

ADVENTURE PROBE

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to Issue 10 of Adventure Probe. No apologies this month, but lots of thanks are due to various people.

Please don't think I've lost my marbles but if The Kraken is reading another stolen copy of Adventure Probe. Thank you very much for all the solutions you sent in. They are greatly appreciated. Won't you come out of the closet and let me thank you properly?

Mike Wade received a request for help from Pakistan - only one problem it was written in the native language of the adventurer. Anybody know anyone who could translate it? The only thing Mike was able to glean from the letter was the title of the adventure giving all the trouble - 'Price of Magik'.

WACCI are offering a free introductory magazine in return for a large (A4) SAE, so if you own an Amstrad then get your free mag., you'll enjoy it. (see back cover)

Thanks to all the magazines that have mentioned Probe in some form or another this month. See you all next month.

Sandra

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THE PRICE OF ADVENTURES

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was text. Gilsoft moved upon the world and saw that the Word was good, and said "Let there be the Quill" and there was the Quill. But Gilsoft then took the fruit from the Tree of Graphics and saw that besides the Word, there was the Picture. Gilsoft saw that the Picture was good, and said "Let there be The Illustrator" and there was The Illustrator. But, Gilsoft were not alone in the world, and soon a new face emerged with the Incentive to improve upon what Gilsoft had done.

Incentive saw that the Word and the Picture were one and said "Let there be the Graphic Adventure Creator" and there was the GAC. Very soon the GAC had made for Incentive a million folds of green, a million circles of brown. They had fulfilled their prophecy from an earlier work of theirs, coincidentally called "Millionaire" where the player had to make a million!

Gilsoft were saddened that Incentive would take over from where they had stood, and thought "We must make our own GAC, at the same price." They had already thought to compress the Word, and with that thought and many others, Gilsoft created the new Word and the word was PAW.

Legend tells of other giants who bravely moved upon the world. One was called CRL and brought forth GENESIS. But CRL had not foreseen the GAC and with both brought forth nearly at once there was no need for a battle of words, for GAC won.

An earlier legend even tells of a company called Dreamsoft who brought forth the Dungeon Builder (or was it Creator? - the legend seems too dim to recall). Alas, little was heard of this since.

So now, although many Basic snails still move upon the world, there are many giants besides Gilsoft and Incentive that keep their soft wares to themselves, such as the mighty Level 9 and Infocom. Many words are forged from their stables and sometimes many pictures too.

Alas for the common mortal, the choice is more and more expensive. At first Gilsoft offered their Quill for fifteen brown circles, five more than a normal ware, but since this, Incentive offered their GAC for either twenty-three or twenty-eight circles, depending on the choice, be it tape or disc.

Gilsoft put out the Illustrator for a further fifteen circles, and other products too for various amounts as additional parts to their whole system. If the user could afford each one, that was.

In that respect, the GAC was complete, for less circles of brown. But now Gilsoft are releasing the PAW, but they are fools, for they are offering it at the exact price of the GAC, or perhaps that is a coincidence? Surely, any mortal being can see that to offer your wares at a lower price to another's offerings will bring more sales. Even more so if one finds that your wares are better.

Whatever happened to their limit of fifteen brown circles? Well, they tell you that's the price of magik, but I wonder. Take heed, all software companies, lest you should fall when an unseen David takes his slingshot and defeats you like Goliath.

You will be knocked down with better value, less circles. But who knows the future of the world, in the hands of such giants? For now, each mortal must earn their brown circles and make their choice, but be warned: all that glitters is not gold; the brown circle itself is proof of that.

Those with enough circles to have bought a Drive have a larger choice, for Incentive do not rest. Soon they are to emerge again with a GAC+. But, the question remains - for how many circles? I trust the answer be not too high, or we could be seeing the first Goliath.....

Thus endeth this chapter.

Christopher Hester

SOFTWARE REVIEWS

THE JADE NECKLACE - Jack Lockerby - Price £1.75

There has been a burglary at the residence of wealthy socialite, Mrs. Gloria Florence Bannister. Someone has stolen her most priceless possession, a jade necklace, a present from her husband.

Can you, Phil Mallow, recover the necklace, find your missing friend, H. Bogat, and pay off G. F. B.'s gambling debts to Big Fats, whose shadow weighs more than you do!

The story has a strong flavour of the 1920's era, as you visit casinos and gambling ships; avoid the lethal machine gun fire of the local hoods; and investigate seedy dives and pawnshops.

It's great fun, with plenty of interesting problems which fit together like a jigsaw as you slowly solve the case and its sub-plots.

