digitized actress. This technique is used extensively throughout *Lost in L.A.* It was probably first discovered by the makers of computerized strip poker games, but is now certainly generally accepted.

The programmers of *Lost in L.A.* came up with an additional wrinkle. The digitized images are animated in simple, but fairly effective ways. Lips move. Eyes blink. Heads turn. Arms gesture. The effect is sometimes annoyingly wooden, but at other times it is engagingly entertaining. Digitized animation has been available on CD-ROM for some time, but I haven't before seen it done this well from an ordinary hard drive using a reasonable amount of space (*Lost in L.A.* only takes up a little more than 4MB on my hard drive).

A nice "in joke" has Les reminiscing back to the original game with his thought balloon displaying EGA graphics from *Search for The King*. The digitized image of Les in the foreground, lips and eyes animated as he remembers, is a nice touch to show doubters how much more interesting digitized images are.

To go with the realism of the digitized graphics, there are also digitized sounds. These include a woman's scream, a barking dog, snoring and the like. They can be heard through the PC speaker (if you have enough memory; more on that later), as well as with a wide variety of sound boards. They

add little to the game as they are few and far between, but it is the beginning of a nice trend.

Music is well done, and sounds great with my Sound Blaster Pro. It is acceptable through the PC speaker, but I found myself turning the music off when playing the game on my laptop.

Interface This, Les!

In all graphic games, the problem of interface looms large for the designer. The purchaser probably has in mind graphics more than text when purchasing a product like *Lost in L.A.* So, since there is no true voice responsive interface, how does the designer enable the player to interact with the game. The initial response was bringing the parser of old text-style adventures right into the world of the graphic adventure. With old parsers, however, come old frustrations. For instance, I type "Pick up the wallet" and the machine responds "I don't know wallet."

The newest response to the interface challenge is of the mouse/menu driven variety. *Lost in L.A.* features the most streamlined, mouse driven interface that I have ever worked with. As with the "new look" Sierra games, there is NO use of the keyboard if you have a mouse (and if you don't, why not?). This interface is the simplest that I have worked with so far. The cursor displays as cross hairs where there is nothing to be done. When you move it over an area where Les can go, a pair of footprints appear. Clicking on the left mouse button causes Les to move to the cursor position. When placed over some objects or people, the cursor turns into a question mark. Click on an object at this time, and a menu appears offering options for Les, such as "Look closely, About and Talk to."

When the cursor is moved to the bottom of the screen, a strip with Les' inventory and a computer system icon appears. Select from the inventory by clicking on an object and the menu "Use with, About" appears. Select "Use with" and the cursor becomes the object, for use with whom or what you please on the screen. Click on the hand icon that appears within the inventory and Les can touch things on the screen. Clicking on the computer system icon brings up a menu of options including sound and play speed control, plus save game options. While the cursor can be controlled by the keyboard, this is very awkward (please, please, get a mouse already!).

Although I like the Sierra interface very much, if you were to force me to rate these against each other, I would place Accolade's interface in *Lost in L.A.* slightly ahead of Sierra's. It is somewhat simpler and seems to offer sufficient flexibility to allow subtlety in game design. Accolade claims, in their documentation for the game, that the only action option not currently available in *Lost in L.A.* is "mulch."

The dialogue menus are redundant with many opportunities for conversation beyond those absolutely necessary to the solution of the game's puzzles. In the end, the interface remains a matter of taste, but I think it can be fairly stated that Accolade has achieved the state of the art.

Enough Details, on with the Story

No matter how attractive the interface, the final determination of the adventure's quality is the story. The story line of *Les Manley in: Lost in L.A.* certainly satisfies. First of all, the plot line is interesting and full of humor, poking fun at nearly everything about the L.A. lifestyle from lifeguards and "pump" bunnies to celebrities and talent agents.

Puzzles employed are not illogical or arbitrary, and can be solved reasonably easily — if you attend to EVERYTHING that changes the cursor to a question mark, and exhaust all possibilities for conversation paying attention to EVERYTHING the other characters in the game say to Les. As is usually the case in these games, if your progress is barred to someplace that you feel sure is integral, go back and find out what you failed to pick up (a special hint for Mud Wrestling Perverts: You need to acquire a laptop computer as well as the entrance ticket for Club Mud if you intend to get into the ring with Monique and Dominique for a little down and dirty fun).

The humor and overall themes in this game are definitely in the realm of "adult" fantasy (why is it that "adult" fantasy means juvenile sexual themes? Ah well...). If the following offends rather than amuses, I can hardly recommend this game for you.

Misty (enquiring as to Les' profession): Private Dick?

Les: So far.

If that kind of double entendre just cracks you up (I know I'm still wheezing with laughter having just typed it), then this game is right up your alley.

I will say, though, that there are more characters and locations available for interaction with Les than are strictly necessary to solve the quest. For my money this is good, adding to the richness and detail of the whole story. For the expert at adventure gaming, this dimension increases the difficulty level of the game. Although a novice can play the game, a more experienced player will appreciate the opportunity to explore.

OK, OK, It's Nice, But...

It must be obvious from the review thus far that I liked *Lost in L.A.* very much. There are a few areas for improvement, though. One of the strengths of the game, the use of digitized human images is also a weakness, in a way. Sometimes, the backgrounds in the digitized close ups have a

cheesy, hurried appearance. This is all the more jarring due to the realism of digitized portions of the images. I suppose that to remedy this, the next generation of games will have to be shot "on location."

The game is also a major memory hog. You will need about 570K of free memory for it to run. This will not be a problem for those with MS-DOS 5.0 and some extended memory; however, the rest of you may need to boot from a "clean" boot disk. Recognizing this as a difficulty for many computer users who are more game players than computer nerds, Accolade has included VERY complete directions for creating a "clean" boot disk or altering the hard drive boot up sequence to free memory from any TSRs or other system memory stealers.

Given sufficient memory, *Lost in L.A.* will play on any MS-DOS compatible machine. It ran unbearably slowly on the office XT class machine. It ran rather well on my home 386SX. A hard drive is required; no option for play from floppy disks is available. The game is copy protected by a codewheel scheme, not an integral part of gameplay (thanks, Accolade! I hate disk-based schemes that prevent me from backing up my investment. However, I do like it more when codewheels or manual-based protection can be worked into a game's storyline in some way). When the copy protection screen appears, you have three chances to type in a number derived from the codewheel. Otherwise, it's back to the DOS prompt with you.

The documentation provided is presented in the form of a copy of *"The Daily Variety,"* a scandal rag from L.A. As such, it is a little difficult to find exactly what you need if you are foolish enough to ignore the index listed on the front page as a side bar labeled "Inside:". On another level, this form of documentation adds to the flavor of the game with amusing advertisements and articles about game locations and characters.

The Envelope Please...

At a suggested retail price of \$59.95, *Les Manley in: Lost in L.A.* is a worthwhile gaming investment. At any reduction, it's an absolute bargain. On the whole, the game is entertaining and logical in its puzzles. I highly recommend it as a product that stands on its own merits and not just as a clone of other popular "adult" adventure games.

My only real reservation is with regards to its recommendation "for mature audiences;" as with other "adult" adventure games, the Publishers means what they say. **IER**

Enchanted Realms™
DISTINCTIVE
Adventure Award

Overall: 90

Les Manley in: Lost in L.A.

Price: \$59.95

Category: Animated

Accolade

Difficulty: Novice

Gameplay: 85

Graphics: 95

Required: VGA/MCGA; 640K; 286/10 MHZ; HDrive

Interface: 92

Audio: 85

Recommended: Mouse

Atmosphere: 85

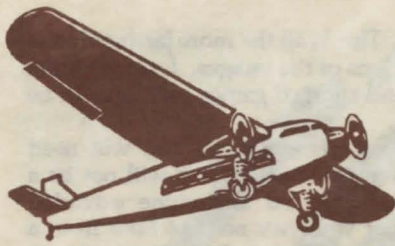
Innovation: 92

Supported: Roland, Ad Lib and Sound Blaster

Documentation: 80

Mechanics: 80

Protection: Codewheel Options: Hint Book Available



HEART OF CHINA

Reviewed by C. Albert Scott

One of the most well known American operated tour services in the Far East is owned by "Lucky" Jake Masters, famed fighter ace from the Great War. Consistently commended for getting people in "to see the real China in ways they never expected," Mr. Masters has established a strong reputation in the budding Asian travel and tourism industry for his air tour service of Hong Kong and China. — *Josephine Andrews Travel Guide to the World*

Have a Heart

If you want to see China in ways "never expected," then consider yourself "Lucky" to meet Jake Masters. For, it's these "never expected" ways of experiencing the Far East that make *Heart of China* such an impelling story and adventure all wrapped together in one convenient package.

As the character of Jake Masters, referred to as Lucky by his friends, you must traverse the Orient on a perilous mission to rescue Kate Lomax, a nurse assigned to the war-torn regions of rural China near Chengdu, and the daughter of the ruthless opportunist E.A. Lomax.

What initially immersed me in the story is its similarity to and its melting pot blending of elements from several other adventures, both on film and disk. *Heart of China* incorporates ideas, plot devices and humor similar to those employed in the extremely successful Indiana Jones films and games, as well as those from the TV show *Tales of the Gold Monkey* and the movie *High Road to China*. Fans of this genre will find themselves right at home in this enjoyable mixture of serious drama and lighthearted adventure. All in all, a nice change from the standard, more humor-impooverished adventure fare.

Rickshaws and Ricochets

As the story unfolds, Lucky finds himself backed into a corner by E.A. Lomax. Lucky is in financial straights and needs cash to save both his butt and business, a commodity on which Lomax holds the mortgage (Lucky's business, that is). Lomax's offer is clear: \$200,000 to rescue his daughter (\$20,000 of which is deducted each day that passes 'til Kate is safely returned) or "Hit the road, Jake." The decision (as though there really was one) is quite clear-cut. Chengdu, where are you?

Of course, Lucky will need some help. Even though he is basically a loner, the Orient is no place to go it alone. At least, not against the odds that face Lucky. Quite honestly, without the help of a local ninja by the name of Zhao Chi, Lucky's luck is sure to run out — and very fast at that. So, head for town by catching a ride via rickshaw. This is where you must start your Oriental orientation, an endeavor that can become somewhat of a painful learning experience. One of the first

things Lucky will learn is that guns have their place. After some brief target practice at the pier, the place for Lucky's gun, at this point in time, is safely tucked away.

Soldier of Misfortune

Death in *Heart of China* is almost as prevalent as in many Sierra adventures, and about on par with Dynamix's previous release, *Rise of the Dragon*. Lucky seems almost a misnomer for Jake Masters, as luck appears to be a fleeting experience. Saving your progress regularly is necessary, as Lucky will expire on a regular basis. I have lost count of the number of times my luck has turned out bad. Still, I never felt that death was continually stalking me. Maybe that's due in part to the element of humor maintained throughout play.

Another reason to save regularly is because of the plot branches employed in *Heart of China*. These were also used in *Rise of the Dragon*, though not always clearly presented. Here, the arrival at a plot branch is unmistakable. When you reach a point where a decision has multiple path options, a Plot Branch Screen appears notifying you that the path you chose could have been approached differently. Saving on a regular basis will allow you to explore these different paths, thus increasing the playability and enjoyment derived from the game. A word of caution is necessary here. Not all plot paths will allow the successful completion of the adventure. Some may result in dead ends. So, save frequently.

Tanks, But No Tanks!

Okay, here goes my major complaint with *Heart of China* in particular and Dynamix adventures in general. Dump the arcade segments (*Heart of China* features a tank simulation and a battle on top of a speeding train). I don't play adventures to test my hand-eye coordination skills. I play adventures to test my mental abilities — to think my way out of problems, not shoot my way out. Mind you, I do enjoy an occasional bout with a good shoot-em up. I also like to play simulations from time to time. However, please do not make me play them in order to complete an adventure. Yes, there is the opportunity to auto-win the sequence after so many unsuccessful attempts. But, if you do select auto-win, you are deprived of viewing the action that has just taken place. That is like being immersed in a good book only to find that someone has torn a page out. Aaargh! At least run the animation when auto-win is selected, so that the player can view the action as it was designed to be played. Little extra programming would be required to do so.

Please Release Me

Though not a "new release" to many of you, since the MS-DOS version came out about the middle of last year, *Heart of China* IS a "new release" for Amiga gamers. And,

since **Enchanted Realms™** just recently began covering MS-DOS adventures and did not previously review **Heart of China** in its original release, this review covers both the MS-DOS and Amiga versions of this Dynamix adventure.

You are probably wondering whether there really is a significant difference between the two versions or not. Well, the answer is a definite "Yes and No." Having invested time in playing both versions, I have to say that there are both subtle and significant differences to be found.

Subtle differences exist in the execution of the interface. The Amiga version of **Heart of China** lacks the mouse calibration offered in the PC version. However, in actual use, mouse action is better on the Amiga, having a more precise and responsive feel. (Unfortunately, the Amiga version does not multitask, so I'm unable to write this review with the game running in the background as I prefer.) As is usually the case, program installation, while different for the Amiga and MS-DOS, is simple and easy to perform. Regardless of what is stated on the box for the Amiga version, though, a hard drive should really be indicated as required rather than simply recommended. Granted, you can play this game from floppies, but you will not enjoy the disk swapping. Hotkey support is provided equally on both systems. One other minor difference is that there seems to be several places where background music is provided on the Amiga where it is not on PC compatibles. Documentation is identical regardless of which package you open. It also adds to the atmosphere of the game and should definitely be read prior to getting involved in the adventure.

Choosing the Right Travel Agency

Some major differences with regards to graphics and audio do exist between these two versions of **Heart of China**. It's a toss up, however, concerning which system to play the adventure on if you have both at your disposal. Even though I usually opt to play the Amiga version when it's available, I chose to continue on with the MS-DOS release for this game. Here's why.

The atmosphere on both versions is near excellent, but for different reasons. Sound and sound effects are superior on the Amiga. The PC incarnation just could not match the Amiga for sound in ambience and separation. Nor could it match the Amiga's superior use of digitized sound effects. The seagull and gunshot on the Amiga sounded just like, well...a seagull and gunshot. On the PC with Sound Blaster support, the gunshot sounded like a bursting balloon and the seagull...would you believe a muted bicycle horn?

Graphics, however, are another story. I was quite pleased with the conversion of **Rise of the Dragon** to the Amiga. In some ways, the Amiga's 32 color version actually looked better than that of the 256 color VGA. **Heart of China**, though, is a disappointment graphically. After installation, I immediately jumped right past the introduction and into the

game to see what kind of treat awaited me. My initial impression was "Yuck!" Something seems to have gone wrong in the conversion of this game in comparison to **Rise of the Dragon**. Bear in mind that my reaction is based upon already spending some time playing the 256 color VGA version. Yet, somehow, something more has been lost in the translation than should have been. Certainly, some of this loss in graphic quality is due to the reduction in the vast range of colors used in the original release (which serves to greatly develop the richness of the Orient). Moving from 256 to 32 colors results in significant limitations. The major weakness, though, seems to be a lack of employing proper dithering techniques to help blend the limited number of colors used in the images, a technique that could have provided noticeably better results. (Dithering is a graphic technique employed to blend two colors together, thus reducing the contrast between them.) Dynamix is aware of the problem with regards to graphics in their Amiga releases. Recent conversations indicate that they are experimenting with 64 color extra halfbright and HAM mode (4096 colors) for future conversions. Hopefully, they will employ one of these in their next conversion.

So, how does all this affect enjoyment derived from the game? That depends on your preference. Both versions of **Heart of China** will provide a rich playing experience. A choice only comes into play here for those who have both an Amiga and MS-DOS compatible. In this case, I recommend the Amiga version if sound is more important to you than graphics. If you are more visually oriented, go with the MS-DOS version.

Chinese Tea and Fortune Cookies

You do not need to read tea leaves or break open any fortune cookies to know what the future holds for the adventurer who signs on for this jaunt through the Orient. Characters are developed well during gameplay, with a goodly amount of humor thrown in to make them both enjoyable and believable. The story line is interesting and well developed, allowing the gamer to experience one of several differing plots and associated conclusions. In addition, a strong atmosphere permeates this interactive quest and quickly draws you into the action.

In conclusion, I found **Heart of China** more enjoyable than many adventures I've played and definitely worth the investment. It is clearly one of 1991's better values, and provides many hours of satisfying gaming for the armchair adventurer in us all. So, if you feel "Lucky," give it a try. **ER**

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DISTINCTIVE
Adventure Award

Overall: 91/89

Heart of China

Price: \$59.95

Category: Graphic

Dynamix

Difficulty: Notice

Gameplay: 86

Graphics: 90/78

Required: VGA; 286 or Better; 640K; and Hard Drive or Amiga 500-3000; Workbench 1.3, 2.0; 1MB RAM

Interface: 88

Audio: 86/91

Supported: Roland, Ad Lib, Sound Blaster, Mouse

Atmosphere: 91/89

Innovation: 87

Protection: None Options: Hint Book Available

Documentation: 92

Mechanics: 85

Scores are separated by a slash in comparative reviews to indicate differences in quality between versions (MS-DOS/Amiga).

POPULOUS

TRIALS OF THE OLYMPIAN GODS

Reviewed by Millie Miller

You know a game is really good when your spouse (who in this case also happens to be the editor) tells you at least a dozen times to quit playing that game and write the review...and when you find yourself glued to the monitor well past your bedtime only to have to get up several hours later to go to work with blood shot eyes. Such is the sad but true plight of a genuine "POPer."

Wouldn't You Like to be a POPer, Too?

Populous is back with a sequel to match all sequels in *Populous II: Trials of the Olympian Gods*. It seems that Zeus has fathered many children by numerous mortal women, and you just happen to be one of those youngsters. As a child, you knew that something was different, unusual, about yourself — that you were an offspring of a god. Because Zeus would not willingly acknowledge your inheritance, you must now prove that you are worthy to be seated among the other gods on Mount Olympus by doing battle with the 32 deities who rule the 1,000 worlds of *Populous II*. And this is no small feat.

Contests of Conquest

At the start, you have little of any skills or power with which to do battle against the opposing deity. As you increase and strengthen your worshippers, your own power or mana increases, but you are still limited in the amount of divine intervention effects that you can utilize. You must use what little effects you do have available to the best of your ability to conquer the world and gain experience points. As you gain these necessary experience points, you chose which areas you want to improve in and then you enter the next world with greater capabilities. But so does your opponent. Each succeeding world also gets progressively more difficult to complete with the terrain becoming more rugged.

Divine Intentions

There are over 30 powerful effects that you will be able to hurl at your enemy and others to help heal and strengthen your own land and subjects. From creating swamp lands and spreading fungus to causing earthquakes, whirlwinds and volcanoes, some of the effects can be quite devastating and spectacular. If you played *Populous I*, you will be quite pleased with the improvements in the effects. Volcanoes actually spew out lava now and earthquakes split open chasms in the earth that swallow up your walkers. Several new devastations have become my favorites. Tornadoes snatch their hapless victims away in a twisting cloud of debris. When they reach the oceans, tornadoes spawn

whirlpools, dragging helpless souls to their death while eating away the coastlines. Fire columns and rains of fire will quickly turn any poor traveler into a pillar of black ash which then crumbles and falls to the ground. Plagues spread rapidly across the land accompanied by the sight and sound of cawing vultures hovering over the infected villages and walkers (in a matter of minutes, your whole population can become plague infested). Also, new to *Populous II* are some roving creatures that cause the earth to split under their feet, spawn tornadoes, plant idols, create fire columns and wade through your land as if it was water, causing the earth to disintegrate in front of them.

On a brighter side, you will be able to create fields of flowers and cause towering trees to rise up from the ground. These two effects will help enrich the land and will gain you some popularity with your worshippers which helps to raise your mana. In the event of a volcano, the only thing that you can do to help restore the land is to level it and plant flowers on destroyed areas. You will also be able to create protective walls around castles and villages, and lay roadways down to create easier travel for the walkers.

Devastating Effects

Much of the layout of *Populous II* is the same as it was in its predecessor, but much has also changed. There are still the two views, a whole-world view and a close-up view. Now, however, you can elect to watch the close-up view normally or full-screen, or you can zoom in or out. In viewing the close-up map as full-screen, you cannot view the whole world. However, you can easily zoom in and out again.

In *Populous I*, you measured your growth against your enemies' by a shield with levels on either side of it in the upper right hand corner of the screen. Now, in place of the shield, there is a stadium in the upper right corner where your people are dressed in blue and the enemy's in red. The stadium fills up according to your population levels. In the center of the stadium appears the figure or house of anyone that you are querying along with a weapon showing the strength of that individual or item.

The button panel has drastically changed in this sequel. Because there are so many more effects that you can do, the buttons are now organized by categories of effects — such as, People, Vegetation, Earth, Air, Fire and Water. Under these six main categories there are five effects each. There are also buttons provided for gathering your people together and sending them off to fight.

Listen to the Heartbeat

Sounds are very important to the play of the game and give you audible clues as to what's going on in other parts of your land. If your worshippers have been infected with the

plague, you will hear the vultures cawing. You hear the high winds of tornadoes, the roaring of fire pillars and the earth splitting from quakes accompanied by the screams of walkers falling into the newly formed crevices. You also hear your own heartbeat which sounds strong and steady if all is well. However, if you are weak and about to lose to your opponent, your heart will beat faster. Music has been added, too, and is a mixture of all of the game's sound effects with an underlying warlike beat that adds to the flavor of the game.

