

ADVENTURE PROBE

ISSUE 1

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(c) ADVENTURE PROBE, 13 Hollington Way, Wigan, WN3 6LS

WHAT IS ADVENTURE PROBE?

Adventure Probe aims to give adventurers what they want to read. It is non-profit making so that you, the reader, can be confident that all opinions expressed are impartial, not coloured by commercial considerations.

It is your magazine and we rely on feedback from YOU to make it a success. Tell us what you want to read, don't just moan that what you are looking for isn't there. Until you tell us your views we will feed you what we think you want. If that suits you - fine. If not, let us know! Covered in each issues are:-

HINTS AND TIPS These will be cryptic in format, to get you thinking, without handing the answer to you on a plate and removing the fun of working it out for yourself. This method also avoids the chance of you reading something that you don't want to - YET!

SOLUTIONS These will be serialized over several issues and will give you the precise actions required to progress in the adventure. Hopefully, this will help you get started on those awkward games where you can't figure out what you are trying to do. Having got started you can stop reading and carry on alone.

PENPALS Readers can have name, address and interests listed FREE!

REVIEWS Unlike many magazines, we will not assume that everyone has already tackled the older games. We will be reviewing these for people new to adventuring, and for old hands who may have missed out on them first time round. New products will also get their fair share of coverage, with the emphasis on offering from small software houses and individuals. We will also review writing utilities and any games that readers may have written.

ARTICLES These will cover all aspects of adventuring, with in-depth investigations of playing techniques, writing skills and marketing expertise.

KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE CASTLE If you can offer personal help to frustrated adventurers send us your name, address and list of games completed (also partially completed games). We will print your details for the benefit of any adventurer who is in need of detailed advice. If you require help, write to one of our Kings/Queens enclosing s.a.e., list of objects found, rough map, and any specific problems you have.

You can send anything in to Adventure Probe. Maps, Full solutions, Part solutions, Hints, Lists of completed games. Letters, Readers recommends, Your own games for playtesting, Classified ads. Items for sales, Items wanted.

COMPETITION

An intrepid adventurer needs to make a six day crossing of a barren desert. He and the porters he engages can each carry rations for one man for four days. How many porters does the adventurer need to engage in order to make the crossing safely? (and humanely!) Answers to Adventure Probe by June 30th. The first correct answer drawn at random will receive three months subscriptions free.

PRINTER RIBBONS

Horrified at the cost of new ribbons? We have details of a new product claimed to be able to rejuvenate ribbons almost indefinitely. The cost is very modest and we will be testing it out as soon as possible and let you know the results.

PLAYTESTING

Any reader who would welcome independent advice on a game he or she may have written is welcome to submit the game, full solution, map and return postage. We will test the game and give our opinion on its suitability for the commercial market, together with constructive advice and criticism.

GRAPHIC ADVENTURE CREATOR REVIEW

This month sees the release of Incentive's "Graphic Adventure Creator" for Commodore, Spectrum and BBC machines, whose owners can now enjoy what Amstrad adventure writers have had for several months.

For user friendliness this utility will be hard to beat. The language is extremely close to normal English, abbreviations being shortened English words where possible e.g. to set up the condition:-

If "get lamp" is typed and there is a lamp here, tell the player OK and give him the lamp.

The language used to tell GAC is:-

If (verb 7 and noun 1 and here 1) get 1 okay end

Where verb 7 = get, noun 1 = lamp, object 1 = lamp.

Vocabulary is similarly easy to follow. Verbs, adverbs and nouns can be defined, synonyms being tagged with the same number. So in the example above verb 7 could also be "take", "grab", "catch", "lift" etc. A criticism often made of "QUILLED" games is their limited vocabulary. Players bang their heads against the wall - knowing what to do, but unable to make the computer understand their commands. With GAC there is no need or excuse for this situation.

Still on vocabulary, GAC will cope with full sentences, no need to be tied to verb/noun inputs now! GAC will even cope with sentences such as - "Get the box and open it". It does this by splitting a sentence up and reading "it" as referring to the previous noun - just as we do without thinking in English!

No need to run out of locations with GAC. You can define up to 9999! Admittedly 9999 locations would leave little room for anything else in the game, but they can also double as messages if you use up the whole 255 of those (which is likely). Perhaps a more even balance between the number of locations and the number of messages would have been sensible - but that is only a minor irritation - it is easy to get round the problem.

Graphics are well represented in the package. The comprehensive list of possibilities includes dot, line, box, fill, shade, circle, ellipse, etc., and editing is simple.

It is possible to draw a few basic pictures then merge them together in different combinations with different colours to give a large library of illustrations for a small amount of memory saves time too!

Markers are available to flag actions completed, puzzles solved, etc., and counters are available to count anything you like - moves taken, score, money available, etc. These are not so well documented but a little logical thought should clarify them fairly quickly.

Taken altogether, the package represents excellent value for money at £22.95 on cassette for all machines and £27.95 on disc for all machines except Spectrum.

If you have ever fancied trying your hand at adventure writing you could not choose a better utility than this and you would be well advised to grab a copy fast, before the market is flooded with the games of those quicker off the mark than you!

The address to order is, Incentive Software, 54 London Street, READING, RG1 4SQ

ADVENTURE REVIEWS

MAD MARTHA ... Micro Gen £1.99

You take the part of hen-pecked Henry, who has stolen HIS wages from his wife's purse. He has to sneak out of the house without waking anyone to head for the bright lights. Just as Henry starts enjoying himself his wife - Mad Martha - realises he's missing. Knowing that he has taken the housekeeping, she sets off after him with an axe!

Great scenario! Reasonable graphics. Lousy responses! There is a delay from you typing in a command to seeing it appear on screen, another delay until the response appears - very annoying when you have made a spelling mistake.

If you are the patient type you might enjoy it, but if you've got a quick mind and a fast typing speed - forget it! It is just too S...L...O...W!

THE PRICE OF MAGIK...Level 9 £9.95

Do adventures sometimes make you mad? Don't worry, the madder you get in this game, the better a magician you will become.

Level 9 do give you the option of playing the adventure with graphics or you can play a text only version that gives you more description. If you do play the version with graphics you don't have to wait for a picture to finish before moving on to the next location. (Spectrum version)

You have to defeat Myglar and become the Guardian of the Red Moon but first you have to find 18 spells and learn how to use them.

I thoroughly enjoyed mapping "The Price of Magik" as you can experiment with different spells as you go along.

Although Level 9 have adopted the Lenslock system for this game, you only have to use it to restore a saved game. If you are just mapping and you get killed, press the wrong code a few times and you carry on in the same location. I found this very useful.

All "Red Moon" fans will wallow in this follow up. I haven't completed the game yet but I'm proud I've reached the rank of sorcerer and I'm confident I'll defeat Myglar when I face him.

In my opinion if you don't buy this one you will miss out on a wonderful experience. It is MAGIK!

TEMPLE TERROR... Atlantis Software £1.99

This is a text only adventure using verb/noun input. Archie's daughter is dying of an incurable disease and only by finding the Elixir of Healing can she be saved from a slow and painful death. Two other explorers have tried and were never seen again. Can you succeed where others have failed?

Yes I succeeded - eventually. I found this adventure incredibly easy, but I have to admit that I got stuck for ages at one point. I won't give too much away but, when I tried singular instead of plural I romped happily through to the end of the game.

I have no complaints about "Temple Terror". The puzzles are logical and it is well priced at £1.99. I would recommend it for somebody new to adventuring but the more experienced adventurer would perhaps find it too easy.

SUBSUNK...Firebird £1.99

Cast as the reporter Ed Lines you find yourself alone on the submarine HMS Sea Lion after an enemy attack. Your reason for being on board was to research an article, but you haven't had time to learn anything about the vessel. Now your object is to find your way to the communications room to send a distress signal.

This adventure is written with Quill and Illustrator, and is typically short of vocabulary. However, the commands required are generally the most obvious ones, the problems being working out what you are trying to do. All the objects found have a purpose, either in their own right or as a clue for a solution elsewhere.

Initially you can wander freely about one deck, savouring the atmosphere of claustrophobia as you discover a flooded well-deck and a hatch with rusty hinges which block further progress. A good deal of coming and going is needed to access other parts of the sub, and careful examination of everything is necessary to figure out uses for objects.

The graphics are simple, yet effective, adding to your sense of living in the adventure, yet not getting in the way of the game. There is also some attempt at sound effects which can be annoying.

The problems themselves are of the, "Oh of course....now I see!" variety, and while obscure at first prove thoroughly logical when solved. All except one which I feel was rather contrived, and which seems to be the one which stumps most people for a while. However, that one apart, the puzzles are very enjoyable, particularly for cryptic crossword fans with an aptitude for lateral thinking.

Overall I would thoroughly recommend Subsunk to any adventurer. Beginners should benefit from their lack of preconceived ideas, while those with more experience will enjoy the deviousness of the puzzles. At £1.99 it is an excellent buy!

(For those of you who have already completed Subsunk, the follow-up "Seabase Delta" is now available and is every bit as good....don't miss it. Full review next issue.)

SERIALISED SOLUTIONS

All full solutions are serialised.