Some of the two word input commands are a little obscure but the author has provided some help in most of the places where you're likely to have difficulty. I found a lot of the city location descriptions repetitive, being of the "You're on the corner of 35th and 1st street" type, and felt that there could have been more variety in this area. Otherwise there is only the occasional spelling mistake, and I did not encounter any major bugs whilst I was completing the game.

The Jade Necklace is a QUILLED, patched, text only adventure, from the capable pen of Jack Lockerby, who also wrote the excellent 'Lifeboat' and 'Hammer of Grimmold'. It features redefined texts and ram save and ram load (which I find extremely useful).

I enjoyed the game and recommend it to all amateur sleuths. It's a gem with only a few minor flaws, and excellent value at £1.75.

Reviewer - PAUL SERBERT - Spectrum

STRYPTISCHE Pt.1 - Richard Robinson

Your partner, Charles, is very interested in the occult and experiments, so you aren't worried when you don't hear from him for a few weeks. Then you receive a phone call from Charles telling you to listen carefully as he's discovered something more - then his voice ends. You hear a ripping sound, then the line goes dead. You want to know what he has discovered, but have you the courage to go on? Your journey begins as you make your way to his mansion, find Charles' body and then you have to find out exactly what he discovered.

I enjoyed playing this game as some of the puzzles were good and took a bit of time to solve, it's a pity there weren't more of them though. The descriptions of some locations fooled me as well. I spent ages at some of them trying everything possible when I didn't have to do anything. Then there was the part where you couldn't go in some directions, but I had to try didn't I? Yes, I got killed. I also learned some swear words (not from the game, but from myself) when I realised I hadn't SAVED it and had to start again.

I think I would class this game as a beginners, because of the amount of locations and puzzles. All the same, I liked playing it. Watch out at the end though, all is not what it seems!

STRYPTISCHE Pt. 2 (House of Fun, House of Terror)

To be truthful, I can't find much to say about part two, as I was quite disappointed with it. There isn't much to do at all, and the things you find hold no puzzle. As soon as you find an object you know how or where to use it. The map is a bit of a pig to do, and to top it all, just as you start to get into the game - it finishes!

Unfortunately the only good thing I can say about this part of the game is the descriptions of the hand and body, they are good. Very gory, but good.

Reviewer - Sue Burke - Amstrad

STRYPTISCHE PTS. 1 & 2 are available by mail order only Price £2.99 on tape from:

RICHARD ROBINSON, 143 Oakfield Road, Wickham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

THE ELEVENTH HOUR - Terry Braverman - Price £3.99

The janitor at Harridges Department Store, driven mad by years of low pay and lack of recognition for his mind-boggling I.Q., has finally gone completely over the edge! He has planted a number of explosive devices throughout the Store, each set to detonate at a different time, so that, by the end of THE ELEVENTH HOUR, all that will remain of this great institution is a pile of smoky rubble! You, as bomb disposal expert extraordinaire, are charged with the task of searching the Store, finding the bombs, and defusing them before any damage can be done. The only "fly in the ointment" (as they say) is that the Mad Janitor is still inside the Store, wandering between the different floors, and toting a loaded shotgun!

As you can probably guess, he is unlikely to help you complete your mission ... quite the reverse, in fact!!

Some people may question the morality of a game like this ... bearing in mind that real-life bombs in real-life department stores occur only too frequently in this day and age, with deeply tragic consequences. That is an argument which I have no wish to get in to. You will either find the scenario of this game acceptable or not. Either way it's YOUR problem!!

The adventure is written using the Quill, Patch and Illustrator. RAMSAVE and RAMLOAD are provided, as is the extremely useful "Alldrop" command. The character set has been nicely redesigned, although it can be a bit tricky to read in upper case, and good use has been made of colour in providing a neat and clear screen presentation.

The expected spelling mistakes start appearing from the introductory screens onward (I'm almost certain that writers do it deliberately in order to give reviewers something to talk about!), but thankfully, there aren't too many of them. The graphics, unfortunately, are very much-of-a-muchness (mainly variations on the theme of a group of ornate pillars viewed from different angles!). They did nothing for me at all.

The sound effects however are worthy of a special mention. This must be one of the NOISIEST adventures ever! Not only is there a nice solid "Beep!" every time you press a key (which is a feature I'm all in favour of), but every other noise offered by the Patch seems to have been pressed into service - there are sirens wailing, taps dripping, telephones ringing, clocks ticking, bursts of static, and all manner of scratching and shuffling effects! My only complaint is - there's too much of it! It gets boring after a while. It's also a shame that, like the graphics, the sound effects weren't fixed so that they only displayed on your first visit to a location. Having to endure 30 seconds worth of ticking every time you pass through the Clock Department quickly begins to get on your nerves!!