In playing **Populous II**, I ran across several quirks. I'm not sure if these were bugs and game design flaws, or just plain old system incompatibilities. In playing on an Amiga 2500/020, I found several things happening that were very frustrating. Occasionally, all of my people would migrate to the northwest corner of the world and just stand there frozen as if they were facing Mecca. If I would raise or lower the land or plant flowers, they would start moving again and walk away. On other occasions, if I selected the option to view the leader, I would find myself looking at the northwest corner of the world again. Sometimes the only thing there would be ocean — no people, villages or papal magnet. These same things occurred in the beta version and in the released game. In one playing session, I had my worshippers covering almost the entire world, with only a handful of my opponent's people in view. However, the stadium indicator had my opponents almost equal in number to my population. In the end, I had to quit that world and start it again, which I quickly won. Though **Populous II** does run on an Amiga 3000 under AmigaDOS 2.04, it did lock up on several occasions, resulting in a system reboot to get going again.

Populous II, unlike its predecessor, is now hard drive installable and employs copy protection which requires the manual. It also includes a save game feature which I heartily recommend that you use often. Support is provided as well for two players via modem or datalink.

Supernatural Delight

Overall, even with the few "quirks" mentioned above, I thoroughly enjoy playing **Populous II**. It has many added features which make it more enjoyable and challenging — even addictive — than the first **Populous**. So, if you enjoy watching little people running about the screen establishing villages and paying homage to you, and if you enjoy the power of creating natural disasters and inflicting them relentlessly upon your enemies, then polish your ankh and conjure up a copy of **Populous II**. It's a great game. You won't be disappointed. ER



(Continued from page 2)

have been working on significantly in recent months), reduce our costs by cutting back on the size of each issue (which we would really like to avoid — actually, we would like to become a monthly publication) or a combination of both. Of course, we would prefer increasing distribution rather than trimming back on the size of the Journal. It looks, though, like we may need to do a little bit of both for the time being.

As such, we would like to call upon each of you, our loyal citizens and supporters, to help us keep **Enchanted Realms™** bulging at the seams with adventure each and every issue. It probably won't cost you any more than a single phone call or letter, either. So, here's what we would like you to do. Evangelize! That's right. Spread the word! If each one of our subscribers would convince just one friend and fellow adventurer to join our ranks, we wouldn't have to trim a single word from the pages of **Enchanted Realms™**. It's really that simple a matter. Of course, if you want, you could always send someone a gift subscription. We'll even enclose a card telling them what a wonderful and thoughtful person you are for thinking of them.

So, there you have it. We know from your calls and letters how much you enjoy **Enchanted Realms™**, and how much you look forward to receiving each issue. All we ask is that you help us keep the Journal packed as full as possible with reviews, news, helps and hints. We will certainly all benefit by the endeavor. Thanks in advance for your efforts!

Is That All There Is?

No, it's not. But in an effort to devote as much of this column as possible to trends and technology in the adventure game industry, other concerns pertaining directly to **Enchanted Realms™** are being moved to **Mortaine's Cauldron**. So, be sure to look there this issue, and in the future, for important information concerning **Enchanted Realms™**. In addition, please take the time to carefully and thoroughly read the Product and Order information in the **Adventurers' Guild** this issue concerning changes that have been instituted there. Oh, and one last item. Make sure you turn to the **Innkeeper's Timepiece** for our annual **Adventure Game Awards**, our editors' top picks for the best adventures of 1991.

Well, that about concludes this issue's **Proclamations**. As a colleague in London says, "May your locations always have exits." And, as always,

Happy Adventuring!

Chuck Miller
Lord of the Realms

Overall: 90

Populous II

Price: \$59.95

Category: Strategic

Electronic Arts

Difficulty: Novice

Gameplay: 90
Interface: 90
Atmosphere: 92
Documentation: 90

Graphics: 91
Audio: 89
Innovation: 89
Mechanics: 90

Compatibility: Amiga 500-3000; Workbench 1.3, 2.0
Required: 1MB RAM
Recommended: Hard Drive or Two Floppy Drives
Protection: Manual Options: One or Two Players

The Bard's Tale™ Construction Set™

Reviewed by Zach Meston



The Bard's Tale. What an ancient game! I remember playing it on my C64 when that machine was the king of the computing hill. Interplay released three separate Bard's Tales, all of which were later ported to MS-DOS and Amiga. The first two were ported well, but *The Bard's Tale III: Thief of Fate* was pretty sucky (at least the Amiga version was).

Now those wacky folks at Interplay have taken the development tools used to put together *The Bard's Tale* series and have released them as *The Bard's Tale Construction Set*. So, how is it? Good. Very good. But not great, as you'll soon learn...

Manual On Disk

After installing BTCS to your hard drive, the manual included with the product instructs you to look at the README file. Don't just look at it, print it out! It contains several manual corrections and lots of important stuff that's nowhere to be found in the printed documentation.

This isn't the first time I've encountered an Interplay product that had important info missing from the documentation. *Castles* also had a weak manual (and the README file for that game still didn't have enough information). I understand about the lead time between the printing of the manual and the final version of a product, but this README business is getting a bit silly. Place it in the manual or on an addendum sheet, but DON'T stick it into a hastily written README file!

Do-It-Yourself Dungeons

The main menu for BTCS offers five options: Item Editor, Spell Editor, Monster Editor, Map Editor and Utilities. Let's look at each option separately, shall we?

Item Editor

The Item Editor is employed to construct weapons and special items (wands, rings, et cetera), with a maximum of 100 items in your game. Each possesses a variety of attributes, including: Name, Item Type, User Class (which character classes may use the item), Price, Damage Dice (the amount of damage the item does, presuming it's a weapon), Spell Cast (the type of magic spell the item casts when used) and several other attributes.

There are only two major limitations to the Item Editor I can think of. You can't assign text to an item, so you can't create readable books or scrolls (although you can create books and scrolls with magical abilities, like a book full of Arc Fire spells). And each item is described by its name only; you can't show pictures of the items. This is a limitation of *The Bard's Tale* adventure system more than anything else (remember, *The Bard's Tale* system is getting along in years).

Spell Editor

This Editor is used to construct combat and non-combat spells. You can have a maximum of 100 spells in your game. Each spell has its own attributes, including: Name, Code (the four-letter code you type in to cast the spell), Mage Class

(which character classes can use the spell), Level (the experience level needed to cast the spell), Points Needed (the amount of magic points sucked from the spell caster), Type (from almost 30 different effects), Duration (how long the spell lasts) and more. Most of the spells are combat-oriented, but there are a few spell types that assist the player during exploration (Secret Door Detection, Phase Door, Trap Destruction, et cetera).

This is about as good as it gets for a Spell Editor, I think. The only way to get more complicated spells would be to program them yourself, and if you could program complex spells, then you could program your own adventure without needing BTCS!

Monster Editor

The Monster Editor is used to construct monsters (surprise). As with items and spells, you can have a maximum of 100 monsters in your game. Each monster has his own attributes, which include: Name, Starting Distance (how far away the monster will appear when encountered), Moves Per Round (how quickly the monster can approach your party), Rate of Attacks (how fast the monster can attack), Illusion (is it live or is it an Illusion?), Picture Number (more on this below!), Combat Options (what the monster will do in battle), Base AC (the armor class of the monster), Hit Points (we all know what THIS means!) and others.

Picture Number allows you to choose a picture from one of 74 possible graphics. BTCS comes with 44 animated monster pictures of its own; plus, you can create your own monster pictures within *Deluxe Paint* and load them into BTCS with a utility program. Unfortunately, your pictures can't be animated.

What's very important to note is that you don't have to use these pictures just for monsters. You can create backdrops and static scenes for use with Special locations. For example, you can draw a picture of a statue in *Deluxe Paint*, load it into BTCS and assign it to a particular location in one of your dungeons. When your characters walk onto that location, the picture of the statue will pop up.

I found myself wishing for a lot more picture slots. Having only 74 slots is a real handicap, especially considering that you can use pictures for much more than monsters (as related below). I also wanted the ability to load in animated monster pictures, but no dice. At least the monsters included with BTCS are semi-animated (faces contort, teeth gnash and so forth).

Special Editor

Well, isn't that special? BTCS's Special Editor (which is actually included within the Map Editor) is used to build Special squares to use on your maps. You can have a maximum of 30 different Special effects per map, although you can place as many Special squares on the map as you like.

Special squares are really "trigger" squares. When a party walks onto a Special square, a set of up to 20 instructions is carried out. The instructions can do something simple, like printing a few lines of text on the screen, or something more complex, like checking to see if the party has certain special items. You'll use Special squares to set up all of your NPC

encounters and other areas of interest. Here's a sample instruction set taken from the BTCS manual:

1. DO Print "What is light as a feather, but cannot be held as long?"
2. DO Get Input
3. If Last Input is "BREATH" THEN Move One Square Forward ELSE Move One Square Backward
4. DO Stop

For this particular square, if the player didn't answer the riddle correctly, he wouldn't be able to pass the square. You could set up another Special square somewhere else in the dungeon that printed the answer (BREATH) on the screen. (Actually, I thought SNOWFLAKE was a better answer to the riddle, but that's just me...)

I actually fibbed when I typed line 1 in the instruction set above, and that leads me to my only real complaint about the Special Editor. You're only allowed to type 16 characters with each Print statement. The line above would actually need to be broken down into several Print statements like this:

1. DO Print "What is light as"
2. DO Print "a feather, but"
3. DO Print "cannot be held"
4. Do Print "as long?"

Ack! This is one extremely annoying limitation. I noticed that in an example Special included with BTCS, they were able to get a few more than 16 characters on one line. Unfortunately, the documentation didn't explain it, and I wasn't able to figure out how they were able to accomplish it. That annoys me even more! Grrr!

Map Editor

To construct the maps for your game, you use the Map Editor. Each Map is 22 by 22 squares, and has the following attributes: Name, Type of Dungeon (see below), Level (level of the dungeon), Chance of Wandering Monster (the chance after each action that a wandering monster will attack), Wandering Monster Difficulty (the strength level of the wandering monsters) and File Name (the disk filename of the map, which can only be up to eight characters). On each map, you can place blank squares, walls, doors or secret doors. You can also turn any square into a Special square.

Type of Dungeon allows you to select from one of four types of walls. There are Dungeon 1 and Dungeon 2 (brick walls), Wilderness (trees and bushes) and City (cobblestone streets and wooden doors). Like the 74-picture limit I mentioned above, I find having only four wall types a real bummer. The four-wall limit means that all BTCS adventures are going to be very similar visually, and no one wants to look at the same graphics over and over again, no matter how

good the gameplay. I'm hoping that Interplay releases more "wall sets" in the future, or updates BTCS to allow users to draw and import their own "wall sets."

Utilities

You have nine different utilities to access: Load Items, Save Items, Load Spells, Save Spells, Load Monsters, Save Monsters, Print Spells, Test Map and Build Game.

The Load/Save utilities allow you to save groups of Items, Spells and Monsters to disk for use in other adventures you create. Print Spells will send a list of spells (organized by Mage Class) to a printer or to a disk file. Test Map allows you to take a party into any of the maps you've created and romp around to make sure all your Special squares are working. Build Game is the most important utility, taking all the necessary files and putting them onto a stand-alone disk (or separate hard drive path) so you can play your adventure without BTCS.

That brings us to a most important question. Can you share your **Bard's Tale** creations with others? You betcha. You are allowed to freely distribute all of the files created by the Build Game utility. You AREN'T allowed to distribute any of the BTCS program files. Makes sense, eh?

Stuff I'd Like to See

I've already talked about options I'd like to see added to BTCS. Here are two more requests that I couldn't fit anywhere else in the review.

I'd like to see the ability to import sound effects added. It's easy enough to grab a few samples with a Sound Blaster card, and sound samples would add some all-important variety to BTCS adventures. The ability to import a title screen which loads in at the start of your adventure would also be great. Currently, the only screen you get is the BTCS title screen. A distinct title screen for each BTCS adventure would, once again, add some variety.

It's Old, But It's Good

The major disadvantage of BTCS is that it turns out "hit points and dungeons" adventure games in an era when computer adventures are (thankfully) toning down combat in favor of puzzle-solving and NPC interaction (**Ultima VII** pops immediately to mind). If you're the hack-and-slash adventure player, BTCS games will be right up your alley. If you prefer puzzle-solving or NPC interaction, BTCS will leave you cold.

Considering the age of the game system involved, **The Bard's Tale Construction Set** can do some truly remarkable stuff. Learn your way around the program and you'll be able to turn out games that are almost as detailed as any of the actual **Bard's Tale** adventures, which is one hell of a feat for a construction set. BTCS is definitely worth a look. **ER**

Overall: 88 **The Bard's Tale Construction Set** **Price: \$54.95**

Category: Language

Interplay

Difficulty: Apprentice

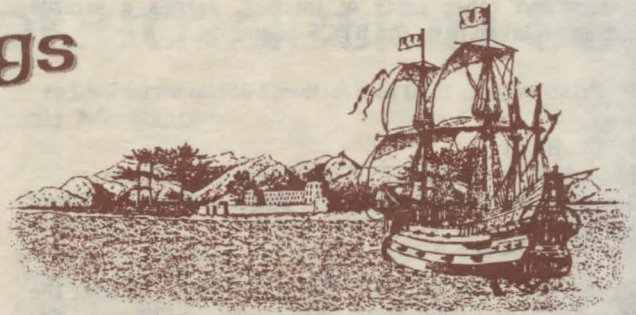
Useability:	89	Support:	85
Interface:	83	Extras:	77
Features:	82	Innovation:	72
Documentation:	65	Mechanics:	70

Required: VGA, MCGA, EGA, CGA or Tandy; 640K
Recommended: 286/12 MHZ or Better; Hard Drive
Supported: Roland, Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Pro Audio
Protection: None

Distant Moorings

Core Design's Heimdall

Reviewed by Zach Meston



Before I begin the review, please humor me while I gloat (or just skip to the next paragraph). In *Issue 6* of *Enchanted Realms™*, I reviewed B.S.S. Jane Seymour, saying "If this game is ever imported into the U.S., I will bet you my soul that the name will be changed." Konami has brought the game to the U.S. under the name *Spacewrecked*. Whatever the name, it's still a good game, so check it out. Now then...

Listen to the Plot Now and Believe Me Later

Way back in the beginning of time, Odin the God King was bored. He started fooling around with a bit of protoplasm, and before he knew it, he had created the Viking race. There wasn't any room in Valhalla for the Vikings, so Odin whipped up a small spheroid called Earth and plopped them onto it. The Vikings went on to lose five Super Bowls, and the Gods went on to do other godlike things.

This brings us to the Age of Ragnarok, when the Gods of good and evil were destined to clash. Loki, an evil God, cast a sleep spell on the good Gods and knocked them out. He stole their three most powerful weapons — Odin's sword, Frey's spear and Thor's hammer — and threw them down to Earth.

When the good Gods woke up, they realized how smart Loki had been to throw their weapons to Earth. You see, during the Age of Ragnarok, no God could walk upon the Earth or he would become mortal. So, how the heck were they going to get their weapons back and avoid getting their Asgard kicked? By conceiving a child in the belly of a beautiful Viking lass named Ingrid. This child would gather up the weapons of the Gods and bring them back to Asgard in time for Ragnarok. The child's name was Heimdall!

(Throwing) Axes and Allies

At the start of the game, Heimdall is a young lad, ready to begin his quest. Before he begins, you've got to organize an adventuring party of six (including Heimdall). There are thirty possible candidates to join the party, each one stronger than the last, but you can only choose from the first fifteen — unless you compete in three arcade sequences. The better you do in the sequences, the more candidates you'll be able to choose from, and the more powerful your party will be at the start of the game. These sequences represent Heimdall's "coming of age" before the real adventure begins.

The first sequence is the Axe Throwing Contest. Here, you must throw axes to chop off the eight pig-tails of Helga the barmaid. You've only got ten axes, so any more than two misses and you won't be able to chop off all of the pig-tails. (In the beta version of *Heimdall*, striking Helga's head with

an axe resulted in a gory splatter sequence. In the final version, they've come up with a brand-new, gore-free sequence in the interests of good taste.)

The second arcade sequence is Pig Chasing. You control Heimdall in a pigpen as he runs to catch a greased pig. The faster you catch the pig, the better your score. This is the silliest (and easiest) of the sequences.

The third and final sequence is the Boat Fighting Test. Your goal in this segment is to board a Viking ship, fight off the guards and make your way to a bag of gold at the head of the ship. Then, you have to fight your way across the ship a second time before you can leave the ship and get away with the gold!

You can choose not to participate in the sequences if you don't want to, but you'll still only be able to choose from the first fifteen candidates, and the arcade sequences are a lot of fun. The more you play them, the better you'll do and the stronger your party will be at the start of the game.

Island Life

The quest is divided into three sections. (Three weapons, three sections, makes sense to me!) Each section takes place in a different realm. The first section takes place in Midgard (Earth), the second in Utgard (a bridge between Midgard and Asgard), and the third in Asgard (home of the Gods). Each realm is broken up into a large group of islands.

Your party sails from island to island, disembarking the ship to explore. You can take on the islands in any order, although you'll find that it's wise to finish the easier islands before tackling the islands with lots of enemies.

When you leave the ship, you can only take three party members. You can take a different group for each new expedition and share the wealth (and experience points), or you can keep taking the same three and beef them up. (I prefer the latter approach!)

Today's Word is "Isometric"

When you're exploring an island, you see your surroundings in an isometric viewpoint similar to that of *The Immortal* and *Cadaver*. *Cadaver* only uses a single screen for each location, and *The Immortal* has a maximum of four screens per location. *Heimdall's* programmers have designed some locations to be more than three screens high or wide! Each location scrolls to keep your party in the middle of the screen as you walk around.

There are hidden pits in some locations. These pits won't kill you instantly, but you will lose a bit of energy. Fortunately, the pit becomes visible so that you don't walk into it again! The pit design for *Heimdall* was in direct response to *The Immortal*; *Heimdall's* programmers detested

the way **The Immortal** killed you instantly whenever you stumbled into something.

There are no random encounters in this game. Most of the monsters that attack you will stand still on the screen, patiently waiting for you to walk within attack range. A few monsters use sneak attacks, but even these surprise attacks are programmed into the game.

Dances with Ogres

The combat sequence uses a first-person viewpoint. Your enemy is shown in the upper-left corner of the screen. Your party's statistics are shown in the upper-right corner. The current character's weapons and spells take up the bottom half of the screen.

To fight, you click on the weapon or spell you want to use, then click on the "Attack" or "Spell" button. When using a weapon, it's best to wait until your enemy starts to strike before you initiate your attack. There are many powerful swords, daggers and spells to be discovered during **Heimdall** for your hacking pleasure.

The combat sequence has the best animation in the game. Enemies are well-drawn and move realistically. When you attack, your own hands even come onto the screen as you swing a sword or cast a spell.

The only letdown to the combat provided is that there's not enough variation in your enemies. There only seems to be about ten different opponents. Once you've fought them all, the thrill is gone (but it's a great thrill!).

Not Just Another Hack and Slash

There's a strong puzzle-solving element in **Heimdall**. In each of the three worlds, you'll have to solve many different puzzles before you find the weapon you're looking for. Most of these involve using the right object or spell in the right location.

The toughest puzzles involve floor plates. You have to walk onto these plates in the just the right order to make things happen. There's one plate puzzle near the end of the game that had me stuck for an hour before I finally got it right. Once I solved the puzzle, I was embarrassed at how simple it was!

Character interaction in **Heimdall** is quite minimal. When you walk up to someone, they'll speak to you, and sometimes give you an object. That's it. **Heimdall** may be a great Viking warrior, but a chatterbox he ain't.

Irritations

Heimdall isn't hard drive installable. It's disk-protected AND manual-protected. Normally, being unable to install to a hard drive is tolerable, since most European games come on one or two disks. **Heimdall** comes on FIVE! This is easily the largest amount of disks I've ever seen in a European game. What's worse, it only recognizes DF0: and DF1:, so Amiga 2000 users without a second internal floppy will discover the joys of constant swapping (note the sarcasm in this sentence).

Heimdall only allows one saved game on a save disk. This is just plain silly. (I seriously doubt that the save file is large enough to take up an 880K floppy, if you know what I mean.) Because of the one-file limitation, you'll end up with three or four save disks, constantly shuffling them around as you progress through the game.

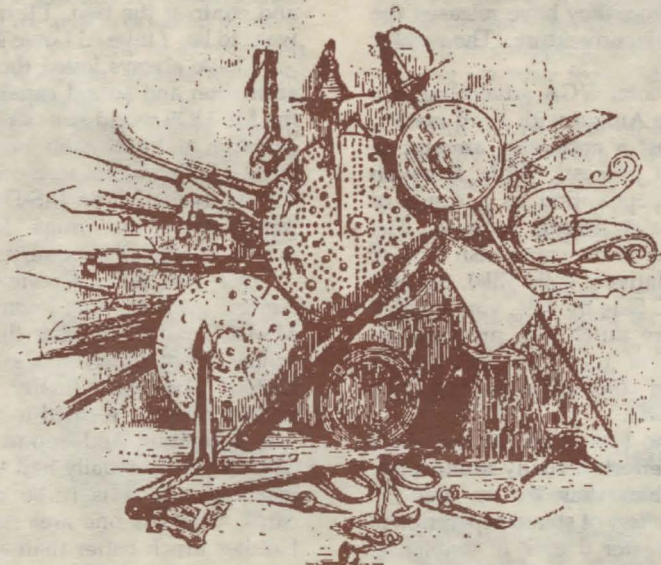
You can only save or load a game when you're at the map screen, NOT while you're exploring an island. Boo, hiss! Since some of the larger islands can be quite deadly, it's a real pain in the butt to have to return to the ship every time you want to save. It's also not a great idea to return to the ship, since most of the creatures you slaughter

will regenerate themselves. This means saving the game is almost pointless unless you complete the whole island in one go. And, that's not very easy!

That Is Some Weirð, Wild (and Fun) Stuff!

Heimdall is a very successful merger of an isometric viewpoint and a first-person combat sequence, but it's let down slightly by some ugly European traits. The graphics are excellent, the sound is good and the playing interest is high.

I've learned that Virgin Games plans to bring **Heimdall** to the States this summer, so like most of the games reviewed in **Distant Moorings**, you may want to wait for this one to hit our shores. But if you want to be a disgustingly hip Amiga gamer, **Heimdall** is THE import to have. EIR



Overall: 89

Heimdall

Price: \$49.95

Category: Role-Play

Core Design

Difficulty: Apprentice

Gameplay: 91

Graphics: 90

Compatibility: Amiga 500, 2000; Workbench 1.3

Interface: 90

Audio: 80

Required: 1MB RAM

Atmosphere: 85

Innovation: 87

Recommended: Two Floppy Drives

Documentation: 78

Mechanics: 75

Protection: Manual & Disk-based (What, no dongle?)



Conversion Castle

A PROVING GROUNDS FOR ADVENTURE CONVERSIONS

Adventures of Willy Beamish

Reviewed by Chuck Miller

In our last, exciting adventure-packed issue, we brought you a review of Dynamix's award winning interactive animated quest, *The Adventures of Willy Beamish*. Since then, in a rather short period of time, they have released the Amiga conversion of this Disney-like adventure. The results, I must add, are quite good.

Willy, released first as a 256 color VGA adventure, has been converted to 32 colors on the Amiga with good results. Unlike *Heart of China* (which lost a noticeable amount of graphic quality in the conversion process), *Willy Beamish* doesn't suffer near the graphic deprivation as a result of having its available color palette significantly reduced. The process is the same. However, due to the cartoonish look of the product (bright colors with relatively solid fills), the loss of colors is not nearly as apparent. Side by side, you are able to see the difference, but they are much less pronounced. Discussions with Dynamix confirm that they are indeed looking into the possibilities of 64 color extra halfbright or HAM conversions for future products.

Audio effects, though, suffer no loss at all. In fact, as is often the case, the digitized sound effects actually sound a fair amount better on the Amiga than they do on the PC compatible with sound card. The effect of stereo separation is also handled well, and adds a greater degree of ambience. Music is pretty much comparable, with the nod going toward the MS-DOS version running a quality sound card like the Sound Blaster or Pro Audio Spectrum.

Requirements, as with most newer adventures, are increasing. An Amiga with 1MB of RAM and at least two floppy drives is necessary. A hard drive is STRONGLY recommended for this TWELVE disk adventure (I believe that this is the largest Amiga adventure game to date, in number of disks at least). I played it for about forty-five minutes from two floppies and found the disk swapping annoying. Not unbearable, but still a nuisance. If you don't have a hard drive yet, now is the time to invest in one. It won't be long before you will need it to play newer releases.

Overall, everything that makes *Willy* a winner on PC compatibles is there to make it a success on the Amiga. Not only is it visually and audibly of higher quality than Saturday morning cartoons, but it is much more entertaining as well. For a lighthearted adventure, "children" of all ages should check out *The Adventures of Willy Beamish*. Now playing on an Amiga near you. ER

Leisure Suit Larry V

Reviewed by Michael J. Ballenger

Alright! Alright! I like this game. I recently wrote a review of the MS-DOS version and I begged the **LORD OF THE REALMS** for permission to review the Amiga version and contrast the two. I'll try to be impartial, but I wouldn't want to lie: I love Al Lowe's sense of humor.

I have always loved the Amiga for its excellent graphics, animation and sound capabilities. While all this is still true, the MS-DOS world has not been in a coma. VGA graphics are common and noticeably better than the 32 colors available in the Amiga's normal resolution. With one of the many sound boards available, an MS-DOS machine now has sound that equals that of the Amiga. Many of the Amiga's strengths are now being equalled or surpassed on the MS-DOS platform.

In a past issue, I reviewed *Leisure Suit Larry 3* for the Amiga. At that time, I complained that it was obviously an MS-DOS port, implying that such ported products did not utilize all of the Amiga's capabilities. Well, Sierra's much touted "new look" finally does justice to the Amiga. The mouse interface seemed to work better for me on the Amiga. The animation and sound are at last within the Amiga's capabilities (I actually had to slow the animation a bit on my machine, which is turbo charged with an 020 accelerator card). There is one area of animation the Amiga definitely handles much better than an MS-DOS machine — moving a whole screen between scenes. The movement crawls agonizingly with MS-DOS, but FLIES with the Amiga. The music is acceptable, but don't turn off your machine's high filter as there is a surprising number of "pops" and "clicks" distorting the sound track.

However, the area where the Amiga disappoints is graphics; although nicely rendered and dithered, the 32 color graphics just don't look as pretty as the VGA display. With a little more work at dithering and palette selection, there might be some room for improvement, but not much. Of course, I'd really like to see the Amiga's HAM mode utilized.

Until this point, I have always had reservations about Sierra's work on the Amiga. Although the adventures have been engaging, the poor use of the Amiga's capabilities have led me to caution buyers. I think it is time go for the gusto, as it were, since this Amiga version may finally be well worth the money. I gave the MS-DOS version of the game an overall score of 96. I'd give the Amiga version a 90, due primarily to the loss of quality in graphics. In all other ways, this is an Amiga winner. ER

Conversion Castle Adventure Summary

Adventure	Category	Publisher	System	Price	Score
Adventures of Willy Beamish	Animated	Dynamix	Amiga	\$59.95	90
Leisure Suit Larry 5	Animated	Sierra On-Line	Amiga	\$59.95	90



Taleteller's Sanctum

CAPSULE REVIEWS OF QUESTS FROM THE PAST AND PRESENT

Barbarian II

Reviewed by John E. Gray

Psygnosis is at it again. This time, cranking another "hack-'n'-slash extravaganza" (their words) out of the game mill. Once more, they've created a product that shows what the Amiga is capable of providing for arcade oriented gamers.

Barbarian II has everything you've come to expect from Psygnosis. The impressive title animation, wonderful audio and great looking screens are all present. It is, in fact, "the ultimate in loincloth entertainment" (their words, again). However, there is still the incredibly long disk access time, horrible copy protection and an almost five minute load time before one can play (though, your long wait is rewarded once you get the game loaded).

You, as Hegor the Barbarian, are out searching for your evil brother, Necron. Necron, you may recall, was defeated by Hegor in the original **Barbarian**. Unfortunately, he's back and now Hegor has his work cut out for him.

The game proceeds through a variety of domains: there's the forest where you begin your adventure, the Caves of No Hope, the Village of Thelston, the Castle, the Dungeon and finally Necron's Temple. Through all these areas, a fantastic and hilarious group of creatures are poised to attack. Marvelously animated, these creatures will amuse (and kill!) you. Of course, as you fight your way through, there is the standard issue potions, keys and weapons to collect.

While it breaks no new ground in the arcade adventure realm, **Barbarian II** is a fun way to waste some time in front of your computer. With great music, graphics and animations — once one gets past the obnoxiously long load time — **Barbarian II** just may deliver "the ultimate hack-'n'-slash loincloth extravaganza" (my words).

Conan the Cimmerian

Reviewed by Jeff James

Having read many of Robert E. Howard's books in my youth, I didn't expect to find anything unusual in Virgin Games' **Conan the Cimmerian**. What I did find was a superb adaptation of Howard's fantasy world of Hyborea to the computer medium, complete with an enjoyable action-adventure game which allows players to don the leather boots and wield the lethal sword of that land's greatest hero.

The game begins with the player assuming the role of vengeful Conan, whose village has been razed by the murderous hordes of Thoth Amon, high priest of the evil cult of Set. Starting with a vulture's eye-view of Hyborea, Conan can be moved about by way of joystick, mouse or keyboard. Once Conan has been maneuvered into a city or town, the action shifts to an isometric view showing Conan, individual buildings and any people (or beasties) nearby. Finally, the scene level shows a side-view of Conan, and is where most of the combat, conversation and clue-finding takes place.

The most impressive thing about **Conan** is its detailed VGA color graphics. The dusky streets of Shadizar are vividly crafted, imparting a sense of a weathered antiquity to

that ancient city. Conan himself is rendered as a brooding, thick-limbed giant that Howard would undoubtedly approve of. Music and sound effects (heard through an Ad Lib sound card) were also of excellent quality.

On the downside, you can only assume the role of Conan himself. Dialogue with non-player characters is rather sparse, while Conan's repertoire of fighting moves during combat is limited to chopping, swinging or thrusting — to my dismay, picking up your foes and tossing them about like rag dolls wasn't permitted.

With sumptuous graphics and exquisite music, **Conan** is a decidedly impressive audio-visual experience. Although the emphasis on arcade action and the limited character generation may annoy the serious role-player, **Conan** is nevertheless a must-buy for Conan fans.

[Editor: The Amiga version of **Conan**, which just arrived, exhibits an equivalent level of visual and audible quality to the PC compatible version, making the selection of one version over the other a mute point. Both are hard drive installable and employ manual-based copy protection.]

Corporation

Reviewed by Zach Meston

I originally reviewed the European Amiga version of this product back in **Issue 7**, and I'll tell you my major complaint about the game: the control system is just SO bad! It's a frustrating point-and-click arrangement that has you manipulate a small cross on a small square to walk and turn. Fortunately, the MS-DOS version of **Corporation** allows you to control your movements with the keyboard, which makes getting around in the game much easier. They've also improved the game in several other areas.

The plot concerns Universal Cybernetics Corporation, a massive firm that has been dabbling in genetic engineering. Unfortunately, a few of their genetic experiments have run amok and slaughtered innocent people. Your mission as an agent of ZODIAC, a top-secret organization, is to collect evidence of the UCC's evil-doings by infiltrating their multi-level headquarters.

The game uses a first-person viewpoint that combines light-shaded vector graphics (for the walls, ceiling and floors) with bitmapped graphics (for objects, enemies and other stuff). As you move around each floor of the building, you'll gather items, shoot robotic guards and avoid setting off the alarm system (which all but guarantees your death, and believe me, I've learned the hard way).

Both the graphics and the sound are quite good, and the MS-DOS version even has the great intro sequence of the Amiga version. The game installs easily to a hard drive, with no protection whatsoever, not even manual lookup. You'll want the manual close by, though, to figure out what you're bumping into as you play through the game.

This version of **Corporation** is very good. It is well worth a look for expert adventurers with an interest in science fiction and heavy-duty exploration.

[Editor: We received the U.S. release of **Corporation** for the Amiga shortly before going to press, but have found little changed from its European counterpart. Unlike the MS-DOS version, **Corporation** on the Amiga is NOT hard drive installable, nor does it support keyboard control of movement. It still uses the frustrating mouse-controlled system employed by its overseas equivalent. A disappointment at best.]

Elf

Reviewed by Rick Henly

In this arcade adventure from Ocean Software, you take on the persona of Cornelius, the Elf. Your goal is to rescue your girl friend, Elisa, who has been abducted by Necrilous.

During your journey to find Elisa and win the final battle with her captor, Necrilous the Not Very Nice, you have to fight your way through eight levels of great graphics, ranging from lush forests to Necrilous' castle. Along the way you collect pets and herbs that you can use to purchase potions which give you special powers or attributes. Shops are provided in various locations that allow you to trade these pets and herbs, in varying combinations, for special items to make your quest easier. There are also people or creatures you can communicate with while you wander the levels during your journey. Most of them, however, are not friendly and must be vanquished before your level of health dwindles to nothing. After disposing of your foes, bonus objects are sometimes left behind which can be collected for big points.

At the end of each level you fight a guardian that gives you a green crystal when defeated. These crystals are needed when you fight Necrilous in order to finish the game. Mapping levels is also a necessity (you can hit "P" on the keyboard to pause the game to aid in this process).

Elf is a two-disk side-scrolling platform adventure that has no on-disk copy protection. A reference card containing a list of potions, which serves as copy protection, must be used when the game is first booted. As an unusual, but nice touch for this type of product, seven games can be saved to disk during your quest, making Elf a game you can stop and then restart at any time. It requires at least 512K and a joystick.

The documentation is a little sparse and can result in some frustration the first few times you play. It's very intimidating having a lot of things coming at you at the same time just after you start a new game. Once you get past those frustrating times, though, Elf is a game that is hard to quit playing.

The Immortal

Reviewed by Chuck Miller

Nightmares still do come to life. In fact, you could say that, in this case, they have been "Immortal-ized." Back in **Issue 4**, I reviewed Will Harvey's **The Immortal** in its original Amiga release (refer there if you want a more detailed look at this game) where, as an apprentice wizard, you are called upon to rescue your mentor, Mordamir, trapped somewhere in the depth of a labyrinth. Not all that much has changed since then except that MS-DOS gamers can now get in on the frustration, too (arcade gamers will probably enjoy this game immensely and not agree with my opinion).

With the PC conversion of this action adventure comes most of the beauty and all of the headaches I encountered in the original. Graphics and audio are quite good, but don't match the quality portrayed in the Amiga version. Some of the detail has been lost in the beautiful 3D isometric graphics, and the sound is harsher, lacking the ethereal quality it had before. Still, those who have not played the original will probably find little to criticize here.

Combat sequences, however, have taken a turn for the worse, being removed from the labyrinth environment to a combat screen with a black background and hit point graphs. Accuracy and response leave much to be desired.

Another peeve I have with **The Immortal** includes the lack of a save game feature. You cannot save your progress during play, and especially before a dangerous encounter. When you complete a level, you are given a code, but you have to make it ALL the way through a level to exempt yourself from playing through those same sequences over and over again. Arcade gamers may like this kind of frustration. I, however, as an adventurer do not.

As before, I really wish I could give this game a hearty recommendation, but I can't. The graphics and sounds blend so well in creating a wonderful atmosphere. Yet, I find it just too frustrating to manage. Playability is its major weakness.

If joysticks are an important part of your life, you may indeed enjoy playing **The Immortal**. Otherwise, look elsewhere for your entertainment.

King's Quest I

Reviewed by Millie Miller

A long, long time ago in a land far away from the wintry chill of the midwest, there lived a fair young maiden whose name was Roberta. Now, Roberta had a fine husband, Ken, who slaved away creating proper business programs. This young man, seeing his bride toiling away her time, decided that she needed something more in her life...a computer...with games. Quickly becoming engrossed in this new-found form of entertainment, Roberta found herself transported into other realms, though seated in her own kitchen, and found herself battling dragons and searching through endless mazes in quests of untold glory. Soon, however, Roberta knew that there had to be more. And more there was. With the help of her gallant husband, she and Ken began weaving fantastic worlds full of beauty, magic and intrigue.

King's Quest I: Quest for the Crown, now available in an enhanced version for the Amiga, was the first in a series of fantasy adventures about the mystical land of Daventry. In this first **King's Quest**, King Edward and his Queen rule this fair land. But much to their sorrow, they remain childless with no heir to the throne. Then, after suffering great misfortune, including the death of his Queen, King Edward loses three of Daventry's most prized treasures — a mirror that foretells the future, a shield that protects the bearer from mortal wounds and a treasure chest that never runs dry of wealth.

Looking out over his land, the King discovers a young, honest knight named Sir Graham who he summons to the castle and beseeches for his help in recovering the three lost treasures. In return for his aid, Sir Graham will become the rightful heir to the crown of Daventry.

Sir Graham, of course, accepts the challenge. In his search, he comes across many obstacles and challenges. There are precarious cliffs, a ferocious wolf, a wicked witch, a fiery dragon, a beastly giant and more of which can all lead to a very quick demise. There are also many rewards to find, such as a golden egg and diamonds.

Although a much older game, it has been re-released for the Amiga with greatly enhanced graphics, music and sounds (though not up to the quality of **King's Quest V**). If you have never played a **King's Quest** game, or if you have played any of the sequels but not the original, by all means, go out and treat yourself to this game. For adventure weary travelers, it's a little touch of nostalgia. Oh, and by the way, Ken and Roberta are living happily ever after in that distant land of Sierra On-Line making many beautiful adventures together.

Leander

Reviewed by Chuck Miller

While growing up, a large part of my afternoon TV diet consisted of Astro Boy and Speed Racer, Japanese cartoons featuring large-eyed characters determined to battle evil in the world in whatever form it appeared. I also spent many Saturday afternoons watching Japanese monster movies with all their attendant costumed creatures. Somehow, **Leander** seems to have brought both of these Oriental entertainment elements together in an fantasy platform adventure.

While Princess Lucanna of Honshu is celebrating her 18th birthday, the evil Thanatos rises from his filthy pit of anguish proclaiming himself "Free, at Last!" All had been peaceful in the kingdom, until now. With the guests gone, and Lucanna resting quietly in the garden of Temple Kiromo, the decaying shadow of Thanatos looms overhead. Then, in a moment of intense panic, Lucanna is gone — the prisoner of Thanatos. As Leander, the Captain of the Guard who is also in love with the Princess, you must go forth and rescue her.

In this action adventure you must fight your way across three worlds, with numerous levels, becoming increasingly more deadly as you progress. To help in your quest, you will find many Shops where you can purchase better weapons and armor. I will tell you now — you need to get them as soon as possible. You will also have to replenish them as they lose their effectiveness as damaged in battle.

Graphics, music and sound effects are all top notch. Animation is smooth, as is screen scrolling, with only a few exceptions. However, you can't have music and sound together. It's an either/or situation.

To **Leander's** disadvantage, it uses disk-based copy protection and, as such, is not hard drive installable or easily copied for protection of the master disks. Documentation is adequate. There is, however, no save game provisions, except codes provided at the end of each world. To **Leander's** advantage, it does recognize multiple floppy drives, eliminating unnecessary disk swapping (**Leander** comes on three floppies). It also runs on 512K Amigas and recognizes and makes use of more memory if available.

Overall, I like **Leander** (much more, for some reason, than **The Immortal**). It's a very good platform game, and definitely up to the usual Psygnosis standards. However, my main criticisms of this product are really criticisms of arcade adventures in general. There is no reason that these should be treated any differently than other types of games. Hard drive installation and the ability to save one's progress should be incorporated. Life is frustrating enough without imposing additional frustrations to one's times of entertainment.

If you don't like side-scrolling shoot'em ups, stay clear. If you prefer some joystick action between more traditional adventures, **Leander** will provide some enjoyable hacking and slashing. It will certainly prove nostalgic to the baby boomers among us.

Millennium

Reviewed by Zach Meston

I thoroughly enjoyed **Millennium** from start to finish. The story line is simple. In the year 2200, Earth is struck by a huge meteorite wiping out all life. Your task, as the commander of a human colony on the Moon, is clear: to populate the solar system, and eventually to repopulate the Earth.

Gameplay is mostly strategic. You allocate resources to mine materials, construct space vehicles, and send defense systems into orbit. Defense systems? Yup. Once you start probing the solar system, you'll get threatening messages from

Martians! Eventually, the Martians will start attacking your bases and you'll have to defend yourself. The single arcade sequence in the game has you piloting a spacecraft against the Martian ships.

Millennium does become slow sometimes, especially when you start having to send ships and transport materials to the outer planets in the system. There is quite a bit of "hurry up and wait" toward the end of the game. Yet, the slowness of the gameplay is offset by the fascinating task of maintaining your bases and watching them grow.

Millennium is one of the few strategic adventures I've ever played to the end; most of them bore me silly. I think that fact alone speaks volumes for this game. There is a sequel, **Deuteros**, which has been released in Europe, and which will hopefully be brought to the States. It broadens the scope of **Millennium** considerably (from one solar system to an entire galaxy) and fixes the gameplay flaws (like the lack of things to do near the end). For now, check out **Millennium** and give it a try. You'll be hooked.

Murder!

Reviewed by C. Albert Scott

I remember spending many hours sitting around the dining room table as a child, dice in hand, listening to phrases that went something like "Colonel Mustard, with the pipe, in the ballroom." To most of you, this sounds familiar too. The game, of course, is **Clue** — the whodunit of boardgames. While **Clue** has already appeared as a computer game in several variations from public domain to commercial, it is inevitable that a **Clue** clone (of sorts) would eventually appear. In this case, it's called **Murder!**

Murder!, available from U.S. Gold for the Amiga and MS-DOS, is an imported strategy game from Europe designed to appeal to the sleuths among us. Each game has a two-hour time limit in which you must solve the murder that has just been committed, else the murderer escapes. These murders can be tailored somewhat by changing the variables of date, type of house and difficulty level, potentially offering about three million cases (though I don't know who would want to play this or any game anywhere near that many times).

Though I have seen several favorable reviews of this whodunit elsewhere, I really cannot offer one here. Overall, the game is only fair at best. Graphics are substandard, as is the use of music and sound. Granted, playability is much more important in a game of this nature. But, that doesn't mean it can't be made to look and sound more intriguing. In this regard, as well as others, the Amiga version is superior to the MS-DOS conversion (**Murder!** appeared first on the Amiga). The game's interface is icon and mouse driven. Workable, but lackluster in appearance. PC gamers with systems running faster than 10MHz will have to drop out of turbo mode to play **Murder!**, as it does not work properly with faster systems (sloppy programming, plain and simple). Documentation is nominal.

Gameplay is only fair at best, and quickly becomes boring. I believe that this is primarily because the game lacks the dynamic of the multi-sleuth interaction of playing a boardgame. Something that **Clue** captured so very well. Interaction with personality-void **Murder!** suspects is also very unsatisfying. There is just not enough game for the asking price of \$44.95 (\$29.95 would be more appropriate).

If you're a murder mystery aficionado, you may find **Murder!** a fair investment. If, however, you are looking for a challenging, atmospheric mystery adventure, give **Murder!** a wide berth. Else, you may just want to kill yourself for buying it — and that would be no mystery!

Shadow Sorcerer

Reviewed by Ken St. André

A hero's work is never done, it seems, especially on the dragon-infested world of Krynn. *Shadow Sorcerer* gives you the chance to join/be Tanis the Half Elf and his heroic companions as you guide 800 liberated slaves away from the Draconian stronghold of Pax Tharkas to a safe refuge somewhere to the south.

SSI has had TSR's *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons*® license for several years now, and they've produced a lot of different AD&D computer games. Most popular have been the Gold Box series, but the most innovative have been the wargames, arcade games, flight simulators and so forth set in the world of Krynn, first popularized in the fiction of Margaret Weiss and Tracy Hickman. *Shadow Sorcerer* is a new hybrid of game types — part role-playing game, part hex-grid wargame, part puzzle-solving adventure and part animated 3D isometric quest.

The story is simpler than most of the AD&D computer adventures — guide the refugees to safety, fight your way through a few monsters, explore a few dungeons and solve a few puzzles. It is definitely an entry-level game, a mere 990K of adventure. Although *Shadow* is a real-time game, you don't have to be an arcade master to triumph. Your characters will fight automatically at a single command from you.

Shadow Sorcerer has an interesting look to it. The main playing field is a map of the terrain south of Pax Tharkas, which has been divided into invisible hexes. Featureless gray with a few mountains showing, as you move through it the color changes to green and terrain features come into view (swamp, forest, rivers, hills).

Besides the large strategic map, there are lots of diamond-shaped tactical maps on which your characters appear as individuals. These maps are three-dimensional. You see the player and non-player (monster) characters from a 45 degree angle. Each character has a distinctive on-screen figure and also a portrait that occupies one corner of the monitor screen. Very well done, the portraits look exactly like the Dragonlance characters they are supposed to be.

Although designed to be played with mouse control on a fast machine, fortunately for me, *Shadow Sorcerer* can also be played using keyboard control on a slow old Tandy. A fast computer with a mouse would produce smooth animation for movement and combat that should be a joy to experience.

Play requires more than just hack and slash heroics. There are times when you must remember to communicate with the NPCs, especially the lame-brained refugees who are always ready to rebel and go off on their own. In truth, the diplomatic game may be more challenging and frustrating than the combat game.

There is much to like about *Shadow Sorcerer* and a few things (like the single voice musical score) to deplore. Though it lacks the pulse-pounding excitement of *Eye of the Beholder*, and the scope of *Champions of Krynn*, *Shadow Sorcerer* is still well done. The veteran adventurer will breeze right through it, but beginners will get an excellent introduction to both role-playing and wargaming in one package.

Space Ace II: Borf's Revenge

Reviewed by Rick Henly

Dexter is back again in this five-disk sequel to the animated sci-fi hit *Space Ace*, containing scenes from the original laserdisc arcade game and some new scenes as well.

In *Space Ace II*, the goons have brought Borf back by reversing the Infanto Ray and now he wants his revenge on

Space Ace. Twenty-seven scenes are provided in this interactive cartoon to run, jump and shoot your way through in order to rescue Kimberly. The graphics are good, the animation is clean — although very quick in some cases, and the digitized sounds really get you into the game.

Space Ace II requires 512K and a joystick on the Amiga, 640K on PC compatibles. Disk-based copy protection is employed for the Amiga version, so that it is not hard drive installable. The PC version, however, can be installed on a hard drive. [Editor: Come on, ReadySoft. The Amiga deserves hard drive support too!] The Amiga version would be a bit smoother having that option, but it is quite playable as is. There are a few instances, however, where the disk drive has to access additional information, causing the video to freeze for a few seconds, but sometimes you need a break to collect your thoughts and remember your next move.

Gameplay is all hand-eye coordination. Dexter/Ace has to react to a certain set of circumstances within a period of time. The longer you wait within that window of time before you make the correct move, the more points you'll receive for it. Don't wait too long, though. You only start with three lives.

A total of fifty-one moves is needed to win the game and there is only a screen that says "Congratulations You Win" at the end. I thought for the sequel there would be a little fanfare. Maybe for the next one.

Space Ace II: Borf's Revenge is another in the line of the *Dragon's Lair* genre. Anyone who enjoyed the arcade originals will find *Space Ace II* a fine addition to their software library. I recommend it. If you're into mapping, strategy and long hours in front of your computer, steer clear!

Timequest

Reviewed by Alfred C. & Amanda L. Giogetti

Time travel is one of the most intriguing science fiction topics today. There have been many books, short stories, movies, television shows and computer games on the subject. Since the hit *Future Wars*, which dealt with the subject in hauntingly beautiful computer background art, *Timequest* is the only commercial time travel computer game to be produced. In it Bob Bates has given us a fascinating and entertaining approach, adding to other classics in this genre.

As a private in the temporal corps in the year 2090 A.D., your job is to enter the future, by means of a time machine called the Interkron, in order to direct the outcome of history to avoid cataclysms that affect mankind. The temporal corps, however, considers travel into the past to be too dangerous to the continued existence of the current time line. Any small change could possibly switch history to an alternative line, preventing the birth of many of those now living.

In spite of this, renegade Lieutenant Zeke Vettenmyer has journeyed into the past in a stolen Interkron. Vettenmyer has changed the time stream in ten vital places, and has hidden himself in time. Your mission is to correct all ten changes in the time stream, find Vettenmyer and the Interkron, and return with them to the future.

Along the way, you get to meet Cleopatra, Hitler, Attila the Hun, Julius Caesar and many of the important figures from ancient history. You also travel to the six most important cities at nine times on three continents where history unfolded, including: 800 A.D. Baghdad, 1215 A.D. Peking and 1519 A.D. Mexico. In addition to meeting these figures in history, the game requires interaction with historical figures to correct the temporal distortions created by Vettenmyer. Many of the puzzles are easy to unravel; others, such as the apprehension of Vettenmeyer, are very difficult. The game will provide a challenge to the most demanding puzzle solver.

The interface uses the same interactive parser and graphic display as seen in *Spellcasting 101* and *201*. Two windows make up the virtually infinite inventory and the interactive verb list. The inventory of items available, combined with the verb list and a Microsoft compatible mouse, make using the parser easy, but with all the flavor and richness now missing in other mouse-controlled interfaces.

The right hand windows include the view of the local area or a map allowing for mouse controlled movement, and a text window where the story develops. Other windows allow for game controls and the interactive compass. Game functions include pause, save, load and quit. There are 128 save games, which should be more than adequate for the average (and not so average) game player.

Timequest's graphics and sound will not win any awards, but their use is quite good. The 256 color VGA palette is fully used in high quality graphic art. There is no animation, but the superb sound effects and musical score combine with the graphics to make a believable and enjoyable experience.

Timequest is one of a new generation of graphic/text adventures which combines the best of the old text adventure technology with the new sound and graphics capabilities. The puzzles are excellent; combined with other features, they make *Timequest* a good game for those who want less hack-and-slash and more adventure from their games.

Vengeance of Excalibur

Reviewed by C. Albert Scott

Back in *Issue 8* of *Enchanted Realms™* I reviewed Virgin's *Spirit of Excalibur*, an adventure with a high strategic element based upon the days following Arthur's death under the reign of Constantine. In *Vengeance of Excalibur*, the sequel to that product, little has changed save the plot, locale and goal of the game.

As the story unfolds, Constantine is under a spell. If that were not bad enough, the Court Sorceress, Nineve, and a large assortment of treasures have been whisked away by a shadowy demon. Four noble knights of the Round Table must now head across Europe in a desperate search for these stolen goods and, in the process, rescue and restore Nineve to her natural form (it seems she has been transformed into a bird). All this transpires in a series of seven episodes which

must be completed in order. The final episode concludes with the destruction of the evil Shadowmaster and recovery of the Holy Grail, needed to restore Constantine to his former self.

As mentioned before, little has changed since the previous game, at least in regards to the game's execution. Graphics are picturesque on both the Amiga and MS-DOS compatible. In fact, I was hard pressed to detect any noticeable difference between them. Both offer an excellent window on the world they portray. Audio quality is also very good on both systems. However, I must admit that I found the music in the Amiga version to possess a richer sound. Neither, though, will prove a disappointment in either of these regards.

While, *Vengeance* does offer a pleasing feast to the eyes and ears, it is not without its problems. Though the interface has been improved, I still find the map movement too unwieldy. It is all too easy to zip past the location where you want to be. Additional refinement is needed. I also experienced difficulties with installation on both systems. I could not get *Vengeance* to run once installed on an Amiga 3000, even though it claims to be 3000 compatible. It would not even run from floppies on that system. Whether booted from Workbench 1.3 or 2.0, it still refused to run. However, I was able to install and run it on an Amiga 2500. A call to Virgin (actually, several calls) determined that, in fact, it is NOT 3000 compatible. The MS-DOS version also proved a little flaky. When starting the game, it always hung on the introduction and required several key presses on the ESC key to free things up. Even then, I was not able to watch the prologue. Apparently, one of the needed files was missing from my set of disks (also confirmed by Virgin).

Aside from the above problems, *Vengeance* did operate smoothly once it was up and running. Not once did it falter from its medieval hoofbeat, or fail in its lush portrayal of post-Arthurian Spain.

On a final note, I must honestly issue a caution in relation to the purchase of *Vengeance of Excalibur*. If you derive your pleasure from puzzle-based adventures or games with a strong role-playing element, I recommend you avoid this adventure with a...vengeance. If, however, you enjoy a quest with a more strategic flair and/or like games based in history and legend, you may very well find *Vengeance of Excalibur* to your liking.

IER

Taleteller's Sanctum Adventure Summary

Adventure	Category	Publisher	System	Price	Score
Barbarian II	Action	Psygnosis	Amiga	\$49.99	80
Conan the Cimmerian	Action	Virgin Games	MS-DOS/Amiga	\$49.99	85
Corporation	Graphic	Virgin Games	MS-DOS/Amiga	\$49.99	83
Elf	Action	Ocean Software	Amiga	\$49.95	81
Immortal, The	Action	Electronic Arts	MS-DOS	\$39.95	68
King's Quest I	Animated	Sierra On-Line	Amiga	\$49.95	79
Leander	Action	Psygnosis	Amiga	\$49.99	89
Millennium	Strategic	Paragon Software	MS-DOS/Amiga	\$49.95	82
Murder!	Strategic	U.S. Gold	MS-DOS/Amiga	\$44.95	68
Shadow Sorcerer	Animated	SSI	MS-DOS	\$49.95	88
Space Ace II	Action	ReadySoft	MS-DOS/Amiga	\$59.95	85
Timequest	Graphic	Legend Entertainment	MS-DOS	\$59.95	86
Vengeance of Excalibur	Strategic	Virgin Games	MS-DOS/Amiga	\$49.99	79

Innkeeper's Timepiece

The Enchanted Realms™ 1991 Adventure Game Awards

Presented by The Editors



Enchanted Realms™ is greatly pleased to once again look in retrospect on the efforts expended by so many individuals and game manufacturers during the previous year, and to give due recognition for the numerous excellent adventures in which we have had the benefit of immersing ourselves. As such, it's our pleasure to present the **Enchanted Realms™ 1991 Adventure Game Awards**.

The categories for this year's awards are: **Adventure Game of the Year**, **Best Role-Playing Adventure (Multi-Character)**, **Best Role-Playing Adventure (Single-Character)**, **Best Graphic Adventure**, **Best Animated Adventure**, **Best Strategic Adventure** and **Best Action Adventure**. So, without further delay, we turn our attention to the winners.

Adventure Game of the Year **Monkey Island 2**

Of all the adventures released in 1991, one game stood out in our minds and hearts as a step above the rest — Lucasfilm Games' **Monkey Island 2: LeChuck's Revenge!** Graphically and audibly superior to the original, **Monkey Island 2** provides more adventure pleasure for the dollar than any other adventure released last year. The scanned graphics are beautiful; the music is rich and captivating; and the humor is simply at the top of its class. If we could only choose one adventure to play, **Monkey Island 2** would be our choice.

Best Role-Playing Adventure (Multi-Character)

Eye of the Beholder II

Eye of the Beholder II: The Legend of Darkmoon is our number one choice for the best multi-character role-playing adventure. The only other game that we felt came close in this category was **Might and Magic III**. **Eye II**, however, just has a more refined look and feel, is more playable and better conveys the sense of a real world experience.

Best Role-Playing Adventure (Single-Character)

Elvira® II

Accolade won an award last year from us for **Elvira®**. The sequel, **Elvira® II: The Jaws of Cerberus** steps in this year to claim the award for **Best Role-Playing Adventure (Single-Character)**. The unique design, edge-of-your-

seat gameplay and campy humor all combine to make this horror adventure a fun, yet challenging game to play.

Best Graphic Adventure **Heart of China**

The winning hand in the graphic adventure category for 1991 goes to Dynamix for their excellent adventure, **Heart of China**. Graphics and music have been blended together with a strong storyline to present an interactive adventure that excels in portraying the richness of the Orient and the life of the reckless, self-styled adventurer.

Best Animated Adventure **Conquests of the Longbow**

This was the most difficult category in which to select a winner. Other finalists included **The Adventures of Willy Beamish**, **Altered Destiny** and **Leisure Suit Larry 5**. The tip of the hat, however, goes to **Conquests of the Longbow: The Legend of Robin Hood**, both an excellent adventure and thoroughly enjoyable story.

Best Strategic Adventure **Populous II**

Populous II: Trials of the Olympian Gods is the walk-away winner of our strategic adventure category. All the intensity and addictive qualities of the original have been carried into this sequel. No other game came close to snatching the laurels away from **Populous II**.

Best Action Adventure **Out Of This World**

There were very few action adventures released in 1991 that really excelled in any way. The one exception is Interplay's year-end release, **Out Of This World**, that exhibits some of the most fluid and lifelike animation we've seen.

I must confess, this time it was more difficult to choose the winners, especially in the animated category. The overall quality of adventures released in 1991 was vastly superior to that of previous years. Yet, by the very nature of awards, only a choice few can win. It is our pleasure, therefore, to offer our sincere and heartfelt congratulations to each of the winners, and to all of those involved in their creation. ER

Dragomon's Journals

ADVENTURE WALKTHROUGH: Conquests of the Longbow

By C. F. Shaffer



Conquests of the Longbow, the latest animated adventure from Sierra, has great graphics. The backgrounds are, without a doubt, the best that they have ever produced. This walkthrough will step you through this lavish adventure in the day-by-day sequence in which it transpires. However, before beginning this adventure, those who do not like arcade sequences may shut them off by using the System Icon. All the way down, Easy Mode, is equivalent to auto-win.

There seems to be two or three sequences for each day depending on the actions performed by Robin and the decisions he makes. The following sequences seem to be the best of those available and result in a completed game with no loss in man-power. However, if you reduce the arcade action, the score will be somewhat less than the possible maximum score.

Day the First

Begin by collecting your Horn and Money, and leave the Cave. Talk to your men around the fire. If you are playing the arcade sequences, follow Will Scarlet and young Simon to the Archery Glade and take a few practice shots. It is two screens north of the Campsite. Next, use the Map Icon and go directly West of the Campsite to the overlook on Watling Road (if you end up on the road itself, go one screen to the east). A peasant girl will come down the road and be captured by one of the Sheriff's men. Click the Walk Cursor on the road below, then save her by shooting her captor with your Longbow. Next, go to the Widow's Home just south of the Campsite (via the Map), and speak with her and her three sons. You will need to visit her again on later dates.

Day the Second

You have a dream that night of Lady Marian and fall in love with her. She gives you a token, an Emerald in the shape of a half-heart, which you find in the morning. Upon awaking, head for the Outlook at Watling Road. Go down to the road, then one screen west. Now, head one screen south and immediately return north. There you will encounter a Monk attacking Lady Marian, shoot the Monk at once with your Bow. After Marian leaves, be sure to pick up her slipper. Then, blow your Horn for your men. When the conversation draws to a close, exit east.

Day the Third

Visit the Watling Overlook and you will find a beggar on the road. Click the Walk Cursor on the road and you will encounter him on the trail. You must obtain his clothing, so

offer him a Farthing (Quarter Penny). An animated sequence follows in which you acquire his clothes and your disguise. Next, visit Nottingham. Use the Map and click on the Cobbler's Sign. The door to your east is the Cobbler's Shop. You must give Lobb Marian's Slipper before he will talk to you. Afterwards, he will give you a Silver Comb, which you must give to Lady Marian. Exit his shop, select the Map and click outside Nottingham. Day Three will draw to a close.

Day the Fourth

Proceed to the Watling Street Overlook and head down to the road when you see the poacher who is being held by the Sheriff's man. Use your Longbow to shoot the poacher's captor and free him. Now, visit Marian in the Glade. You can click on the Map to the east of Nottingham (indicated by a willow tree) to go directly there. You must give her the Comb from Lobb. Marian will then ask you to retrieve a Scroll from the Fens Monastery.

Day the Fifth

Go to the Widow's to find out the news about her sons, then proceed to Watling Street Overlook. Wait for a Fen monk to appear (he will be dressed in black). Click the Longbow on him, but accept his challenge to the Quarterstaff. After defeating him, you will have his Clothes, Reed Whistle and Pouch of Gems.

Use the Map and click on the Fens Monastery southwest of Nottingham. Then, go down to the shore. Use the Whistle and a Fen monk will meet you in a boat. Use the Hand cursor on the boat to get in it. When you arrive at the Monastery, save the game. You now face some tough questions.

You must give the guard the Whistle and the Pouch of Gems. He will now pose several riddles about the Gems which you must answer correctly. They are random. So, you must study the question and pick the Gem that provides the best answer (found on pages 10-11 in the Longbow manual). If you guess an answer incorrectly, you will quickly be dispatched and have to restore. Be sure to save following each of the three riddles.

After entering the Monastery, you must first visit the Prior in the Refectory (at the Monastery's center). Then, go to the Northwest Tower and release Fulk, King Richard's Jester, from torture (click the Hand Cursor on the Ropes attached to the east wall). Now, proceed to the Scroll Room in the Southeast Tower where you will find the Prior. Click on his Goblet. When he leaves to change robes, take the Scroll on the table, then go to the scroll rack and get Marian's Hand Scroll. Also, there is a hint in another scroll that refers to a secret exit from this Monastery. You need to click on each of the scrolls to find what you require.

Return to Fulk in the Northwest Tower and give him his Scroll. He will show you a secret way out. Make sure, however, to save the game before entering the boat.

Now, click on the Hand Cursor to step Robin into the boat. Move the boat over to the Iron Grate. You must click on three of the Gargoyles in just the right order for the gate to open. Counting from the left, click on Gargoyles One, Five and Three in that order. When safely on shore, Fulk will give you his Scroll and a Ring. Day Five now draws to a close.

Day the Sixth

Start by visiting the Widow to learn of her children. After that, go to the Watling Road Overlook and wait until an Abbey Monk (wearing a brown robe) comes along. Walk down to the road and click the Hand Cursor on him. You will now have the disguise you need.

Next, click on the Map and go to St. Mary's Abbey. Enter the Laundry Room and take Three Robes you find hanging there. Then, enter the Chapel and use the left door to enter the Garden Maze. You will need to access the Secret Door at the far end of the Maze later. So, be prepared and check it out now. Go north to the first jog in the path then east, north, east, north, east, north, west, north, east, south, east, north, west and north out the door.

After you know the way out of the Maze, return to the Chapel and proceed to the Refectory (in the southwest corner of the Abbey) where you will meet the Abbot. Talk to him. Then, take his empty Ale Cask to the Pub to have it filled (click on it with the Hand Cursor).

When you arrive, use the empty Cask on the Pub Owner and he will exchange it for a full one. Now, click the Hand Cursor on the empty stool by the table in the lower right corner to play Nine Men's Morris with the old man. There is no easy way to win this game within a game. You will simply have to use your skills of logic until you succeed. Doing so will earn you the Amethyst.

When you have claimed your prize, take the Cask to the Abbot. Put the Amethyst in your Mug as quickly as you can (use the Amethyst on the Mug). Once you have drunk the Abbot under the table, take his Purse and go to his room. Take the Puzzle Box from under one of the pillows.

Now, return to the Pub and give the Pub Owner the empty Cask. Then, pay the Abbot's bill. Leave the Pub through the Iron Door at the back of the room by clicking the Hand Cursor on it. Next, click the Hand Cursor on the Spigot on the second Ale Cask from the left along the eastern wall. A secret passage will open.

Enter the tunnel and go to the left (the right passage leads to the Abbey). At the Secret Door to the guards' room, click the Eye Cursor on the hole in the door. Move the arcade lever to the bottom at this point and save the game. After you see the guards leave, quickly enter and put Four Pennies on the table. Exit the room. When the guards leave to buy ale, enter the room again and click the Hand Cursor on the Trap Door. Next, use the Robes on the Trap Door. After the rescue animation is over, you will find yourself and the widow's three boys back out in the tunnel.

Now, enter the Pub (not the Abbey) where you will find the Sheriff. When he asks for a blessing, click the Talk Cursor on him. The balance of this day is carried out by the program.

Day the Seventh

Visit Marian in the Willow Grove and give her the Scroll from the Fen Monastery. Marian will explain the Druid Hand Signals and give you another task to perform, advising you to

visit the Green Man of the ancient Oak and solve the riddles he poses. Before leaving, give Marian the Emerald shaped like a half-heart.

To visit the Green Man use the Map and click on the Ancient Oak west of Watling Street. Then, go west one screen and use the Net the Widow gave you to catch the Pixie. You must cast the Net quite a distance in front of the Pixie to capture him. He will not grant your wish, but he will introduce you to the Green Man. Save your position. You must now answer three riddles. The answers are as follows:

For "I am the heart..." Answer - WOOD

For "High born, my touch..." Answer - SNOW

For "I am the outstretched fingers..." Answer - FEATHER

For "Golden treasure I contain..." Answer - BEEHIVE

For "My first master has four legs..." Answer - FUR

For "Metal or bone I may be..." Answer - COMB

For "Not born but from a mothers body drawn..."

Answer - CHEESE

For "I am two faced but bear only one..." Answer - COIN

For "I am a window..." Answer - EYE

You must answer these riddles using the Hand Signals shown by Marian. After this, if you want to hide, go to the Green Man Tree and spell out "DUIR" with the Hand Signal.

Day the Eighth

Go to the Overlook and down to Watling Street when you see the Yeoman. Click on the Coins in your inventory and then on him. You will have a perfect disguise for the Tournament. Next, go to the fair by clicking on the Map. Walk up and down the fair until you find the Scholar. You will then ask him to see the Coat of Arms of the Christian Britaines. As soon as it is shown to you, give him the Scroll from Lady Marian. He will offer you some Coins. Take them.

Now, go to the Archery Tournament and enter it for One Penny. If you have the arcade setting at the bottom (turned off), click your Arrow Cursor on the target and you will collect the Golden Arrow from the Sheriff. Otherwise, you will actually need to shoot to win it. (Drawing additional arrows from your quiver is accomplished by clicking the Arrow Cursor at the bottom center of the screen on your arm — a poorly documented feature.) Thus concludes Day Eight.

Day the Ninth

You must escape the Sheriff's men by going to the Green Man and receiving his assistance. Go to the Ancient Oak by using the Map. Then, move two screens away. You will hear the Sheriff's men approaching. Return quickly to the Oak and click the Hand Cursor on yourself. Now, use the Hand Signals to spell out Oak in Druid — "DUIR." You will be turned into an Oak Tree.

Go to the Overlook and wait for an encounter with a Jeweler. There are a number of ways to proceed from here: let the Jeweler go on his way, give him the Heart-shaped Emerald for his clothing (in which case Marian will die later) or, preferably, click the Hand Cursor on the Jeweler twice. This way you'll get his clothing and he will depart happy.

However, if you go to the Sheriff's wife as the Jeweler, she will recognize you as Puck and you will be killed. Instead, return to your cave and use the Yeoman disguise. Then, use the Map and click on the Castle. At the entrance, you can bribe the guard with Three Farthings or keep talking until he admits you to the Sheriff. Then, talk to the Sheriff and the

action will unfold. However, you can always wager him money if he doesn't want to come. After you have finished with the Sheriff, Marian will visit the camp and the day will conclude.

Day the Tenth

At this point, you must open the Puzzle Box taken from the Abbot's Room. To do so, first open Fulk's Scroll by clicking the Hand Cursor on it, then read it by means of the Eye Cursor. You use the First Letter of each tree's name as the code to open the box (this code is random with each game). Inside you find the Ring of Fire.

After receiving word that Marian is to be burnt as a Witch, you must rescue her. Blow your Horn and assemble your men. Upon hearing their advice, select John's Subterfuge Plan, it will work successfully.

Go to the Pub and talk the Owner into allowing you to use the back room. This time, go to the right and follow the passage until it emerges in the Abbot's Room. Head to the left door in the Chapel and enter the Maze. Click the Ring of Fire on yourself and follow the path in the Maze to the Secret Door. If you arrive in time, you will successfully rescue Marian and end up at the Willow Grove. You must now heal her by using the Emerald Heart on her. Marian will then give you the Password for the Queen's Knight (this word is also random). If you are too late and Marian is dead (shame on you!), go to the Willow Grove and use the hand signal for Willow in Druid "SAILLE" to get the Password.

Day the Eleventh

When you hear that the Treasure Train is coming into Sherwood Forest, call your men and get their ideas. Employ Tuck's, for it will work very well. Using the element of surprise, you will acquire the entire Treasure and lose no men.

Day the Twelfth

The Sheriff's Men again sweep the Forest. Once more, you must seek the protection of the Green Man. Do just as you did before. After you are released, return to Watling Overlook where a Knight is being held by your men. After your men leave, give him the Password from Marian. If after two attempts, he does not answer use your Longbow on him. Then, search the body for clues. Blow your Horn to call Little John and exit the screen.

Day the Thirteenth

You must save the Queen's Knight from Fens Monastery. Use the Map to get there. Then, remove the Ring of Fire and wear the Ring of Water. When the Will-o-th'Wisps appear use the Talk Icon on them. They will guide you to the Monastery and the Tower where the Queen's Knight is held.

You must climb the Vines to rescue the Knight. Click the Hand Cursor on yourself and spell the Druid for Ivy, "GORT." The Ivy will double in strength and you will be able to climb to the window near the top. Give the Knight the Password (spell it in Druid on your hand) and he will follow you. If you have the arcade setting active, you will now have to dodge rocks that are being dropped from the tower above. As soon as you reach land, you are safe. The Queen's Knight will take the Ransom to the Queen.

At this point, you are captured and held for trial, your fate to be determined by King Richard. If you carefully followed the walkthrough above, the program is now carried on automatically to a full and satisfying conclusion. ER

WALKTHROUGH: SIERRA ON-LINE'S King's Quest V

By Marci Rogers

Sierra's *King's Quest V* marks the return of King Graham as the official adventurer of Daventry, and also marks the introduction of Sierra's new "iconized" interface, which eliminates typing and simplifies game commands. Therefore, using this walkthrough should be simple, as the game is very linear, and much more a cinematic experience rather than a graphic adventure, with the interactive sections interspersed with a number a "just-sit-and-watch" sequences.

Because of these innovations, this adventure can provide success for a first-time player, and is highly suited to beginners. By the same token, there isn't a whole lot to do, and only one method for doing it, so that almost all puzzles can be solved by trial and error "icon clicking."

Character interaction is kept to a minimum, and only two sections need mapping. I've included the compass directions for those. If you have a child who is intrigued by these games, but is beyond *Mixed-Up Mother Goose* age, he or she should be thrilled to rescue Graham's family with you.

Stage One: The Owl, the Witch, and Your Wardrobe

You will need to watch this opening sequence once to establish the plot and meet Cedric and Crispin. Crispin will also feed you the whitesnake and give you his Wand as well as Cedric to accompany you.

You can experiment as you wish outside Cedric's House. There's nothing there, but it does afford a chance to practice with the icons. When you're ready, go south, avoid the Snake and take the path west. Talk to the Prince, then head south around the Bakeshop and east into town.

You can only talk to a few characters here, as the rest will ignore you. Make a point to talk to the man fixing his cart, and look in the barrel near him. Take the Fish you find and leave town. Turn around immediately and walk back in. (No, I'm not kidding, you need to trigger the cart owner's disappearance.) You will find a Coin on the ground where the cart owner was. Pick it up, then enter the Tailor's Shop.

Look at the Cloak. The Tailor will come over. Talk to him, and he'll tell you about the Golden Needle. Leave and go east to the Toyshop. Look at the Sled, then talk to the Toymaker. Exit his shop and go to the Shoemaker's on the east end. Pet the dog, and talk to the Shoemaker. Leave town.

Go to the Bakeshop and buy a Pie. Notice the cat as it will be important later. Go west again, but DO NOT enter the Inn or it's all over for Graham. (Don't bother with the Haystack; YOU can't find anything in it, hint, hint.) Save the game.

One more west will find you at the bear. Stop as soon as you enter. If you get close, the bear will eat you. Throw the Fish, then wait for the sequence with Queen Beatrice. After that's finished, get the Stick, walk to the hole in the tree and get the Honeycomb.

Walk north and throw the Stick at the dog. Watch the sequence with King Antony. Continue north to the Gypsy Camp and talk to the Gypsy at Madame Mushka's wagon. Go east once and talk to the Weeping Willow.

Exploring Serenia further will only get you into trouble, as you need some things from the desert. Return to the Gypsy Camp and enter by going west, but SAVE before you do. You can die of thirst or be poisoned by scorpions if you misstep, so follow these instructions closely.

Go west four times, then south twice. Drink. West three, north two, SAVE! North, drink, hide behind tree, making sure no part of you shows. Wait for the bandits to finish, then go south four, west two and drink. Continue west one, then three south into the Bandit Camp. Save, then drink from the jar.

Don't get close to the big tent, but enter the small tent — carefully. If the bandits notice you, or the sleeping one wakes, you're dead. Stay to the right, quickly get the Staff at the back of the tent and leave. (It's a timed sequence, so when I say quickly, I mean it.)

Escape from the camp by going east four and north one. Drink. Go north two more and take the Boot near the skeleton. Go east two, north one and drink.

Head west three and north three to return to the Temple. Drink and SAVE. Another timed sequence is coming up. Walk to the Temple Door and use the Staff. Now move fast, as you have only one try at this. Take the Coin on the ground and the large Brass Bottle. (Getting the Coin may require some practice, so aren't you glad you saved?) Leave the rest and get out. Don't even look at anything else — GET OUT! And don't open that Bottle unless you save again!

Grab a drink, then head south three, east three and drink again. Leave the desert by heading straight east five screens to the bee tree. You can now go two north and give the Coin to the Gypsy Man. Enter the wagon and listen to Madame Mushka. Don't forget to put on the Amulet when the animated sequence finishes. Graham must be wearing it to be protected.

Go east past the Weeping Willow and north past the warning sign. Take the northeast path into the forest. Keep heading north, noticing the tree with the Tiny Door. You'll come to the front of the Witch's House. If she hasn't shown up already, she will now. When the Witch appears, she'll be unable to hurt you due to the Amulet. Talk to her and give her the Bottle. Oops, she opened it, and she didn't save. Well, I can see we'll never make a good adventurer out of her.

Enter the Witch's House, open the Trunk and get the Spinning Wheel. Examine the incense burner hanging from the ceiling. Get the Key hidden there. Open the drawer in the tree trunk table and get the Bag. Open it and you'll have Three Emeralds.

Leave the Witch's House and go south to the tree with the Tiny Door. Open it with the Small Key and take the Heart. Proceed south one more, then go west twice. Don't look now, but the elves are watching you.

Go north one and you'll be in a clearing. (This is part of the Endless Forest loop which you are about to break.) Squeeze the Honeycomb onto the ground at your feet. Now throw an Emerald and watch the Elf run out for it. Repeat this and he'll get closer. Drop the third Emerald into the Honey, which you haven't been able to do until now — no hoarding of ill-gotten gems in this adventure! You will be able to capture the Elf that comes to get it. We'll call him Treaclefoot.

Talk to Treaclefoot, then let him go, and the elves' strange pet will create an exit for you on the west side. Take the exit and follow the Elf into the tunnel for yet another animated sequence. During this sequence, Graham will get the Fine Shoes and be put into a tunnel that leads out to the warning sign. Don't bother returning. The elves have vacated their blown cover quicker than you can say "leprechaun," and you have a chance of falling to your death in the chasm.

Head west and return the Willow's Heart. Watch what happens, then pick up the Harp and return west to the Gypsy Camp. Madame Mushka's gone also, but she left you a Tambourine. What a nice gift; take it. (No, you couldn't have returned before. The Gypsies don't leave until you've gotten rid of the Witch.)

Go south, then east one to the Gnome Home. If the Gnome and his grandson aren't there, leave and return when they are. Talk to the Gnome and give him the Spinning Wheel. Gee, you knew he looked familiar, but he's aged. Then again, so have you. Take the Marionette.

Walk south once more and search the Haystack. Yes, I know I told you not to do that, but this time you'll have help and they CAN find what you need, or is that Needle? You must still not enter the Inn. Go east to the Bakeshop, but SAVE THE GAME before you do. A vital action will occur here when you enter with the Boot, and it only happens once. Blow it and you can't win the game. So SAVE, Graham, SAVE! As you walk across in front of the Bakeshop, a cat will run in chasing a rat. Immediately throw the Boot at the cat. Nice move. Head for town.

Give the Golden Needle to the Tailor in exchange for the Cloak, then go to the Toyshop and use the Marionette to get the Sled. Now it's on to the Shoemaker where the pair of Fine Shoes nets you the Hammer. Take all your goodies and proceed to the Inn. Enter and talk to any of the men. You will be attacked and imprisoned. Don't worry, you need to have this happen, and you always were a klutz.

The rat you saved will now arrive to gnaw through the ropes. Take the Rope, walk up the stairs and hit the locked door with the Hammer. Go through the door to the kitchen, open the Cupboard and get the Leg of Lamb. Leave by exiting west. A second trip east into the bar will only get you killed.

Head north once, then east twice to the Snake. Save as soon as you reach the screen just in case you get bitten. Now shake the Tambourine. Yes, I know the Snake is deaf, you know the Snake is deaf, but this Tambourine vibrates like you wouldn't believe — or maybe the SNAKE doesn't know the Snake is deaf. At any rate, it will slither away, leaving the east path clear. Put on your nice warm Cloak if you're going out into the cold, dear, and head east.

Stage Two: Across the Not-So-Great Divides

You are now in the mountains, where another screen east will bring you to the waterfall and the washout. Messages may appear here telling you that you're getting hungry, but don't eat just yet. Instead, use the Rope on the Overhanging Rock, NOT the branch, and climb up to the higher path where you will find the Log and the rock ledges. SAVE. In order to cross, you must jump from ledge to ledge to get to the Log. The ledges at the top will all hold you, but the three lower ones are tricky. Avoid the middle. It never holds. The far left will, but only half the time, and the right won't hold unless Cedric is with you, which means, in case you haven't noticed, that you can't go back in certain places. Anyway, jump up and go across on the higher ledges, then down to the far right one and on to solid ground.

Now, eat the Leg of Lamb, but only half of it, and don't eat the Pie! SAVE, then cross the Log carefully and continue east. Cedric will be kidnapped by a wolf as soon as you arrive. Don't worry; you'll save him later. Walk near to the center of the path. Don't start down or you'll fall. Use the Sled instead, and you'll automatically ride to safety. Of course, you can't go back, but what else is new?

Ignore the ice bridge, which leads to death, and go east. Feed the leftover Lamb, not the Pie, to the hungry eagle you meet. Save. Now go north and let the wolves get you.

The next sequence appears to be another animation, but you do have to do one thing. As soon as Icebella orders her wolves to take you away, you regain icon control long enough to use the Harp. Awww, music sootheth, er, melteth, the

savage breast. The animation will pick up again, leaving you near a cave with the head wolf. Talk to him and then go to the cave. Save and enter.

The Yeti will charge at you from the east. He's nasty and fatal, so don't waste time talking. Hit him with the Custard Pie. Yes, in the face, just like the Three Stooges, only your stooge (Graham) means business. Don't leave just yet. Search the cave to the north until you find the "Brilliant" Crystal. Use your Hammer to get it, then return to the wolf for yet another animation.

Well, at least Cedric's safe and you're past Icebella. Save, then go south. The next path is slippery, so climb carefully to the east until the Roc swoops down and carries you off. In the nest, you must swiftly find and get the Locket before the eagle rescues you. This is timed, so restore it if it doesn't work. Then just relax, as the well-fed eagle carries you to safety.

Section Three: Life's a Beach

Follow the path down and pick up the Iron Bar at the bottom. Don't try to swim in the ocean. Graham's forgotten how. Go south to the Hermit's Hut and ring the bell. Talk to the Hermit when he appears.

Now, head north two screens and stand close enough to the Boat to look in. Plug the hole you find with the Beeswax, then get in the Boat. Avoid the rocks by going east one, then south one, then straight east until you reach Harpies' Island. Save. Sail into the bay, where you will be attacked and kidnaped for another animated sequence. As soon as you get the large view of the clearing, you will be in control. Play the Harp; after all, if it worked once....

The Harpies are a quarrelsome lot, aren't they, but at least it isn't over you this time. Don't get too close to the edges, but search the clearing until you find the Fishhook. Now, go west and talk to poor wounded Cedric. Pick up your little friend and carry him west to the Boat. Get the Conch Shell lying on the beach, then sail west until you reach the Hermit's House. Ring the bell, then use the Conch Shell so he can hear you. Another animation will occur, and at the end you will be shipwrecked on Mordack's Island.

Section Four: I Hear He Is a Wiz of a Wiz

I shouldn't have to tell you that you want that Dead Fish. You already know how handy they are. Now save and walk up to the Snaky Dragon Statues, but not between them, or you'll get zapped. Hold up the Crystal to zap them instead, then head straight for the Castle. Watch your step.

When you reach the area near the gate, open the grating with the Iron Bar and climb down into the Wizard's Maze. There is a creature in here named Dink that you must meet. He can be in one of four locations, which the program randomly sets when you climb in. This Maze is also deceiving because the top of the screen is Graham's view of what's directly in front of him, and not necessarily north. However, it is north when you first descend, so do this before you move: Draw an eight by eight grid, just like a chessboard. (In fact, you can use a chess/checker board if you wish and mark locations with the pieces.) Label the vertical squares A through H on the south to north axis, and the horizontal squares 1 through 8 on the west to east axis. Now mapping should be easy. Graham arrives at D-3. Dink can appear at B-1, H-3, A-8 or H-8. The exit door is at H-5, but you must find Dink first or you cannot leave.

As soon as you encounter Dink, play the Tambourine. It's good for your health! Take the Hairpin and go to the exit.

Pick the lock with the Hairpin and enter the pantry. Open the Cupboard and take the Bag of Peas. Go north to the kitchen.

From this point on, you must avoid the cat, who is Manannan, until you are ready to catch him. If you don't Mordack will arrive and kill you, so save often while exploring. Also, do NOT play the organ! You're breaking in, remember.

Talk to Cassima in the kitchen and give her the Locket. This sets off another animation, and you should talk to her again when it's finished. Go east, ignoring the organ, then east to the dining room, south and then west.

Don't go upstairs yet. Beware the cat, but travel these three rooms until Mordack's Henchman catches you. Yes, you want him to get you, but only once. You will be taken to a cell where you can use the Fishhook to get the Cheese. Do this quickly before Cassima shows up to rescue you. Follow her out and return to the entry by the stairs. (In case you lose Cassima for some reason, the cell is at C-8.)

Start looping again, but this time throw the Peas as soon as the Henchman appears. This will knock him out for a brief time, and you now have an Empty Bag. SAVE here just in case, then hunt down the cat and throw the Dead Fish. Use the Bag while he's eating and he's out of the way for good! (As a side note here, you can win the game without catching the cat or knocking out the Henchman, but your score will suffer. Besides, even though the Henchman won't follow you up the stairs, Manannan will and he can be a real pain when you're dealing with Mordack, so it's best to bag him.)

Climb the stairs and SAVE. Go west to Mordack's bedroom. If he's there, back out immediately and return when he's gone. The in-and-out-at-the-edge-of-the-screen works well here. When the bedroom's empty, walk quickly south to the library. Open the Large Book and read it. Stop reading, but wait in the library until Mordack enters the bedroom and goes to sleep. SAVE the game and go get Mordack's Wand, then leave the bedroom and head east to the laboratory.

You have about two minutes before Mordack wakes, so be efficient. Examine the Bottle with the Castle, then go to the Transfer Machine and put Mordack's Wand on the left scale. Put Crispin's Wand on the right scale and throw the Cheese into the Machine's fuel chamber. Grab Crispin's Wand as soon as it's charged. Mordack will appear instantly and attack.

Cedric will now save Graham in a short animation. When the control returns to you, Mordack will transform into various forms which you must conquer. Use Crispin's Wand for each. Fight the Stinging Insect with the Tiger, the Dragon with the Rabbit, the Cobra with the Mongoose (the old Rikki-Tikki-Tavi spell), and finally the Fire with the Rain.

The Rain Spell will destroy Mordack, and his magic is well. You have rescued your family and won the game. Sit back and enjoy the end sequence, then take the wife and kids out for dinner. After all, it's been a hard day! ER

NOTE: **Dragomon's Journals** is the place to submit your original adventure walkthroughs. All walkthroughs should be approved by **Dragomon** prior to submission. Simply contact us to verify interest in the walkthrough you would like to write and submit. If your walkthrough is published by **Enchanted Realms™**, you'll receive three complimentary issues added to your subscription. For approval and submissions of adventure walkthroughs, contact Digital Expressions • P.O. Box 33656 • Cleveland, OH 44133 • Attention: **Dragomon's Journals** or call us at (216) 582-0910 from 9:00 - 5:00 Eastern Standard Time. Please do not submit walkthroughs to **Enchanted Realms™** that you have submitted to any other publication.



'Starr Light

HELPS BROUGHT TO LIGHT FROM THE RUNES OF ESTARRA

Adventures of Willy Beamish

Here's some help with a few of the puzzles Willy faces in his hometown of Frumpton.

Alicia the Bat: Walk to the bathroom and get the Hairspray. Use it to zap the Bat. Go to Brianna's bedroom and get the Mouse from Mr. Snickers. Next, head for the living room. Then, drop the Mouse on the coffee table and hide behind the sofa. Suck up the Bat with the Vacuum.

Humpford Mansion: Take the Goblet and Cloth from the table. Drop the Cloth in front of the Suit of Armor, at the feet. Take the Helmet and Map. Then, go to the kitchen. Throw the Goblet at the cook and go behind the counter. Get the Skillet and pour Melted Butter from Skillet on the floor behind the cook. Now, move the barrel and exit. Jump onto the conveyor, put the Helmet on the cook and push the Stop Button. Exit.

Frog Jump Contest: Put the Jar of Bugs onto the table next to Turbo. Be sure to wait until the Red Indicator is near the top for the maximum jump. You **MUST** win 1st Place to complete the game.

Guard: Put the Key on the Chain (trade the Diary with your sister for the Key). Put Chain with Key on the Guard. Pick sentence with "Agamemnon" in it. Exit.

Plumber's Union: On Day four, enter through the window. Take the Plunger and throw it at Louis Stool's face. Now, take the Security Pass on his desk. Exit.

Golden Bowl Bar: Get the Recorder from the jet-ski and go to the phone booth outside of the Plumber's Union. Put the phone receiver on the Recorder and turn the Recorder on. Dial the Astrologer (432-7446) and record the conversation. Stop the Recorder and rewind it. Now, call the Golden Bowl and ask for Ray. Put the phone receiver on the Recorder again and play the taped message. Next, head for the Golden Bowl, then give the Lottery Ticket to the bartender and get the Calendar off the bar.

Humpford Sludge Works: Show the Calendar to the strikers, then show the Pass to the Guard. Examine the Map and note the color sequence on it. Head for the controls and open the box. Turn on the control panel, enter the correct color sequence and throw the lever to the left at the proper moment.

Fred J. Philipp

Battle Isle

Although **Battle Isle** is a deceptively simple game to play, mastering the more difficult scenarios can take quite a bit of effort. The **Battle Isle** manual has some excellent strategic pointers, so I definitely recommend thoroughly reading both it and the **Armed Forces Manual**, which contains detailed information on each of the combat units in the game. Here are some other general strategies I've found that work well.

In the last few levels, use your amphibious landing vehicles to ferry equipment from your transport ships to the beach-head. Although transport ships can move next to land to unload their cargo, they can get trapped by enemy units much more easily than the smaller landing vehicles can.

When building units, I've found that three types are especially effective. The Raven (a ground-attack jet), the Crusader (the battle tank) and the Buster (the fast recon vehicle) are my three favorite units. The Raven and the Crusader are extremely versatile, being able to attack and defend themselves from threats from the land, sea and air while sustaining heavy damage. Although lightly armored, the Buster offers the same versatility coupled with longer firing range and movement.

Finally, what follows below is a listing of all of the five-letter access codes for each of the one-player map levels.

Level 1: Phase	Level 9: Space
Level 2: Exoty	Level 10: Valey
Level 3: Mount	Level 11: Testy
Level 4: Fight	Level 12: Terra
Level 5: Rusty	Level 13: Slave
Level 6: Fifth	Level 14: Never
Level 7: Vesuv	Level 15: River
Level 8: Magic	

In addition, **Battle Isle** has two secret maps available. The codes for these two maps are revealed once you've defeated the last one-player level. These codes are Storm, which is a staggeringly large recreation of Operation Desert Storm, and Europ, which appears to be a recreation of World War II on the European continent.

Jeff James

Conan the Cimmerian

As many players of Virgin Games' **Conan the Cimmerian** are aware, staying alive in Robert E. Howard's fantasy world of Hyborea is no simple task. Surely, the iron-thewed Conan has it easier than most Hyborean adventurers, yet even he occasionally needs a helpful nudge in the right direction.

Many **Conan** players have had a tough time getting enough money to buy the necessary equipment, training and information that Conan needs to adventure beyond the walls of Shadizar. After you've spoken to Taurus, found master Quan Yo and mapped a good portion of the city (see **'Starr Light** in **Issue 9** for hints in this area), several locations in Shadizar will offer monetarily lucrative mini-quests for Conan to complete.

Crom's high priest (see Shadizar map for temple location) will give Conan 1000 bezants for recovering the Gem of Sight, located in the Merchant's Quarter in the southwest corner of Shadizar. The Temple of Ishtar will pay a similar amount for the recovery of a piece of jewelry found in the chamber at the top of the Temple of Set. However, to retrieve this bauble you must have two Teleport Spells in your possession: one to reach the chamber and another to return once you've retrieved the item. Finally, the priests at the Temple of Adonis (northwest of Damballah's Temple) will give you a Map to help you recover their Staff of Power, found in the sewers beneath the streets of Shadizar. Upon its return to them, you'll be rewarded handsomely.

Although none of these quests are required for the successful completion of the game, they prepare you well for the more difficult encounters to come. With the funds gained from completing these tasks, you should be able to afford the training and equipment needed to tackle the tougher parts of the Shadizar sewer system and the even more deadly obstacles which await beyond the city gates. **Jeff James**

Death Knights of Krynn

Here are a few hints for Dave's Challenge in **Death Knights of Krynn** (Amiga version). The real Necklace is in the middle of the Maze. Follow the path around to the top of the Maze where the Temple is located. Go south through the Secret Door. There is a pit here. Climb down into it (one of my characters was killed by the noise there) and get the real Necklace. In the Temple you will have to fight several Death Knights, Spectral Dragons and Spellcasting Vampires. All I could find besides the Necklace was some treasure and a couple of magic items. **Chris Garnett**

Dask of the Gods

In selecting your character, try to get as many gods on your side as possible, but go heavy on the warrior side. Seek out the battles in the selection area and engage in them when possible. Spend at least two years of being a Sage, two years with Freya and two years with the God of Thunder.

Start by talking to everyone in Asgard. Set up the program to print out all conversation so you can refer back to it later at your leisure.

Practice your fighting as much as possible and build your warrior strength. But first, make your way south of the walled section of the inner city to Inghen who will give you some supplies. Next, go north and west to the Bif-Rost Bridge, then north on a projection out into the void where you will find the Three Fates. Pay good heed to their words for only you can change the outcome. They will give you a Helm, Shield and a Battle Axe.

Go north outside the main gate if you are hurt to the Lady Eil. She will heal you. Nearby is Bjort, who will extend the life of your torches, and Hlif, who can bless and protect you for a while.

As you talk to all the above characters, there are some key words to remember. Footfall is directed to Freya. Also, be sure to pick up the Chest in her room. You will need its contents to increase your strength when paying homage to the gods. You will also find a similar Chest with her handmaiden, Sif. When you talk to Frey, use the word Skidbladner. Now go to the large meeting hall and take the Chest in the corner. It contains Mimer's Head which can give you advice. Use the word Sleepers with it.

Having spoken to everyone and noted their locations, and possibly having questioned Hoenir and Skirnir, you are now ready to leave and seek out your fortune. **C.F. Shaffer**

Elvira II: Jaws of Cerberus

For those struggling through this new role-play adventure from Accolade, following are some specific helps.

Spells and Ingredient Locations

Absorb Magic: Towel or Sponge (Bathroom), Garnet (Spider Maze)

Antidote: Yellow Liquid (Located in "Frank's" Room), Mushrooms (Spider Maze)

Bind Demon: Scroll of Binding and Rope (Spider Maze)

Bless: Holy Water (Church), Test Tubes (Lab), Crucifix (Inventory)

Brainboost: Floppy Disk (Typing Pool)

Breathe Underwater: Chewing Gum (Inventory), Cupcakes (Canteen), Popcorn (Elvira's Room)

Buoyancy: Remains (Catacomb)

Courage: Wine Bottle (Dining Room or Meat Locker), Gin and Vodka (Director's Office)

Cure Wounds: Holy Water (Church), Test Tubes (Lab)

Fear: Witch's Eyeball (Costume Room)

Fireball: Tissues and Newspaper (Elvira's Room), Papers (Bulletin Board in Guard Shack), Wooden Hammer (Catacombs)

Freezing Blade: Two Cold Objects (Meat Locker — leave two items there for a long time)

Detect Magic: Quartz (Spider Mazes)

Detect Trap: Vase (Living Room), Wine Glass (Dining Room), Jars ("Frank's" Lab or Kitchen)

Destroy Cerberus: Magic Bag ("Frank's" Room), Tomahawk (Spider Web), War Lance (Catacombs), 10 Black Candles and Chalice of Blood (Altar Room), Matches (Storage Room) and Bind Demon Spell (Magic Bag, Tomahawk and War Lance must all be blessed by the Indian and the Bind Demon Spell must be prepared ahead of time).

Enchant Weapon: Emerald (Spider Caves), Nail File (Elvira's Room)

Glue: Adhesive (Tin Box in Kitchen)

Healing Hands: None

Herbal Healing: Mushrooms (Spider Maze)

Holy Blast: Prayer Book (Desk in Study), Medicine Bag (Janitor's Closet), Holy Cloth, Gold Cross and Candlesticks (Church)

Ice Dart: None

Illusion: Mirror (Trashcan in Make-up Room)

Lightning Bolt: Amethyst (Spider Maze), Fork Shaped Object (Tuning Fork from Succubus Room)

Lock: Horseshoe (Bucket in Kitchen), Cats (Master Bedroom), 4-Leaf Clover (Under Sign by Gate)

Magic Muscles: Pots and Pans (Kitchen), Knives (Inventory), Keys (Guard Shack), Tuning Fork (Succubus Room), Headband (Frankenstien's Head)

Mindlock: Padlock (Desk in Study), Book (Computer Room)

Nova: Hair Spray (Elvira's Room), Bourbon or Gin (Director's Office)

Protection: Soda Can (Canteen), Bucket (Kitchen or Living Room), Fire Extinguisher (Janitor's Closet or Lobby), Headband (Frankenstien's Head), Pots or Pans (Kitchen)

Resist Fire: Fire Extinguisher (Lobby or Janitor's Closet)

Resurrect: Brain, Heart and Skin ("Frank's" Room), Eggs (Kitchen), Prayer Book (Church)

Revive: Cheese (Meat Locker), Bleach (Janitor's Closet)

Summon Storm: Barometer (Foyer of Hounded House)

Telekinesis: Magnet (Inside Stereo in Typing Pool)

Trueflight: Feathers (Pillow in Succubus Room)

Turn Undead: Brain (Jar in Lab)

Unholy Barrier: Prayer Book (Desk in Study)

Unseen Shield: None

Special Items and Locations

Blocks and Balls: Nursery (Use to Lure Poltergeist away from Library)

Boots: Meat Locker (Wear for Protection)

Copper Rod: Boiler Room (Use on *House of Horror's* Roof as Lightening Rod)

Curling Iron: Elvira's Room (Use on Thermostat in Meat Locker)

Dagger: Catacombs (Adds to Power Points Each Time Used)

Gauntlet: Suit of Armor in Living Room (Wear for Protection)
Guard's Jacket: Protection (Guard Shack)
Helmet: Suit of Armor in Living Room (Wear for Protection)
Lab Coat: Costume Room (Wear to Fool Scientist)
Ladder: Storage Room (Use to Climb onto Roof)
Magic Dagger: Catacombs (Increases Experience Points with Each Use)
Photos: Master Bedroom (Use to Help You Disguise Yourself)
Shields: Catacombs (Wear for Protection)
Soldier Suit: Costume Room (Includes a Sword)
Wire Cutters: Car Trunk (Cut "Frank's" Wires)
Wizard's Robe: Costume Room (Wear to Fool Wizard)

These helps should give you a better chance staying alive long enough to save Elvira. **Ralph P. Daltry**

Leisure Suit Larry 5

As promised last issue, here's some more advice for finding your way through *Leisure Suit Larry 5: Passionate Patti Does a Little Undercover Work*.

When returning to airports, always pause to recharge the pocket Video Recorder at the outlet found all the way to left. Read all the signs for information on Limousine phone numbers to get around.

When Larry goes to Miami to meet Chi Chi Lambada, his telephone Quarters can be obtained from the cigarette machine. Yes, I said "Quarters" — call Just Green Cards as well as the limousine company. Then, make sure to pick up the counterfeit Green Card from the trash can (outside the terminal to the left of the door) before you leave in the limo.

Show Doc Pulliam's Business Card to the limo driver to get to the dental office where Chi Chi works. On arrival, go to the office and take the Doily from the table on the right and use it on yourself (Larry wraps it around his head, ala the Three Stooges with a toothache). The receptionist won't give you the time of day without this outward sign of your dental problems. When you are shown in for your dental exam, make eye contact with Chi Chi. Talk with her and offer her the Green Card. When she accepts, turn on your Camera before she invites you downstairs to her gym to show you her appreciation. After your work out with Chi Chi, turn off the Camera and go back to the reception room of Dr. Pulliam's office to use the phone to get the limousine back.

Now, back to Patti whose next stop is radio station K-RAP. The Access Code for Mr. Krapper's office can be found by inserting the appropriate Datapak into the DataMan. Go into Mr. Krapper's office and open his desk drawer. This can be done one of two ways; there is a Key hidden in the planter at the back right of the office, or you can use the Letter Opener in plain view on the desk. In the drawer you will see a Blue Post-It Note; write down the Code Number from it, you will need that number to get into Control Room B later (this number changes from game to game, so if you replay the sequence you get a different number each time). Look in the drawer again, and find evidence there against Krapper and K-RAP; use the photocopier at the left of the desk to make copies of the Letter.

After the photocopier accident, replace everything in Krapper's office and go through the door on the left to the executive bathroom. Disrobe and attempt to take a shower in the booth at the left for another interesting surprise.

Don the Clothes outside the shower when the surprise is over. Go as far to the right as possible to find Control Room B. Use the Code you wrote down from the Blue Post-It Note to open the Control Room. You can record evidence against the rap group *2 Live 2 Screw* who are recording in a neighboring

studio by using material found in Control Room B. A Tape of the right size can be found on the shelf straight back in the room. Put it on the machine at the left. Fool with the control board until you can overhear the members of *2 Live 2 Screw*. Turn on the tape machine.

You'll be locked into the control room while you are taping. When this happens, you can stop the Tape and take it off the machine (don't leave the evidence after going to all this trouble to find it). Escape the room by positioning the microphone in front of Patti's mouth and touching the control panel. Patti will sing, and her amplified voice will break the control booth window, permitting her to escape.

Larry's last trip is to Donald Tramp's Casino and the boardwalk in Ocean City, New Jersey. To get the requisite Quarter needed for calling the limousine service, play each of the slot machines found at the far left of the airport lobby.

Upon arrival at Tramp's Casino, play the guessing game with the official greeter. Take the Tramp Silver Dollars you win into the Casino and play video poker until you have at least \$500; \$775 is better. If it hasn't occurred to you how to collect this kind of money quickly, keep in mind that you can save and restore games. Save each time you win and restore each time you lose. The effect is that you never lose. As soon as you have enough money, raise the bet to \$100. If it takes you longer than half an hour to raise the money with this system, you are a hopelessly unlucky and inept poker player.

If you like, go to the back of the Casino and attend the Wet T-shirt Contest starring Jennifer Jiggle. It will cost \$25. It isn't necessary to finish the game, but its worth a few chuckles. If you go, be sure to click the Look Icon on her. If you are feeling more business-like and want to find the woman you have come to interview, Lana Luscious is out doing some skating on the boardwalk.

The boardwalk goes on forever (seriously, I haven't found the end of it yet) and only one store is open for business: Ivana Skates. Rent some Skates there (leave a \$250 deposit, or the Camcorder as security if you are afraid you will have less than \$500 after skating). Skate around until you meet Lana, and talk to her. She will invite you to her show (a Mud-Wrestling Match) at Tramp's Casino. When finished talking, return your Skates and go. The Mud-Wrestling Match is held in the same ballroom as the Wet T-shirt Contest was. Pay the bouncer 500 big ones and have at it; make sure to use the Action Icon to touch as many body parts as is possible. Remember to turn on the Camcorder after you pay the bouncer and then turn it off again after Bucephalous fails to perform.

When Larry tries to return to Porn Prod, his plane will begin to crash. When asked to take over for the pilot, do so. Use the Action Icon all over the control panel; eventually you will find the Autopilot (it's located at about the center of the panel), and Larry will save the day.

At the White House testimonial dinner, you will get to use Patti's Hooter Shooters. Don't worry. You will know when.

There are a full 1000 points available in the game, and I was only able to obtain a figure somewhere in the mid-900's. I expect that there are many ways to finish this adventure without scoring even as many points as I did.

I do know that it doesn't make any difference in which order Larry visits the girls on his list, or in which order Patti carries out her secret missions. *Leisure Suit Larry 5* is a forgiving adventure that the expert will want to fool with until every point is found. Have fun! **Michael J. Ballenger**

MegaTraveller 1

When you drop an item, it will vanish once you enter your ship. Also, some experimentation showed me that it is very

easy to inadvertently lose an item. Just leave something highlighted in your inventory then hit the right mouse button to get back to the previous screen, and voila, the goodie is dropped. If you move your party back into your ship or save the game without noticing the slip, then it's "goodbye, Laser-guided Mark IX Frammistat."

Although you can buy lots of weapons and combat software for your ship, it is possible to complete **MegaTraveller 1** without once engaging in space combat. I did experiment with it just to see how it worked and found it cumbersome. Movement is strictly in two dimensions, and falls far short of giving a real you-are-there feeling.

While the odds in the final combat segment are heavily stacked against you, it IS possible to win — it just takes a lot of restoring the last saved game and trying again. One piece of advice which might be of value here is to arm at least two members of your party with Grenade Launchers. Most of your opponents in the warehouse are armed with these weapons which cause a great deal of damage, and they can get off two or three shots to your one. Watch your party's stats and bring plenty of Med Kits.

Once you begin the final confrontation, you can leave the warehouse before defeating all the enemies there if you find you need more Med Kits, Ammunition or (as I did) a Demolition Charge. You can even go to the spaceport to recruit new party members if you have lost several in the combat. The only catch is that you cannot then save your position without restoring the full complement of bad guys in the warehouse. So, while they can be defeated piecemeal, which makes it a bit easier, you can't insure against the unforeseen by saving your progress. **Raymond N. Rayl**

Monkey Island 2

Some puzzles in the Hard Mode when playing this sequel to the original **Monkey Island** are more difficult than others. So, to prevent any unnecessary hair loss....

Q: How do I get the Fish from the kitchen at Marley's mansion? The cook keeps chasing me out.

A: Actually, that's the key. Make the cook chase you around the outside of the mansion. Then, before he can follow you all the way back into the kitchen, enter and Take the Fish. Hey, I got the Fish. Halibut that?

Q: How do I win at the Wheel Game and get the Invitation?

A: It certainly won't be by guessing the number correctly. After the other "gentleman" wins, follow him to the next alley and watch. Use the slot on the door and ask for the next winning number. Bruno will quiz you three times. The correct answer will always be the number of fingers shown when he asks "If this is...."

Q: I need help with the Spitting Contest. What do I have to do to win this prestigious event?

A: Well, you need several things. First, buy all the Drinks from the bartender at the Bloody Lip. You will need some I.D. to do so, however. Try the Library Card you get from the librarian on Phatt Island. Now, mix the Yellow and Blue Drinks together to make a Green Drink. You also need the Ship's Horn from the merchant on Booty Island. Blow it when you're standing by the cannon to determine its effect. Next, enter the Spitting Contest by Talking to the Spitmaster (the name you choose and the sounds you make have no effect on the outcome — Ptooi! will do it). The first spit will always be a misfire. After you spit once, stand on the right side of the screen and Use the Horn. (Don't blow it! Well, actually that's what you do). When the cannon goes off and distracts the crowd, Use the Flags to move them closer to the fault line. Now, Use the Crazy Straw the bartender gave you on the

Green Drink. Return to the fault line and wait for the breeze to blow the red skirt on the woman to the far right. Then, Ptooi! with the wind!

Look in the next issue of **Enchanted Realms™** for a complete walkthrough to this adventure. **Chack Miller**

Vengeance of Excalibur

Episode Three: Go far to the southeast outside the City of Brass and talk to Al-Mansur. Find and hire Enrico, then go to Barcelona. Fight the battle and enter the city. Head right until you come to a door with a Herbalist standing outside. Buy the Wine Bottle from her. Then, use the Bottle to get the Cork. Enter and buy the Silk Carpet. Now, go to the City of Brass.

Drop the Carpet, use the Lamp and have the Djinni cast Flying Carpet. Now, activate the front of the Carpet and work your way east through the rooms, killing skeletons as you go. Then, head west to the room with the door and go through it. Fight the skeleton. Use Cork on the Bottle containing the Evil Djinni. Next, go east and get Helye's Book.

Episode Four: Proceed to Salamanca and have Ruy Diaz join you. Then, go to Kurtuba (before Al-Mansur arrives). Head left and enter the house (Diaz has the Key). Now, go into the hole that leads to the catacombs. Move north, then west from the dungeon to find Breuse and help him. Have Landoine join you. Go east, east, south, west and north through the door.

Episode Seven: With the Sword of Vengeance and the Dragon's Teeth (which can be used to create skeleton soldiers), go to Enchanted City, northeast of Kadiz. Proceed north, north, east, east, north and down. Then, go east, north, west, up, north and enter the gate. Head east and enter the northwest room. Go east again and kill the wizard.

Now, get the Bronze Key and the Citadel Scroll. Proceed west twice to the courtyard, then east until you find the locked door. Unlock it with the Bronze Key, enter the cell and give the Knife to the girl. Talk to her until she talks to you about the hidden passage. Exit the cell to the west, then move north, west, northwest, east and east again through the hidden passage. Now, kill Breuse, take the Shield and have Lancelot use it. Have Bors use the Citadel Scroll. Then, go east and kill the Shadowmaster. Take the Holy Grail. **Fred J. Philipp**

Last Minute News

Attention Trekkies! Interplay has finally shipped their long-awaited and anticipated **Star Trek: 25th Anniversary!** Line up to get yours now. **King's Quest V** for the Amiga has shipped, as well, with a fix for the slow animation that resulted in its being pulled back into development after the first shipment went out the door several months ago.

NOTE: **Estarra** is always pleased to receive adventure hints, those precious little gems which add a needed glint of hope in a difficult quest. This is your opportunity to provide these splendid baubles for other adventurers and receive another precious commodity in return. If we publish your hints here in **'Starr Light**, you will have an additional issue of **Enchanted Realms™** credited to your subscription. Simply forward your original hints to Digital Expressions • P.O. Box 33656 • Cleveland, OH 44133 • Attention: **'Starr Light**. Please do not submit hints to **Enchanted Realms™** that you have submitted to any other publication.



Shrine Of Restora

SACRED ARTIFACTS FROM THROUGHOUT THE REALMS

Deluxe Paint and Animation

Electronic Arts \$129.00 - \$179.00

Deluxe Paint has been the de facto standard computer paint program on Amiga and MS-DOS systems since its inception. It's powerful, intuitive and very easy to use. But, why do we mention paint programs in **Enchanted Realms™**? Because they're indispensable in the creation of adventure games!

On the MS-DOS side, **Deluxe Paint II Enhanced** (\$129.95) and **Deluxe Paint Animation** (\$139.95) combine to make powerful tools for graphic design, used by many adventure game manufacturers including Electronic Arts and Lucasfilm Games (in the production of the soon to be released **Indiana Jones** adventure). Though due for an overhaul, **Deluxe Paint II Enhanced** (an MS-DOS version of **Deluxe Paint IV** is being prepared now) is a very capable paint program with support for VGA/MCGA and EVGA graphics with 256 colors available from a palette of 262,000. Both it and **Deluxe Paint Animation** can be used to create monsters for importation and use with Interplay's **The Bard's Tale Construction Set** (reviewed elsewhere in this issue).

On the Amiga front, however, the newest version of this venerable paint program has emerged — **Deluxe Paint IV** (\$179.95). **Deluxe Paint** has always been my favorite, and it remains so with its newer, more powerful features. Space does not permit a full review of this excellent product, but several points are worth noting.

Upon first loading the program, the new 3D-look interface is most prominent. It is also possible to load an image now by simply double-clicking on its name (standing ovation, if you please!). **Deluxe Paint IV** is also capable of working with HAM images and, accordingly, sports a new palette tool with color mixing features. Metamorphosing has been added for brushes, Mix is available from the Mode Menu (similar to palette mixing) and LightTable has been added for assistance with animations.

Improvements and refinements made to the "king" of Amiga paint programs leaves **Deluxe Paint IV** seated securely on its throne. If you can only purchase one graphics package this year, this is it!

Chack Miller

Eye of the Beholder II Editor

Gosselin Computer Consultants \$19.95

Temple Darkmoon is one real nasty place. Beautiful? Yes...but deadly! However, don't pack up your daggers and leave just yet. Gosselin comes to the rescue once more with his **Eye of the Beholder II Character Editor**.

All the bells and whistles are present in this MS-DOS editor for manipulating your characters' attributes, personal statistics, condition and spells. You can also give your characters any of the items available in the game, and memorize spells on the spot. An unexpected feature, though, is the ability to change your characters' map location. Want to see what's on the other side of that door or behind that wall? Just edit your party's position.

Whether you would like to deck out your party or just want to give your characters a little "lift," this editor will do the job quite handily. Recommended for the faint of heart and those lacking time to grow as you go. Hey, I always wanted a +2 Crystal Hammer, but what do I do with the Sticky Paper? Contact: Gosselin Computer Consultants • P.O. Box 1083 • Brighton, MI 48116 • (313) 229-2453. **Ralph P. Daltry**

Heart of China Hint Book

Dynamix \$9.95

One of the nice things about the new hint books from Dynamix (and Sierra for that matter) is the inclusion of information about the development of the game in question. It is always enjoyable to me to know how a game was developed and produced. Since this information is usually not provided with the game itself, I enjoy being able to read it in conjunction with gaining the hints I need from time to time to complete the quest. The **Heart of China Hint Book** provides for both these needs quite well.

Using the red-ectoplasm-and-viewer format, general questions are addressed, maps are provided, plus you also get a list of objects and their uses, arcade hints and a description of the possible endings. As you would expect, it has all you need to complete **Heart of China**.

C. Albert Scott

Official Guide to Roger Wilco

COMPUTE Books \$14.95

If you find your role as the James Bond of janitors a little too perplexing, you may just need a bit of "official" help — from **The Official Guide to Roger Wilco's Space Adventures**, that is. COMPUTE Books has just released another title in their **Official** series, this time focusing on the adventures of Roger Wilco with a complete guide to **Space Quests I - IV**. Chapters are devoted to Sierra's history, the development of **Space Quests I - IV**, an Interview with Roger and solutions to all four **Space Quest** adventures. There is also an index of key names, places and "things" in the games.

If you like quick, to-the-point solutions, you may find yourself weighed down in this resource. However, if you enjoy a good story, and like conversational walkthroughs, this **Official Guide** will be a pleasure to use. Each game section is identified by goal or mission, including the possible number of points to be earned. Maps are included as well. A running inventory is also provided so you know what you should have in your possession at all times. And, though not necessary, game screen shots are slipped in sporadically to add atmosphere.

Sometimes I find that I really like the listen-to-my-story approach. It does help prevent you from accidentally looking ahead and spoiling the next puzzle, while still guiding you through the game. Yet, in this case, I'm not quite sure. There almost seems to be a little too much verbiage. But, hey? The price is right. For little more than the cost of one individual hint book you get four complete walkthroughs in one handy volume. I'd say that's a good value.

Chack Miller

Persona™ PC Speakers

Persona™ Technologies \$229.95

Sound quality can make or break a major motion picture. Try turning down the volume during the Death Star fighter sequence in *Star Wars* and see how bland the action becomes. Even worse, try to recreate in your mind the same sequence with only the accompaniment of PC speaker bleeps and bleeps. Gag! Wretch! Blah!

Sound can add immensely to atmosphere not only in films, but also in computer games. That's why PC owners spend so much for a quality sound card (of course, Amiga owners have one built in). However, this is only the first link in the audio chain. The final link is the speaker.

Several options are available here. Some monitors have a speaker or speakers mounted internally. These provide modest to acceptable sound. Better options, though, are the use of amplified speakers or routing sound output through a stereo system. Both have their advantages and disadvantages. Of the latter, several options are available. Numerous manufacturers produce amplified speakers, many of which do a decent job. However, most of these systems have been designed for use with portable sound sources like walkmans and disk players, and can't reproduce the full range of sound that a full-blown stereo system affords. Enter the Persona™.

So, what makes the Persona™ PC speaker different from all the others out there? For one, it costs a lot more than most amplified systems. However, with the additional cost come some additional features. The Persona™ speakers have been designed for close up listening, referred to as "near field monitoring," with an optimum distance of 20 to 24 inches between speakers. They can be conveniently positioned on each side of your monitor, or mounted directly to it. While they are not designed to fill a big room with sound, they are perfectly suited for the computer gaming environment.

The Persona™ incorporates a three-way speaker design to provide high resolution, low distortion music reproduction. Also incorporated is Persona™ Technologies' Ambience Recovery System (ARS), designed to reproduce the spatial imaging present in the original recording. Controls include a combined volume and power switch, bass control and stereo imaging control. Jacks are provided for the included power supply, stereo input and headphones. The only feature I really felt was lacking was a balance control. The system seems to favor the left channel a little.

It is the stereo imaging that makes the Persona™ different. Provision is made for monaural, stereo and Super Sonic Stereo listening. The latter position employs the ARS described above, and alters the depth or ambience experienced. There is a noticeable difference in the quality of sound with the stereo imaging in gear. I must admit, after some experimentation, I have defaulted to listening with the speakers set to full ambience and bass. It just sounds best to me at these settings.

If I were buying a pair of amplified speakers, I would spring for the Persona™. The sound quality is excellent and the construction is top notch. The 10 watts per channel output is more than sufficient for most games. In other words, I would classify the Persona™ PC speakers as a sound investment. **C. Albert Scott**

Quest for Clues IV

Origin \$24.99

In the past, I have found *Quest for Clues* volumes helpful for getting me through some tight spots in an adventure. They certainly provide a good value for the dollar, including at least forty walkthroughs per volume. Well, *Quest for Clues*

IV is no disappointment whatsoever, as it includes forty more walkthroughs of current adventures, and is the best value yet in this series. If you can only buy one resource this year, this is the one to get (in addition to a subscription to *Enchanted Realms™*, that is).

Though several older walkthroughs are included, the majority are for adventures released in 1991. Thirty-eight of the included walkthroughs are applicable to MS-DOS quests while twenty-seven solutions cover Amiga adventure releases (or soon to be released conversions). All are nicely illustrated, and many are provided with accompanying maps. The only gripe I have with the way these walkthroughs are handled is with the use of coded "gibberish." I know this is done to protect wandering eyes from seeing something they really shouldn't, but I don't like having to decode these key words. This is a walkthrough, and it's meant to provide the helps necessary to help you solve an adventure, not be a puzzle itself. If I don't want to "read" what's ahead, I will simply cover the page with a piece of paper or cardboard.

All in all, though, I strongly recommend *Quest for Clues IV* (it's available from the *Guild*). I know that we will put it to good use here on some of those unfinished adventures just lying on the shelf, begging to be completed. **Chuck Miller**

Visionary Handbook

PaperDisk Publishing \$29.95

By now, many of you who purchased *Visionary* have had enough time with it to realize that you could use some extra help. It's just not as simple as booting it up and typing away. Well, our own contributing columnist and *Visionary* Sorcerer, John Olsen, has written a handbook to provide that much needed assistance.

The Visionary Programmer's Handbook is comprised of a bound volume of over 400 pages and comes with a disk that includes the game featured on our *Issue 9* Amiga disk, *I was a Cannibal for the FBI*, including the source code for your dissecting pleasure. Chapters are devoted to plot, puzzles, places, variables, objects, vocabulary, messages, subroutines, automatic actions, sounds and pictures, dungeon adventures and artificial intelligence in NPCs. Additional chapters are given to examining all facets of the *Cannibal* adventure and how it was created.

Next to *Visionary's* author, John Olsen knows more about *Visionary* than anyone else, making him eminently qualified to quill this handbook. It is quite an exhaustive source of information both for *Visionary* programmers and for adventure authors in general. Much of the material in the book deals directly with issues that apply to game writing whether you use *Visionary* or some other language.

Overall, I found the *Visionary Programmer's Handbook* well written and very understandable from a layman's perspective. To my knowledge, you will not find a single more helpful resource for writing adventure games anywhere. If you just want some help in general, or if you plan to get the most you possibly can from *Visionary*, I recommend that you pick up a copy of *The Visionary Programmer's Handbook* (also available through the *Adventurers' Guild*). It will be money well spent! **Chuck Miller**

NOTE: Resources reviewed in the *Shrine of Restora* are available through normal retail channels unless indicated otherwise. Select products reviewed here are also available through the *Adventurers' Guild*. If you market an adventure resource you would like reviewed, please send two copies via U.S. mail to Digital Expressions • P.O. Box 33656 • Cleveland, OH 44133 • Attention: *Shrine of Restora*.



SORCERER'S DEN

A CONJURER'S ADVICE ON THE FABRIC OF TALES

We will look further this issue into the creation of an adventure. Previously, we started with a general plot idea, established the game's setting, added details and made a rough map of the world being built. Now, it's time to design the puzzles that are at the heart of every adventure. However, let's first pause to answer a letter from a reader.

Gee, Mr Sorcerer...

Devin Rankin of Phoenix writes, "The game I am writing would allow two players to link their computers via a modem. Would this type of game be possible with *Visionary*?" I'm pleased to report that the answer will soon be YES. AREXX support is planned for version 1.5 of *Visionary*. This will allow control of the serial port along with other AREXX features. If you are not familiar with this program, now is the time to buy a book on beginning AREXX.

Devin Rankin also describes a game containing a 3D maze with a textured look, like many current dungeon games, and asks "How hard would it be to construct a maze of this type using *Visionary*?" Actually, Devin, it's so easy to do, that a sample dungeon game is included in the *Visionary* package. You can look at the source code, and see how to create mazes that are huge in size, yet relatively simple to program. In your *Visionary* package, you will find two sample games, *The Magic Potion*, my creation, and *The Catacombs* by Kevin Kelm. Kevin's *Catacombs* is an excellent introduction to dungeon mazes. *The Visionary Programmer's Handbook*, also my work, contains a chapter on similar dungeon quests, including monsters, mazes and non-player characters.

Out On a Limb and Puzzled

Now, let's take a brief look at the puzzles which will be incorporated into your adventure. You want them to fit smoothly into your game, to assist the plot rather than be isolated from it. Your game should keep the player always planning ahead, asking "what should I do next?"

Puzzles should be planned to help the player reach various goals, and several levels of goals should be included. Imagine a tree diagram, like a family tree, using game goals instead of family names. At the top of the diagram is the main goal. Perhaps it's to reach the bottom level of a maze where a princess lies in a mystical trance. Next on the diagram are the sub-goals. These might include clearing the dungeon of monsters, gathering medical supplies for the princess or acquiring treasures. And, beneath these sub-goals on your diagram lie yet other goals. One of these might be to kill the minotaur that guards a trove of magical potions.

Hack Vs Tact

When your diagram is complete, you are ready to design the variety of ways that these goals can be accomplished. Don't make them all the same. If the problem is the minotaur, the player could find an appropriate weapon and kill this man-beast. However, it becomes boring after a while to dispatch all monsters in the same manner. Get a weapon, stab the monster. Slash, kill, slash, kill. To make your game more

interesting, find alternative solutions to the puzzles. For example, the player may have to open a trap door covering a spiked pit, then find a red cloth and finally wave the cloth before the minotaur in order to lure it into the pit. Changing the solutions to the puzzles allows the player to exercise his ingenuity. He'll feel proud when he has outsmarted the game.

However, it's important to make your puzzles consistent with your plot. Don't have the player lure the minotaur into the pit by holding out a tantalizing cheeseburger. It's not logical that a minotaur should want such an item, and it is certainly not consistent with the setting of your game. Cheeseburgers just don't belong in a dungeon adventure. A more consistent solution would be the use of the red cloth, or possibly a poison dart or even a time-worn magic sword. Remember that you won't want your player to be jolted out of your make-believe world, and ruin the illusion.

Puzzled Over Puzzles

Several types of puzzles exist that you can employ, acquiring an object being the most common. For instance, the player must try to find a way to acquire a sword stuck in a stone. Or, he must discover how to get an amulet encased in crystal. Another type of puzzle is the avoidance of death. The player must find a way past the crushing stone walls. Perhaps he needs to keep from being killed in a pit of hungry alligators. Anyone who has seen the Indiana Jones movies or old movie serials will be familiar with the concept of death traps. Avoiding such traps adds a new thrill to your game.

Keep in mind, though, as you design the puzzles for your adventure, that you don't make the solutions too obvious. If your game is too easy, it will become boring. Similarly, don't make the puzzles overly difficult. Players will become frustrated and give up. It's best to vary the difficulty level of your puzzles, with easy ones mixed in between the harder ones. And, to keep the hard ones from being too hard, leave plenty of clues about to help the player find the solutions.

Moving Right Along...

Now, you have a complete story on paper. In the next column, we will look further at the steps involved in creating an adventure game. The choice must be made concerning game category: text, graphic or a combination. The game's look and feel must be designed. Sound effects, music and animation need to be decided upon as well. All these will be discussed in the next issue. Until then...

Adventure On!

John Olsen

NOTE: The **SORCERER'S DEN** is the place to direct your questions or comments concerning adventure game design, especially as they relate to **Visionary**. Questions may be general or specific in nature. Please forward your letters to Digital Expressions • P.O. Box 33656 • Cleveland, OH 44133 • Attention: **SORCERER'S DEN**.



Mortaine's Caldron

A MYSTIC COLLECTION OF ODDS AND ENDS

Issue Companion Disks

This issue marks a change concerning how we handle subscriptions with disk. Disk supplements, which are now referred to as companion disks, will no longer be identified by an issue number. Instead, we have decided to include an *Adventure Game Treasury* disk with each issue of *Enchanted Realms*™. Thus, this issue's disk is not the *Issue 10* disk, but rather is identified as **UHS Hints**.

These disks will also be listed separately in the *Adventure Game Treasury*, and will carry a note indicating the issue they accompanied. This way, new subscribers will not accidentally order both the individual *Treasury* disk and a back issue containing that same disk.

Treasury Notes

While on the subject of the *Adventure Game Treasury*, we need to relay some additional information. Since we first began *Enchanted Realms*™ and the *Adventure Game Treasury* almost two years ago, we have had no price increases even though our costs of producing *Enchanted Realms*™ have almost doubled! Printing, postage and other related costs have all increased. As a result, we have had to adjust our prices accordingly.

We are, however, committed to doing all we can to maintain our current subscription rates. We simply don't want to increase the cost to you above the present level. Yet, some adjustments do need to be made, namely an increase in the cost of *Adventure Game Treasury* disks. New pricing is based on your status. The cost of disks to non-subscribers is now \$5.00 each for single disks and \$6.00 for two-disk sets. Subscribers and *Citizens of the Realms* can purchase single disks for \$4.00 each, with two-disk sets going for \$5.00. We believe in providing additional benefits for subscribers whenever possible. In this case, it will be a lower cost per disk. Please note that this increase is effective immediately. We also ask that you refer to the *Advertisers' Guild* for additional changes.

Be Our Guest

At least that will be Virgin Games' invitation to MPC CD-ROM owners this coming June. From what we've seen to date, it's an invitation you won't want to pass up. In fact, it's probably the best reason I have seen yet for starting to stash some cash for upgrading your system to the MPC standard.

Guest, of course is Virgin's interactive horror story set in a fully 3D modeled virtual house (haunted of course) with well over 30 rooms to explore. Each room can be fully animated to change the players point of view. Digitized character and object animations will also be presented throughout.

We're very excited about the upcoming release of *Guest*. The SVGA (640x480x256) screen shots we have seen are simply stunning in this MPC level 1 adventure (a VGA version is also planned). However, as great as the graphics are, and as much as we look forward to moving about in this virtual world, what we look forward to the most is a good, old-

fashioned creepy adventure similar to those black and white horror films we grew up on as kids. There simply haven't been enough really good gothic horror adventures created since *Uninvited* (released in 1986) to satisfy our desires for this style of game. There's no doubt that we look forward to accepting Virgin's invitation.

Visionary Update

Owners of Oxxi's *Visionary* should be sure to send in their registration cards, as all registered users are being sent the 1.2 update at no charge. In fact, it will take a while for the newest version of *Visionary* to make it through the distribution channels and onto dealers' shelves. So, if you have the earlier version, just request the update when you send in your registration. *Visionary* 1.2 can be distinguished from the initial release in that it now comes on three disks. Included is the Program Disk with Interactive Editor and two example disks containing the *Magic Potion* and *Catacombs*. If you have the two-disk version, you should get the upgrade.

Wrath Revision

In our mini-review of ReadySoft's *Wrath of the Demon* it was stated that Anthrax was the name of the wizard in the game and also that of the programming team. Actually, the programming team's name is Abstrax, not Anthrax. We apologize for any confusion or misrepresentation that may have resulted on this matter.

Midnight Mecca Mail

Maeve is still waiting for some more responses to her *Midnight Mecca* feature in *Issue 8*. So, send in your letters. For those who missed that issue, Maeve opened the floor to your input on the ideal adventure. Her question: What elements must be assembled in order to create the perfect adventure game? Whether you are "a fan of the who-cares-about-plot-give-me-sound-and-graphics style, a battle-for-battle's sake strategist, or a gee-I-wish-Infocom-had-never-died purist," we are interested in your opinion. Just write a brief letter expressing your feelings and she and her companions will assemble a picture of that ever-illusory, ultimate adventure! Please address correspondence to: Digital Expressions • P.O. Box 33656 • Cleveland, OH 44133 • Attention: *Maeve's Midnight Mecca*.

You Are My Density

We recently had a reader ask us whether we knew if low density disks were available for Lucasfilm Games' *Monkey Island 2*. We checked and the answer is... "No." We mention that here because low density drives just don't cut it any more. Like it or not, most major game manufacturers will only be offering games on high density disks from here on out. So, if you still don't have one of these babies, now's the time to spend some bucks. We recommend that you purchase a 3.5" high density floppy rather than a 5.25" model. ER



Adventurers' Guild

WHERE OLD FRIENDS MEET AND NEW ADVENTURES BEGIN

Adventure Products

Adventures And Resources Available

ADVENTURE GAME TREASURY

All products listed in the *Adventure Game Treasury* are freely redistributable, being either public domain or shareware in nature. These select adventures and adventure resources have been chosen for inclusion here because of their quality and value. Though many are not of "commercial" stature, all products listed are worthy additions to your adventure library. And remember, please reimburse shareware authors for their efforts. This support encourages them to continue their endeavors.

Please Note Changes Below

COMMERCIAL PRODUCTS

As of **March 31, 1992**, commercial adventure games will **NO LONGER** be available through the *Adventurers' Guild*. In *Issue 7*, we added commercial adventures to the Guild on a trial basis as a means of providing both a one-stop-adventure-shop for our readers and a means of helping subsidize the costs of producing *Enchanted Realms™*. It has become apparent to us during the past six months that the great majority of our readership and subscribers would rather purchase their adventure games through the mail order giants, than through us, thus allowing another David to be slain. As it now stands, we simply can't afford to offer games through the *Guild* due to the poor response we have experienced to date. The investment in resources is far too great in relation to the return. We will, however, continue to offer commercial clue books and resource items through the *Guild* for the present. If sales of these items grow during the next few months, we will continue to make them available. Otherwise, the axe may fall again.

Of course, this makes it more difficult to earn extensions to your subscription, since fewer items will now be available for purchase through which to earn *Notes of the Realms*. However, we will try to help balance this out over the next few months by expanding the selection of products in our *Adventure Game Treasury*.

As stated above, we will continue to offer commercial adventures until the end of March. This is to provide ample opportunity for those who would still like to earn *Notes* through this means to do so. Also, for those who still have special coupons to redeem toward the purchase of commercial adventure games, this will provide you with the opportunity to make use of them. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause, but the support has been insufficient for us to continue to offer this service. Rather than serving to subsidize the costs of producing *Enchanted Realms™*, it has actually resulted in increased operating costs. Thank you for your understanding on this matter.

Enchanted Orders

Ordering Information

PURCHASES AND NOTES

In the *Adventurers' Guild*, we offer only select merchandise, products which stand out above the rest for the quality and value they offer. With each purchase of one of these products from the *Guild* (not including back issues and *Combo Packs*), you will receive *Notes of the Realms* to use toward extending your subscription. For each freely redistributable item purchased, you will receive **One Note**. (two-disk sets count as a single purchase.) Multiple-disk sets of five disks or more earn **Two Notes**. The purchase of commercial merchandise earns *Notes of the Realms* as follows: adventure games and languages (while still available), **Three Notes** each; books over \$15.00, **Two Notes** each and books under \$15.00, **One Note** each.

Here's how it works. When you buy products from the *Adventurers' Guild*, we will send you the appropriate number of *Notes* for that purchase. When you have acquired a total of **SIX Notes**, simply return them to us and we will extend your subscription by **ONE** additional issue at no extra charge — our way of saying thanks! In fact, by making regular purchases from the *Guild* and sending in your adventure game hints to *Starr Light* each issue, it's possible to extend your subscription to *Enchanted Realms™* indefinitely — **FREE** of charge! So, take advantage of these subscriber benefits today.

SHIPPING AND HANDLING

A \$3.00 shipping and handling charge is required per order on freely redistributable products, and on back issues of *Enchanted Realms™* and *Combo Packs*, plus \$2.00 additional for Canadian orders (a total of \$5.00). Shipping and handling charges on commercial merchandise, including adventures and clue books, is \$3.00 per order for the first item, plus an additional \$2.00 on multiple product orders. Canadian orders require an additional \$4.00 charge per order for commercial products to cover the increased costs involved in shipping merchandise "north of the border." (Products offered through the *Guild* are NOT available outside of the U.S. and Canada, except for back issues of *Enchanted Realms™*, available worldwide.) Please note that a street address is **REQUIRED** on commercial merchandise! We cannot ship commercial products to P.O. Boxes. In addition, Ohio residents **MUST** add the appropriate sales tax as indicated on the order form. Please include your subscriber number on your order (found on each issue's mailing label).

It's always our goal to ship your orders on a timely basis. However, if an item is out of stock and there will be a delay in shipment, we will immediately notify you of that delay in writing. If you have any questions concerning the status of your order, call (216) 582-0910 from 9:00 - 5:00 EST.

ENCHANTED BACK ISSUES

Issues 1-6 (Original Edition) Contents

Issue 1: (July - August 1990) **Journal:** (Converted to Disk) Reviews - Dungeon Master, It Came from the Desert I & II, Drakkhen, Starflight, Elite, Federation, Swords of Twilight, Hound of Shadow, Rings of Medusa and The Adventure Construction Language. **Disk:** Dungeon Master Character Set, Spell Chart and Level Four Map, plus Jungle Adventure.

Issue 2: (September - October 1990) **Journal:** Reviews - The Faery Tale Adventure, Might and Magic II, Day of the Viper, Universe 3, Future Wars, Champions of Krynn, Keef the Thief, Maniac Mansion, The Island of Lost Hope, Beyond Dark Castle and The Third Courier. Walkthrough - Drakkhen. **Disk:** The Attic Adventure Game, Maps for The Faery Tale Adventure and Drakkhen, plus Faery Tale Character Editor.

Issue 3: (November - December 1990) **Journal:** Reviews - The Bard's Tale, The Colonel's Bequest, Imperium, Chamber of the Sci-Mutant Priestess, Arthur, Conquests of Camelot, Loom, Neuromancer, Heart of the Dragon and Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade. Walkthrough - Future Wars. **Disk:** The Secrets of Funland Adventure, Maps for Faery Tale and Future Wars, plus The Bard's Tale Character Editor.

Issue 4: (January - February 1991) **Journal:** Reviews - PIRATES!, The Immortal, Dragon Lord, Sword of Aragon, Police Quest II, Code-Name: Iceman, DragonStrike, The Fool's Errand, Shadow of the Beast II, Pool of Radiance, Captive and Elvira Preview. Walkthrough - Neuromancer. **Disk:** The STEALTH Affair Demo, Character Editor for PIRATES!, Previews of Chaos Strikes Back and Bane of the Cosmic Forge, plus Game Screenshots.

Issue 5: (March - April 1991) **Journal:** Reviews - Zork Zero, Chaos Strikes Back, Bane of the Cosmic Forge, Elvira: Mistress of the Dark, Curse of the Azure Bonds, James Bond: The STEALTH Affair, Space Rogue, Cadaver and AMOS: The Creator. Walkthrough - Shadow of the Beast II. **Disk:** Rings of Zon: Dungeon Adventure Game, Enhanced Character Sets for Might and Magic II, Elvira and Chaos Strikes Back, Game Screenshots and Obitus Hints.

Issue 6: (May - June 1991) **Journal:** Uninvited, Leisure Suit Larry 3, Obitus, Legend of Faerghail, Countdown to Doomsday, Nightbreed, Dragon Wars, PowerMonger, Infestation and B.S.S. Jane Seymour. Feature - Character Editors: Just What the Doctor Ordered? Walkthrough - Loom. **Disk:** Zerg 1.0, SCombat, Infestation Cheat, Hint file for 244 Amiga Games and Chaos Hints.

Issues 7-8 (Enlarged Edition) Contents

Issue 7: (July - August 1991) **Journal:** Reviews - Bard's Tale III, The Secret of Monkey Island, Warlords, Search for the King, Breach 2, Trial by Fire, B.A.T. and Corporation. Previews - Visionary and Eye of the Beholder. Features - Interview with Roberta Williams Part I and Rilian Rogue Chapter I. Walkthrough - Trial by Fire Part I. **Disk:** Elvira, Altered Destiny and Search for the King Demos.

Issue 8: (September - October 1991) **Journal:** Reviews - King's Bounty, Eye of the Beholder, Wonderland, Centurion, Mean Streets, MegaTraveller 1, Overlord, Renegade Legion and Visionary. Features - The Old Timer, Interview with Roberta Williams Part II and Rilian Rogue Chapter II. Walkthroughs - The Secret of Monkey Island and Trial by Fire Part II. **Disk:** Crypt Arcade Adventure, Maps for Bane, AmiGraph: Mapping Utility and Hints for Fool's Errand, King's Quest IV and The Colonel's Bequest.

BACK ISSUES (CONTINUED)

Issue 9 (Expanded Edition) Contents

Issue 9: (January - February 1992) **Journal:** Reviews - Altered Destiny, Lord of the Rings, Secret of the Silver Blades, Rise of the Dragon, Death Knights of Krynn, Might and Magic III, MegaTraveller 2, Police Quest 3, The Adventures of Willy Beamish, Martian Memorandum, Leisure Suit Larry 5, Gateway to the Savage Frontier and 3D Construction Kit. Features - The Kristal, SUMMIT Games Network and Rilian Rogue Chapter III. Walkthroughs - Rise of the Dragon and Police Quest 3. **Amiga Disk:** I was a Cannibal for the FBI. **MS-DOS Disk:** The Last Half of Darkness.

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*PLEASE NOTE: We have adopted 3.5" disks as our standard media. All freely redistributable MS-DOS adventures and adventure resources will be provided on 3.5" disks unless you request 5.25" disks. If you fail to specify your need for 5.25" disks, there will be an additional charge to exchange media.

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Tournament Of Wits

CONTESTS OF KNOWLEDGE AND CHANCE

Contest Rules

Entering contests is very simple. If you like, you can fill out, detach and mail us this page. Of course, if you don't want to deface your copy of *Enchanted Realms™*, you can always send us a photocopy instead.

Some contests require you to match answers, solve a wordsearch or answer multiple-choice questions. Others require no more than filling out and mailing a 3" x 5" card. In either case, we require your full name, address and a phone number where you can be reached. Please use a pencil or pen to indicate the correct words or answers. Or, if you prefer, you may use a highlighter. Entries should be addressed to: Digital Expressions • P.O. Box 33656 • Cleveland, OH 44133 • Attention: **Tournament of Wits**.

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____
ZIP: _____ PHONE: (____) _____

All entries for this issue's contest **MUST** be received by **MARCH 31, 1992**. Late entries not accepted. Contests are limited to readers and subscribers in the U.S. and Canada.

Contest Information

Welcome to yet another **Tournament of Wits** Contest, brought to you this issue courtesy of *Enchanted Realms™* and Strategic Simulations, Inc.

So, what do you know about SSI and their products? Are you acquainted with the details of their meteoric eleven-year history? Do you know the name of every game that SSI has ever published? Is any of this really important? Hmmm?

Okay. You don't really need to know the answers to any of the above questions. However, there are a few questions that you do need to answer correctly. They, of course, are below. After reading each question carefully, take a 3" x 5" card and clearly print your complete name, address and phone number at the top. Then, print the numbers one (1) through four (4) down the left-hand side, and place the letters of the correct answers next to the appropriate numbers. For question four, list the correct letters as they would appear in three columns. When finished, send us your entry, but make sure you mail it early enough so that you don't miss the contest deadline of **March 31, 1992**. That's all there is to it!

SIX lucky winners will be selected from the entries received, and will have their choice of any single adventure from among those in SSI's 1992 Catalog (prizes are courtesy of, and will be sent directly from, SSI). So, get to work today!

The SSI Lil' Bit-o' Trivia Contest

- Strategic Simulations, Inc. (SSI) is best known as a publisher of what type of computer games?

A. Arcade Shoot'Em Ups	C. Golf Simulations
B. Flight Simulators	D. Role-Playing Adventures
- A long-standing philosophy at SSI has been that "sequels just don't sell" so stay far away from them.

A. True	B. False
---------	----------
- AD&D® game boxes contain an application card allowing you to enroll your champions into SSI's:

A. Hall of Champions	C. Order of Distinction
B. Order of Heroes	D. Fellowship of Heroes
- Most SSI adventures take place in TSR's AD&D® FORGOTTEN REALMS® or DRAGONLANCE® game worlds. Your task is to properly identify the following adventures with the game world in which they belong. Simply place the appropriate letter next to each role-playing game.

A. FORGOTTEN REALMS®	B. DRAGONLANCE®	
___ Eye of the Beholder	___ Death Knights of Krynn	___ Pool of Radiance
___ Gateway to the Savage Frontier	___ Neverwinter Nights	___ War of the Lance
___ Secret of the Silver Blades	___ DragonStrike	___ Shadow Sorcerer
___ Champions of Krynn	___ Curse of the Azure Bonds	___ Pools of Darkness

AD&D, FORGOTTEN REALMS, and DRAGONLANCE are registered trademarks owned by and used under license from TSR, Inc., Lake Geneva, WI, USA. Answers to these questions, if needed, can be found in SSI's 1992 Catalog and AD&D game boxes.

EVERYONE KNOWS BUT INDY. AND HE'D BETTER LEARN FAST.

Plato knew about Atlantis.

In a lost dialogue he wrote about the famed city and orichalcum, the mysterious element that powered the Atlantean's amazing machinery.

The Nazis know about Atlantis.

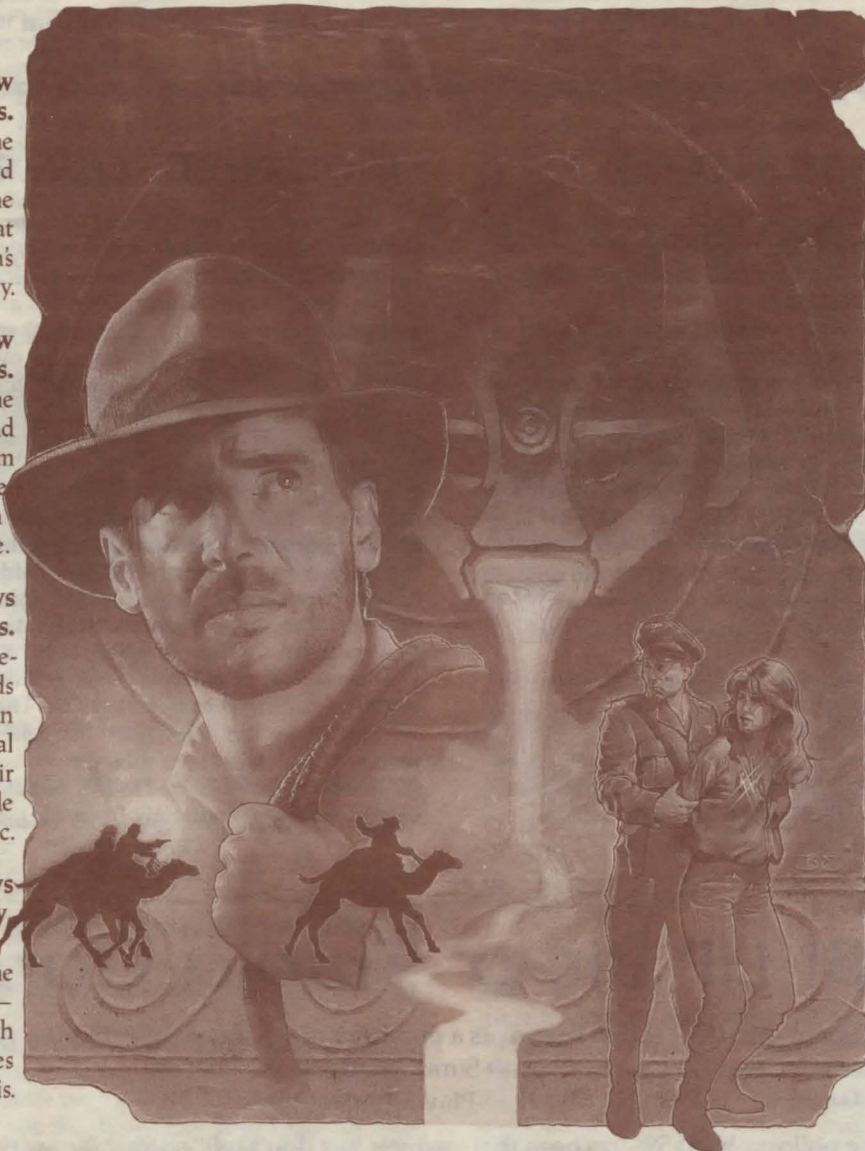
They tracked down the lost dialogue, and realized orichalcum would yield them the ultimate weapon of the age.

Sophia knows about Atlantis.

She unearthed a mysterious necklace and beads of orichalcum during an Icelandic archeological dig with Indy. Their magical properties made her a psychic.

Everyone knows but Indy

And he's got to learn fast. The Nazis are one step ahead of him — from Iceland to North Africa to the Azores to ... Atlantis.



Our biggest, most complex adventure ever.

Huge. More than 200 rooms furnished with vivid VGA art. Rotoscoped animation, a new icon interface. Exciting LucasArts electronic storytelling technology. Dramatic theatrical lighting.

Three ways to play and replay.

Three roads lead to Atlantis. "Puzzle path" features tough but logical riddles. "Action path" demands two-fisted reflexes. "Team path" calls on your intuitive sense and interpersonal skills.

Cinematic soundtrack.

iMUSE™, our brand new interactive sound system, supports all major sound cards with situation-based sound effects and music.

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Iceland. The start of a new chapter in the history of Atlantis.



Indy and Sophia cross many paths on the way to rediscovering the lost continent.



The ancient necklace hides many mysteries from the past.

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Visit your retailer or order directly by calling 1-800-STARWARS (in Canada 1-800-828-7927).

Adventure Game Rating System

Adventure Ratings

Enchanted Realms™ employs a categorical rating system designed to convey data concerning the quality of an adventure based upon its individual components, as well as its overall quality. Each standard adventure review concludes with a game rating chart. This chart displays the scores received by each adventure and additional data pertinent to that game. Mini-reviews receive a simplified version of the rating chart, providing the overall score an adventure receives, its category, publisher, system (Amiga or MS-DOS) and suggested retail price. For you to have a proper understanding of how to interpret the data provided in the game rating chart, an abridged version of the guidelines used by our reviewers is reproduced here. This information is divided into the four following sections: **Adventure Categories**, **Adventure Difficulty Levels**, **Adventure Elements** and **Adventure Scores**.

Adventure Categories

Text Adventure - Adventures based entirely upon a text parser with little or no graphic enhancement.

Graphic Adventure - Games ranging from text adventures with significant graphic enhancements to cinematic or interactive adventures which incorporate multiple game elements and/or object manipulation.

Animated Adventure - Adventures where the player manipulates one or more animated on-screen personae.

Role-Play Adventure - Graphic adventures which emphasize character development and growth, usually involving more than one character.

Strategic Adventure - Adventures placing a strong emphasis on military defense, combat and diplomacy.

Action Adventure - Arcade-oriented adventures which stress hand-eye coordination.

NOTE: Please keep in mind that adventures often include elements of more than one category. For review purposes, only the adventure's primary category is indicated in the game rating chart.

Adventure Difficulty Levels

Novice - Adventures easily played by beginning adventurers and above.

Apprentice - Adventures requiring the skills of players who have several quests under their belts and who are accustomed to some of the more difficult aspects of adventure gaming.

Expert - Quests demanding expert level skills for successful completion, or the use of a clue book by less skilled adventurers.

Master - Adventures requiring the highest level of experience and skill, almost to the point of being impossible to complete.

NOTE: Most adventures will naturally fall into either the Novice or Apprentice classifications.

Adventure Elements

Gameplay - Storyline of the adventure, character creation and manipulation, variety and level of difficulty in play, nature and variety of puzzles to be solved and the ability to maintain the player's interest.

Interface - Success in the implementation of the user interface whether it's graphic or text-based, seamless interaction with the game world.

Atmosphere - A game's feel, its unique ability to draw the player into its world and provide a true-to-life experience, one of actually being there.

Documentation - Quality and clarity of the printed and on-line documentation, support and development of the storyline, automapping features and extras like cloth maps, magic stones or parchments.

Graphics - Visual excellence, selection of images and colors, style of art and quality of animation.

Audio - Quality of music and sound effects included, number and appropriateness of selections employed.

Innovation - Creativity, revolutionary technology, unique elements or new concepts.

Mechanics - Product stability, form of copy-protection employed, provision for hard drive installation and bug-free operation.

Overall - Overall quality of the adventure.

NOTE: Since most games are either better or worse than the sum of their individual parts, the overall score does NOT reflect an average of the scores from the other eight categories. It stands alone as a final summation of the adventure as a whole.

Adventure Scores

Excellent (90-100) - State of the Art Quality

Very Good (80-89) - High Quality

Good (70-79) - Average Quality

Fair (60-69) - Acceptable Quality

Poor (50-59) - Unacceptable Quality

Dragon Dung (0-49) - Don't Step in It!

Much careful thought and planning has gone into the design and implementation of our game rating system. We believe that it enables us to provide our readers with accurate adventure reviews, as well as enabling us to remain consistent in the reporting of pertinent data within each review. However, we will be the first to acknowledge that it is not, by any means, a perfect and foolproof system. Therefore, when looking at the scores an adventure receives, keep in mind the components that you consider most important in a game. Also, be reminded that each reviewer has his or her own personal likes and dislikes which will be reflected in their reviews. These should be determining factors on your part in the decision of whether or not to purchase an adventure. In either case, we trust that the information provided in *Enchanted Realms™* will enable you to increase the enjoyment you receive from your adventure dollars.

\$7.95 (U.S.A.)

\$9.95 (Canada)

Enchanted Realms™

is devoted exclusively to the pursuit of adventure gaming, an experience which endures unchallenged in its ability to transport one into worlds and experiences otherwise untouched in an ordinary lifetime, and to transform one into persons such as those recorded in the annals of history, as well as those transcending the bounds of time and space. Adventures enable one to relive history, unravel the mysteries of the universe, defeat the minions of evil, fight for what is true and good, and weave oneself into the fabric of eternity itself. Furthermore, playing adventure games provides a key to understanding one's own self, too. And, if all this were not enough...adventures are just plain fun!

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