THE HOBBIT (PART ONE)

OPEN DOOR, E, E, N, WAIT, WAIT, WAIT, S, TAKE KEY, N, UNLOCK DOOR, OPEN DOOR, N, TAKE ALL, S, S, SE, SAY TO ELROND "HELLO", SAY TO ELROND "READ MAP", E, E, N, WAIT (UNTIL CAPTURED BY NASTY GOBLIN). IN DUNGEON. WAIT (UNTIL THORIN APPEARS), SAY TO THORIN "BREAK WINDOW", DIG SAND, BREAK TRAPDOOR (REPEAT UNTIL TRAPDOOR BREAKS), TAKE KEY (THORIN MAY DO THIS), SAY TO THORIN "CARRY ME", SAY TO THORIN "W", SW, D, WAIT (UNTIL GOBLIN APPEARS), N, SE, E, TAKE RING (IT IS ADVISABLE TO TYPE WEAR RING BEFORE EVERY MOVE AS IT SLIPS OFF YOUR FINGER), N, SE, W, N, D, S, W, E, OPEN DOOR, U, CLOSE DOOR, E, E..... to be continued next issue.

NEVERENDING STORY (PART ONE)

NE, E, LOOK, TAKE AURYN, E, E, E, TAKE ARTAX, N, W, DROP ARTAX, NW, NW, S, S, S, E, E, E, SW, TAKE FOOD, EAT FOOD, TAKE LEATHER, NE, W, W, W, S, SW, W, N, TAKE BRANCH, S, E, N, NE, W, SW, LIGHT BRANCH, NE, E, E, E, E, E, D, LIGHT BUSHES, D, TAKE BOX, N, SW, W, N, W, W, W, SE, W, SW, N, TAKE STONE, S, TAKE HORN, W, SE, BLOW HORN, TAKE FALKOR, SAY TO FALKOR FLY SOUTH, E, U, D, S, E, DROP BOX, SMASH BOX, LOOK, TAKE FRAGMENT, S, S, (WAIT FOR EYES TO BLINK) S part two next issue.

VALKYRIE 17 (PART ONE)

E, N, N, U, W, W, N, GET BRICK, S, E, E, D, W, SMASH CASE, DROP BRICK, GET STETHOSCOPE, E, E, GET SNOWSHOES, W, U, E, GET SHEETS, W, W, S, OPEN SAFE, DROP STETHOSCOPE, GET NECKLACE, GET BOX, N, GET MIRROR, W, W, OPEN WINDOW, OUT, S, IN, TIE SHEETS, TIE ROPE, S, GET BOOK, READ BOOK, DROP BOOK, N, OUT, D, E, S, DROP MIRROR, E, E, GET SKIS, E, S, N, WEAR SNOWSHOES, N, S, S, GET POLES, N, N, W, S, DROP SNOWSHOES, WEAR SKIS, D, DROP SKIS, DROP POLES, S, S..... to be continues next issue.

We hope to have about six serialised solutions each month but, in order to do this, we need help from you. If you have any full or part solutions please send them in to Adventure Probe.

Full credit will be given to all contributors, and the best set of maps/solutions will win a prize!

CRYPTIC HINTS

HEROES OF KARN

Marsh gas is explosive stuff. Try revival techniques on the frog. Underground religion is profitable. Wealthy prisoners can escape.

SINBAD AND THE GOLDEN SHIP (PART ONE)

Swim to the ship and board her. Search the ship then steer her. Old men don't like water. To get past the dragon break the chain. Enter the cage and search it.

NEVERENDING STORY

A bush fire could be useful.

EMERALD ISLE

The spider will give you a pasting - unless you give it to him. Roof fall a barrier? Use a barrier to prop it up. Dig a lot. Honesty brings its own reward.

BORED OF THE RINGS

Being smothered? Shout for help.

GROUND ZERO

Generosity jumps the queue.

RED MOON

From tiny acorns, mighty bridges grow.....if you read up on it first! The horseshoe is most attractive to treasure.

VALKYRIE 17

Poles enjoy skiing as much as the Swiss.

SPIDERMAN

Pathway blocked? Push!

MESSAGE FROM ANDROMEDA

Do the decent thing with the skeleton to find a weapon. It's rude to point...except with a rod and plate! Unscrew the sphere and change places.

SUBSUNK

Plunge into the basin to clear the flood. Stuck with the gun? It's a case of shooting! Stuck in the locker? Don't be...you can leave with ease! Molten yoghurt is sticky...when thickened with cinders.

GETTING YOU STARTED

Each month we get you started in one adventure.

BORED OF THE RINGS (PART ONE)

OUT OF THHE TENT, W, W, W, E, E, S, S, HIDE, N, S, DRINK ALE, N,
N, N, E, E, E, E, S, D, E, N, N, SHOUT FOR HELP, E, E, IN, OUT,
S, S, W, W, N, E, IN, IN, OUT, OUT, E, E, E, E, N, U, TAKE
PEPPER, D, S, E, E, E, E, E, IN, E, S, E, E, N, E, DROP PEPPER.
End of part one.

HELP WANTED.....PLEASE!

LUDOIDS Can't get started.

SINBAD AND THE GOLDEN SHIP (PART TWO) I am literally stuck - to
the side of a mountain.

LORD OF THE RINGS How do you get past the Black Riders to
finish Part One?

ROBIN OF SHERWOOD How do you find the tax collector and the
serf.

AL STRAD How do you get past the dog? What does DA THOLC mean?

MORDON'S QUEST How do you get out of the catacombs?

WARLORD How do you kill the Roman?

MICROMAN How do you get back after killing the mole? How do you
catch the fish? What are the twig, pencil and hook used for?

MURAL Can't get started

If you can supply answers to the above problems, please write to
Adventure Probe.

ADVENTURE SHOP

ADVENTURE EXCHANGE SERVICE

Adventuring is fun, addictive, frustrating and costly! With adventure games priced at anything from £1.99 to £15.00 or more, how can you pursue your pastime more cheaply?

With A.E.S. you can exchange your completed adventures for others in the same price range. Membership is free, the only cost to you being a small handling charge to cover postage, packing, etc.

If you would like more details without obligation, just send an SAE to:- A.E.S., 78 Merton Road, Wigan, WN3 6AT.

SPECTRUM ADVENTURER

New! A cassette-based magazine featuring a brand new, ultra atmospheric, serialised adventure. Learn how you could win a colour monitor in our fantastic adventure competition. The cost is just £2 per issue. Alternatively, write for subscription details to:-

S.A.E.C. (AC), 4 Kilmartin Lane, Carlisle, Lanarks. ML8 5RT

AMSTRAD ADVENTURERS!

Have you met Arnold Blackwood yet? Or Mexican Pete? Or Lord and Lady Erebus? No!! Then you don't know what you're missing!

For details of these pun(ishing) adventures write to:- Nemesis, 10 Carlow Road, Ringstead, Kettering, Northants, NN14 4DW

AMSTRAD CPC DISC OWNERS

Why wait minutes to load your software? With BONZO MEDDLER you can transfer most of your cassette based software to disc and have it accessible in seconds.

Bonzo Meddler is a fantastic new utility devoted to tape to disc transfer. It can cope with all standard Basic binary and ASCII files and even some headerless and flashloaders!

Bonzo incorporates full status display during transfer. With "hands off" operation it offers extended catalogue, renames to suit AMDOS and automatically relocates binary as required.

Cutedisc is also included on the tape.....which transfers itself to disc!

By return of post, £5.00 inclusive from:- Nemesis (AC), 10 Carlow Road, Ringstead, Kettering, Northants, NN14 4DW

READERS LETTERS

This is your page.

As this is the first issue we haven't got any letters to print so please write in. We want to hear your views on anything to do with adventuring.

Also we plan to have a "READERS RECOMMENDS" slot in which you can recommend an adventure bought from the classified ads section of a magazine. If you enjoyed it, others will. What we require is the title, software house (or address of the seller), price and list of computers the game has been written for. We also need a brief storyline and the reasons you enjoyed the adventure, e.g. atmosphere, plot or puzzles.

We would be interested to hear from anyone who has tried out an adventure writing utility e.g. GAC, Quill, Genesis or other.

Would you be willing to give personal help by post to fellow adventurers who are stuck? Then send your name and address in to Adventure Probe with a full list of all completed adventures. We will print your details in our Kings/Queens of the Castle section.

Send us any hints you think would help readers. If you can't make them cryptic we will do that for you.

Need any help in an adventure? Drop us a line enclosing s.a.e. and we'll do our best to help you. If we don't have the answer you want we will print your name, address and problem in our HELP WANTED section.

Please try to find time to fill in our Questionnaire at the back of this issue, it will help us to give you the magazine you want.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

More on GAC.
Mapping mazes.
Vocabulary list of useful verbs for easy reference.

MARKETING NEWS

Interceptor have launched a new line of budget games, PLAYERS, and are looking to expand their range on most micros. The games already launched include several adventures. They have also reduced the prices of their older games (Heroes of Karn, etc.) to £1.99

ADVERTISING

This is welcome from both traders and individuals, and the charge made for this service reflects only the cost of extra paper and printing. We welcome advertisements covering any aspect of adventuring, but reserve the right to refuse submissions which we feel are not in keeping with the aim of Adventure Probe.

Advertising Rates

TRADE.....5p per word
INDIVIDUALS, PRIVATE CLUBS & USER GROUPS.....2p per word

Finally we can't say thank you to anyone this month for contributions to the magazine because we haven't had any.

Perhaps next month we can say thank YOU!

This is a re-mastered version of Issue 1.

The original was published on foolscap paper and stapled down the left-hand side. I have rearranged the sections to fit into the A5 format but nothing has been amended or omitted, and the only words added are those on this page.

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