The game itself involves finding and defusing 5 very different bombs. You have 660 game minutes in which to do this (each move counts as one game-minute), and that is plenty of time ... if you know where you're going and what you're doing! So you can expect the Store to come down-around-your-ears several times before you finish mapping and exploring everything! The map is large - but not vast.

The Store comprises 6 floors as well as a Roof and a Basement. Transport between the floors is by means of stairs or lifts - and sometimes the lifts don't work properly! Just another little wrinkle to add to your misery! Should you run into the Mad Janitor on your travels (and you will with some regularity), he will ask you an I.Q. question. Failure to provide the right answer will result in the Janitor readily adding murder to his list of crimes - your murder!! How easy or difficult you find the questions will depend upon your ability to see relationships between groups of letters and numbers (somewhat like actual I.Q. tests I suppose) rather than your general knowledge or ability to solve puzzles. I quite liked this part of the game. It made a nice change.

Once you find the bombs, the difficult part of the adventure starts - how to defuse them? This requires the correct manipulation of a number of objects, which you will find around the Store, and the use of a series of very precise inputs in the correct order. Each of the 5 bombs is different and therefore requires different objects and inputs, but all are very tricky indeed!

It may well take you longer to work out the correct defusing methods than it does to complete everything else in the adventure! The question is: will the game sustain your interest for long enough to keep you guessing and trying? Personally, I doubt it.

I found that, despite all it's good points, the adventure really doesn't have enough atmosphere to grip and hold the player. There is no sense of being alone in the deserted vastness if a great department store - there is no sense of impending doom to spur the player into urgency - there is no sense of racing against the clock in a life-and-death struggle! The adventure is too flat, too one-paced, and, ultimately, uninteresting.

The Store's counters are filled to overflowing with loads of different stuff - but trying to "Examine ..." any of it invariably produces "You can't"! How much better it would have been to have prompted "It's of no use to you." or "You are wasting time" or "As you dilly-dally the clock moves ever closer to the moment of destruction." or even "You find something!" Such responses would have been more realistic and much more involving for the player. "You can't." is simply soul-destroying!

Also, I think that here was an adventure which cried out for an on-screen clock (permanently positioned in one corner) to act as a constant reminder that the player is in a race against time - and time is short! Failing the presence of a clock, the appearance of a regular "It is xx minutes since you bravely entered the store. Only yy minutes remain before the full fury of explosive destruction is unleashed. You must hurry." (or variations thereof) type message would have done much to keep the player keenly aware that a relentless countdown is occurring. As it is, I didn't care much one way or the other.

THE ELEVENTH HOUR is an adventure which contains a lot of good stuff, along with some fairly original ideas, but, in the end, it just doesn't quite come off.

Reviewer - Jim O'Keeffe - Spectrum

THE ELEVENTH HOUR is available by mail order only from:

TERRY BRAVERMAN, (Dept. AP), 23 Aragon Close, Kings Hedges,
Cambridge. CB4 2SU

ADVENTURES FOR SPECTRUM

OPERATION STALLION AND THE CROWN are available at the reduced price of £5.75 for Probe readers, contact WRIGHTCHOICE at:

PO Box 100, 159 Welbeck Crescent, Troon, Ayrshire. KA10 6BD
(Reviewed in this issue of Probe)

FLOOK TWO - David Oya - £1.75

You are standing outside a cave, ahead of you are the dreary marshes. You wander about aimlessly, when suddenly Moovle appears. He reminds you that your mission is to rescue Vile Narcilcrisis from Angralusa the Wiz and his assistant Joyce the Profitable, stays long enough to give you a couple of tips, then disappears.

This is a QUILLED adventure without graphics, the best kind in my opinion. The descriptive passages go from the sublime to the ridiculous. "You are in an Oak wood. To the west is a high wall. As the undergrowth is so dense this is the only point along the path where the wall is accessible.", gives way to "You are up a gum tree". Even after I had completed it I went through again for the sheer pleasure of finding a wrecked CS with a sun filter saying:-

"ANGRALUSA JOYCE"

I'm sure nobody could come up with pictures to do it justice.

There were one or two nice little diversions which seemed to be designed to stop you rescuing poor old Narcilcrisis - a robot who kept asking the meaning of life (I still think the answer is 42, but he says I'm wrong) and a man in a raincoat who offered me a nice little earner, ten grand for a platinum egg.

The vocabulary is perhaps a bit limited, but the syntax is nice and simple, there is none of the "lean ladder against wall, climb ladder" nonsense here, just type in "UP" and you are. The only thing I really missed was not being able to use "IT".

Now for the bad bits. There's this maze you see. Now normally I like a good maze, bit of a challenge, chance of a bit of accurate mapping, just up my street that is. This maze is absolutely ***** awful! What with bits of chalk and useless things that disappear after you drop them, and a great big orc (with all the good looks and charm of Bernard Manning) who says "Oy fink Oy'm gunner avta cut your head off" - well, it was all too much for me. If it hadn't been for Sandra the Helpful I might not have got through it at all.

I really enjoyed "FLOOK TWO". It's amusing and really great value for money, what more can you want from life? At £1.75, or "2.95 for Flooks One and Two together you can't beat it.

Reviewer - LINDA FRIEND - Amstrad 464

BESTIARY - Author Perry Williams - Amstrad - Price £2.50 on cassette

What's this? Prologue? Playing instructions? Perry has taken a bit of time over the presentation of this game, giving some quite useful information and a plot summary on the inlay card. So what's it all about then?

Alas and alack, a terrible blight has fallen on the land. You are the King's youngest son and decide to set forth to set the blight right. Armed with a short hunting knife and a silver penny you set off on your travels.

Soon enough you come across your older brother who went out blight-bashing before you. Unfortunately, he had some bad luck and lies, with his horse, dead on the ground. Ah well, never mind. I know - loot the body. No such luck!

Okay then, loot the horse's body. Aha, a golden bridle. I bet that'll come in handy. And so we continue on our merry way, finding all manner of strange things, mostly of the animal kind.

Perry obviously likes animals, as the adventure is full of them. Unfortunately, there really isn't a great deal else (apart from a virtually non-interactive witch and sorcerer) and most of the puzzles revolve around befriending or getting past them.

This can all get a bit boring after your third or fourth little furry friend or horrible ferocious beastie in twenty minutes.

These beasties by the way range from a penguin to a gryphon, which brings me neatly to my next point. The locations are put together in a very illogical fashion, which rather destroys any realism built up by the good text descriptions.

For instance, three moves away from a tropical rain forest you find an arctic waste. A bit silly that.

The graphics (mostly pictures of animals) are excellent. I usually dislike graphics but these are very pretty and draw quickly, although they're not essential to the game. Unfortunately for hardened graphics-haters you can't turn them off.

A clever little touch is that the background colour changes to match the local scenery (green for fields, white for the city, yellow for the desert etc). Unfortunately, this creates some garish colour combinations at times, the most unpleasant of which is a really eye-straining red-on-green.

The vocabulary is small, and as far as I can see not much use has been made of the GAC's advanced features, which is a shame. Several standard adventuring phrases are not understood.

So, on the whole, Bestiary is a pleasant adventure that will keep you entertained but not for very long. Maybe a teensy bit expensive given the price of recent efforts from, for instance, Plasma Touch.

Presentation - 15/20 Plot - 12/20 Atmosphere - 17/20

Interaction - 11/20 Value - 13/20 Overall - 14/20

Reviewer - DAVID OYA - Amstrad 664

BESTIARY is available by mail order only on tape or disc (send CF2 + £2) from:

PERRY WILLIAMS, (Dept. AP), 12 Godesdone Road, Cambridge. CB5 8HR

THE ARCHERS - Level 9/Mosaic - Price £9.95

First of all let me come out of the closet. I listen to "The Archers" (an everyday story of countryfolk) every Sunday morning when I'm peeling the spuds and beating up Yorkshire puddings, (they fight back though). It's great! I don't actually remember poor Grace getting burned to death but I've been listening for years, and even join in when good old Uncle Tom sings "The Village Pump".

Now for the review bit. The Archers is just like Adrian Mole except you have to get more listeners, not peer group approval. (What does that mean anyway?) I'm a great fan and know lots about the characters but I gave up after about 45 minutes, so you can tell how awful it must be.

At £9.95 it's the biggest waste of money I've ever had the misfortune to play - get the picture? Oh, Level 9, how could you put your name to it?

Reviewer - LINDA FRIEND - Amstrad 464

WRIGHTCHOICE SOFTWARE - Andrew Wright - £6.95

WRIGHTCHOICE are a new company in the adventure market. They have just released their first two adventures, and have ambitious plans to follow this up with 5 further releases before the end of the year. The current games each form the first part of two separate trilogies - the "Operation Series" and the "Quest Series". Both trilogies carry a prize of £500 for the first adventurer to complete them.

OPERATION STALLION

This is an illustrated text adventure in two parts and features John Blake, a very special agent!

For many months now, large quantities of high quality heroin have been flooding into Britain. