Star Portal
page 14

D'you know ther's a skeleton in your spacesuit?

Yes... and I suspect there's also one in your closet...

Don't you just *hate* double-booking?

Mind The Doors
page 53

When is a door not a door?

I'm only doing knock-knock jokes this week...

STAR PORTAL

YOUR TICKET TO RYDE, BOOTLE OR ANYWHERE ELSE IN THIS, OR ANY OTHER UNIVERSE

RETURN IN ONE PIECE NOT GUARANTEED

Since he's unlikely to have cut himself shaving, I believe we're looking at murder here...

The Case Of The
Beheaded Smuggler
page 30

Very little escapes your keen eye, Watson. I think we might be looking for a Zaphod Beeble-brox Fetishist... You know... *Two heads are better than one...*

General information

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☞ Contributions to Red Herring on any aspect of adventuring are welcome and can be either hand-written, typed or on disk in Atari ST, Macintosh or PC format (3.5 or 5.25 disks). The particular word-processing program used is not important - ASCII files are also suitable on any of these computers. Opinions expressed in reviews or elsewhere in the magazine are those of the writer and the editors do not necessarily agree with or approve of them. Contributors submitting articles on disk will have their disk returned. Closing date for copy is the 21st of the preceding month.

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Useful addresses

The Adventure & Strategy Club, 17 Sheridan Road, London E12 6QT. Tel: 081 470 8563. *Cheques/POs to Hazel Miller*

Adventure Probe, 52 Burford Road, Liverpool L16 6AQ. *Cheques/POs to Adventure Probe*

Adventure Workshop, 36 Grasmere Road, Royton, Oldham, Lancashire OL2 6SR. *Cheques/POs to P. M. Reynolds*

Borphee Computers, 64 County Road, Ormskirk L39 1QH. *Cheques/POs to Borphee Computers.*

Graham Cluley, 43 Old Mill Gardens, Berkhamstead, Herts, HP4 2NZ. *Cheques/POs to Graham Cluley*

Compass Software, 111 Mill Road, Cobholm, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR31 0BB. *Cheques/POs to Compass Software*

Dream World Adventures, 10 Medhurst Cres.,Gravesend, Kent DA12 4HL. *Cheques/POs to Mr. M. Freemantle.*

Fictitious Frobishire, 1 Heath Gardens, Coalpit Heath, Bristol BS17 2TQ. *Cheques/POs to Neil Shipman*

From Beyond, Spectrum Adventure magazine. Tim Kemp, 36 Globe Place, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 2SQ. *Cheques/POs to T Kemp*

FSF Adventures, 40 Harvey Gdns, Charlton, London SE7 8AJ. *Cheques/POs to Larry Horsfield*

The Guild, 760 Tyburn Road, Erdington, Birmingham B24 9NX. *Cheques/POs to Glenda Collins*

High Energy Software, PO Box 50422, Palo Alto, CA 94303 USA. Tel: 0101 415 493 2430. *Cheques, Money Orders in US dollars. Visa and Mastercard telephone orders accepted.*

Labyrynth Software, 70 Mallets Close, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes MK2 1DG.

Jim McBrayne, 27 Paidmyre Crescent, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G77 5AQ *Cheques/POs to Jim McBrayne*

SAM Coupé Adventure Club, Phil Glover, 43 Ferndale Road, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 9AU. *Cheques/POs to Phil Glover*

SofTouch, 6 Oak Avenue, Runcorn Road, Birmingam B12 8QT. *Cheques/POs to John Ure*

Special Reserve, PO Box 847, Harlow CM21 9PH.

SynTax Disk Magazine and PD Library, Sue Medley, 9 Warwick Road, Sidcup, Kent DA14 6LJ. *Cheques/POs to Sue Medley*

Toplogika, PO Box 39, Stilton, Peterborough PE7 3RW

Zenobi Software, 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancashire OL12 7NX. *Cheques/POs Zenobi Software*

RED HERRING Subscription

AD&D Unlimited Adventures - SSI/US Gold - PC/Macintosh - RRP £35.99.
Shop around for best price.

Amulet of Darath - Zenobi - Spectrum 48K - £2.49 tape, £3.49 +3 disk

Bloodwych - Quest & Glory Compilation - Amiga/ST - Ubisoft price £30.99.
Shop around for best price.

Bloodwych Data Disk - Mirrorsoft - ST - RRP £14.99.
May have to advertise for second hand copy.

Case Of The Beheaded Smuggler - author Patrick Walsh - Adventure Workshop - Amstrad CPC - Disk £5.00. Requires CP/M or CP/M 2.2

Curse Of Enchantia - Core Design - Amiga / PC RRP £34.99. *Shop around for best price.*

Fleece Quest - author Simba - SynTax PD - ST (Disk 332) / PC (Disk 331) / Amiga (Disk 544)

Four Symbols - Amiga / Amstrad / Atari ST / PC
Details in ads on pages 51 & 60

From Out of a Dark Night Sky - Zenobi - Spectrum 48K -Tape £1.99, +3 disk £3.49

Golden Fleece - author Jim McBrayne - SynTax PD - Amiga - Disk192. *Other non-shareware versions from Jim McBrayne.*

Great Million Dollar Jewel Heist - author Dorothy Millard - Spectrum 48K £2.00 tape / C64 version £3.00 tape or disk - The Guild

Legend - Mindscape - Amiga RRP £14.99 /PC £19.99 /ST £9.99. *Shop around for best price*

Legend Of Kyrandia - Virgin Games - Amiga & PC £35.99. PC. Needs 286 or better.
Shop around for best price.

Lure Of The Temptress - Virgin - Amiga & ST £30.99 / PC £35.99.
Shop around for best price

Maze - author David Sambrook - Syntax PD - ST - Disk 461

Perdition's Flames - author Michael Roberts - High Energy Software - Macintosh / PC
(details in ad on page 44)

Pork 1 - author Dave Malmberg - Syntax PD - Amiga (Disk 371) / PC (Disk 454) / ST (Disk 67)

Solvadol X - author Louise Wenlock - Adventure Workshop - Spectrum 128k - Tape £2.50, Disk £4.50

Star Portal - SynTax PD - Amiga (Disk 396) / PC (Disk 457) / ST (Disk 64)

Starship Quest - author Larry Horsfield - Adventure Workshop - Amstrad - Disk £6.00. *(Other versions from FSF Adventures)*

Thrallbound - SynTax PD - Amiga - Disk 508

Unnkulia One-Half - author D. A. Leary - SynTax PD - PC - Disk 546

EDITORIAL

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"Nemesis"

Ron Rainbird

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From Beyond is, as of its July issue, ceasing publication. *What???* Yes, I'm afraid it's true. Tim has decided that, as he no longer enjoys doing the magazine and finds "… it isn't fun any more…", there's no point in his continuing it when there are lots of other things he'd rather do. All subscribers will be refunded in full.

As some of you may know, Tim resigned his adventure-writing column in Your Sinclair a month or so ago. There are many reasons but it was mainly YS's policy which seems to be aimed at a teeny bopper market. They seem to consider that mini reviews with the fewest possible number of words, Top Ten lists and wild and wacky funny bits are *allegedly* de rigeur for an adventure column today. There is a very strong rumour flying around is that Your Sinclair may not survive its tenth anniversary - with a lowest common denominator policy that comes as no surprise.

When Tim first told me about his resignation, he was pretty sure that FB wouldn't suffer because of his depression about the way his column had worked out, but recently he has been asking himself if he 'really' enjoyed editing and producing the magazine as well as writing a large percentage of it. The answer sadly was, finally, no.

It's a question Sue and I often ask. There's no doubt that producing magazines like SynTax, Red Herring and From Beyond can take an inordinate amount of time, particularly if you're always striving, as Tim does and we do, to continually improve the look and the content. And for sure, there have been many times when I've wondered if it was worth all the effort… usually when things go terribly wrong. But for us it is - mainly because of the help we get. Our contributors do a great job and we appreciate the support from everyone… not forgetting the people who cheerfully (!) attack such boring jobs as typing up solutions. *A round of applause to you all.*

So, while I truly regret that From Beyond will disappear, I can appreciate and sympathise with Tim's decision. Anyone who saw his first issue knows the immense amount of work which has since gone into it (not to say that the the first issue was bad, it certainly wasn't). Producing a quality magazine in your spare time is no mean feat and Tim definitely did that. From Beyond will be missed and there's nothing to replace it for Spectrum adventurers.

Are 8 bit owners a dying, or moribund breed? Looking at the number of RH readers who have recently upgraded their computers, I rather think so - the only 8 bit computer I have now is my trusty ZX81, but even that has been in the junk cupboard for years. Is pure text adventuring also on its way out? I do hope not but I'm concerned that it might be - from the large commercial producers at any rate. Let's have some letters on this… tell me I'm wrong… please!

Marion

Lemmings 2 is a brilliant game, but beware if you're buying the PC version. It's very heavily copy protected and a lot of people are experiencing problems running it, especially wth DR DOS 6 and OS\2, so be warned.

Thanks to Bob Adams for telling me that a new version, v1.5, of the Master's Edition of AGT will be out on 15th June. It will have many extras including animation and Sound Blaster support, and an improved question and answer system. A minimum of 512K and a hard disk are required and it is PC only.

Clive Wilson's second PC conversion of one of his 8-bit games, The Unborn One, is now available from The Adventure Workshop for £5.00.

From Al Lowe (inventor of Leisure Suit Larry) comes Freddy Pharkas:Frontier Pharmacist! Born to be a gunslinger, Freddy met his match and gave it all up for a life in pharmacy. Now his arch enemy is back so Freddy must leave the safety of his shop counter, strap on his guns and clean up Coarsegold. The PC version of this new Sierra icon-driven graphic adventure is out now.

New Amstrad releases from Adventure Workshop: Spectre Of Castle Coris (Larry Horsfield) - mid May; Dragonslayer (Martin Freemantle) - mid May; First Past The Post, Quest For The Holy Snail, Larry The Lemming's Urge For Extinction, Snowjoke (Gareth Pitchforth) - mid may; Agatha's Folly (Linda Wright) - end of May.

The Adventurer's Convention, Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham in October. Details in their leaflet in this issue.

Legend's Gateway 2: Homeworld should be out by the time you read this, as should SimFarm. Look out for the RPGs Lands of Lore from Westwood/Virgin (over 20 megs of compressed art and FX) and Might and Magic V: Dark Side of Xeen (I'm still ploughing through M&M3!) and the strategy games Rules of Engagement 2 (includes a campaign builder) and When Two Worlds War (with a random planet generator for great replay value).

A new version of Railroad Tycoon is on the way. It will be out in the States fairly soon but not in the UK until August or later. It will have several new features including new locomotives and three new maps - North America including Canada and Mexico, Africa south of the equator and South America.

Debby Howard has given up doing her Amstrad Adventure PD Library and although she is looking for someone else to take it over, we have no details as yet.

HOT NEWS
Brian Moriarty's latest game will be The Dig (he wrote Loom for LucasArts). It has been co-developed with film director Stephen Speilberg. Due for release later this summer. the official announcement is to be made at the Chicago CES Show next month.

Sue

"... I totally agree with Tim Kemp that, to get any recognition from big companies for a multi-format, all-dancing, all-singing adventure writing program, we must make ourselves heard.

Most large companies probably don't even know that a sizable adventuring community (I don't know how big) exists, so wouldn't contemplate doing something like this.

Firstly, if we were to start writing to companies and making ourselves noticed, we would need to establish, as a group, what we would want out of a program and who we were going to write off to.

It would be no good, if we were to start this campaign, to divide our overall strength in writing separately to different companies. Also, not to be offensive, Red Herring and SynTax (if it got involved) can't reach everyone that would be interested in such a scheme.

If possible, we could try and get a group of the 'Glossies' to help us. The FORMAT trio would be a prime example, if we could persuade them to help. If...

To make Tim's idea work he will need all of Red Herring's and SynTax's readers, and more, in full support..."

James Judge

"... I read with interest Tim Kemp's letter in RH10 concerning adventure writing utilities and I thought I'd play devil's advocate to his arguments. Instead of feeling that a fantastic commercially developed adventure writer would fuel interest in adventures on 16 and 32 bit machines, I believe that such a utility would backfire in the same way that GAC and Quill did on the 8 bit machines - allowing easy programming tools is dangerous to the market - although, I'm sure there would be some amazing adventures produced they would be diluted by a deluge of predominantly low quality products which, instead of attracting people to adventures, will drive them away.

As Tim rightly points out - the big companies do have large development teams, marketing and advertising power which they use to develop their own in-house systems to write games such as Monkey Island II, Rex Nebular, Space Quest IV etc., But there is a limit to the size of of the adventure market. I doubt that any company is willing to release their in-house utility - firstly, it's probably not very user-friendly and secondly, it would reduce sales of their other adventures.

Many people underestimate the amount of time, expense (and expertise) and people it takes to write today's commercial adventures - game designers, producers, programmers, artists and musicians can work solidly for over a year to create a game... resources which I doubt are available to home brew companies.

Gone are the days of programmers sitting at home writing and designing games with their own graphics and sound. This is sad in some respects but unfortunately, as games have grown to multi-megabyte size, it has become a necessity.

Finally, I'd like to round off by saying that I also don't believe that advertising and hype are as important as Tim believes - many people wait to read the reviews and talk to friends before shelling out £40 -50 on a game. Even games with no advertising or hype, if good, usually win

in the end (Wolfenstein3D is one example).

Anyway, I seem to have drifted from my original point and, to be fair to Tim, most of my arguments are based on my experiences in the PC market - the ST and Amiga market may well be different. Anyway, hopefully this will generate some lively discussion…"

Stuart Whyte

The case for a commercial product isn't helped by the restrictions US Gold have put on AD&D Unlimited Adventures. See Sue's review on page 32.

"… Dave Barker states in his introduction to the solution of Volcano of Raka-Tua (April issue of Red Herring) that "it is more likely to be Australian or American". In fact the program is Australian. Others in the series include, Oasis of Shalimar, Castle of Mydor, The Lost City, Smuggler's Inn, Himalayan Odyssey, King Solomon's Mines and Mystery Island. I understand that most of these are now in the public domain and are available from The Guild…"

Dorothy Millard
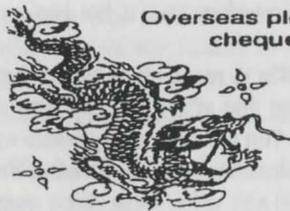
BLOODWYCH

Reviewed by James Judge, played on the STe
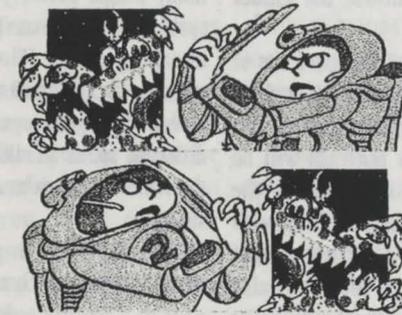
It is said that many eons ago the Bloodwych ruled over the ancient city of Treihadwyl. There, secretly, they directed the affairs of Trazere. For many centuries the people of Trazere lived in peace and respected the Bloodwych. But there was one amongst the Bloodwych that hungered for power. His name was Zendick and he was second only to the Grand Dragon in power and the mystic arts. After many years of plotting and planning Zendick was ready to deliver the blow he had always dreamt of, and on that day he called forth dark powers that had never been thought of and decimated the Grand Dragon and banished the rest of the Bloodwych to The Astral Plane.

In the years that followed that dreadful day Zendick called to Treihadwyl many abhorrent creatures of the night and the good citizens were frightened to go out after sunset. Slowly the great city changed, towers appeared above the ramparts and in them great Crystals Of Storing were placed, sucking the life out of the land.

With this stored power Zendick planned to summon the Lord Of Entropy, an incarnation of pure evil. Then, or so Zendick thought, he would be able to re-create the world in his own image. He was, of course, absolutely insane. The Lord Of Entropy (or The Entity) would humour him for a while but then destroy him and do what it pleased.

While all this was going on the subconscious minds of The Bloodwych found one another in The Astral Plane. They then agreed to send two of their number (Saldar and Vestryl) to find the last sixteen Champions of Trazere. Once the the

champions were found the two must chose the worthiest of them and embark on a mission that will destroy Zendick, find the Crystals of Storage and defeat the Lord of Entropy.

Bloodwych is an RPG in the mould of the ever-popular Dungeon Master, with one exception. You and a friend can play simultaneously! The screen is split down the middle, horizontally, with Player One's view at the top and Player Two's at the bottom. Each player has his own control panel etc., in his own half and (thankfully) cannot interfere with the other player. This game can be played on your own but that means you have twice the amount of work to do but it does have its own advantages (more food, experience points and equipment).

For those of you that have never played or seen Dungeon Master, Bloodwych or one of their clones here follows a brief description of how the game is played.

First of all you are presented with a screen full of the portraits of the sixteen champions. On the 16 bit you choose one champion and go onto level one - The Recruitment Area. From here you wander around a small area where the other champs reside and you must choose another three to complete your party. After that it's off to The Keep. On the 8 bit version you must choose your four champions from the opening screen and then go straight to The Keep.

You view the game world in a pseudo 3D view and move around using arrows which are to the right of the screen. The arrows take you one step forwards, backwards, left and right and turn you 90 degrees in any direction.

Just above these arrows is a scroll with which you can view your characters stats, a backpack with which you access your characters inventory and a book with which you utilise the games magic system.

To the left of the screen are four portraits of your characters and a graph showing the leader's Hit Points, Stamina and Magic Points. If you click on the graph, it and the portraits will be replaced by a list of commands. Most of the commands are to do with communicating with the monsters in the game (you can't use most of them in the 8 bit version). You can also commend your characters, tell them off, shout (useful in a two player game), sleep, pause the game and save your position.

Once you have mastered controlling your characters it's time to go around the dungeon. On both the 16 and 8 bit computers it is split up into six significantly different sections... The Keep, The Serpent Tower, The Moon Tower, The Dragon Tower, The Chaos Tower and Zendick's Tower.

The Keep is the easiest and it is the level you will enter most frequently because around it are scattered the entrances to the five towers. The objective in the towers is to retrieve the Crystal Of Storage and, once you have got all four crystals, move to Zendick's Tower and there kill Zendick (he is hiding behind some Mindrock sections), place the Crystals in their rightful place and kill the Entity. Easy really.

All over the place are monsters in groups of up to four. On the 8 bit you will only see the monsters as humanoid creatures with a variety of faces, while on the 16 bit they take the form of dragons, crabs, floating eyes and a myriad of human creatures.

To fight these evil beasties you walk up to them and then click on a sword icon that is next to the direction arrows. The two front characters will then trade blows with the monster(s) while the back two can use bows and lob magic into the fray.

Each character has his or her own spell book with the spells they've learnt in it. To cast a spell all you have to do is click on a rune, specify how many magic points you want to expend on the spell and away you go. The spells range from attacking spells (Fireball,Wychwind) to spells which reincarnate dead characters and renew the power of magic rings. Different characters learn different spells at different rates, wizards being the fastest to learn and warriors and assassins the slowest.

You will also, in your journeys, come across many puzzles which range from stepping on four pads in a specific order, to utilising pads, buttons and spells to allow you to continue. (On the 16 bit version you even come across a maze).

All in all this is the second best RPG I've played (the first being Mindscape's Captive). Graphically this game is quite good but the animation is shoddy and the sound department is not very well catered for. The programmers have balanced puzzles and monsters in the correct proportions so you are not fighting a monster every five minutes and only coming across the odd puzzle.

The 16 bit game is, as one would expect, better than the 8 bit with better graphics, sound and it is larger. The 8 bit version is still very enjoyable to play and really it is a different game.

If you haven't got this game buy it now (ST version on the Quest & Glory collection from Special Reserve at £14.49)

I can only give hints for the Atari version as this is the only one I've completed.

A Few Hints

Recruit characters that you don't want and then put all their equipment in the inventories of the characters you do want. This way you will get more than enough keys to see you through the adventure and money to give your wizards a good start. Sell all the surplus items to the first trader you meet.

BLOODWYCH DATA DISK. Volume 1

Reviewed by James Judge, played on the STe

Just when you and Trazere thought it was over!

When you fought the Entity in the original game it was not killed but merely 'ejected' from our world back into his own. Now he thirsts for revenge against you so, just for your pleasure, he has constructed a dungeon full of creatures, traps and puzzles which will 'make Treihadwyl seem like a holiday camp' according to the instruction manual.

So here you are having being snatched from Trazere and plonked in the middle of this dungeon with no weapons, no armour and no idea what is behind the door that is facing you.

These extended levels are designed to be played with the characters you had in the previous game so I hope you haven't wiped your saved game position... oh dear, you have, what a pity. If you haven't you can import your characters, whatever level they are. Even though the game is meant to be played by characters of level fourteen you can still play with characters of a lower level, although it is not advised.

The difficulty level of the game follows pretty closely to its predecessor with the same equipment and monsters you were finding at the end of Bloodwych.

In the manual it says there are plenty of new monsters but I'm about the a third of the way through and I haven't found a single one. One good thing with some of the monsters is the ability to recruit them if you have a spare place in your party. They are only temporary characters though so you can't replenish their hit points, stamina and mana without potions.

Other new aspects of the game include enhanced graphics, twenty five new levels to die in, old and new artifacts that have been vamped up and a new class of spells.

To obtain the spells you must have reached a certain level and then the spell fairy asks if you want to sacrifice one of your old spell classes for this new class. The first few spells are ones that help greatly, concentrating on your party rather than doing damage to the opposition such as making a person super human by enhancing their stats, a heal spell and a novel one called Phaze. This spell, depending on the amount of magic points you expend, transports you a few squares forward enabling you to sneak up behind a monster before he can attack you!

If you enjoyed Bloodwych you'll love this as it is more of the same but better and harder. If you haven't played Bloodwych though, you'll have to play it before you can play this.

CHEAT!

Every time you come across a monster communicate with it then ask what it has to sell. It will then name an item. Kill it and the named item will be dropped by it.
Yippeee.

BLOODWYCH

A Few More Hints
In the Maze in The Keep you will come across a sign saying "Welcome Back". Go down the stairs opposite and then take two steps forward, drop an item and continue walking until the item appears, turn around and repeat. You will now be able to go up the other set of steps.

THE FOUR SYMBOLS

Reviewed by Phill Ramsay, played on the Amstrad CPC

When I loaded the game, I had no idea what to expect, nor indeed, at what level the game had been aimed. Before attempting to solve the game, I walked around the various locations, noting objects and making mental notes as to what (if any) their applications might be.

Eventually, a black cat found me and rubbed itself against my legs, as felines are known to do, when I noticed people looking at me strangely. Sensing danger, I moved away from the location with the cat, but it was too late. A crowd chased me, and before long I was accused of using Magik...

There was, I deduced, more to this game than was at first apparent. I was right.

The scenario is quite simple. You were seen with a black cat, and as everyone knows, only a wizard would own such a pet. Surrounded by the villagers, unable to get away, a villager asks you directly, is this cat yours?

At that point I said "Yes", just to see what would happen. I was quickly put to death. Obviously, the villagers didn't share my somewhat quirky sense of humour.

So, having ramloaded, I said "No". Just then, the cat reappeared and ran to me. It was all the proof the villagers needed. The next thing I knew, I was being ducked in the village pond, having been tied into the ducking-stool. It wasn't until the second or third ducking that another Elder ran up, loudly proclaiming that the Four Symbols had been stolen from the altar of the Church. It seemed that they protected the village and ensured relative prosperity. Without their protection the village was doomed!

Now, they needed a volunteer to go out into the big, horrible, wide world and recover these sacred objects. None of the villagers seemed too keen to try their luck, so I volunteered. At least it save being murdered by these paranoid villagers

for being a wizard when my only crime was to be adopted by a black cat.

Reluctantly, since no one else would take on the job, the village Elder conceded that he had to trust me, and I was released form the ducking-stool and was ready to undertake the quest proper.

At this point, let me inject a hint or two. Get all the objects that you're likely to need before you go to the location where the cat is. Otherwise, when you're released from the ducking-stool, you are taken to the outskirts of the village and cannot re-enter it. It's a case of solve all the problems that have been set in the village before allowing yourself to be caught and ducked.

As for the rest of the game, the problems are quite cleverly programmed, and in one or two places rather awkward to solve if you don't think along the right lines.

You will have to obtain something (indirectly) from a band of robbers (I confess I had to use the solution to solve that problem), and manage to explore a cemetery (assuming you can get there), before moving on to a Toll Bridge and beyond that to a castle and Part Two.

The game, in two parts, was converted using the PAW and so is disk-only. When you get killed off, you are offered a resurrection at your last SAVEd (or RAMSAVEd) position. Obviously, the game supports RAMLOAD and RAMSAVE (RL and RS).

The game seems to be bug-free and should keep intermediate adventurers interested for however long they need to complete it. Novice adventurers might find the game to be difficult.

I enjoyed playing the game and would recommend it to adventurers as a worthwhile addition to their adventure library. There is a very nice twist at the end which I enjoyed so much that I had to re-load and play again.

(First reviewed in Issue 7.)

STARSHIP QUEST

Reviewed by Phill Ramsay, played on the Amstrad

Starship Quest begins where Magnetic Moon ends, the story begins with Mike Erlin on the Stellar Queen, which is speeding away from the Magnetic Moon and its mother planet. The injured Commander Giles tells Mike that his crew had, before the tractor beam captured them, seen large cities and spacefields on the Magnetic Moon's mother planet.

Mike thinks of the discs which were given to him by a priestess in the temple under the moon. Could their secret be hidden on the planet away from which he was now heading? He quickly found the Captain and told him of his suspicions. The Captain is intrigued, but has orders to get Commander Giles to Rigel III, and refuses to stop to explore the planet. Mike has only one option... to jump ship and embark on a Starship Quest. At this point , the game starts and many, many problems begin.

The game has been converted using the PAW and requires CPM+. It is in three parts (The Abandoned Planet, Marooned and The Last Starship) and each part presents many problems and difficulties.

Part One begins with Mike on the bridge of the Stellar Queen, having just decided he must jump ship. He must collect the equipment which he needs and steal a lifeboat before the Stellar Queen goes into hyperspace jump - a mere two minutes away, so you only have so many moves to escape the ship. It is quite possible to escape from the ship without certain equipment which will be essential in later parts, so be warned! Having escaped the ship, your problems seem to multiply. You will have to deal with an

underground tube system (and, alas, the tube car you find is as dead as a dodo), learn how to read alien writing and manage to launch a jeep which has an empty fuel tank. These are only a few of the many diverse problems which have been set - and which you will have to solve to proceed to Part Two.

Having managed to get this far, you are stuck at a spaceport surrounded by a moat. To escape this trap, you must be very careful. A little further on, you will be chased by a wild animal and it is very much a case of planning your actions, and being ready to execute them quickly. The program continues if you take too long and by then it is too late.

And if this isn't enough, the woodlands abound with hostile natives who wouldn't mind having you for dinner... To escape from them requires a little thought and ingenuity. Eventually, after having solved more problems, you will find a cave where you can rest and then be ready to tackle Part Three.

Part Three presents many challenges, as you will have come to expect from the first two parts. Passing impenetrable barriers is one of the tricks to learn. The wildlife inhabitants of this part are not very friendly, but there are ways to neutralise the threat which they pose to you. At one point you will have to swim underwater and you must remember that you can only hold your breath for so long. When, at long last, you get to a spaceport, the end may be in sight, but there are still several problems to be solved...

Starship Quest is a very difficult game and is aimed at experienced adventurers. I wouldn't be

surprised if they find many problems to baffle and bewilder them. That isn't to say that the solutions aren't logical; they are. To those adventurers who relish a challenge, I cannot recommend Starship Quest too highly. The game has a strong science fiction element, which will appeal to many people who are fans of this genre.

There are useful INFO and VOCAB commands which help with syntax and recognised verbs.

Apart from one minor bug (which should have been removed by the time you read this), I found the game very impressive. A first rate conversion by Philip Reynolds of Larry Horsfield's original game for the Spectrum.

STAR PORTAL

Reviewed by James Judge, played on the Atari STe

You, the adventurous type, were having a drink at the local pub with a fellow drunkard, sorry, customer who, during the conversation, had dropped a few hefty hints about an installation on Mars with 'an ancient alien artifact' within.

These hints tugged at your adventuring personality so, for the next six months, you spent your time trying to find out whether there was any truth to the rumours.

Finally you had tracked down someone who had been on the expedition that had found the artifact. She said the artifact looked like a phone booth with a lever protruding from a wall. Someone from the team had stepped inside, pulled the lever to see what would happen and disappeared never to reappear!

After a bit of research Earth established that it was a 'Gateway to the stars', a teleportation booth that would take whoever was in it to designated points around the Universe. Where these points were nobody knew. Earth decided it was too dangerous to be of any use so they built an installation around it and posted a solitary guard there who was supplied by a remote control ship.

You decided to have a look at this artifact so you snuck aboard the ship but, when it reached Mars, it crashed near the site scattering your

equipment around the surface of Mars never to be found again.

So here you are alone in the Martian desert with not the foggiest what to do...

Star Portal, based on the book 'Ticket To Anywhere', was written by Michael Detlefsen in AGT and is one of the best AGT games I've seen.

The introduction is pretty big but gives you a fair idea of what has happened beforehand which got you into this predicament. The instructions are the standard stuff ripped from the AGT manual with a small note as to where you can obtain hints and what any special keys do.

Right... on with the game. The text is in mono which, in my opinion, is the best display for AGT games and of a very high standard. I have not noticed any spelling or grammatical errors which is quite rare for a PD game.

The actual game is very well thought out with all the locations spreading from the portal booth and at any time you can go from one world to the other.

Let me just explain about the portal. As I said it is a phone booth shape with a lever in the south wall. You come across this contraption first of all in the installation on Mars but once you pull the lever you are randomly transported, in the booth, to a different planet so there are

puzzles that can only be solved by something in another planet! (Remember to wear your suit whenever you enter the portal).

Puzzles are logical and there are quite a few in the first stages of the game. The first puzzle had me stumped for a while because I was just dense. You had to find this key to open the door to the installation and it was somewhere in the Martian desert. The only object I found was a raggedy spacesuit which I wore. After that I forgot about it until about a thousand moves later I decided to open it up and there it was the key and, wait for it, a human skeleton! So I had been walking around in the old suit with the solution to the problem and a skeleton crammed in with me. A slight mistake on the programmer's part there, I think !

This was one of only two bugs I have found so far, the other being that if you step into the portal and try to do anything you are told "I'm sorry I can't see/describe that" or "sorry you can't do that/go in that direction" so you have to reload a saved position which in itself is a bit dodgy.

A nice touch to the game is the fact is that as you progress you gradually learn more about the booth and its creators.

All in all a very good game that I can't wait to complete. For your £2.50 you will get hours worth of enjoyment. Well done Michael.

Hint

Nothing about the game this time. If you have a machine with a megabyte or more of ram you can speed up the speed AGT games run by using a ram disk of about 700k and copying all the contents of the game into it and running the game from there. It takes about ten seconds to load instead of the couple of minutes and there is no pause between rooms.s

THE GREAT, THE GOOD AND THE AVERAGE

Legend Of Kyrandia, Curse Of Enchantia & Lure Of The Temptress

Three reviews of three point and click PC adventures by Tim Kemp

THE GAMES

These three games, all from different stables, share a remarkable amount of similarities. First of all they all have similar sounding names. There's LEGEND OF KYRANDIA by VIRGIN/WESTWOOD STUDIOS. Then there's CURSE OF ENCHANTIA by CORE DESIGN, and last, but by no means least we have another VIRGIN title, this time by REVOLUTION called LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS.

THE PACKAGING

The second thing that links them closely is the cover art. In each case we have a mountainous and misty, or castle filled/woodland backdrop, with large middle distance central baddie figures (evil looking women in two cases, funnily enough) and the odd smaller 'bit player' thrown in to balance the artwork up. But wait, the similarities don't end there...

THE STORYLINE

The games all have similar sounding 'typically fantasy based' storylines. In LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS you play the part of DIERMOT, imprisoned in a depressing cell for no particularly good reason, but you know that the village of TURNVALE has been invaded by SKORL (evil mercenaries of the temptress) who are there to do her dirty work. Who is she, where does she come from and more importantly, where is she now? Your job is to escape, question the villagers, find the TEMPTRESS and presumably get rid of her and return the village to its peaceful state.

Funnily enough in CURSE OF ENCHANTIA you find yourself incarcerated in a depressing prison cell with apparently no hope of escape. To be fair you are at least 'plucked' from a baseball field in the semi-animated opening sequence and transported off to another time, so it's not like you actually belong in this strange place. BRAD, for that is your name, is actually magically transported to Enchantia by an evil witch who, it seems, wants to use you in a potion of some kind. Nevertheless, despite this slight plot difference, obvious similarities abound as you find that: 'the downtrodden villagers are praying for a return to a peaceful life, and the death of the evil one', which is pretty much what they are doing in LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS.

Finally there's LEGEND OF KYRANDIA. This, to my mind, is the best 'all round performer' of the trio, but even it has a remarkably similar storyline to the other two titles. Deep within the ancient forests, the enchanting world of KYRANDIA has long been known as the most magical of the ancient Kingdoms. Then along comes MALCOLM the evil Jester, who, would you believe, is hell bent on turning the ecologically sound KYRANDIA into a place of death and decay. You begin the game by visiting your grandfather who has been turned to stone by MALCOLM (well, it may not be you who starts off incarcerated, but it is one of your relatives!) and from then on it's a case of using magic, skill and lucky guesses to return the land to health once more. Yes, there's also plenty of 'chatting' to villagers to be done in order to 'pump' them for information - just like there is in LURE and CURSE...

THE INTERFACE

How do you like your point and click interface? Here we have three different examples. The worst has to be ENCHANTIA'S which has a row of ICONS which only appear when you click in the top or bottom section of the screen. Once accessed you see several different icons representing the various actions you can perform and which, when clicked, allow you to perform 'stand alone' or 'linked' actions, depending on what 'game' objects you either possess or have access to in any particular location. Intuitive it ain't as you discover that despite being able to click on, pick up, carry or store lots of 'objects' there's nothing there, save the object itself to tell you what you've just picked up. Now had the graphics been crisp, SVGA efforts, or even large VGA ones, then things might not be so bad, but at one point I picked up a Y shaped object, and it was only by trial and error that I got it to operate in the manner it was meant to be operated in, though even after using it successfully I still had no idea what the object was. Had the name of the object been printed somewhere on screen, even when you first find anything, then things wouldn't have been so bad, but you really have little idea what the items you find on your travels are. The sequence of 'action' icons to be clicked on in order to get anything remotely complex to work is a nightmare, and is really just a matter of trial and error - a click here, an object manipulation there, another 'linking' click there... all with no guarantee things will work in any way, shape or form. It's a long winded way of doing things, and by the time you've spent ten minutes flicking between the 'control' icons and 'objects' in your possession you start to lose interest in any part of the game that's giving you trouble. The problem of object manipulation is made all the more annoying by the fact that the game is split into sections. You can't progress past one section of the game till
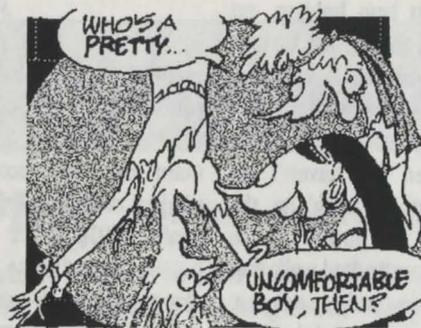
you've completed the tasks within a certain area. No one likes being forced to stay in one place till they've worked out what does what - especially if you aren't likely to work out what does what before the turn of the century.

In sharp contrast, the LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS interface is rather more pleasant to use. It's still a bit quirky as you find yourself presented with a series of options appearing in a box after clicking your pointer on any object that takes your fancy. The best thing about this interface is that whenever your roaming pointer passes over an object of interest - the pointers arrow-like appearance changes into cross-hair sights and the name of the interesting looking item your sights settle on appears on-screen. Further clicks with either left of right button cause an option box to appear, and you can scroll through a list of options which relate to using the object in question. Options include OPERATE, TALK TO... etc., so OPERATE KEY ON DOOR would more or less do just that, and TALK TO (preceded by a click on a character) allows a conversation to take place. You also find that the pointer changes to a directional arrow when you move it to screen exits and entrances, rather like it does in LEGEND...

Best of the bunch as far as pointing and clicking goes is LEGEND OF KYRANDIA. Here we have a simple display showing the objects you've collected (all clearly defined, and they also come with a description) and when something needs be used or manipulated it's just a case of clicking on it (to grasp it), the cursor then turns into whatever object you now hold, and then you move the object to the place on the screen where you hope it will be used successfully, and click again! In this simple manner you get to give

things to folk, place objects into holders, eat things, grow things and drop things into various containers such as WELLS, and GOPHER HOLES. Another nice touch in this game is that when you move your 'walk to' pointer (which is what the pointer actually is when you haven't got anything in your hands so to speak) to the screen edges, it changes to point in the appropriate direction if you can indeed walk that way. i.e. if you enter a location, and are not sure whether you can take the track to the right, then simply moving your pointer to the right and seeing if the arrow points right will tell you if you can go that way. A barred circle (NO ENTRY) appears if movement in any particular direction is not possible. Again, a nice simple way of doing things.

GRAPHICS

All three games feature some very nicely drawn backdrops and scenery, but again those in KYRANDIA are, to my mind, the best. KYRANDIA also has the best animation and animated sequences, though there are some nice 'spot effects' in LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS. CURSE OF ENCHANTIA comes last in the graphics stakes, mainly because of the rather flat and characterless cartoon type sprites that have been used for the games inhabitants. The main character sprite is nicely done, but is nothing special, and is certainly not a 'saviour' that makes me want to give it 10 out of 10 on the graphics front.Another graphic area where CURSE is let down is in the animated intro sequence. Both LEGEND OF KYRANDIA and LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS really go overboard on their animated scene setting intro's. All CURSE OF ENCHANTIA has are a couple of static graphics with a bit of colour cycling going on and the odd flash here and there. Okay, that's not a major part of the game, but occasionally a nice intro helps get you into the spirit of the thing.

SOUND

You can't turn the sound off (on the PC version) in ENCHANTIA, though believe me you'll wish you could. A pair of speakers with volume control is a blessing! It's not that the main tune that accompanies the game is bad, it's just rather samey all the way through. Once again, LEGEND OF KYRANDIA shines in the music department and the tunes played throughout your quest will stick in your mind and you'll be humming 'em for the rest of the day after every session. LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS employs the odd sound effect, but nothing much in the way of accompanying tunes.

GAMEPLAY

LURE seems to present the player with the best overall challenge. Problems range from the very easy to the very tricky, and there's quite a few dirty tricks and double dealings done by your enemies and supposed villager friends and contacts which sees you get into the odd 'scrape' here and there! You also find that you can interact with the other characters in the game rather more intricately - issuing complex, multi-layered commands to your underlings is no problem, so you can send them off to do some of the games more menial or more demanding tasks while you go off and do other things. You also have the opportunity to do a bit of hack 'n' slash fighting too which adds another dimension to the game. CURSE OF ENCHANTIA plays like a dog. Why mince words? The interface is rather duff, the objects are, on several occasions unrecognisable, and you are given no real 'pushes' in the right (or even wrong) direction that could help keep you interested. The only reason it will be the last of the three games finished is because it's hard, but for all the wrong reasons and in all the wrong ways. LEGEND OF KYRANDIA is rather too easy on the whole, mainly because it's so damn friendly.

FROM BEYOND

• THE SPECTRUM ADVENTURE FANZINE •

Isn't it strange that of all the adventure fanzines currently on the market, every one of them says, or at least hints, that the majority of their readers are Spectrum owners. Well it's not so strange really as the Spectrum adventure scene boasts the most frequent adventure releases, the best titles and undoubtedly the best value for money. If you are a Spectrum (or SAM Coupé owner) then FROM BEYOND should be right up your street!

FB has just celebrated its 2nd anniversary in fine style, with a massive 68 page adventure packed issue. Mind you, the two previous issues were also pretty big! Issue 10 had 52 pages and came with a free fantasy novel, while issue 11 had 60 pages and came complete with a free Zenobi adventure.

If you haven't seen FROM BEYOND before (or not for a long time) then I'm afraid that back issues are not available, so you have missed out quite badly! On the other hand, for a copy of the latest issue simply send a Cheque or Postal Order for £1.50 (made payable to Tim Kemp) to:

Tim Kemp (From Beyond), 36 Globe Place, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 2SQ.

• From Beyond... more than just words on paper! •

Characters tell you where to go, what to do etc., and even if you can't get to the places you need visit immediately you know that you'll get there one way or another - usually by a relatively easy route or via a set of easy-ish problems. There are the odd harder problems here and there, and at least they are hard in a logical way rather than being tough because there's not enough help in the game to enable you to make progress.

NICE TOUCHES

All three games employ the same method of giving the adventurer a few thrills and chuckles, and that method is having the central character perform tasks in front of your very eyes. Examples: In CURSE OF ENCHANTIA a row of electric eels line the seabed blocking your path. When you accidentally walk onto them your little character sizzles, glows and jumps backwards as the electric shocks take effect. Getting past them calls for help in the form of a friendly turtle who, for a morsel of food, sinks to the seabed where you climb on his back and safely hitch a ride to the other side of the eels. Also, right at the beginning of the game you find that calling for help in the prison cell sees a disgruntled guard fling the door open, storm into the room and shout 'SHADDUP' at you. On the way out he trips over the stair and a key falls to the floor and bounces over to where you hang upside down, manacled to the wall.

Talking of prison cells... in LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS you find that should you escape from the confines of your cell without first making sure the guard is safely locked away you'll soon find that a bit later he'll catch up with you and the screen changes to show an incoming fist zooming towards your face! Swift, graphical punishment indeed!

Once again though I have to say that the best touches pop up again and again in LEGEND OF KYRANDIA. I suppose you could liken the magical sequences that link the action in the game to so-

called 'end of level' guardians in arcade games. What I mean by that is when you come to a part of the game where the quest changes, or where you do something extra clever then you get an animated sequence - usually involving your character - which lets you know that you are making good progress. Even one of the lesser encounters with MALCOLM the evil Jester produces a humorous display where MALCOLM appears before you and in a rather menacing fashion juggles three throwing knives in a most convincing and natural way. While he juggles he taunts you, and every time he reaches a poignant point in his rambling threat-filled diatribe he launches a knife high in the air... and then only continues with his insane ramblings when it eventually falls and becomes part of the juggling act once more. All of a sudden he launches a knife in your direction! It twangs into a tree next to you. Quick as a flash you guide your character (BRANDON), pluck the knife from the tree and fling it back at the Jester with superhuman speed and force. Does it kill MALCOLM... No siree, as he merely snatches it from the air and incorporates it into his little juggling act, though you know you've shaken him somewhat as he retreats into his lair - sealing the mouth of the cave behind him, and to get in you have to... oops, that's another superbly animated surprise waiting to happen... But that's only a minor sequence in the game - the major ones are a darn sight more graphically spectacular.

JUDGMENT DAY

These type of games, especially when they first hit the streets, don't come cheap, though for an annual £6.00 membership fee you'll find that SPECIAL RESERVE are selling two of the games at reasonable discounts... CURSE OF ENCHANTIA £13.99 & LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS £23.99. LEGEND OF KYRANDIA will set you back at least £25.00 depending on where you get it (PC prices).

The best all rounder is LEGEND OF KYRANDIA, though I believe it's also the game that you'll complete the quickest. LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS is not far behind LEGEND in the enjoyability stakes, and will probably last a good while longer as it's that bit tougher. CURSE OF ENCHANTIA is a reasonable game, and not at all bad for the SPECIAL RESERVE asking price of £13.99, but even at that price it still only scores 5 out of 10 on the value for money stakes in my opinion. However, all of the games could have been improved with the inclusion of a few more minor problems dotted around here and there, so that in-between completing the bigger tasks you could con yourself into thinking you were a good adventurer because of all the smaller problems you solved along the way!

NOT APPEARING IN THIS TRIO OF REVIEWS...

What's not appearing in this trio of reviews are my favourite point and click PC games. Why not review those instead? Well, they've been reviewed before - and reviewed to death. What are they? SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND II which has a great point and click interface, great graphics, storyline, humour, music, animation and spot effects. ULTIMA VII The Black Gate which is more your massive point and click RPG adventure quest - again with superb musical accompaniment, graphics and interface.

And finally, I lied, LEGEND OF KYRANDIA does make it onto my 'buy this or miss a goodie list'. Despite the fact that it only took me a week of leisurely play to complete it's a game that makes you smile on more than one occasion and will, if you care to show them, impress your friends. The well designed player / game interface enables just about anyone to get to grips with the game which means anyone new to adventures (or computers for that matter) will be able to get into adventuring straight away and have a good time to boot.

SOLUTIONS WANTED

Archers 1-4, Amnesia, Black Tower, Big Caves 1&2, Black Crystal, Catacombs, Catacombs Revisited (Classic Quests), Codeword Arguseye, Caves of Ice 1&2, Dark Dungeon, Demigod, Desperado, Dragonlight (Thalien), Excalibur (not the Alternative one), Explorer, Forest of Doom, Fourth Protocol, Grungy Towers, Gothmog's Lair, Inheritance, Infinite Inferno, Lord of Darkness, Labyrinth of Crete, Law of the West, Macbeth, Microzone, Oregon Trail, Orion Quest, Phantasie II, The Rats, Sealed City, System 1500, Valley of Cesis, Vampire Hunter, Vampire Castle, The Valley, Wizard's Castle, Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?, Where in the USA is Carmen Sandiego?, Where in Europe is Carmen Sandiego?, Wizard's Crown, Yes Prime Minister.

SPECTRUM 48 & 128k GAMES WANTED

Valhalla, Mindfighter. Also wanted, book by Mike Gerrard 'Adventures on the Spectrum'. Send prices and list to: D Fisher, Stonecroft, Little Green, Easton, Wells, Somerset BA5 1EB.

PC SOFWARE EXCHANGE

Maurizio Discepolo, Via Maggiore N# 5/B, Sava Di Baronissi (SA), Italy would like to hear from anyone who has PC software to exchange. He's also looking for Level 9's and similar adventures.

FROM OUT OF A DARK NIGHT SKY
Reviewed by Geoff Lynas, played on the Spectrum

Shivering as he did so, the old man moved closer to the small fire, then drawing his tattered blanket tightly around himself, he closed his eyes and tried to sleep. But he knew it would be no different tonight, once again 'that' dream would worm its way into his mind and he would spend the night wondering what might have happened if he could only have found the final pod. Maybe it would all have been different and Man would still rule instead of the Aliens that now dominated the Earth. If only he could have destroyed them all, if only ...THE DREAM BEGINS...

You are Martin and you've just been on a night out. Did you score? Nearly - well, maybe next time. You are driving home through the dark when WHOOSH! A bright light plummets from out of the sky. The engine of the car dies away and stops. What now? No, you haven't blundered onto the set of a Sixties SciFi film ("When Worlds Collide", "The Day the Earth Caught Fire", "Day of the Triffids" etc.) this is really happening. Well, what NOW?

The game oozes quality. From the moment that the loading screen takes over the whole screen (with a simple but evocative skyline), leaving only a small window defined to show some activity while loading takes place, to the final downbeat message which rewards success (?) this is a top drawer product. The introduction is atmospheric and just about the right length. The opening scene is a brilliant tribute to all of those SciFi movies they can only screw up these days by re-making. The location descriptions are succinct and the messages helpful, maintaining the atmosphere throughout with just the right amount of humour.

The problems to be solved are many and varied. They are also, in the main, brutes. This is no beginner's game - it will challenge the skills of the most jaded expert.

My first attempt was doomed to failure because I left the car without the keys. The doors then automatically locked which meant that I could no longer get back in to get the keys. Naturally, without keys I couldn't open the boot and, ultimately more important, neither could I open the bonnet! Everything else that I did turned out to be futile. This sort of thing goes on all the time. Time is also of the essence - if you don't complete certain tasks in a predetermined number of moves - tough, you're outta there!

Another feature which had me confused (an easily accomplished trick) was to have different results to repeated instructions e.g. SEARCH POCKET = You find a ball of fluff - SEARCH POCKET = Ah, the fluff was hiding a strange object, which you now have - SEARCH POCKET = You do not find anything of interest (This is a fictitious example). The moral is - don't be satisfied that you have achieved all that can be achieved at a given location with a given command until the message starts repeating and, even then, watch it!!

1988 seems to be when this game reared its head originally in which case I'm probably preaching to the converted but if you're relatively new to adventuring and haven't got this one - treat yourself. For a paltry sum you will have bought yourself days of entertainment, if not weeks!!

Just in case you were beginning to think that

this is an unqualified testimonial to this game I have to say that (without detracting from what I've already said) I personally cannot abide the 'Sorry, you can't do that JUST YET", "Maybe later", "Not at this time" sort of message, so favoured by Zenobi, in response to inputs which will NEVER elicit the desired effect. It is just so misleading in a gratuitous sort of way. Anyway there are some of those in this otherwise awesome adventure. Despite this, send Zenobi some money. Buy it!!!

By the way, there is a function which saves to RAM. Just type SAVE and you get the option to save to MEMORY or CASSETTE. Neat, eh?

Getting Started
.ssarg hcraes ,ssarg hcraes ,tsew ,eldnah llup ,draobhsad leef ,syek teg ,draobhsad leeF

THE GREAT MILLION DOLLAR JEWEL HEIST
Reviewed by Andrew Craig, played on the Spectrum

You are bound to a chair in a strange room...

After freeing yourself you discover that you are in an opulent and many-roomed mansion. Slowly the cause of your plight returns to your aching head - you unwittingly became involved in a huge jewel robbery. Now you have to escape. This is not easy - garden walls are too high to climb and doors to freedom are locked. You discover that loot from the crime has been secreted in the house and garden as the thieves made a hasty exit.

There are, then, two objectives in "Heist" - to find jewels and to escape. But it's the former that dominates so that this is a game which will appeal, principally, to treasure hunters. Dorothy Millard has taken a good deal of time and care in constructing the game. It's packed with puzzles of varying difficulty and you soon taste success. The first location, the living room, gives a good idea of the game - it's packed with objects to Examine and Take and do things with.

There are some nice features to "Heist".

Randomly appearing messages give a clear idea that you are not alone. This adds urgency to your task, but loses its impact when you realise that, in fact, you have oodles of time to do whatever you want. There are Ramsave, Score and a, not very helpful, Help facility. Descriptions are many and well written.

Two pieces of advice need to be heeded. Examine everything carefully and sometimes more than once - particularly where more than one object may be lurking. Secondly remember that exits are not always described either in the house or in the garden.

And so to the crunch - did I enjoy "The Great Million Dollar Jewel Heist"? Well, no, I didn't particularly. I felt that Dorothy's obvious adventure writing skills had been wasted on a plot which I found unengaging. That said, I would certainly be interested in other games by this particular writer.

A Few Hints
Saw - latem stuC / Clock - lenap a saH / Rose - esav eht ni ti tuP / Cup - lio teg ot ti esU / Cheese - ti nosioP

PERDITION'S FLAMES
Reviewed by Marion, played on the Macintosh

You have departed this world, shuffled off thus mortal coil, popped your clogs, snuffed it, bought the farm or, to put it bluntly... you're dead. You are floating in limbo, aware of nothing and feeling nothing. It's all so peaceful... but of course, with your luck, this state of affairs won't last and it doesn't. All your faculties, such as they are, return to you and you awaken.

You are on a boat. Not just any old-fashioned ferryboat being rowed by a sinister being, you're sitting on a plush window seat in the main passenger cabin of a large luxury yacht. Well, if you have to be dead, at least you're travelling in style. As you casually glance through the window you can just see a red glow on the horizon and you notice that the boat is travelling quickly down a wide river. Hmmm. A red glow, a boat? Can this mean that you aren't en route to Heaven? Is your destination... gasp... that other place? Hell?? Perhaps it might be an idea to look around the boat, someone might be able to confirm this dreadful suspicion you've just had.

As you stand up, you notice that there are other passengers but none of them seems to want to talk. A door to the south looks interesting - aha - a bar! Unfortunately the bartender isn't one of the chatty types and apart from handing over some free booze, all he does is to tell you to ask the captain. Free drinks? You wonder if there's a catch. Should you or shouldn't you drink it? Still puzzling over this, you head up to the deck and the first thing that strikes you is the complete lack of sound, then you see a note.

At this point, I'm digressing from the story-

line. Amongst other things on the note are the command INSTRUCT-IONS. This lets you save a large and detailed file to disk for printing out later, but given the excellent game manual which accompanies Perdition's Flames, I thought it was an unnecessary exercise. As far as I can see without checking one against the other word for word, everything on the file is in the game manual.

Back to the story... You find the captain and ask him a few questions. From his answers you deduce that your suspicions were correct - Hell is your destination and you reckon you'll just have to make the best of it. By the time you've done all this, the boat has landed and is tied up at the pier. The captain tells his passengers that they may disembark at their leisure, so there's nothing else for it... off you get...

The first location you come to is a Briefing Room where it's advisable to sit down and listen carefully (and take notes) to everything that is said. This can take a long time, but then time means nothing when you're dead and the answers to the questions from the other passengers will be of great help in your future existence in this place.

Perdition's Flames is a large and intricate adventure. It's not the number of rooms, 110 or so, but the various puzzles and pieces of puzzles can take you back again and again to the same places, therefore there's a lot of action in relatively few locations. The place is crowded with people to interact with, littered with objects (fortunately, as you're dead, the weight of things isn't a problem). Seemingly easy puzzles turn

out to be a whole lot more involved than you had at first thought. I very much liked the way you are allowed to move around the game, map it and tackle the earlier puzzles without coming to a dead stop (cough... sorry about that) because you can't solve a particular puzzle. Okay... you soon find out that perhaps you've only solved one little piece of that puzzle and you have to go back and rethink it, but at least you are getting somewhere.

Perdition's Flames is a TADS game so you'll find all the multiple commands usage and contractions you would expect. You can "take the box, the floppy disk, and the rope", "get (or drop) all except the torch" or even "put all except the cheese and the mouse in the box" and so on. Amongst the special features are Command Line Editing, Command Recall and a very useful Review Mode which allows you to scroll back screens of text so that you can see what you've recently done.

I've already mentioned the game manual. The second half of it is taken up by a very comprehensive hint book which starts off by giving you tiny nudges and eventually, if you are stuck enough and exasperated enough to go back and forward through the bigger and bigger

hints, will give you the final solution. A map is also included in the packaging, but be warned - it only shows obvious objects.

I really enjoyed playing this adventure, there's so much to it and author Michael J. Roberts is to be applauded for the plotting and good story-telling, the quality of the puzzles, lack of spelling mistakes and thanked for the great fun I had. Perhaps it's not for the absolute beginner, but then nobody ever told me that the Level 9s were difficult when I first had my Spectrum and this is a very user-friendly game. I'm going to offend all the purists, I expect, but I'd say if you need to - use the hints, there's no point at all in struggling for days at one particular point. By doing this, the less experienced adventurer will sooner or later get to the stage where he/she doesn't need so much help, nor will the adventure end up in the junk cupboard because you're irrevocably stuck.

For me, it's also a very great pleasure to see really good text adventures available for the Mac. I can play the PC version using SoftPC, but it slows things down a lot, so thanks to the High Energy people for having the Mac version of this and some of the Unnkulian games done.

FLEECE QUEST
Reviewed by Sue, played on the PC

I've played various characters in adventures - sometimes male, sometimes female - sometimes human, sometimes not. I've also occasionally found myself as an animal; the game that springs to mind is Infocom's Arthur where I was an owl, badger and other creatures at different parts of the game. But this is the first time I've ever been cast as an elephant!

Not any old elephant, though. This intelligent pachyderm is in charge of the

automated library system at Glumdale Skewels. Many other animals work there too; Vivid, a hardworking donkey, is the Library Ass-istant, Mrs. Bunny has various titles including Coordinator of Library Technology, Fawn the Dragon and Sofie the Zebra work in the Technical Services, and there are many other equally industrious animals dotted about the building. It would be a pleasure to work there, except for one thing...

Fleece is a sheep and Presiderm of the CSEX, the Union representing the classified Staff. She prances round (when she gets in to work at all) in ridiculously short skirts and generally drives everyone crazy with the way she disregards all the rules. Rules were meant for other people (I mean, animals) not for her! More than anything, you'd like to sort out the difficult creature once and for all, and it looks like today will be the day.
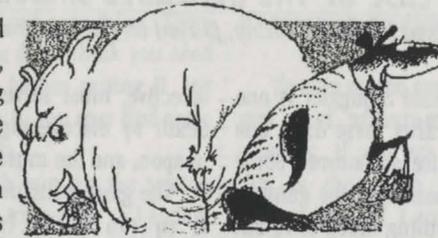
So, the aim of the game is to get even with Fleece. Luckily the other members of staff are as unimpressed with her behaviour as you are and are quite willing to give you a helping hand. You can talk to most of the characters and this is essential if you're to succeed. Fleece, as usual, is nowhere to be found, so you'll have to search for her as well as for the bits and pieces you'll need.

Fleece Quest was written using AGT and one of the entrants in the 1991 AGT Adventure Writing contest. The location descriptions are generally of a good length and describe the various sections of the library pretty well. This might be a dull place to set an adventure if it weren't for the animals inhabiting the place - put a cat in charge of the reference section and things take on a more humorous feel. All the characters are well described to make them more realistic, the spelling and grammar are good and the game is easy to map as all exits are mentioned in the text.

The screen display is a rather brilliant yellow and green on black with the room title, score and moves taken in red on white. Yes, quite. (Actually it's better than it sounds.) The 'EXAMINE' command is rather brief but any messages are generally of a good length. Unfortunately death is abrupt with no resurrection option which would at least give you the opportunity to restore your game. There

is no built-in help but the game is fairly easy apart from the fact that the author, for some unknown reason, has stepped back into the early days of adventuring and makes you 'OPEN DOOR' and then 'GO DOOR' to leave your office! Since this is the starting location, I think it quite possible that some players will take a long time to see the rest of the building, especially those not familiar with this prehistoric way of getting from A to B which, thanks heavens, is rarely used these days.

There are a few dodgy bits of programming in the game. There are several pieces of paper (torn, crumpled and smudged) which each give a hint, but if you're carrying the smudged paper, you read it automatically even if you have the other papers with you. This means you have to drop the papers in different rooms and, since each scores points if carried, you have to remember to pick them up afterwards if you want a chance at a full score. A few of the responses are strange too - a lit flashlight can't be turned off because it "isn't even on" but it can be "extinguished" - that sort of thing.

Generally the game is too easy. With only 50-odd locations, the help from the other characters and heavy-handed hints dotted through the game, the main problem will be doing the right things at the right time and in the right order at the end. But having said that, the scenario is original and the game is quite enjoyable.

A Few Hints

What to give Vivid? - epolevne dna troper ehT / To fix the old computer - lanimret yb revirdwercs dna elbac pord ,lanruoj scinortcele daeR / To open the new book closet - yek leets esU / How exactly to get rid of Fleece? - skcatS kooB ni koob daeR / To read the smudged paper - ssalg gniyfingam esU / When you see Fleece - reh palS

THE CASE OF THE BEHEADED SMUGGLER

Reviewed by Phill Ramsay, played on the Amstrad CPC

The Case Of The Beheaded Smuggler is one of those games that is a rarity these days, one which is aimed at the novice adventurer. Some people may take that to mean that the game is simple and that there is nothing much to it, but they would be very wrong to draw that conclusion.

You play the part of Sherlock Holmes. The story-line is that you were visited by your close friend and chronicler, Dr. Watson, in time for him to hear the latest mystery which has come to your attention.

Holmes is in conversation with Mr. Victor Wathley: at his invitation, Wathley describes events concerning his uncle, Mr. George Wathley.

Mr. Wathley is, it seems, a rich man. He has made his money in the past year by smuggling various articles within the cargoes of tea which his ships carry.

However, of late he has become reclusive and ill-tempered. Victor Wathley is certain that someone has an unfair hold over his uncle, and that he may be being blackmailed. He requests the aid of the legendary Sherlock Holmes in solving this riddle.

He excuses himself, as he has business to attend to, but promises to meet you at Wathley's home.

With Watson by your side, you journey to George Wathley's home, where he has secreted himself. Victor Wathley meets you at the station and together you reach the house.

But all is not well.

The decapitated corpse of Mr. George Wathley lies upon a path just outside the house. Victor Wathley immediately runs off to summon the local constabulary - but not before chiding Holmes for being too late, and no good.

You, as Sherlock Holmes, the world's greatest detective, must solve the mystery of Wathley's death by discovering the motive, the murder weapon, and the murderer.

The game runs under CPM, is disc only, and is in two parts. It supports Ramsave and Ramload, and offers resurrection at the last saved (or ramsaved) position, should you manage to get Holmes killed.

As I have already said, the game is aimed at novice adventurers, but more experienced adventurers shouldn't let that put them off. The game is well-written and has lots of atmosphere. Personally, I am a Sherlock Holmes fan and was a little unsure about how faithful to Conan Doyle's writings this game could be. I was pleasantly surprised that it has been very well put together, and obvious mistakes have been avoided. ("Elementary, my dear Watson." for example, would have devotees of Sherlock Holmes grinding their teeth in fury.)

Some of the problems set are easy to solve, or the solutions are fairly obvious; but in one or two places the solutions are slightly more difficult.

You may TALK TO and QUESTION characters that you meet. It is best to do both, since they may not yield the same answers. The whole process of piecing together how And why the crime was committed has been very well handled. It is an idea to make a note of any addresses that you find in Part One, because you will need to visit them in Part Two.

Part One (the murder scene) sees you having to search the house and land for clues which may be of some use. In one or two places Watson may have something of interest to add, so it's an idea to talk to him fairly frequently. There are several objects which you will need to find and use in order to unlock some clue or other. Some of these objects are hidden, so you need to make

certain that you've examined everything. There is a weight limit, so if you don't think you need an object later on, don't bother getting it. It's always an idea to examine it, you may find some information which is of use.

Part One finishes with you on the station platform waiting for your train back to London. This is the starting point for Part Two, and your investigation continues in the capital.

To sum up the game, I have to say that it is a very neat adventure. It succeeds in its aim superbly. If you are a novice adventurer, then this is the game for you! More advanced adventurers will, I am certain, find the game full of atmosphere, and a worthwhile purchase.

THE GOLDEN FLEECE

Reviewed by Keith Adam, played on the Amiga 500+

Some three (or more!) months ago I received a copy of The Golden Fleece by Jim McBrayne to review.

Since then, life has been somewhat chaotic (putting it mildly) and what with flying up and down the country to such exotic ports of call such as Birmingham, Aberdeen, Edinburgh etc. ... I never really managed to get around to starting the review.

Finally having my feet back on terra firma for a few days, I managed to dedicate some "Quality" time (as our American cousins would say) to looking at this game.

I was truly looking forward to playing this game - always enjoyed hearing tales of ancient Greece. I also felt that I would have something in common with Jason who had been sent searching for the fleece - he never managed to stay in any one place for very long either!!

On initially loading the game, my *first* real impression was that I had two first impressions!!

The "Read Me" guide to the game bore striking similarities to the last few weeks - chaotic. The information contained within the "Read Me" section was presented in absolutely no discernible order whatsoever.

On the other hand, the introductory text for the actual game was polished, well written and highly atmospheric.

Having read of the origin of the hunt for the Fleece, I was all prepared for a great adventure steeped in the mythology of ancient Greece.

Unfortunately this was not to be. So far as I could see there was little (no) attempt to involve any other aspects of Greek Mythology in the plot beyond that initial scene.

I am afraid that I simply do not see what relevance a Changing Room, a Gingerbread House or trolls or goblins actually have to do with either Greece or the Golden Fleece.

This lack of adherence to the storyline expected and other little quirks in the game, largely dictated by the game writing system used I would imagine, tended to make me less than enthusiastic about playing this game.

If you are looking for an adventure based on Greek Legend - this is not it!

Sue grabs her graph paper, sharpens her crayons and loads up...

AD&D UNLIMITED ADVENTURES

Played on the PC

If you play adventures or RPGs, eventually most of us get the feeling that we'd like to have a go too. As far as text adventures are concerned, there are lots of utilities about on the various machines to try. But if you fancy writing your own RPG, until the appearance of this package, you'd have been rather stuck and would have had to program your own from scratch, a daunting task.

The SSI Gold Box games have been about for some time. They features a forward facing view during exploration, with text boxes and extra graphics popping up from time to time to give you messages and allow the plot to progress. Combat switches to an isometric 3D view with each individual shown on the screen being moved in turn, casting spells, attacking, fleeing or whatever. With the AD&D Unlimited Adventures package, you can attempt to create your own Gold Box game. I would imagine the fact that the package is being sold means that we've seen the last of the official Gold Box games and that a new system is on its way.

So what do you get for your money? Three high density disks, a data card and a manual in a nice, solid box. The manual contains the rules for the AD&D computer game system (familiarity with the system and Gold Box games is recommended but certainly not essential) and instructions for creating your own games, including a tutorial to get you started with some basic puzzles. A sample game, The Heirs to Skull Crag, is also provided on the disks and this can be played or loaded into the editor to be examined and altered if you wish.

Each game is divided into sections or modules. A maximum of 4 overland regions and 36 dungeon areas (which can, of course, also be towns etc.) are permitted. Each module is worked on individually, then all are linked into a complete game. Each module is represented on screen by a map of up to 576 squares in area e.g. 20 by 28, 15 x 38. On these you place walls, doors, creatures… whatever you want. The main limit to this game is your own imagination. A wide range of artwork is provided with the package and you can amend or import your own art work too if you're a good enough artist.

Working with the program is simplicity itself since it is controlled by menus, all choices being made by a click or two of the mouse button. For example, walls are added using the 'map editor' which has four modes to place walls, backdrops, zones or events. Up to three sets of wall images can be used in each module, chosen from a good range including bricks, stone, marble, coral reefs, and trees and shrubs. Some walls have doors (locked, open, secret etc.) and there are 16 different obstruction levels available. All you do is select which image you want and click on the map wherever you want it and as many times as you like. Floors and ceilings are changed using a backdrop image. For outdoor scenes these come in night/day pairs.

Each module may have up to eight zones. These can distinguish between different types of terrain outdoors, permit or disallow resting, have wandering monsters or whatever. There is a wide variety of monsters provided. Again, you can customise them to suit, decide what treasure they carry, their HP etc., creating new monsters in the process and making the game very much your own creation.

Finally, there's the main section of the editor - events. These are also linked to individual squares of a module, up to 100 events per module. Events can be chained e.g. if you fight at a certain location, you find treasure which then permits entry into another area or if you carry a certain item at this location, something will happen somewhere else, such as a teleporter appearing. Stairs are also designed using events - if you walk onto a particular square you'll get the choice to go up (or down) a staircase to another area. Atmospheric text, suitable artwork and evocative sound effects can also be added. Rewards can be given in the form of weapons, armour, scrolls, potions, special items… whatever. Quests can be set up, keys and special items customised to give just the effect you want.

Testing your work in progress is carried out through the editor too. Thankfully a WIN option is provided for combat so you don't have to fight every battle to its ultimate conclusion. To leave testing, just select ENCAMP and then DONE and you'll be back in the editor.

The manual is very well written, taking everything step by step and making it easy to get to grips with the package. Unfortunately there are errors in it. Some of these have been noted on the data card in the box but others will be discovered as you work through the tutorial. For example I thought at one stage that the option for random combat had been omitted - an AD&D game without wandering monsters? Impossible. But no, it was there but had been renamed 'pick one combat'. Presumably these changes had been made, like the others, after the manual was written, but also after the data card was designed. It's aggravating when you're trying to understand a new package and get held up by the manual being incorrect.

The whole package impressed the hell out of me. It's a dream to use, and its flexibility in chaining events means you can create very complex puzzles. The range of art work means that non-artists like myself won't be hampered by the fact they can't draw, but if you can draw, there's no limit to what you can achieve.

But… It's a big but…

Though you can share your finished game with other players the games produced are NOT stand alone games. You need Unlimited Adventures to run them. You can add passwords so the player can't dig into your datafiles and look at or change things. The thing that really cheesed me off was that the adverts which didn't mention this fact anywhere. To me, this is misleading advertising and why make such a restriction anyway? The game author gains nothing, the player gains nothing, in fact, both lose through the package's inflexibility.

I wrote to US Gold asking for their views on this, sat back and waited… and waited. No reply came. Cynic that I am, I can't say I'm surprised. However, Paul Rigby kindly offered to contact SSI direct in the States and ask them. I'll let you know what reply we get, but, whatever the outcome, be warned; this package may not be as useful as you'd hoped. Buy it to use for your own enjoyment, not with an idea of giving away copies of your completed RPG.

LEGEND

The ancient land of Trazere is once again in turmoil due to a strange and powerful entity stirring from its sleep. The people of this land are being turned into minions of evil and are marauding around the countryside.

The king, for reasons unknown, has abandoned his subjects, leaving them to fight for themselves. The only hope is the stalwart men of the four keeps.

From the north came a mighty Berserker, frothing at the mouth all the way. From the south, a Runecaster ready with runes and funny smelling herbs. A Bard sung his way from the south and, from the east, an Assassin, a master of stealth and the art of backstabbing.

Yeah, yeah, yeah... we've seen and heard it all before with Bloodwych and its Data Disk. So what's new?

Well, first of all, it's a completely different game with a different control system, more monsters, different graphics, sound and view point, a far more versatile spell system, larger levels, better puzzles and, secondly, it's a better all round game. Need I say more?

After a nice intro you start the game and are presented with a 3D map not unlike the one in Dragonsbreath with keeps, villages, cities and armies on it. You can go anywhere you want on this map visiting towns, fighting battles with the armies of evil and seeking out the Unshrine.

When you do enter a dungeon (Treihadwyl is the first) you are presented with a 3D viewpoint like the ones in Shadowworlds, Shadowlands, Cadaver etc. where all the dungeon-based action takes place.

Around the screen are the icons for inventory (same idea as usual), the compass, Chicken Mode (you click on the chicken and your party peg it as fast and as far as they can away from the enemy), Eliot The Dragon (who kindly draws a map for you) and the characters' pedestals.

Each of the characters' pedestals has a pile of skulls in front of it which signifies their hit points and the lower the stack the more in need of a coffin that character is.

If you click on one of these pedestals another group of pedestals (to the left of the screen) will change showing what that character has got in his hands and what his mystic item is (magical helms, rings, wands, staves etc.).

Moving around the game area is simplicity itself. Select the character you want to move a click to where you want him to move and off he runs.

Fighting and spellcasting are a major part of the game but both are very easy. When fighting, your characters can fight as a group or on their own. To fight as a group all you do is click on the Rally icon and off they go a-slaughtering. To fight individually you just click on their weapon and, once again, they charge off seeking the enemy.

Only the Runecaster can cast spells (surprise) and the way it's handled in the game is beautiful. There are, unlike Bloodwych, no set spells but instead you are given a bundle of runes. Runes are split into two different categories - direction and effector. There are four direction runes (Forward, Missile, Continuous and Surround) and twelve effector runes from damage to vivify.

You can mix these runes as you want, so you could cast antimage on yourself, then surround yourself with continuous damage and, from the eight squares surrounding you, have missiles that will shoot off which will dispel any magical protection the monster has. Its hits paralyze it, continuously damage it and surround it with a continuous paralyze spell!

There are so many spells (I think the

OKLIB'S REVENGE

BY SUE MEDLEY

The story begins...

"Okay, lads," said the Sergeant, looking you and your fellow guards slowly up and down while you looked at the toes of your boots, shuffled your feet and wished you were somewhere else ... anywhere else. You just KNEW that Oklib was looking straight at you. "All I want is a volunteer to go and find this missing staff of the King's."

Even now, it's hard to believe what happened. When Oklib shouted, "Volunteer, one pace forward, now!" you suddenly felt a sharp <<jab>> in your arm and, startled, made a swift hop forward. Turning to rub your stinging arm, you noticed a strange absence of feet to either side of you. None in front either. But behind you was the Sergeant - casually repinning a medal, and you were left - totally alone - the 'volunteer'...

OKLIB'S REVENGE is available for the ST, Amiga and PC (3.5 and 5.25 disks). The 5.25 PC version is supplied in archived form for use on a hard disk due to the size of the finished adventure.

For your registered copy of **OKLIB'S REVENGE**,
please send a cheque or postal order for £5.00 payable to:
S. Medley, 9 Warwick Road, Sidcup, Kent DA14 6LJ.
If you live outside the UK/Europe, please add £1.00 towards postage and packing.
All payments in Pounds Sterling, please.

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programmers said a couple of billion) that you'll always be coming up with new and useful spells and compiling a pretty chunky spell book.

Puzzles are pretty fiendish in this game making you use all for characters, spells and other items to complete them. Their difficulty seems to go up the further along the game you get.

Graphically this game is quite good with animation that is streets ahead of the Bloodwych two-frame effort. Sound wise the game is average with the odd spot effects, music playing all the time while you're outside the dungeons and the Bard has eight songs he can play and each of them has its own little melody (the tunes boost your characters' abilities).

Graphics and sound are not what makes this game though, it's the sheer amount of playability that is oozing from every corner.

Great game, great puzzles, superb playability. Buy it or miss out on an excellent game.

SOLVADOL X

Reviewed by Darren Fisher, played on the Spectrum 128k

Upon loading, you are greeted with a couple of pages of text, telling the player of the game, the theme and also the mission briefing. The following is just a short passage...

"You are the narcotics investigator for the Federation, recognised by your superiors as being amongst the best in the field. You have been issued with the latest interstellar scout craft and dispatched, single-handed, to crack a suspected drug ring in the Alpha Scyni System."

The Mission Briefing...

Basically, you have to stop a large supply of the drug Solvadol X which has been found, from leaving the Alpha Scyni System and heading to other Galaxy systems. You also have to find out who is supplying the drug - all under the cover of a normal space-faring civilian.

After these screens of text, you are into the game. The first screen you are presented with show the controls of your scout craft. This includes a small Galaxy map and flashing cursor which shows exactly where you are. Also displayed is an information panel showing fuel, shields, weapons status and also what planet your cursor is presently over (if any). To move your craft (the flashing cursor), the standard movement words (e.g. N, E, S, W) are used.

There is also a command called Scan and this leads to the first bug - upon using the command Scan, you can scan the planet Rastic (Scan Rastic) but you cannot scan the planet Zether. I don't know whether or not this is intentional. Typing Land, when the cursor is over the planet, takes you to the planet's surface where you are presented with a simple but effective picture of the planet's main starport.

You are now presented with a detective-style adventure which leads you into many unsavoury places. There are also lots of small effective, but interesting items in this game, including the command Chase, which you encounter later in the game.

This game is a very enjoyable adventure, apart from the few small bugs. I heartily recommend it to all fans of Sci-fi adventures but I don't advise beginners to adventuring to rush out and buy it as there are a few nasty problems to solve later in the game.

THRALLBOUND - The Escape From The Vikings

Reviewed by Terry Brawls, played on the Amiga

And they should know...

Here's an "interactive short story" (sic) all the way from Norway, written by 3 people "for" Pantheon Softworks in Assembly. Yes! Fully compatible with Workbench 2, all this wonderfully in-expert little gem needs is 1 megabyte and a total suspension of belief. Na, just joking - it'll still run on 512K, but minus the graphics. You see, everything loads into RAM first, resulting in quite a fast game with no annoying AGT-style access with each move. More!

The story is one of horror and suspense, nearly. A year ago, a Viking raiding party removed you forcibly from your village in France and took you back to Scandinavia with the rest of the loot. Rascals, eh? Since then, the life of a poor, miserable farm-thrall has been your lot - but enough is enough!

Bravely, you sneak out especially early one morning and steal the Earl's white horse, in order to get to the nearby port of Havgard, find a ship, and sail away before you're missed. Riding hard, you reach the fortified village and canter through the gate...

Which is where we come in. The gate shuts solid behind you; no way back. Strangely, the first thing you see is a "fiercely looking guard" - inside the walls! Well, life's like that, I suppose.

First of all, I have to say that this is one of the shortest and easiest adventures I've ever played. The documentation bravely admits this, adding that it's SO easy no "save" feature is available. I never missed it at all. With just over 40 locations,

half of which are "empty", a plethora of red-herring objects, and a smattering of sub-quests which can be avoided with no ill-effects gamewise, I was finished before I really got into it.

Basically, all you have to do is wander round the village environs and find 3 suitable objects with which to pay the owner of the soon-to-depart ship in the harbour. The parser, though simple, is very good, featuring LOTS of synonyms (decrunch the main code and have a look - you'll be surprised; even shocked!). If you get tired of using the keyboard, Mr. Mouse can be used to clone just about everything.

As the authors are Norwegian, some syntax awkwardness is expected. Mix in that strange fascination most Europeans seem to feel towards what constitutes our sense of humour, and of the vernacular/scatological side of our language, and you get an often hilarious text!

About halfway through the game, this exceedingly strange "advert" sequence comes into play. I haven't a clue what they're talking about (I think it's meant to be funny); it's obscure to the point of insanity, like seeing a favourite room through a mirror - familiar, yet eerily unsettling. Lovely!

Near the end of the game, a nice touch is provided by a map in your possession being transferred to the disk in IFF format; nice pic, and the choice of this happening is yours.

An excellent beginners game, but really only of interest to collectors of the peculiar.

And short!

PORK 1

Reviewed by James Judge, played on the STe

Pork 1 - The Great Underground Sewer System is a Zork 1 spoof, based on a BASIC game, converted to AGT and expanded by Dave Malmberg. If you're familiar with Zork 1 you'll see some similarities between the two games. The thief has now been converted into a tax collector (what can be worse?) and, like the thief, will steal things from you but, luckily, you can get them back at a later date. The Grue has had a personality change. Play the game to find out what.

If you're familiar with AGT games you'll know how this one operates with quite a good parser, status line at the bottom, slow loading times etc. The idea of the game is the standard 'find a number of valuable items and return them to a specific point' and there is no background on how you got here, why your doing this or who you are.

This was the first AGT game I bought and to begin with I was rather disappointed. This proves that first opinions are not everything as I soon began to enjoy the game and couldn't bring myself to reset the computer on it.

As you progress through the game you'll gradually appreciate Dave Malmberg's sense of humour that is present every step of the way. Not just in the text descriptions (although the 'Hell'

section is great) but in the responses it will give to your actions. You try saying 'Ulysses' to the Cyclops!

The puzzles are quite logical but what the game classes as 'valuable items' are, in some cases, rather strange (chili pots, pieces of coal, baseball bats signed by Ron Reagan). The author says this game is not meant to have you pulling your hair out in frustration over the puzzles but it's meant to be quite easy. I agree with him in this respect with the games difficulty level pitched for the starter in adventure games rather than the adept adventurer but, nevertheless, for experienced adventurers it will be an enjoyable break from 'heavy duty' adventures.

As I said, the game is packed full of humour with some of Zork's cleverness and low cunning still present. You need not have completed Zork in order to play this game but, if you have, you will appreciate some of the jokes more.

A very, very funny game that deserves a place in everyone's adventures. If this is anything to go by Pork 2 should be a cracker (which, Marion, I notice hasn't been reviewed for RH yet (nudge, nudge, wink, wink, know what I mean?)).

[Ok, ok... I get the message. M]

UNNKULIA ONE-HALF: The Salesman Triumphant

Reviewed by Marion, played on the PC

Here you are, sitting miserably in the Golden Dragon Inn wondering why fate has been so cruel to you... you, Tuckbucker, one of the famous Acme salesmen. Okay, so it's only your first week in this job of all jobs, but to be sent to this dump right beside the borders of that fearful place... Unnkulia... shudder. Not only that, but

you were attacked, robbed and tortured by demons on the way here! It's all too much, and now, after all this the barman has disappeared and there's not a drop to drink!

You stand up, yawn and wander outside just in case the barman in hanging around. No such luck. Instead you are confronted by some macho

warrior boasting that he has completed Unnkulia Zero! He sneers at you and says that he's found a lot about you during his travels, then he carelessly tossed a pickaxe and a yellow ball to you (fortunately, not at you) and strides off confidently towards the great northern cities. You wish you could follow him, but duty comes first and you are supposed to be bringing (well, selling) the delights of the Acme products to the 'fortunate' locals.

Sighing you try to explore a little, but the way north is not for you and the thugs of the Valley Patrol won't let you go anywhere but back to the Inn and they're making some very unflattering comments about your personal appearance. There being nothing else for it, you make a determined effort to find the barman. When you do eventually find him, he's absolutely plastered - he must have drunk everything in the Inn and left not a drop for you. In fact, he's so drunk that he offers to sell you the Golden Dragon Inn for a mere 18 valmids. Suddenly, your day brightens as the possibilities of this venture reach your brain cells. Now all you have to do is find the money, or some other things that you might be able to palm off on to this mug… errmm… person.

There are lots of puzzles to solve and, as is usual in the Unnkulian adventures, the game is littered with objects all of which, with one exception, have a use. Although Unnkulia One Half is rated '2 - trivial' by the author, some of the puzzles do take a little working out but the game has plenty of nudges so you shouldn't be stuck for long. All the obvious exits are listed although that isn't to say that there aren't any hidden exits. The usual TADS contractions such as, x = examine, g = again etc. are supported and are listed in the ReadMe doc. I like the addition of footnotes in the Unnkulian series. Typing Footnote + the number given in the

main text brings up extra information about the location, or the history or whatever, without having screeds of text at a location - this stops my eyes glazing over and my missing vital information because there is just too much text.

You will meet a variety of people and beings in your travels. They range from the aforementioned thugs of the Valley Patrol, to a Gambler, a Stone Bird, a Bicorn, a Little Girl and a Time Traveller on a bicycle. During the game you are frequently shown highly desirable golden objects and then told that you can't have them thus making what would have been a relatively easy task, much harder.

The writing and the humour in the Unnkulian games appeals to me. I love all the weird Cheezbee names and I find the responses to my actions, amusing. The game is well-plotted and care, time and attention to detail has obviously been taken with the writing. I am not competent to comment on TADS as an adventure-writing system - it takes me all my time, just to play without going into the technical side of things - that has already been done by others who are much more able. All I can say about that is that it plays beautifully, I haven't noticed any bugs (not that I would unless I fell over one) and I haven't been irritated by the 'you can't do that' sort of response.

Unnkulia One Half is a short freeware adventure which gently introduces you to the much more difficult Unnkulian Underworld: The Unknown Unventure; Unnkulian Unventure II: The Secret Of The Universe and Unnkulia Zero: The Search For Amanda. While One-Half an ideal adventure for the beginner, it's great fun for everyone else and a very pleasant way of spending a few (or maybe more than a few) hours while bashing your brains out … as I am currently doing in Unnkulian Zero…

AMULET OF DARATH
Reviewed by "Nemesis", played on the Spectrum 48k

You play the part of Zachra, who is set the task of finding the two pieces of the Amulet of Darath in order to destroy the Dark Lord and restore peace and happiness to the land.

You start the game in a pub (good start) with a mug of mead on the counter which you can purchase for the rather princely sum of one gold piece. The landlord is described as being like his pub - large and well-built, he is not, unfortunately, at all helpful. After a leisurely wander about, I had accumulated a fair selection of objects and points, including a rather mystifying memo informing all of an attack at Lammastide at 29:00 hours?? Some unprovoked violence produced a uniform, the wearing of which sent the locals away screaming in terror - maybe uniforms just do not suit me?

Typing HELP produced six clues, one of which warns against stealing a book - oh dear, too late, Ramload again! After becoming thoroughly stuck I consulted a friendly adventurer and was able to proceed a little further with the aid of some rather obscure inputs.

Unfortunately I have still not found any of the Amulet or many uses for the vast array of objects collected. The game seems very well programmed with no obvious bugs, mazes (thank goodness) or sudden death syndrome. It is hampered by a lack of clues in the text and a rather old-fashioned feel.

A Few Hints

At hole in tree - (strif evolg eht gniraew era uoy erus ekam) eloh otni hcaeR / Pond - ybur a dnif ot dnop eht morf dum evomeR / Uniform - mrofinu ni stekcop ni kool dna nepO / Book - moor terces a dnif ot koob evoM / Mattress - ssap a dnif ot sserttam tfiL

THE MAZE
Reviewed by James Judge, played on the ST

We've all watched it at some time or another haven't we? With its annoying music and plonkers who call themselves contestants. What am I talking about? The Crystal Maze, that's what.

The Maze is, basically, the Crystal Maze on your computer (minus the host and music) and written with the 3D Construction Kit utility.

You're an adventurer trying to complete this Maze and retrieve the legendary 'Prize'. To get to this fabled 'Prize' you must progress through a certain number of 'lobbies' or levels and complete four out of five puzzles in each lobby. When you complete a puzzle you get a key and once you've got four keys you can progress to the next lobby.

The puzzles aren't all that difficult, just time consuming, ranging from logic problems to sliding letter thingamijigs and the unavoidable mazes.

Each puzzle has its own time limit and if you fail to complete the challenge within the time limit you will lose one of your four lives and start at the beginning - unless you've saved your position.

Movement through the gameworld is achieved by the usual 3DCK arrows and you can also change your eye level and direction. Sound and graphics in the game aren't wonderful but what do you expect from 3DCK?

I'm not a fan of 3DCK games but this one is a fair effort. There are not enough brain teasers for my liking and the puzzles are too easy. I haven't completed it due to my copy now refusing to work but I doubt whether I would have wanted to anyway.

If you like 3DCK games you'll like this one but if you don't, you won't.

ADVENTURERS: A Funny Breed Of People
by Phill Ramsay

Have you ever stopped to think about adventurers? Not about the people themselves, but about the kind of mentality which they possess? Many people just cannot understand how we can be fascinated by adventuring. Indeed, one friend of mine sees adventures as simply a collection of silly puzzles presented on screen.

He amplifies his thoughts by saying that nearly all adventures follow the same theme, or can be classified in the same way. 'Find the Golden Chalice', or 'Rescue the demented princess from the beautiful Jabberwok'.

There is, he claims, no originality in adventure games. Further, they are plagued by bad spelling, poor grammar and abysmal punctuation.

Unfortunately, I have to concede these points to my friend Alan. Don't get the wrong idea, I'm not interested in attacking fellow adventurers, but we have all played games which we have found... shall we say less than satisfactory.

It is not the case that these criticisms apply only to home-produced games. I have played many commercial adventures where the grammar was appalling, spelling mistakes didn't seem to have been checked for, and so on.

Despite these problems, and the fact that new adventures for the CPC are no longer appearing from the 'big' software houses, we still buy and play those which are available. Personally, I frequently check the second-hand markets to find old adventures at very low prices.

Yet I found that playing these games was not enough for me. Perhaps, as Alan pointed out, the poor grammar and spelling began to irritate me. Maybe I simply played one bad GACed game too many. But, for whatever reason, I came to the conclusion that I wanted to contribute something to the adventure scene which had

given me so much enjoyment over the years.

I remember playing a game which I felt had been thrown together without any thought. The programming standard was not what it could have been. The thought crossed my mind that even I could have made a better job of writing the game, and then...

My first two games I wrote with no thought of allowing other people to play them. But Debby Howard twisted my arms (literally), and I donated them to her Dragonsoft label.

The next three games were written specifically for adventurers to play, and I think this, coupled with the fact that they are text-only, made them better games than the first two.

In each game I set myself new programming problems to solve, and became fairly proficient in using the GAC. Recently, a second-hand ADLAN rom became available, and I'm now grappling with this new (for me) adventure writing utility.

But why am I spending so much time and energy in writing these games? Surely in writing six games I've contributed enough to the adventure scene?

Logic says yes; but something else motivates me to continue writing these games, and I'm not at all sure what it is. Perhaps it is merely the fact that every time I write a routine to do such and such, and that routine works (well, eventually), it gives me a deep sense of satisfaction.

When the game is completed and playtested and donated to Debby, I tell myself that that one was the last, and that I have other interests which I have neglected for far too long - and yet, within a few weeks of finishing the 'last' game, I'm drawing the map and writing the location descriptions for the next.

Having said all that, when I compare my games to, say, those written by Simon Avery (Hi,

Si), I'm always a little envious of his abilities. I don't intend my games to be like Simon's - in fact, no one can write an adventure quite like Simon - they couldn't be, simply because our styles are so very different.

Many people out there are fans of Simon's, me included. But if only one person plays one of my games and enjoys the experience then, for me, the whole process of writing the games has been worthwhile.

The adventurer will spend many hours finding solutions to the problems which have been set, and sometimes go to extraordinary lengths to obtain hints and/or tips. The adventure writer, of course, spends many hours trying to think up new problems and new challenges to set. But both will burn the midnight oil and drink coffee by the gallon; one solving problems, the other setting and programming them.

To an outsider, like my friend Alan, we adventurers must seem to be a very funny breed. Very strange and at times incomprehensible. Not only do we willingly put ourselves through all this, we enjoy doing it. We get a satisfaction from solving a game that only a fellow adventurer can really understand.

I still remember the first game that I solved unaided. Before then I had despaired that I would ever manage to solve one. Yet, a few years later, here I am, writing my own games (chiefly for my own pleasure in creating them, I freely admit), and writing articles for Dragon News and Red Herring.

If nothing else, I feel that I am, in some small way, continuing to put something into the adventure scene. I don't say that to be in any way critical of those who play adventures - without you there wouldn't be an adventure scene!

And no matter what the big software houses say, as long as there are people like Joan Pancott,

Debby Howard, Simon Avery and all the rest too numerous to name, and so long as you, the intrepid adventurer, are out there burning the midnight oil, there will be an Amstrad adventure scene for us all to be a part of and to enjoy.

After all, to my mind, that is what adventuring is all about; enjoyment. It should be fun. Of course, when you're stuck in a dungeon with no obvious exits and none that you can find, when you feel like tearing your hair out in frustration, it's difficult to see how much fun you are having.

Sometimes returning to the problem with a fresh mind is what is needed - often a hint or even a solution is called for. Yet, we go back, not necessarily to the same game, and put ourselves in the same situation again and again and again.

Trying to explain to someone - especially someone like Alan - why it is I find such a fascination with playing and writing an adventure is virtually an impossible task. In fact, I have given up trying.

Unfortunately, I find writing an adventure a very time-consuming task, and as a result I find that I don't have nearly as much time to play adventurers as I would like. How Debby or Joan ever get time to play any games, committed as they are to providing us with our beloved adventures, I don't understand. Perhaps they know something that I don't.

Those people who cannot see the attraction of adventuring will probably never be able to comprehend exactly why the likes of Debby, Joan and Simon expend so much of their time and effort enhancing the adventure scene.

Maybe only an adventurer can come anywhere close to understanding it. Anyone else can be forgiven for coming to the conclusion which formed the title of this article.

Adventurers ARE a funny breed of people.

This article was first published in Dragon News by Debby howard to whom thanks are due for permission to reprint it.

"ONE-DISK" AGT ADVENTURES (Amiga 500+/A600)
by Terry Brawls

Let's face it - Amiga owners who want to run AGT adventures have to go through a lot more hassle than PC or ST users - and it's all completely unnecessary. The main problem is the ridiculous need for 2 disk-drives. Sure, 1-drive versions are at last being released, but what we need NOW is a method of converting already existing adventures to 1-drive operation. While we're at it, why not introduce the facility of launching the adventure from an icon? Here's how!

Firstly, make sure that the disk will autoboot in the first place, i.e. INSTALL it, make sure that a SYSTEM-CONFIGURATION file is in the DEVS directory, and the STARTUP-SEQUENCE loads in Workbench (LoadWB).

So - you've got a disk containing the game files, and either AGTRUN or AGTRUNB. If you haven't got a LIBS directory, create one now, because you need to put a copy of the DISKFONT.LIBRARY into it. There are many versions of this floating around; V36.66 on my 2.05 Workbench disk works fine, as should most.

If you want to implement the system's speech capability (using the SPEECH/NOSPEECH convention) you'll also need to put the TRANSLATOR.LIBRARY into LIBS, and the NARRATOR.DEVICE into DEVS. These 2 programs take up 75K, and the voice not only slows things down considerably but is extremely irritating. Consequently, I don't include them - the AGT system doesn't mind.

The 2-disk method always gave me a lot of trouble fonts-wise. Not now, though. Place the IBM-II font, available on Syntax disk PD353 if you don't have one, in your FONTS directory, and you'll improve the look of the adventure enormously.

As to actually starting the adventure, you could always copy over your Workbench CLI, click on it, and do the usual AGTRUN XXX business. However, this is disgustingly inelegant, especially on a powerful, user-friendly machine like the Amiga. It can be done using an icon, just like any other normal program.

All you have to do is get out your fave text editor/word processor and write just 1 line - AGTRUN GAMENAME (or AGTRUNB - whatever). Save it off as a normal ASCII file. Attach a PROJECT icon to this file, same name as the file. Put a copy of either ICONX or XICON in your C directory. I use ICONX, but the version I like (file size 3884 bytes) is not the one in my Workbench disk, V37.1, which I'm sure I've had problems with. Access information on the project icon and add to the DEFAULT TOOL box: C/ICONX (or XICON). Save it.

That's it! Clicking the icon will execute the mini-script and load in the adventure; all automatic and civilised!

I like to fill disks to the brim with the smaller AGT adventures to save space. I have 11 on 2 disks, each accompanied by its crunched source files (if available), easily accessed by text-viewer for that "little bit of help" whilst playing! Each adventure - icon and both game and source files - is in its own drawer for neatness, and easy copying over to its own disk for actual playing.

If you choose to do this, i.e. effectively having the adventure and AGTRUN on separate paths, write the mini-script like this - SYS:AGTRUN GAMENAME - or the system will look for AGTRUN in the same drawer as the game.

To save more space, AGTRUN compresses down to around 77K using Power-Packer 2.3b. As I mentioned before, I iconize and crunch the source files and use PPMore on them when needed. The .INS file in particular reads faster this way, but DON'T crunch it if you're going to read it from the game. Have fun!

BELIEVABILITY
by James G. Johnston
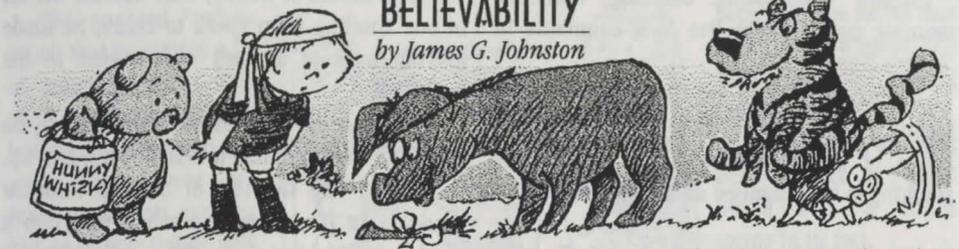
With apologies to E. S. Shepard. KT

I was recently asked what I thought was the key factor in adventure writing and having given the matter some thought, gave the following reply - 'Believability'. Now I have to explain what I mean by 'believability' and to do this I will go back to when I was Dr. Watson to a young adventure writer, Ross Harris. We were in the middle of developing a Space Prison Adventure which involved escaping from the prison sphere, travelling the interconnecting passage, setting a timed explosion in the passage and sealing the administration sphere. After waiting for the resulting explosion to blow the administration sphere clear of the prison, the emergency pod is operated to complete your escape.

We had just hit a problem of believability. How did you indicate the method of waste disposal for hundreds of prisoners in space and about the same number of guards etc.? Too costly to shuttle down, you could not store it nor could you push it out into space. The waste would be gravitationally attracted to the largest body near it - the prison station - and end up clinging to the walls. Yeugh!! We were in the middle of detailing a central globe in the passage which would covert the waste to compost in its inner portion. The compost being used for food cultivation in the outer portion. As I was leaving, Ross handed me a set of sheets and asked me to glance over them. The sheets referred to a proposed 'spoof' adventure. Unfortunately time and the nature of things has meant that neither 'Space Prison Breakout' nor 'The Kidnap of Kristofer Rambo' were ever completed but here are the details of "The Kidnap".

This 'spoof' adventure is based loosely on Winnie the Pooh stories but, for copyright reasons, claims to never have heard of 'Pooh stories' before creating these original characters and story!!

Characters

Winno the Pugh (pronounced Pyuo) - a friendly bear with many friends and a particular liking for hunny whiskey. Not a lot of brain though.

Kristofer Rambo - your average growing-up child. At the time of the story, about to leave home to go on a special holiday, called Supervised Community Work, the result of being caught playing his favourite pastime (Granny Scaring).

Hee Haw - a very sarcastic donkey, suffering from acute depression due to a part of his anatomy having dropped off. Suggestions from his friends of "Sticking it on again with superglue" or "Strapping on an artificial one", have increased his depression and sarcasm.

Snigger - a striped cat-like creature. Spends his time playing practical jokes, when not watching Kristofer Rambo 'Granny baiting'!

Twiglet - a small very nervous piglet who has difficulty making up his mind what day it is.

Titchy - a small and extremely timid creature of unknown type. The only creature in the whole world who considers Twiglet superior to him.

Bajars - disgusting, offensive, mindless, moronic animals who live in a commune in 'Bajar's Wood'.

Hamsturs - small rat-like creatures who, having no courage of their own, live in the fringe of the Bajar Commune and will do anything to be recognised as Bajar friends.

This list of characters was rounded off with a fancy bird called *Yowl* and two jumpy characters called *Regretta* and *Rue* (a mother and son).

Now read on…

An introduction to Pugh's Adventure:
'The Kidnap of Kristofer Rambo'

Chapter One

IN WHICH WINNO THE PUGH FINDS OUT HE MUST GO AND RESCUE KRISTOFER RAMBO, AND THE READER WORKS OUT THAT HE ONLY NEEDS TO LOOK AT THE TITLE TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS.

Winno the Pugh woke up, suddenly, in the middle of the night and listened. Hurriedly, he lit the candle he kept by his bed for such occasions. Avoiding the beer cans strewn across the floor, from Kristofer Rambo's farewell party held a few nights before, he made his way to the airing cupboard to see if anybody had been trying to steal his hunny-still or any of the illicit liquer he had laid down since. "That's lucky that", thought Pugh, "books and I can get away with misspelling liquor!"

Anyway, to Pugh's great relief, none had been touched.

"I think…", he smiled, "I think it's going to be one of those get-up-in-the-middle-of-the-night-and-have-some-whisky -days!"

He leaned down and picked up a half-full bottle, opened it gently, paused briefly to sample the sweet aroma of hunny, then downed the lot in one. Smiling from cheek to cheek, he made his way back to his bed with a glow in his tummy.

Just before he reached the bed, however, he heard the noise that had initially woken him up. It sounded like the sort of noise a Hamstur would make if used to hammer a nail into a heavy wooden front door. "Hum ho, it sounds like the sort of noise a Hamstur would make if used to hammer a nail into my heavy front door", agreed Pugh.

Cautiously. or as cautiously as a Pugh can be with the contents of a half-bottle of hunny whisky in him, he made his way to the door. Slowly he opened the large wooden door and saw before him a large Bajar carrying a very dazed looking Hamstur. "Are you Winno the Pugh?", asked the Bajar. "Yes I am", replied Pugh politely… but just before he could say more, he belched a loud and fruity belch.

Now a Pugh belching is not a pretty sight, at the best of times, but coupled with the hunny whisky and the candle, it became a very effective flamethrower. The Bajar squeaked a pitiful little squeak as you might do if caught by surprise by a Pugh with a flamethrower and ran off into the woods in a fast-zig-zaging-I-don't-like-being-on-fire manner.

Pugh eventually looked away and was about to close the door when he saw the message nailed there. The nail was bent and crooked, as if it hadn't been knocked in with a hammer. It was also rather sticky. At any rate, it had ruined his lovely teak door. The one Kristofer Rambo's daddy had given him in exchange for the spiky weeds that were growing in Mr. Pedro's garden. He decided then and there, as Pughs tend to do, that he would get even with those Bajars.

He ripped the note off the door and read it. It said, "WE BAJARS HAV KRISEFUR ROMBOW AN WIL REELEEZE HIM IN ERXECHANG FOR TWELRVE BOTTLES OF HUNNY WHISKY".

This annoyed Pugh so much that he uttered a lot of naughty words that can't be said in children's books - including two new ones. There were two reasons why this annoyed him so. Firstly Bajars only like twelve year old hunny whisky, which is very hard for a four year old bear to acquire. The second thing was the atrocious spelling, as most animals in the wood, (except Rue, who was too young), could spell perfectly but whenever the Author typed what they had said or written, it always contained appalling spelling mistakes just to make him look good. And with a determined stomp that annoyed teddy bears make, he went back to bed.
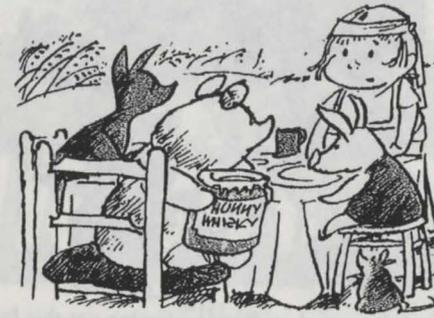
Chapter Two

IN WHICH WINNO THE PUGH FINDS A MYSTERY OUTSIDE HIS VERY FRONT DOOR, AND HEE-HAW IS AS SARCASTIC AS EVER.

Pugh got up with a start. He hadn't the faintest idea how it had got into his bed, just that it was there. He wished it wasn't. But now he had woken up properly and had looked under his bed, he found that it had gone as suddenly as it had appeared. Anyway, it had turned out to be a fine day in the wood and the birds were singing loudly. Too loud, Pugh could still hear them even when he played his Walkman full blast. He decided that birds singing would be very nice, if conducted out of earshot of his humble dwelling. "I pay my rates", he cried, "I'll have to put a stop to this right now!".

A few minutes later, the birds saw a small bear leave Pugh's house with a very determined stomp. Indeed they had never seen Pugh with such a determined stomp before. In fact it was

because of the stomp that they never noticed the flock of Kestruls until it was too late.

A small bear was seen heading back to Pugh's house with a slight spring in its feet.

After elevenses, Pugh decided that there had been enough waffling in this chapter and so he set out to tell his friends about Kristofer Rambo and his capture. For the first time that day, Pugh looked at the ground. There he noticed something that he had not seen before. A dark path led off from his very front door into the wood, following a brand new clearing. A Mystery. "A mystery !!", gasped Pugh, ("A mystery !!", repeated the Narrator), "and one outside my very front door, I must investigate at once, if not sooner!", decided Pugh.

Pugh followed the trail and found that it led to Twiglet's house. At least, it would have yesterday when the house hadn't been razed to the ground. The air was thick with the smell of burnt fur. Twiglet was sitting in the exact spot where his house wasn't, evidently wondering why not. He was covered from head to toe in soot. Pugh thought of an extremely witty thing to say but decided against it on the grounds that it may have been taken as racist and, worse still, have the book taken off the market.

"Dddddid yyou see ttthe ccomet last night Pugh?", stuttered Twiglet. "No", said Pugh, temporarily forgetting the plight of Kristofer Rombo. "It came all the way through the wood and hit my lovely house and burnt it all up!"

By this time Pugh was totally engrossed in Twiglet's story. To think that a comet had been at his door - and he had been fast asleep. "Tell me more", inquired Pugh, trying to hide his excitement.

"Well it was big, about the size of a Bajar -

but, of course, you never see a Bajar on fire and it made a sort of horrid noise as it dodged from side to side".

"And then it hit your house?", asked Pugh.

"Yes and burned it down. But I don't think it meant to. It even left a large pot roast ready cooked for me, but the really funny thing was that it must have known that Tichy was visiting me".

"How was that?", inquired Pugh.

"Well it left me a small pot roast for him".

Though Pugh had no Brains, even though it had a capital 'B', for no obvious reason, he was not slow. Pugh made a hasty retreat once Twiglet started pestering him about making the incident about the comet into a Pugh Hum. However the sun was shining. This was just the kind of day that Pughs like to hum and Pugh hummed the best hum that Pugh had hummed in a long time.

Why is it when I write a sign
or attempt to write a letter
The spelling is the worst there's been
The more twisted it seems the better.

But when I hum a poem
and this seems strange to me
the words come out the right way round
and rhyme most perfectly.

But the end of the second chapter had been reached and he still hadn't told any of his friends.

"Not to worry", he thought, "That's the way they pad out these books".

And Pugh went straight to bed, with a smile that only comes if you know that people have found out that the chapter titles lie.
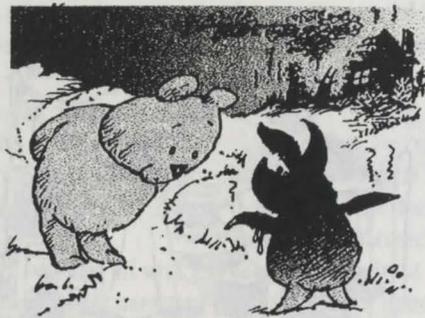
The broad outline of the locations and tasks followed and it looked a good 'spoof'. The skillful way he had used the adventure introduction to paint the scene and set up the personalities ensured a high believability factor.

Having got this far, the actual adventure did not create a great deal of difficulty since the clues/puzzle information would flow naturally from the introduction and characters would act accordingly.

Thus you would never expect Snigger to go to the Bajar's lair and demand the whereabouts of Kristofer Rambo but he would take part in a practical joke on them.

Twiglet will never do anything about anything on his own but if his little friend Titchy, who looks up to him, makes the request (maybe on behalf of the adventurer), he will find it difficult to refuse.

You, as Winno, fortified with hunny whiskey, to keep yourself on top of the situation. And, if successful in rescuing Kristofer Rambo, must pay for all the booze at the celebration party (Do you really want to give away all that hunny whiskey?)!!!

I trust that I have managed to put across what I feel is the main criteria for any piece of fiction (story, film, play or computer adventure) to be successful - believability.

If the reader finds himself saying "wait a minute, that's not practical (possible, logical, etc.,)" then you have failed to maintain your illusion and your story, instead of giving pleasure, irritates and believability is gone forever.

To illustrate a breakdown in believability, I will take an example from a current adventure. You are required to cross a river! You search

around for a means to cross. Six locations away, unknown distance, you find a boat. GET BOAT, WEST, WEST, SOUTH, SOUTH, WEST, DOWN, DROP BOAT, ROW BOAT... Wait a touch! Shipmate! I was brought up in a fishing town on the river Forth and I never saw a boat under 12 ft. Built as boats are, to be buoyant and safe as possible, it took about eight of us to move our 17ft. racing yawl, on rollers, down the 500 yards of soft sand to the water edge. We were glad of a rest before preparing the boat for sailing.

Wandering about with a boat on your back, dropping it so that it falls directly and unharmed into the water, with you in it, then calmly rowing away, without mention of oars at any time, is to me utterly unbelievable and at that point the 'adventure' finished for me.

Without believability, you are wasting your time.

1. While you are preparing the data for your adventure, check that at every stage that it is believable to you.

2. Get a friend to read it over and give you his opinion and a note of any suspect points.

3. Ask your playtesters to give their opinion on believability.

You cannot overcheck for believability.

MIND THE DOORS!
by Neil Shipman

Perhaps the most common barrier to progress in adventures is the ubiquitous door. In fact, it's hard to think of an adventure which doesn't have a door in it somewhere. Some are, of course, necessary for scenery - well you'd expect buildings, rooms etc. to have doors wouldn't you? - and can simply be opened. But writers don't always make things that easy and the ways of getting through doors are many and varied.

So what should you do when confronted with a door for the first time? Obviously EXAMINE it to see if you get any information about how it's secured. It might be locked or bolted, have a keyhole, handle, wheel, doorknob, etc. Is there a slot for a card or, perhaps, a keypad, button or a plate just waiting for your hand to be placed on it? In a fantasy adventure there could be symbols for magic, and so on. Whatever you find, make sure you examine that too.

It's surprising how often OPEN DOOR is all that's needed. Then, to go through it, usually a direction is sufficient - if it isn't then IN, ENTER or even the horrible GO DOOR (found in early adventures and still sometimes seen) may be necessary. Not all doors open in the way you might expect so SLIDE, LIFT and RAISE are worth trying as are PUSH and PULL. And, if a door keeps closing on you try to WEDGE it open. Brute force shouldn't be ruled out and BREAK, SMASH or HIT it with an object (USE AXE), LEVER, PRISE or FORCE it with something (INSERT CROWBAR) or KICK it open. Or, if you're not feeling aggressive, is there anyone at home? KNOCK and see!

Some doors are only open at certain times, e.g. store doors during shopping hours or daylight, so just because a door is closed the first time you try it doesn't necessarily mean it will still be closed if you go back later. Remember, too, that an action in some other location such as PULLing a ROPE or PUSHing a certain BUTTON may be all that's needed. Handles, doorknobs and wheels can be TURNed or TWISTed, buttons PUSHed or PRESSed and, if the door's bolted, UNBOLT DOOR or SLIDE BOLT may work. If you've found a key then UNLOCK DOOR (WITH KEY) even if there doesn't appear to be a keyhole. In the absence of a key, locks

can be PICKed using objects like needles, pins, files, nails (which you might need to bend first), thorns and, every burglar's flexible friend, the good old plastic card! LOOK IN KEYHOLE may show you a key in the lock on the other side and you can then try the old trick of sliding a piece of paper under the door and pushing the key onto it.

A keypad usually requires a certain button or combination of buttons to be pressed, in which case you should have already found what the code is from elsewhere, but sometimes PUSH or TOUCH KEYPAD will work. If you're stuck for the right command try things like PUSH BUTTON 1, PRESS 3, TYPE 642 or even INPUT CODE. If there's a plate or panel by the door and simply pushing it doesn't work then PRESS PALM (AGAINST PLATE), TOUCH PLATE (WITH HAND) or PUT/PLACE FINGER ON PANEL. Your fingerprint may not be recognised - so how about cutting off someone else's hand and using that instead? Bloodthirsty, but it could be effective.

Security doors like this often only require you to INSERT the correct CARD into an appropriate slot. But what if there's a microphone as well? SAY your NAME or a particular phrase or SPEAK INTO MICROPHONE may work, although the door may not be programmed to open to just anyone's voice. Can you record someone else's and play that back? Or, if you've seen someone with a squeaky voice go through, you could disguise yours by BREATHing or INHALing HELIUM gas or by WHISTLing. Some doors can detect your approach and you may need to satisfy certain conditions before they'll stop closing in your face. Have you got the right clothes on, are you carrying certain items and wearing the correct identification?

In adventures where magic works you might have a simple spell for opening things including some doors. Strange symbols on the door could correspond with ones on an object like a talisman or seal you've found, so RUB TALISMAN or PRESS SEAL (INTO DOOR) are worth trying. And don't forget the obvious WAVE/RUB WAND/ROD and even OPEN SESAME - although these tend to be found more in earlier adventures than in recent offerings.

If you can't open a door by yourself perhaps someone else can help. In adventures peopled with non-player characters (NPCs) instructions like SAY TO THORIN "OPEN DOOR" or FLOYD, OPEN DOOR may be what you need. Just POINTing AT DOOR or SHOWing DOOR TO WIZARD may spur the NPC into action on your behalf. Where possible, timing the action of a NPC to coincide with your own efforts may be crucial, e.g. GALAHAD, WAIT THEN OPEN DOOR followed by OPEN DOOR will have both you and Galahad working together in Level 9's Lancelot.

Finally, there's the "intelligent" door with a mind of its own which can sometimes be found in science fiction adventures. One such door is that on the Heart of Gold in Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy which has a rather philosophical bent, being equally unimpressed whether you're carrying tea or no tea! But one of my favourites is a door I came across recently which was bored stiff and would only open if I told it a joke. Unfortunately, I had to go through it a few times but I only knew two jokes, and if it had heard one already it sulked and stayed shut. The solution? I found a Des O'Connor joke book and told it one from that which made it laugh so much it blew its circuits and jammed wide open! I don't know whether this was an indication of

its intelligence - I think it just couldn't stand any more!

Postscript: I wrote this article some time ago and a few readers may have already seen it printed elsewhere. Since then a couple of adventurers have mentioned to me various ways of getting through doors which I haven't covered. Well, I wasn't seeking to give an exhaustive list - more an indication of things to try (especially for beginners) while you're sitting at the keyboard tearing your hair out. Of the further suggestions I've had I particularly liked the idea of using a lens to focus the sun's rays on a wooden door and burn round the lock! What's the most obscure way of opening a door that you've come across in an adventure - and what's your favourite method?

C'mon, folks - let's have your nominations!

SYNTAX MAGAZINE: A look at the Amiga version
by Terry Brawls

Yes, it's true - SYNTAX, the adventure magazine on-a-disk, is at last available for the 500+ and A600 Amiga models.

Issues of the magazine prior to number 23 were actually Atari versions which had to be run using an emulator. Fair enough, but this program would only work with the older 1.3 machines, resulting in owners of the new generation of models holding an unworkable disk.

The disk itself is entirely AmigaDOS and autoboots, needing nothing extra to run - just shove it in and go. This minor miracle was achieved by one Richard Hewison, who wrote the central text-viewer in AMOS basic. The actual text of the magazine is simply a collection of standard, uncompressed ASCII files.

Control of the system is via the keyboard, which accesses a series of menus and sub-menus. From 5 "master" headings (Information, Reviews, Features, Solutions/Maps and Hints/Tips) a multitude of others can be viewed at the touch of a key. Subjects covered are as wide as in any other adventure magazine, but with a greater potential for experimentation (sound and graphics, say. Indeed, the editor would like to see some home-made art for inclusion as title pages, etc.).

The text-viewer itself is a competent, fairly fast program. No "bells and whistles" to speak of, but it does its job. On-screen colours can be changed to suit the individual's needs.

Contributions from the readership are greatly encouraged - there's always a couple of hundred K left to fill. All in all, a must for all adventure/RPG fans.

You may be interested to know that an Atari ST emulator package is now available from the Syntax public-domain library that works on ALL Amigas! AND it's an English-language translation (previously, it was in German). See disk no.PD510. Now you can choose which version of Syntax you want - autobooting or Atari!

PLAY BY MAIL

by Tim Lomas

ONE MAY ALWAYS FIND ANOTHER CHAMBERMAID... AN UNOCCUPIED LOO IS SOMETHING ELSE...

OUT OF ORDER

Having got last issue's rant off my chest it's time to get back to reality (or at least as close as I ever get to that state).

Next month is a Delenda meet, unless anyone screams loudly before then you can look forward to an article on that next issue. Just as a taster I'll go for a quick run down on the current situation.

The war between the Caliphate & Telindoon continues, the Pope has called a Crusade (which has had a less than enthusiastic reception). The Templars & Hospitallers have joined up with the Telindoi and a battle has taken place at a place called Nea (in Telindoon), according to your view of events this was either a victory for one side or the other. The Hiyiros lost 7500 men and retreated from the battlefield with the Flaminians losing 2500 men, what should be considered is the quality of the troops killed, virtually all the Hiyiros losses were standard cavalry while a large proportion of the Flaminian were elite and guard troops and knights, 25% of the Hospitallers being killed. We're actually quite happy with the result, mind you, so are they.

Selyas is very quiet, they withdrew from Telindoon when the Crusade was called and are now sat at home trying to decide what to do, reports suggest that they'll join the Crusade if the Empire comes out to play, otherwise they are expected to sit back and watch to see what happens.

The Empire was a hotbed of activity recently, Aagar (the Capital) was rocked quite heavily at reports of odd goings on in the Imperial Palace. A chambermaid was found dead in a privy, two

guards in the throne room reports stomach pains after a delivery of beer from a new maid, after they left and before their replacements arrived one of the two guards left was dead as was the chambermaid, preliminary reports suggest that she killed the guard with a blowpipe and poison dart, being killed by the second guard before she could get him. It has been suggested that she was everything from a Sirus worshipper (evil goddess) to an assassin from Kerim, investigations are apparently under way.

More fun and games next issue, things always get busy before a meet so I'm expecting all hell to break loose in the next few weeks.

I spotted a new Role Playing Magazine the other day, someone was trying to sell it at the London pubmeet (and didn't seem to be having much luck, probably due to a cover price of £2 for an A5 photocopied format. I don't have details of this but I do know some of the background.

It's edited by Ken Borer, some months ago he was involved in a series of fairly acrimonious messages on Compuserve with Nicky Palmer (the editor of Flagship, the leading PBM mag). Ken's assertion being that Flagship didn't cover rolepaying enough, didn't do it very well anyway and that he disagreed with their definition of the word so even when they did Roleplaying articles it didn't cover 'REAL' roleplaying games. That being so he decided to start talking about 'Interactive Fiction' instead of Roleplaying and he'd define things thank you very much. According to Ken a 'REAL' roleplaying game didn't have ANY statistics and was a storytelling

exercise between the GM and players, suggestions from some of the other users that even such things as the colour of a character's hair is technically a statistic and what he really meant was that it shouldn't have obvious statistics such as experience points and such like, the GM hiding such matters by using prose to describe things instead of numbers didn't go down very well.

So, he decided to run his own zine, suggesting that the offer from Nicky to do a zine linked to Flagship would not be acceptable to the potential readers. I've no idea what the zine is actually like but I do know that Ken has a very abrasive style on Compuserve, he seems to believe in confrontation rather than discussion. Hopefully he'll moderate this style somewhat wearing his editors hat. Rumours suggested that issue 1 was due out for the convention in February, centring on a big report on Winterworld, the demise of Winterworld just before the con may have affected this, it may also be simply that the rumours were wrong and it was never meant to be out then. I'll get details of this in case anyone's interested, I'll print the address next issue hopefully.

So, what news do we have for this issue? Well, interestingly enough it looks as if the recession might be drawing to a close (among PBM companies anyway), late reports on the London convention report good signup rates even if the number of companies attending was down, those who did attend seem to have done well. John Dent wrote a review of Delenda est Carthago in the latest issue of Flagship (number 43) which I enjoyed considerably, even if it did give away too much for my liking, reports have it that this has produced quite a number of startup requests. Given that Delenda is known as one of the more expensive games around this bodes well.

Rampage Games are winding down, possibly the reason they didn't go to the London con. Bob Middleton (the guy who runs Rampage) has

passed the running of Keys of Medokh to his brother and will continue running just Mundis and fall of Eagles. He wants to concentrate on his design work instead of actually running the games.

Oddly enough I've had three requests to do the programming work on new games, one crime game, one football game with an interesting feature or two and one fantasy game. I've accepted one of the projects and I'll probably take one of the others later in the year, it shows that the GMs think things are likely to pick up later this year and next year (because it takes a year or so to get a game from initial design work to release date if it's done properly).

Lastly I think we'll have another quick review... Vorcon Wars. I don't think I've done that one before. If I have then apologies to those who read it, I'm sure there are a number of new readers who might benefit, this game is one which I always recommend to new players, it's fairly straightforward (although still provides a challenge), one of the cheaper of the games and it's been running for upwards of 9 years which means you've got a reliable GM with a proven track record. I'll personally attest to that, I played the game for 8 years.

Vorcon Wars (now called Super Vorcon Wars) is run by Vorcon Games, the GM is John Nicholson. He provides a well run, timely game and in my experience always answers your questions, usually as a note scribbled on the bottom of the turnsheet but that's all you need.

The game is based on the planet Vorcon, a hex grid which excepting the unreachable northern and southern icecaps provide a grid 36 wide by 18 deep (if my memory serves me), wrapping round from east to west.

Each hex has a type, barren, industry, mines etc. which provide weapons, raw materials and such like. The very rare atomic mines provide a source of atomic ore for nuclear missiles.

The game itself is a basic wargame,
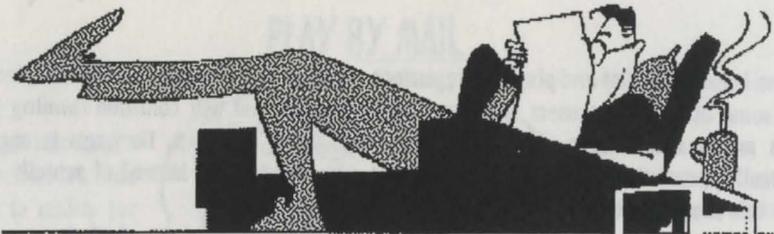
reasonably well balanced which does sometimes produce rather long games (one I played in went to turn 78), a trader wanders round every three turns with a variety of raw materials (including atomic ore for those unlucky enough not to find an atomic mine) which allows players to balance their production if they're high in one thing and low in another.

The game tends to follow a fairly standard pattern, players meet on turns 3 and 4, making their initial alliances, the first knockouts tend to happen on turn 5 or 6 and by turn 10-15 you normally end up with two or sometimes three power blocks. Diplomacy is important in this game, if you don't talk to your neighbours you'll find yourself jumped on! At this point the war has usually reached much of a stalemate and most players have produced or bought enough ore for an atomic missile or three and built a silo. This is the point at which the well

organised alliance does well, with good intelligence from spy satellites they will have located the juicy bits to bomb and a good salvo from three players will often take out one of the opposing alliance completely, changing all of his useful territory to useless radioactive hexes.

Here things start getting really interesting, either one alliance has achieved a superiority and will then grind down the other alliance or they will all have done a lot of damage leading to a heavy war of attrition or a short quiet period while they prepare more nuclear attacks (or both!). It does happen that the players end up isolated by swathes of radioactive hexes but this is fairly rare.

A good starter game and well worth while for the experienced player who hasn't played it before. I did say it's be short didn't I?

See you next issue for the latest instalment of the saga of Delenda.

Vorcon Games, 59 Juniper, Birch Hill, Bracknell, Berks. RG12 4ZG

Tim Lomas, 211a Amesbury Avenue, London SW2 3BJ. Compuserve 100014,1767

DAZE ASTER

Solution by John R. Barnsley, played on the Atari ST

Ensure that disk is 'write-enabled' otherwise the game will crash Instead of showing the completion screen.

(1) READ MAIL - A hurry-up note from, your wife. (2) HELP - You need a hint. (3) HINT - You need a tip. (4) TIP - Note the name of the horse as this is random. In this case it was: 'OOFTAN'. (5) INFO - You are given your credit card number which is also random. In this case it was: 85038752) (6) DIAL - You must now enter your credit card number. (7) 85038752 - You are now given 4 options - only TWO are relevant. (8) PRESS A - to call the bookies. You are given a choice of four runners - select the one indicated when you called up 'TIP' (OOFTAN in this case). (You win and now have enough credits to call the repair man.) (9) DIAL - PRESS B to call repairman(10) 85038752.

Well done! If disk is write-enabled then you see the final screen welcoming you back home!

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MYSTERY FUNHOUSE: Scott Adams Adventure Number 7
Solution by Dave Barker, played on the C64 (disk version)

Time for a little spy stuff! A fun house may seem a strange place for espionage shenanigans, but secret agents have a habit of popping up in the strangest places! If you just had some money, you could get inside.

This is standard Scott Adams fare being a very early adventure designed for computers with not much more than 1K of memory. This particular version is from a compilation for the C64. The single side of a disk contains the driver program and the data files for the first twelve Scott Adams titles! There are few locations, objects or puzzles and the text is terse in the extreme. The main annoying factor is that the location description is not shown when you enter a location and requires you to "LOOK" to see where you are. Whilst this adventure is enjoyable it is little more than a task of mapping and object manipulation with a limited inventory. A few of the early Scott Adams adventures were enhanced for the C64 and Spectrum but unfortunately Mystery Fun House was not one of them.

At random times during the game play you will get a message that your shoe heel is loose, ignore it until the end game.

You are standing in front of a fun house, you can see a sign and a ticket counter. There is a path to the east. You are carrying your shoes, a watch and hard chewing gum. WEAR SHOES, DROP WATCH - it's not needed. E - you are in a parking lot, you can see a rusty closed grating, a dead tree and a 5 dollar bill. Ignore the five dollar bill, it's a bill for $5! EXAMINE TREE - the only thing left is a bare branch. GET BRANCH, EXAMINE GRATING - you can see a shiny coin at the bottom of the drain but two big bolts hold the grating down. CHEW GUM - it tastes horrible. STICK GUM - the program asks, 'On what'. TO BRANCH, GET COIN - the program asks, 'How?' WITH BRANCH - you get the coin. DROP GUM, DROP BRANCH.

W - you are back in front of the ticket counter. GO COUNTER - the ticket lady asks what you want. GIVE COIN - the ticket lady hands you a ticket. ENTER FUN - you are in a magic mirror room, there is a strange mirror here. N, W, W, W - you are in a small room. W - the wall closes behind you as you find yourself in a room with a low ceiling. You can see strange knobs on the wall coloured: yellow, green and blue. There is a skeleton in the room.

PULL GREEN - the room swings around and you find yourself in a small room with a trampoline. GET TRAMPOLINE, S - you are in a shooting gallery. You can see a window, and a gun pointing into and mounted by the window. There are some strange spectacles here. EXAMINE WINDOW - you see a bunch of clay pigeons. [If you want to, you can amuse yourself and FIRE GUN and shoot a few clay pigeons.] GET SPECTACLES, N, U - the wall closes behind you as you find yourself back in the room with the low ceiling, coloured knobs and the skeleton.

W - you are beside a large tank which has a window in it. EXAMINE WINDOW - a mermaid swims by and waves. U, U, U, U - you are by a ledge over the pit. There is a ladder and a sign here. READ SIGN - it says 'Authorized Personnel Only'. DROP TRAMPOLINE, E - you are in a large rolling barrel room, there is a comb

and a match here. GET COMB, GET MATCH, CRAWL - you are back by the ledge. S, D - you are on a small landing, there is a slippery slide with a sign on it. READ SIGN - it says 'Authorized Personnel Only'.

GO SLIDE - you are in a windowed tank that is full of water. There is a mermaid here as well as a rusty key. GIVE COMB - the mermaid thanks you and turns a hidden knob revealing some secret stairs. GET KEY, GO STAIRS - you are back on the small landing by the slippery slide. E - you are in a windy hall. E, E - you are back in the magical mirror room. DROP MATCH - you don't need it until later. WEAR SPECTACLES, LOOK MIRROR - you find a hidden door. UNLOCK DOOR - with the rusty key. GO DOOR - you are in an observation chamber with a one-way mirror and a locked door. There is a valve handle with no valve here. DROP SPECTACLES, GET HANDLE, E - you are back in the mirror room.

N, W, W, W, W - the wall closes behind you and you find yourself back in the room with the strange knobs and the skeleton. W, U, U, U, U - you are back by the ledge over the pit. GET TRAMPOLINE, GO LADDER - you are in a pit, the fire ladder retracts stranding you. There is a locked door and a valve on a large warm pipe. DROP TRAMPOLINE, PUT HANDLE - you put the handle on the valve. TURN OFF - you have now turned off the calliope in the merry-go-round room. GO TRAMPOLINE - you are on the trampoline. JUMP - you are back on the ledge.

S, D, N, D, E - you are back in the room with the coloured knobs and the skeleton. PULL BLUE - the room swings around and you find yourself in a small room with a fortune telling machine. There is also a sign here. READ SIGN - it says, 'Out of order'. E - you are in a large room with a merry-go-round and a quiet calliope. It was previously very noisy but you have just turned it off. There is also a blue button. PRESS BLUE - the ride stops. GO MERRY - you are on the merry-go-round. GO HORSE - you are astride the horse, a pole comes out of its back. CLIMB POLE - you are on top of the ride, a piece of hemp falls on your head and vanishes. LOOK UP - a rope hangs down from the ceiling. JUMP ROPE - you are on a catwalk. There is a rope hanging down and a locked door.

E - you are in a store room. There is a locked door, a red knob in the wall and a wrench. UNLOCK DOOR - the door was to a cupboard, there are small shelves beyond it. DROP KEY, GET WRENCH, EXAMINE SHELVES - you find a flashlight. GET FLASHLIGHT, W - you are back on the catwalk. D, D, D, D, S - you are back by the fortune telling machine. GET SIGN, D - the wall closes behind you as you find yourself back in the room with a low ceiling, coloured knobs and the skeleton.

PULL GREEN, S - you are back in the shooting gallery. DROP SIGN - you drop the 'out of order' sign. N, U - you are back in at the room with the coloured knobs and the skeleton. PULL YELLOW, N, S, S, E - you are back in the magical mirror room. GET MATCH, S, E - you are back in the parking lot by the closed grating.

REMOVE BOLTS - how? WITH WRENCH - you are only able to remove one of the two bolts. SLIDE GRATING - a dark manhole is revealed. DROP WRENCH, GET GUM, LIGHT FLASHLIGHT, GO MANHOLE - you are down a manhole, a passage leads east. E - you are in a sewer system. You can see an open flood door and a dark hole above with a grate welded over it. CLOSE DOOR, REMOVE HEEL - something falls out of your shoe. LOOK - you see a short fuse and a letter. DROP TICKET, DROP HEEL, GET LETTER, READ LETTER - "Jimmy: We must get the plans back by tonight! We believe they're hidden within this fun house." It is signed 'M'. A P.S. says "Q says enjoy the gum". DROP LETTER, GET FUSE.

CHEW GUM, STICK GUM - on what? ON FUSE, STICK GUM - on what? ON GRATING - the fuse is stuck by the gum to the grating. LIGHT FUSE - it burns with a dull glow, melting a hole in the grate. GO HOLE - you are in a long tunnel. U - you are in a large room next to some clay pigeons. S - you are in a hidden laboratory, there is a locked door and the missing 'Top Secret' plans. GET PLANS - well done! You have successfully completed your assignment!

MICROFAIR MADNESS: Part Two

Location by location solution supplied by Delbert The Hamster Software

LEVEL TWO

48k & 128k Versions

| | 58 | 59 | 60 |
| 61 |
17		18 START
19	20	21	22	23	24
69	25	32
26	27	28	29	30	31	33	68
34	35	67
36	37	38	39	40	62
42	to Snail	43	63	64
44	45	46	65
47	66
48
49	50	51
52	53	54	55	56
END	57
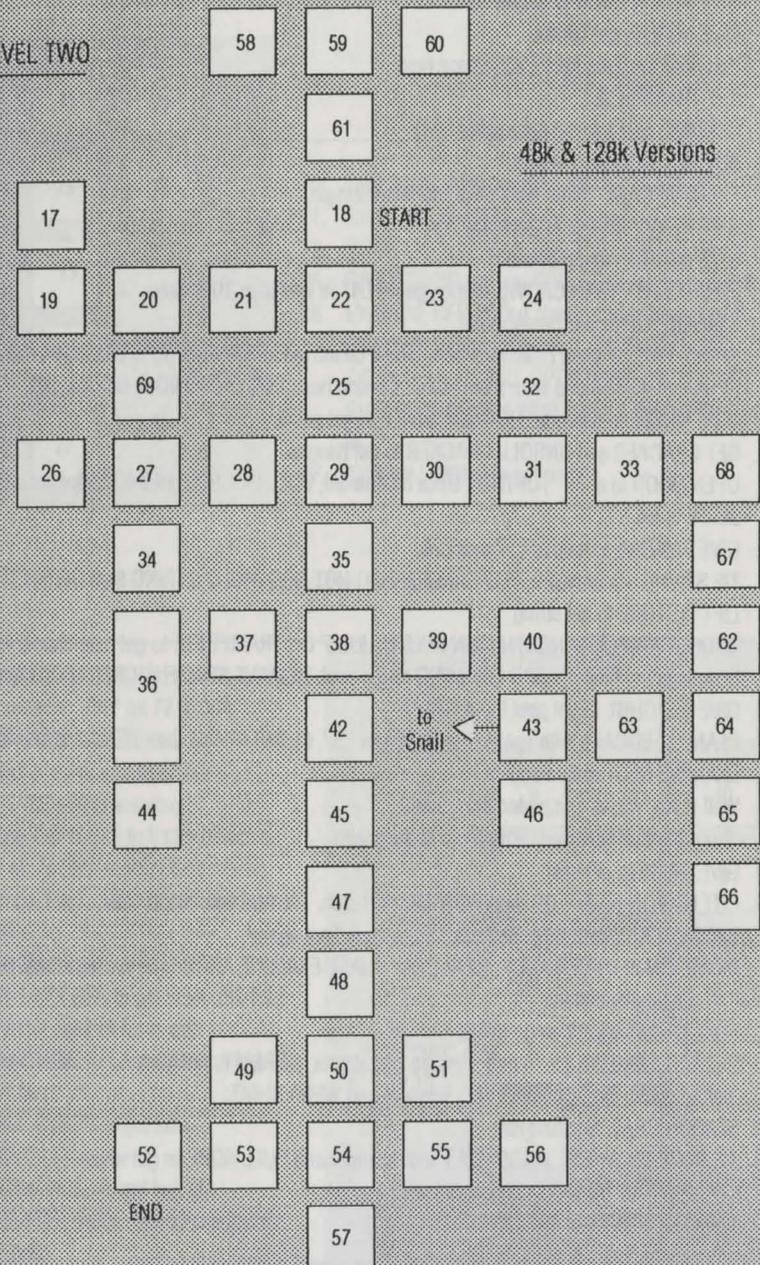
17.   PRESS BUTTON on gizmo to get money. Make sure you complete L44 before attempting L17 or L26.

18-27. DROP BUDGIE when robocleaner is present then CLIMB ONTO ROBOCLEANER. JUMP when at L34.

20.   GIVE BLACK DOOR to get alcohol.

21.   GIVE NOTE to get fanzine.

23.   You need the pass from L26 to pass here.

24.   GET TRAMPETTE.

26.   EXAMINE SOFA to get pass (after L44).

28.   BUY HOT DOG with money.

30.   EXAMINE CAGE to find seed cake and dead budgie.

31.   GIVE HEAVY METAL to get spray can.

32.   GIVE DRAGON to get gizmo.

33.   PRISE CRATE WITH CROWBAR then get to L47 in less than 10 moves.

34.   EXAMINE TIP to find heavy metal.

35-42. SPRAY WALLS when Lawson is here. You'll be moved to L29 then go to L35 to get dragon.

36.   SPRAY GLASSES and wear them before coming here. FEEL AROUND to find the exit.

39.   GIVE WHEEL to get note. EXAMINE STALL to get game.

40.   GET CRACKER and UNROLL CRACKER to get banger.

43.   OPEN DOOR to enter "TQFTHS". Once completed, PULL DOOR to get the black door. JUMP TO THE JETTY to 64.

44.   GIVE FANZINE to help at L17 and L26.

45.   TIE STRING TO BANGER, PUT BANGER INTO HOT DOG, HOLD STRING then GIVE HOT DOG.

46.   LIFT PICTURE to get string.

47.   DROP TRAMPETTE, NORTH, RUN SOUTH, JUMP ON TRAMPETTE to get over chasm to L48. When lemmings are here, CATCH LEMMING to get card. REMOVE SPADE FROM CARD to get the spade.

50.   GIVE ALCOHOL to get past the reviewer.

51.   PLANT SEEDCAKE with spade then complete L57. CLIMB PLANT then REACH across to get nest. EXAMINE NEST to find egg.

52.   Well done, you've completed the game!

53.   Bring the bird here and he'll get rid of the snake.

55.   GIVE GAME to get past.

56.   PUT EGG ON RADIATOR then WAIT for it to hatch. The bird will follow you.

57.   BREAK GLASS then leave and don't come back here again!

58.   MOVE CHAIR UNDER ARCH, STAND ON CHAIR, EXAMINE ARCH to find carrier bag. SEARCH BAG to find packet of smartos.

59.   PULL CHAIR twice then go to 58.

60.   SEARCH GAMES twice to find scissors and stapler. GET MAT, WRAP MAT, STAPLE MAT to cover below waist. CUT CARRIER with scissors and WEAR SHIRT.

62.   SEARCH CRATES to find net.

65.   TIE ROPE TO WHEEL, UNDO BOLT with spanner and PULL ROPE to get wheel.

66.   EXAMINE CUPBOARD to find spanner.

67.   EXAMINE STRAW to find rope.

68.   EXAMINE BUG to get crowbar.

69.   THROW NET OVER BUG to get the bug.
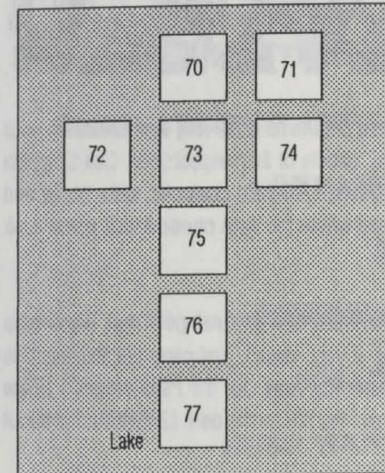
QUEST FOR THE HOLY SNAIL

70	71	

72	73	74

75

76

77

Lake

70.   GIVE MUG to kill knight. UNLOCK GATE WITH KEY.

71.   GIVE CREDIT CARD to get lamp.

72.   POUR OIL from lamp, then PULL SWORD to get it.

75.   GIVE STRING for key. GIVE COIN for mug of beer.

76.   EXAMINE BED to find sheets and pillows. TEAR PILLOWS to find credit card. TIE SHEETS TOGETHER, TIE SHEETS TO BED, OPEN WINDOW, THROW SHEETS THROUGH WINDOW, CLIMB DOWN SHEETS to 77.

77.   THROW SWORD to get coin.

THE SEARCH OF SMOK!

1.   PUT MOTHBALLS IN (and WEAR) EARS before entering. SAY 49 77 93005.

2.   EXAMINE CONSOLE to discover co-ordinates of Earth and Microfair.

3.   WEAR EARS before entering.

4.   EXAMINE CONSOLE to find mothballs.

5.   INPUT 49 77 53515. PRESS REMOTE, STAND ON PAD, SAY ENERGISE to get to Level two.

7.   DROP ROLL to get red key.

8.   EXAMINE HOLDER to get toilet roll. FILL HOLE WITH WATER from toilet.

9.   GET BLUE KEY from here after performing acts at L16.

10.   EXAMINE OUTFIT to get ears.

12.   GET HOLE.

15.   UNSCREW TILES to get to L16.

16.   POUR WATER (from hole) to extinguish pepper pot.

11	15	12
9	14	10
7	13	8

The Mistress's Tardit

6

START

to Main Part of Level Two ← 5

Lift Door

2	3	4

1
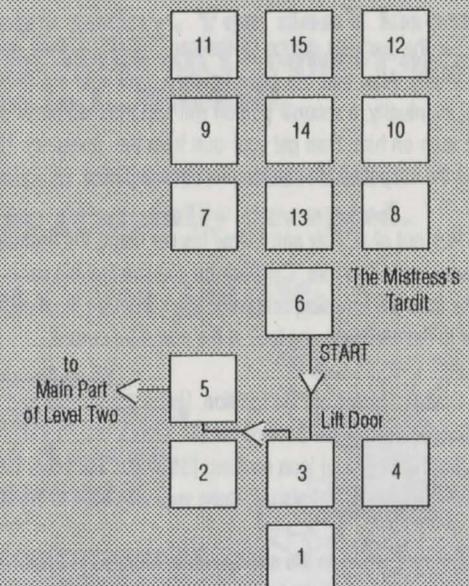
POLICE QUEST III: The Kindred : Part 3

Solution by John R. Barnsley, played on the ST
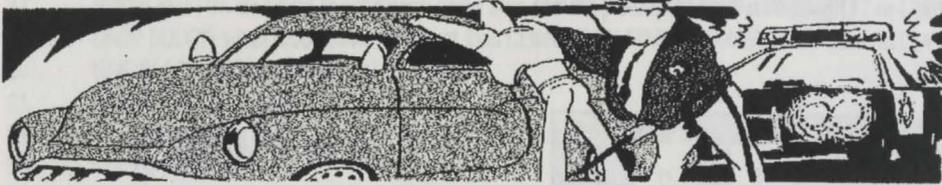
DAY FIVE

Walk into the Homicide Office and examine the notice-board. Read the memo [278/460] then switch on your computer. Go up to the Evidence Analysis menu and note down the details of the suspect's car. Call Dispatch from your phone with orders to put out an APB on the vehicle [283/460]. Using the computer, enter 'tools' and then the City Map. Plot the locations of where Marie was mugged and where the three murders took place. Link the stars together and you should see the beginning of a pentagram.

Draw in the fifth point on Palm Street, between 8th Street and 9th Street. Link the final point and, if you have completed the pentagram correctly, you will be told so [293/460]. If you haven't, just carry out the exercise again. This will be the location of the next murder. Leave the room and head for the Psychologist's Office opposite the Briefing Room. Walk into the office and pick up and read the file on the desk [298/460]. It's about Morales so read carefully.

Having read Morales' file, leave and head for the elevator and the Ground Floor. Get in your car and head for the point that you mapped on the computer earlier - the Old Nugget Bar. Open the trunk of your car and get the paint scraper and the empty envelopes from the metal briefcase. Look at the car in front of the saloon and examine the back of the vehicle.

Fix the tracking device to the car [308/460], then get a paint sample by clicking the scraper on the car [313/460]. After that has been finished, walk into the saloon. Morales will check out the back of the bar. Wait and, eventually, a second person will join the man playing pool. Look at the second pool player, by clicking the EYE icon on him, then get your gun from the inventory [318/460]. Examine him once more. You'll realise that he is the suspect you're looking for, then he'll flee.

Run out of the bar and follow his car using the tracking device [323/460]. He will eventually end up on the freeway, so follow him. Catching up you see that his car is overturned on one side of the road. Get out, grab the flares from the inventory and walk. Click them on the road and you'll divert any oncoming traffic [328/460]. Walk over to the wreckage and look at the now rigid corpse.

Grab the keys from the ignition. Using the scraper and the envelopes, get a sample of the paint from the car. Walking round to the back of the car, unlock the boot using the ignition keys. Examine the five bags of cocaine by clicking the hand icon on them [333/460] and you'll be called by another officer. Morales will take over and, when you have both finished, make your way back to the station.

On your return to the station, while Morales is booking evidence, go to the Homicide Office. Use your copy

SynTax

SynTax is a bi-monthly disk magazine, running in colour, and it's the only diskmag dedicated to adventures, RPGs and related software and books. It contains information sections, articles, reviews, maps, solutions and hints including the popular SynTax 3-in-1 hints where you can pick subtle or sledgehammer hints. The disks build up into a useful reference collection and specially labelled disk boxes are available to keep them organised.

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Originally produced for the ST, the first issue was in July '89 and an Amiga version, which runs using an emulator in an external drive (but not on the Amiga 500 Plus or the Amiga 2000, sorry) is now available. The emulator is provided free with your first disk. The ST and Amiga versions are colour-coded issue by issue. The new PC version, programmed by Graham Cluley, runs in a similar range of colours and includes Bumblebee Red and Cheese and Onion flavour!

—— ∽∾ ∾∽ ——

The SynTax PD Library of adventure games, solutions and demos contains disks for the ST, Amiga and PC. They can be bought or traded one for one for contributions to the magazine on disk.

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Finally, what is Brainchild? It's an innovation in adventuring brought to you by High Voltage Software, authors of Cortizone, in association with SynTax, and exclusive to SynTax readers. To find out more, order Issue 15; it's just £3.50 or £20.00 for a year's sub in the UK/Europe (£5.25/£30.00 rest of world by airmail).

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Send cheques or POs payable to S. Medley to SynTax, 9 Warwick Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6LJ. Don't forget to say whether you want the ST or Amiga version.

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of Morales' key to get into her desk. Look inside her drawer and take note of her locker combination. Close and lock her drawer [343/460] and take the elevator to the garage and book your evidence in the evidence booking room under either case 199145 or 199144. Now go and visit Marie at the Hospital, kiss her and return home.

DAY SIX

Go to the Homicide Office and talk to Morales. After she walks out of the room, take the elevator to the First Floor and walk into the men's locker room. Create a diversion here by putting a roll of toilet paper in the toilet [348/460]. When you see water running onto the floor, walk out of this locker room. Talk to the Janitor [351/460]. While he's busy clearing up the mess in the men's locker room, go into the women's locker room. Locate and open Officer Morales' locker. Click your notebook on her locker [361/460] and return to the Homicide Office. Talk to the Captain about your discovery [366/460]. Wait for your partner to return.

You now go to the Coroner's Office. Get the manilla envelope and open it (put the HAND cursor on it) [369/460]. Read the tags on the bodies. When the Coroner arrives he will give you a news clipping. Take note of Rocklin's last known address. Go back to your car. After you receive the call, respond to the Hospital. Give the locket from the Coroner's Office to Marie [379/460]. Leave the Hospital and get back in your car. After receiving the call, respond to the address given to you by dispatch.

On arrival at the burning house, get the scraper and some envelopes from the boot of your unmarked car. When the Fire Chief gives his 'okay', enter the house. Pick up the photograph that is lying on the floor partially covered with debris. Look at the photograph and note the address (partially covered by one of the subjects), the 'palm' tree (street name) and the subject in uniform. Enter the altar room. Use the scraper and envelope to get a sample of blood and hair [384/460]. Return to your car and drive to the Mall.

Enter the Army Recruiting Office. Wait until the Recruiter finishes his intro then show your wallet to him [387/460]. Show him the photo of Michael and Jessie Bains [390/460]. After the Recruiter prints out the file, remove it from the printer [393/460] and read it. Return to the car and drive to the Police Station.

Talk to the Psychologist. Show him Michael Bains' military record [398/460]. After hearing Michael Bains' psychological profile, return to the unmarked car. Go to the 'crackhouse'. Knock on the door [403/460]. You find that you will need a search warrant. Go to the Court and talk to the Court Reporter. Take the news clipping out of your inventory and show it to the Court Reporter. Talk to the Judge. Show the Judge the photo of Michael and Jessie Bains. Show her the news clipping [406/460]. The Judge will now give you a search warrant so take it [411/460] and return to the crackhouse.

Knock on the door [416/460]. You won't be able to serve the warrant yet. You need to bring in a team to help you. Return to the station and go to the evidence booking room. Book the photograph, the sample of blood and hair, the news clipping, the cult book, and the cult ring. Then go to the Courthouse. Talk to the Judge in the Judge's Chambers and she will grant your request for help in the form of a judicial order which you should take from her desk [421/460]. Return to the crackhouse.

Exit your car and, this time, draw your weapon by selecting the gun from inventory and clicking it on Sonny Walk to the left side of the crackhouse door. Click the TALK icon on the ram. After the door is broken down

enter the house. A suspect will fire at you as soon as you enter. Place the cross hairs on the suspect and immediately return fire [431/460]. A second suspect (Michael Bains) will then appear and subsequently surrender. Walk behind him and cuff him [436/460]. After the back-up Officer walks the suspect out of the house, lift up the cushion on the sofa [441/460] and take the TV remote control. Click the control icon on the TV and push button 8 [446/460]. A secret room is now available!

Walk through the fireplace with your gun drawn. A dangerous third suspect is waiting for you behind the barrels down here. As soon as you spot him, place the cross hairs on him and fire immediately [456/460].

Congratulations! You have now broken Lytton's drug cult ring!

LUDIODS
Solution by Neil Currie, played on the Spectrum

PART 1

E, S, EXAM C50, EXAM COMPARTMENT, GET BATTERY, N, W, N, EXAM DOOR, EXAM PANEL, CONNECT BATTERY, DROP BATTERY, N, W, EXAM MACHINE, PRESS BURGER, PRESS BUN, PRESS SALAD, PRESS CHEESE, PRESS COLA, PRESS SERVE, GET FOOD, N, LOOK BEHIND DESK, SEE KEY ON HOOK, GET KEY, N, GO TO CUBICLE WITH SAME LETTER AS HOOK, UNLOCK CUBICLE, CODEWORD IS COLD STORE, EAT FOOD, SLEEP, S, DROP KEY, GO TO START LOCATION, OPEN DOOR, S.

PART 2

W, ENTER IGLOO, GET CLOTHES, WEAR CLOTHES, GET CROWBAR, S, S, EXAM HELI, ENTER HELI, EXAM PANEL, START MOTOR, N, D, N, W, N, N, OPEN CRATE, GET GLYCOL, S*3, READ LABEL, CODEWORD IS DIODUL, N, E, S, U, N*2, EXAM ICE, POUR GLYCOL, PRESS DETECTOR.

PART 3

READ SIGN, GET PEN, SIGN, GET CREDITS, S, HELP, DROP DETECTOR, S, W, GET GUN, E*2, EXAM MACHINE, READ INSTRUCTIONS, PUT CREDITS IN SLOT, GET BURGER, S, SHOOT RAMBOT, CODEWORD IS MINISUB, N, W, S, EXAM WHEEL, PLAY UNTIL HAVE 1000 CREDITS, N, PUT CREDITS IN SLOT, N, GET DETECTOR, PRESS DETECTOR.

PART 4

EXAM CONTROLS, A, D, A, GET LIFEJACKET, WEAR LIFEJACKET, GET HARPOON, F, U, LOOK PERISCOPE, TURN PERISCOPE WEST, F, PUSH PORT CONTROL, A*2, OPEN HATCH, SHOOT OCTOPUS, WAIT UNTIL CITY EXPLODES, PUSH DETECTOR.

GATEWAY TO THE SAVAGE FRONTIER: Parts 7 & 8
A guide to locations by Ron Rainbird, played on the Amiga 500 (1meg)

PART 7: PORT LLAST
Here, you must board the "Gallant Prince", a mysterious vessel which suddenly appeared at the Port, apparently without a Crew. (Shades of the "Marie Celeste".)

MAP REF	DETAILS
11 - 10	Harbourmaster's Office
14 - 11	Stonecutter's Guild. Important information may be obtained here.
3 - 12	
3 - 14	
5 - 12	Various portions of the "Gallant Prince" such as Hold, Cabins, etc.
7 - 12	
12 - 13	Here is where you board the ship.
14 - 14	Inn.
2 - 13	Captain's Quarters. Use the password "KAS" to enter.
0 - 14	Secret entrance to hidden room South.
1 - 13	Captain's Quarters. A tough fight.
0 - 12	Secret entrance to hidden room North. Another tough fight.

PART 8: LUSKAN
This is a VERY dangerous city. Home of five Pirate Captains who, in conjunction with a group of Wizards, can be a formidable enemy. However, several magical items can be gained from winning battles against them.

MAP REF	DETAILS	MAP REF	DETAILS
0 - 1	Warehouse - a fight with Scrags.	3 - 9	More Scrags.
4 - 1	Arms and Armour Shop.	10 - 9	Captain's Palace. Fight Pirates and win a magical item.
14 - 0	Margoyles - can only be beaten by magical weapons.	8 - 9	Fortress. More Pirates and magical treasure.
11 - 1	Another fight with Scrags.	14 - 9	Margoyles - remember to use magical weapons.
8 - 2	Encounter in either of these		
8 - 3	locations, but not both.	5 - 11	Mansion. Pirates again and magical items.
0 - 3	Docks. Depart here for Tuern. Ship leaves at 8 a.m. Passage costs 100GP, covering all your party	9 - 12	Captain's Lodge. More Pirates and a magical weapon.
10 - 5	Gate to Old City.	3 - 13	Tower. A really hard fight, but the treasure is a MUST.
12 - 6	Old City	12 - 14	The Captain's Court. Most illuminating information.
0 - 8	Host tower of the Arcane. ONLY ENTER WHEN PARTY IS STRONG. Separate guide will be in Part 9.		

SEEK AND DESTROY

Solution by W. McCole and J. G. Johnston, Map by J. G. Johnston, played on the Spectrum

In this adventure you are a Private Detective whose future wealth and prosperity depend on finding the gangster's meeting place and arresting them. This adventure uses sudden death to give the impression that it is a large adventure, but it fails. There are only 19 locations and three of them are sudden death rooms. Meanwhile back at the adventure ....

You start off in your office...

GET GUN, EAST to Hall, SOUTH to Lobby, SOUTH to Car Park, SOUTH to Dark Lane, EAST to Main Pathway, NORTH to German Printer Shop, GET CARD (Note: Although you cannot read this card it is your pass to get past the Italian Guard in the Long Corridor - You must enter SHOW PASS not SHOW CARD to get past), SOUTH, DOWN to Subway, EAST to first room of maze, READ SIGN, READ GRAFFITI (I Hate You), WEST, UP, EAST to Motel, EAST to Long Corridor, DOWN to Cellar, GET KEY, UP, SHOW PASS, USE KEY, READ NOTICE (tells you the method of gaining the pass letters from the graffiti slogan), IHYI - You have gained access to the meeting place, arrested everyone. Your future prosperity is assured!

```
START
┌────────┐   ┌────────┐   ┌────────┐
│ Office │───│  Hall  │───│ Toilet │
└────────┘   └────────┘   └────────┘
Gun              │
             ┌────────┐
             │ Lobby  │
             └────────┘
                 │
             ┌────────┐   ┌──────────┐
             │Car Park│   │ German   │
             └────────┘   │Print Shop│
                 │        └──────────┘
                          Card
                                      Italian Guard
┌────────┐  ┌─────────┐  ┌──────┐  ┌──────┐  ┌──────────┐
│Dead End│◄─│Dark Lane│──│ Path │──│Motel │──│  Long    │
└────────┘  └─────────┘  └──────┘  └──────┘  │ Corridor │
                          d              d   └──────────┘
                                             Show Pass
            u                     u
┌─────────┐ ┌────────┐  ┌────────────┐  ┌──────┐  ┌──────┐
│Deep Ditch│◄│Subway │  │First Room of│  │Cellar│  │Small │
└─────────┘ └────────┘  │Maze of Rooms│  └──────┘  │Room  │
                        └────────────┘  Key        └──────┘
                        Sign  Graffiti             Use Key
                             │
                        ┌────────┐           ┌────────────┐
                        │ Lower  │           │  Another   │
                        │Station │           │Small Room  │
                        └────────┘           └────────────┘

                                             ┌────────┐
                                   END       │Meeting │
                                             │ Place  │
                                             └────────┘
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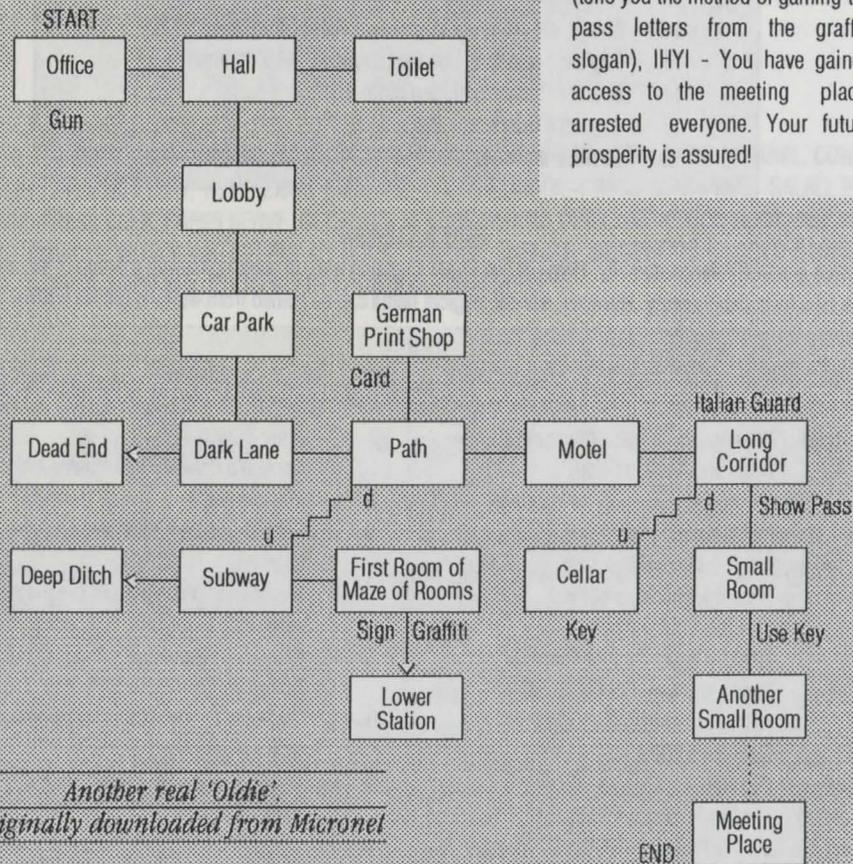
WAXWORKS: Victorian Era, London

Solution by John R. Barnsley, played on the ST
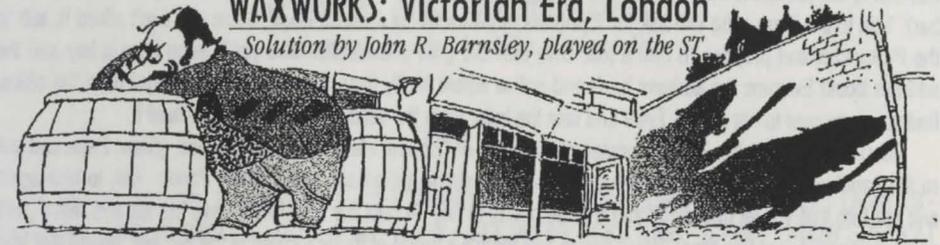
Notes: (1) Watch out for the bobbies who patrol certain sections of the city. If they catch you, you're dead. At the same time, keep an eye out for the angry mob. They're after Jack the Ripper and will pounce on anyone they come across, including you. Be extra careful since the mob moves very fast and can take you by surprise. (2) You can't fight in this waxwork so the only way you'll build up your experience is by exploring each space on the map. Since your final showdown with Jack is the only fight scene, you might want to do some 'experience-gaining' exploration on your own to prepare yourself for the fight. (3) London at the close of the 19th century - not the prettiest place on earth by a long shot! But it is home to all manner of folk, even to mass murderers like Jack the Ripper, who just happens to be your evil twin brother. Take him out and you'll make London a safer place to live in.

You first appear at a murder scene. You can examine the dead girl, but be quick about it. The bobbies are on their way. Make sure to grab the purse that's lying right next to the poor girl, and get out of the area - QUICK! Open the purse to find a diary and some small change. Read the diary, but notice how part of the final paragraph is missing. You'll need to fix that later. Due south of the dead girl is a long east/west street that's dotted with numerous shops. Make your way to the street that runs parallel to this one, but on the southern side. Along the length of this street you'll find three opened doors; two with barrels and one with a ladder going up (there's a third barrel out in the street but this isn't the one you want). Examine the barrels and take their contents (a rope in one, animal guts in the other). Leave the ladder alone for now. Head all the way south until you reach the docks. It's an area with three doors, two of which are padlocked for now. The door furthest west is not locked, however, and you'll want to enter to find the loose plank that's on the jetty.

Head back to the door with the ladder. Climb up and place the rope on the chimney, then drop the plank to close the gap between the two buildings. Shimmy down the rope, and enter the Tailor's shop. Get some items of clothing and wear them. This will allow you to enter the Black Bull Tavern (located on the same street as the small shops). You'll also need to take the pencil lying on the counter here. Head back to the roof and cross the placed plank. Enter the building through its window and enter a Lawyer's office. Find the letter with the key and take the map out of the filing tray. Head downstairs into the Locksmith's shop. Take both keys off the key rack (a skeleton key and a security key). You can leave everything else. Look at your diary. Go ahead and use your pencil to reveal the rest of the entry. Climb back down the ladder. With skeleton key in hand, head to due east until you come to a four-way stop, and then head north until you can only go east or west. Head east into the doorway and open the locked door with your skeleton key. Enter and take the bottle of sleeping pills. Now lace the animal guts with the pills.

Head to the barrel that was sitting in the street, near the opened doorway that hid the barrel with the rope. Click the barrel and climb onto it. Drop the animal guts onto the dog. Unlatch the bolt and enter the doorway. Take the police whistle and gentleman's sword cane. Move the clothing that's hanging, and open the safe with your security key. Take the gold pocketwatch and leave. Head to the Black Bull Tavern and talk to the Landlord

Get him to tell you about the Pimp and the map (he should end with a warning about the pickpocket sitting at the bar). Talk to the Pimp, who will ask for 2 pounds in return for an address book. Since you can't afford it, talk to the Pickpocket and propose to him a job. Give him the gold pocketwatch and you'll soon have a key and the address book! Examine the address book and notice where Molly lives. Using the map you got from the office, find your way over to her house. Enter and take the letter from the dead girl. Go ahead and read it.

Now head to the Ship's Tavern, located at the south of London, along the River Thames. (Save) Enter and talk to the Landlord. Tell him that you're looking for entertainment then ask about Molly Parkin. Talk to him again and tell him that you've got something that he needs to see. Accept his mission to save his tea and leave (he'll give you a crowbar at this time). You'll notice that there's a group of thugs located at the two exit streets that lead out of the area, and another bobby at the final exit. Face the westernmost thugs, but don't step into the alleyway. Now, facing due west, blow your police whistle and run to the dead end. Wait until you see the message about "feet shuffling". Now the thugs are gone so you can make your way to the docks along the south-eastern edge of London. Again, alongside the River Thames.

Enter the middle padlocked door (your key from the Lawyer's office will open it). Find the crate that is barely open (located in the western part of the room, along the bottom row). Open it now that you have the crowbar and take the tea. Head back to the Ship's Tavern and talk to the Landlord. Get the key for the final padlocked door, next to the Tea Warehouse. Save the game, then enter to talk to Molly. Tell her that you want to kill Jack and step onto the jetty for the final encounter with Jack the Ripper. Jack's a little tough. He requires lots of swings and he blocks exceptionally well. Try clicking your attack along the left side of the screen and, when you manage to hit him, he'll take a step backwards. Attack again and you should automatically step forwards to meet him. Keep it up and Jack will soon get a taste of his own medicine. You have now completed this part.

To be continued

RAID ON LETHOS
Solution by Neil Currie, played on the Spectrum

E, EXAM CHAIR, PULL ARM, W, U*2, W, GET KEY, OPEN BOX, GET DAGGER, E, D*2, E, E, UNLOCK DOOR, E, N, YES, YES (If you don't win a coin, then re-start), S, BUY ONIONS, N, E, N*2, READ SIGN, W*3, N, GET COIN, S*2, W, ONIONS, N, E*2, S, E, S*2, W, S, BUY SHOVEL, N, E, N*5, GET NOOSE, S*2, E*2, N, LIFT FLAG, DIG GET STAFF, U, READ WORD, D, S, E*2, GIANTUS KILLUS, EXAM GIANT, GET HANDKERCHIEF, U, W, CLIMB TABLE, GET BOTTLE, EXAM BOTTLE, GET GOOSE (Every time the goose lays an egg GET EGG), TIE ROPE, D, E, D, E, D, S, READ SIGN, S*2, D, DRINK WATER, U, N*3, U, W, U, (Keep moving U and D until you have four eggs), W, ENTER BED, GET EGG, N*4, E, GET BOX, EXAM BOX, W, N, W*2, DRINK LIQUID, OPEN DOOR, N, GET LAMP, S, E*2, S*6, E, D, E, D, S*2, W, MRAHC, I, S, D, E*2, FILL LAMP, W*2, U, N, E*2, N*3, W, GET COAT, WEAR COAT, E*2, N*4, W*2, S, E, S, ENTER BOAT, TIE HANDKERCHIEF, GET CASKET, OPEN CASKET, SAIL BOAT, W, N, S, E*4, N*2, POUR OIL, PULL LEVER, W*2, D*4, LIGHT LAMP, D, W*3, SAY FROST, W, N, MOVE DUST, LOOK, GET ROD, EXAM ROD, S*2, EXTINGUISH LAMP, D*2, N, W, GET KNEE CAP, THROW KNEE CAP, W*2, U*4, D*4, E, S, W*2, OPEN CURTAINS, CUT CURTAINS, SAY PASSWORD, W, N, E, BUY PAPER, READ PAPER, W, N*2, W, DRINK POTION, SWIM, W*2, LIGHT LAMP, W, S, GET ROBE, SCARLET, WEAR ROBE, N*2, E, SAY KILROY, E, THROW GOOSE, W*2, N*2, U*2, S*2, E, ENTER BOAT, SAIL BOAT, W, N, E*2, S*2, W, E, S, W*2, N*2, U, W*5, S*3, W*3.

THESEUS AND THE MINOTAUR
Solution provided by John R. Barnsley

PART ONE

N - W - W - W - UP - EXAMINE TREE - GET BERRIES - EAT BERRIES - DOWN - E - E - N - GET LAMB - S - NE - GIVE LAMB TO ORACLE - (for a clue) - N - W - GET SPEAR - GET TUBE - E - IN - THROW SPEAR AT PROCRUSTES - LOOK - GET AXE - W - S - SW - W - N - E - KILL PHAIA WITH AXE - LOOK - GET SHIELD - WEAR SHIELD - W - S - W - W - UP - UP - WASH FEET - KILL SCIRON - UP - GET HELMET - WEAR HELMET - DOWN - DOWN - DOWN - E - E - N - N - KILL PERIPHETES WITH AXE - LOOK - GET CLUB - W - KILL LION WITH CLUB - LOOK - GET CARCUSS - S - NW - EXAMINE ROCK - LIFT ROCK - LOOK - GET SWORD - GET SANDALS - WEAR SANDALS - S - S - E - E - WRESTLE CERCYON - ENTER LAKE - WASH IN LAKE - EXAMINE LAKE - GET REED - OUT - W - S - S - EXAMINE STATUE - GET COIN - SE - SE - EXAMINE PAPER - EXAMINE SHELVES - GET BOTTLE - GET VASE - INSERT REED INTO TUBE - (to make a syringe) - INSERT SYRINGE INTO BOTTLE - INSERT SYRINGE INTO CARCUSS - (to make a drugged carcuss) - W - EAT FOOD - DRINK WINE - (make sure you have the sword; Aegeus gives you a key) - W - UNLOCK DOOR WITH KEY - S - EXAMINE JEWELS - NW - NW - GIVE COIN TO FERRYMAN - W - GET TORCH - IN - GIVE CARCUSS TO CERBERUS - W - SE - GET TABLET - S - NE - E - SW - FREE PIRITHIOUS - NE - W - SW - N - NW - E - N - OUT - E - SE - GIVE TABLET TO GUARD - S - SE - W - GIVE BAG TO CAPTAIN - FOLLOW CAPTAIN - SET SAIL.

PART TWO

FH07 JK32 - SW - EXAMINE POTS - GET SMALL KEY - NE - S - UNLOCK DOOR - ENTER DOOR - GET ROBE - WEAR ROBE - OUT - N - SE - E - S - SW - OPEN DOOR - ENTER - GIVE FOOD TO HECALE - OUT - NE - S - S - E - UP - UP - E - E - E - EXAMINE GRASS - GET LEAD BAR - E - S - S - E - S - W - EXAMINE URNS - GET AXE - E - N - W - N - N - CUT VINE WITH AXE - GET VINE - N - (you fall into a pit) - EXAMINE SNAKES - GET SHORT SWORD - EXAMINE PIT - THROW VINE AT TREE - CLIMB VINE - GET VINE - S - S - E - S - TIE VINE TO GRILLE - PULL VINE - ENTER - PRAY - GIVE SWORD TO APOLLO - (he blesses it and returns it to you) - W - N - N - KILL ZOMBIE WITH BLESSED SWORD - LOOK - GET SHIELD - HOLD SHIELD - OPEN TRAPDOOR - DOWN - S - KILL GORGON WITH BLESSED SWORD - GET HEAD - SE - EXAMINE FLESH - GET ARROWS - NW - N - UP - S - W - N - N - W - W - W - W - DOWN - DOWN - W - W - KILL LION WITH AXE - GET LIONSKIN - WEAR LIONSKIN - UP - S - SW - THROW LEAD AT CHIMERA - IN - NW - KILL KRAKEN WITH HEAD - E - GET BOW - W - SE - OUT - NE - N - DOWN - E - E - UP - UP - E - NW - N - FIRE ARROWS AT HARPIES - E - EXAMINE MASONERY - GET DAGGER - W - S - SE - W - DOWN - DOWN - W - S - S - E - S - W - (you are now arrested and taken to the base of the White Mountains where you must rescue Ariadne) - S - UP - S - SW - FREE ARIADNE - NE - N - DOWN - N - (you are arrested again and taken to a guest room) - S - S - KISS ARIADNE - NE - N - DOWN - N - (you are taken to the Labyrinth) - S - SW - W - W - SE - E - SE - SW - E - S - SW - SW - W - N - N - SE - NE - W - NW - N - E - S - KILL MINOTAUR WITH DAGGER - N - W - S - SE - E - SW - NW - S - S - E - NE - NE - N - W - NE - NW - W - NW - E - E - NE - N - N - W.

THE END

SynTax Public Domain Software Library

ST DISKS

STAC Games
Text/graphics unless stated
6: Wizard's Tower V1.65
8: The Payoff
89: Snatch and Crunch - "adult" text-only
94: Treasure of the New Kingdom
130: The Grimoire - updated version
175: Trials and Tribulations of an Apprentice Wizard
437: Operation Blue Sunrise - new version, now shareware
438: Slayer - multiple choice with RPG characteristics
439: Black Dawn - text/graphics with RPG characteristics
463: Mysterious Realm
464: Escape From Sygnus Alpha
499: Hack (NOT the RPG)
503: Obscure Naturalist (shareware)

AGT Adventures. Text-only
38: The Adventure Game Toolkit - shareware v1.3
39: AGT Source Code 1 - 10 AGT adventures. Requires AGT disk
*Buy both PD 38 and PD 39 for just *£3.50**
245: AGTBIG - write larger games
41: A Dudley Dilemma
42: Tark
64: Star Portal - D/S
65: Susan - adult only
66: Tamoret - D/S
67: Pork - Zork spoof
68: Son of Stagefright
72: Pork II
73: Pyramid of Muna
74: Quest for the Holy Grail
75: Sir Ramic Hobbs and the High Level Gorilla
76: The Battle of Philip
146: Dragon Slayer - adult
183: Disenchanted
218: Magic Mansion
223: Pyramid
225: Storms
261: Deena of Kolini and Lottery - adult

PD 262: Betty Carlson's Big Date and Christian Text Adventure
269: Elf's Adventure
308: Ghost Town
314: Castle of the Alchemists
319: Apprentice
333: Hotel Notell
337: Deadly Labyrinth
341: The Lost Stone Mansion
346: The Spelunker's Tremendous Cave Adventure
348: Tales of Tavisa
350: The Tomb of the Ancient Pharaohs
363: New England Gothic
365: Mop and Murder
418: Crusade
440: Droolig and the King's Gold
442: Christian Text Adventure
465: Jubilee Road
500: Oklib's Revenge (cutback PD version)

TADS - all these TADS games, and TADS itself, need 1 meg.
77: Text Adventure Development System. Register to get full instructions. Includes the game Ditch Day Drifter.
178: Deep Space Drifter
PD 378: Unnkulian Underworld: the Unknown Unventure
379: Unnkulian Unventure II: the Secret of Acme

MISCELLANEOUS ADVENTURES
Text-only unless stated otherwise.
40: Darkness is Forever. Text-only in med. res, occasional graphics in high res
46: Treasure Hunt Jersey - mouse -controlled graphic game
126: World CAT - "C" Adventure Toolkit for text games
248: CAT - shareware, D/S, contains ST and PC versions, needs C compiler
249: Awe-chasm - adult, D/S
356: Everyday Adventure

STOS Games
93: Treasure Search + source code. Great effects, simple treasure hunt game, especially good for kids. D/S

441: Grandad and the Quest for the Holey Vest - shareware, register to get code for later stages. Excellent graphics. D/S, 1 meg

RPGs and Strategy
5: Hack! v1.03, with ramdisk, D/S
37: DDST
127: Nethack v2.3 1 MEG, D/S
258: Mystic Well - very good DM -style game. Shareware version, so no save routine
466: Dungeonlord. 3 levels. DM-type game. Shareware. USA
467: Cailynvorn. D&D-style RPG
468: Omega. Moria-style RPG. ! Meg
489: Conquest (Strategy)
504: Dungeon Lord (RPG)

ALEX VAN KAAM'S Map Disks
All D/S with slideshow program. (AM+Em in low res)
61: Bloodwych maps
129: Bloodwych Data Disk maps
131: Xenomorph maps
362: Knightmare maps/solution

JOHN BARNSLEY'S Game Help Disks (AM+Em)
59: Bard's Tale 1 Game Help Disk, maps and text, D/S

Other RPG Help
11: Dungeon Master maps and demo of the DM cheat
60: Chaos Strikes Back D/S disk of maps, including isometric 3D version of level 5
156: Chaos Editor and Bloodwych Editor
162: Chaos editor, Chaos hints/pix, Populous editor
180: A new DM dungeon created using the editor
251: Five Chaos dungeons created using the editor
252: Five more Chaos dungeons
253: SimCity editor, terraformer, cheat program and printer option
310: Captive help, maps, text files etc. (AM+Em)

368: Sim City extra cities vol. 1 D/S
370: Sim City extra cities vol. 2 D/S
425: Captive Maps by Ivan Broad, created using the Mapper program on 158 (AM+Em)

TALESPIN games
176: Mountain, SDI and Mansion - written by children for children
181: The Wolf and the Seven Kids - aimed at 5-9 year olds
381: Wizard's Dungeon

UNCLASSIFIABLE!
158: Mapper - draw, save and print maps for RPGs and text games (AM+Em)

MIND GAMES
86: Drachen - German colour vers. of Shanghai

UTILITIES
33: ST Writer Elite now v4.5. Excellent PD word processor , saves as ASCII
403: Intro Maker - write intros for your adventure games.

ART PROGRAMS
428: Art Tutor - shareware, register for manual and Paint Package. Written with STOS.

3D CONSTRUCTION KIT GAMES
461: The Maze
462: Hysula

PC DISKS

If a program is too large to fit onto a 5 1/4" disk I'll show it by a (*). This means the program will be supplied ARCed on 5 1/4" disk so you'll need to unARC it onto a hard disk to run it. Most games, especially the text adventures, will also run on the ST using a PC emulator.

ASSORTED ADVENTURES
Text only unless stated.
53: Crime, Island of Mystery, The Haunted Mission, Nuclear Submarine Adventure, Terror in the Ice Caverns
57: Golden Wombat of Destiny
62: Quest for Kukulklan, Under the Ice
153: Jacaranda Jim now v 4.03
157: Humbug now v 4.5, saves to disk as well as RAM
170: Advanced Xoru - evaluation copy
174: Nirvana
196: McMurphy's Mansion
197: Four With Battune (Museum, Caverns City, Battune in Wonderland and Battune the Sailor

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264: Another Lifeless Planet (and Me with No Beer...)
273: Four More With Battune (Battune Becomes an Actor, Crime-fighter, Goes on Safari and Meets Sleeping Beauty)
274: Supernova by Scott Miller
283: Pirate Island, Castle of Hornadette and Stoneville Manor
285: Fifi's Whorehouse, Softporn Adventure (both adult only), Basic Adventure and Funcity Adventure.
286: T-Zero - Time travel adventure
295: Alien, Dark Continent and Nebula
298: Masquerade, Escape from Maya's Kingdom and The Thief's Adventure
375: Dunjin
414: Pork, original vers. not AGT vers.
* 417: CIA, Escape from New York (both need Basic), IBM Adventure and Dungeon, the original Lebling/Blank et al adventure!
446: Mutant Invasion, Intercept and Red Planet
469: Geneva Adventure
476: Alice in Wonderland
479: Melita Adventure
482: Perils Of Darkest Africa, Revenge Of The Moon Goddess, Eye Of The Inca, Explora

GRAPHIC ADVENTURES
472: Hogbear
474: One Night In Sweden. 2 disks. £3.50
477: Mystery Of The Java Star. 2. disks. £3.50
*486: Drock 1

TADS Text Adventures
* 288: TADS adventure writing system plus Ditch Day Drifter
289: Deep Space Drifter
329: Uunkulian Unventure I - The Unknown Unventure
330: Uunkulian Unventure II - The Secret of Acme

CAT - C Adventure Toolkit
266: CAT - write your own text adventures, needs C compiler.
357: Everyday Adventure

AGT Text Adventures
198: AGT - write your own text adventures. £3.50 (multiple disks)
237: AGT Utilities - AGTBIG, POPHINT, PRETTY, SCRIPTER
167: Betty Carlson's Big Date
168: Deena of Kolini - adult
195: Andkara
219: Magic Mansion

224: Pyramid
*226: Storms
*229: Crime to the Ninth Power
265: Crusade
*267: Son of Stagefright
268: Elf's Adventure
278: Quest for the Holy Grail
307: Ghost Town
*309: A Dudley Dilemma
*315: Castle of the Alchemists
*320: Apprentice, the Testing of a Magical Novice
*326: Sanity Clause
328: Disenchanted
338: Deadly Labyrinth
342: The Lost Stone Mansion
346: The Spelunker's Tremendous Cave Adventure (spoof Colossal)
348: Tales of Tavisa
*349: The Multi-dimensional Thief
351: Tomb of the Ancient Pharaohs
*352: Mop and Murder
363: New England Gothic
*447: Pyramid Of Muna
*448: Love's Fiery Rapture
449: Tark
*450: Battle of Philip...
451: Der Ring Des Nibelungen
452: Susan (Adult)
*453: Sir Ramic Hobbs...
*454: Pork
455: Pork II
*456: House of the Os
*457: Star Portal
*458: The Pilot
459: Fast Lane
460: Easter Egg Hunt
470: AGTAID. Easier to write AGT adventures.
495: Odieus' Quest
496: Squynchia Adventure
497: Jubilee Road
498: Darkest Road (shareware)
501: Oklib's Revenge - cutback PD vers.

OTHER ADVENTURE WRITING SYSTEMS
394: Adventure Writer

RPGs
171: Moraff's Revenge
173: Dungeons and Dragons
*290: NetHack v 3
*296: Vampyr - Ultima-style colour RPG
*305: PC Hack v 3.6
*408: Maze Quest

Solutions

Send a First Class Stamp for each solution requested and a SAE. This isn't the full list, so if you don't see what you need... ask!

INDEX

CH = Coded Hints : F = Feature : H = Hints : M = Map : Ma = Maze : OL = Object List
PG = PLaying Guide : R = Review : S = Solution : P = Page : Number (1) = Issue Number

FEATURES

REVIEWS, SOLUTIONS, HINTS, MAPS and MAZES

SYNTAX PD UPDATE

PC Disks

RPGs
516: Moria
541: The Land
542: Dragon's Shard **PC Disks**

Text Adventures
520: Starship Columbus, Crypt, LBSS,
Maroon, The Adventurer's Museum
522: Nectar of the Gods, Paul's First
Journey
528: Return to Colossal Cave, Rimworld
and Silver Cloud
529: Revenge of Xoff, Orbital Observatory
Adventure and Other World
530: Skylands Star

Adventure Writing Utilities
521: Adventure Compiler/Interpreter and
game, Mugger, plus ADVSYS and
Adventure Maker
523: Gamescape and Levy adventure
writing systems
524: Figment

AGT
525: AGT Adventure Author
531: Wraith Blaster
535: Shades of Grey

TADS
540: NEW! TADS v2.1
526: High Tech Drifter and source code
527: The Great Archaeological Race
533: Save Princeton
534: Alice source code
546: Unnkulia One-Half + Unnkulia Zero
demo. Freeware.

AMIGA Disks

Utilities
510: ReloKick and ST emulator for all
Amigas.
543: PC Task, PC emulator for Amiga.
Shareware, needs DOS

3D Construction Kit Games
511: Mountain Adventure
512: Atlantis
513: Darkness Calls (needs ReloKick
from PD510 to run on 500+/600)
514: Planet of the Daleks
515: Escape from the Planet of the
Cardboard Monsters

Wargames
536: Iron Clads, needs 1meg

Adventure Writing Utilities
537: Adventure Bank Creator, needs
AMOS. Write graphic adventures

AGT
544: Fleece Quest

ST Disks

### 3D Construction Kit Games
517: Spielraum
518: West One
519: Infiltration

TADS
534: Alice source code

NB: To simplify things, from now on, it will
be assumed that PC owners use 3.5" disks
and have a hard disk. If you don't, please
check whether disks will run

I had a deuce of a time getting here, I can tell you. Locked up in a beastly dungeon with no-one to talk to for days on end. Only rats for company at night and the torture squad by day, and those chaps aren't interested in conversation - only answers, *that's* what they want...

Indeed, Lord Crispin, that's what we're *all* seeking, one way or another. I myself am experiencing some difficulty with a homicidal robot. He's a big, metal fellah, armed with laser cannon and infra-red sensors. Got a very nasty disposition too, I just can't get past him...

I'm stuck too, in a cupboard, with this really nasty, bad-tempered, hairy-legged and extremely poisonous spider the size of a dinner plate. Now, I *hate* to be politically incorrect or arachnoidist, but honestly, those *mandibles*, well, really...

I'm cornered in an air-lock with three-headed *alien*, each head uglier than the other and the other is *jolly* ugly...

Well, really, what a load of *duffers*. There's *always* a way out... and it's so simple. Get *Red Herring* on a regular basis and watch your troubles disappear...

Red Herring is published bi—monthly at the end of the month. Next issue, August.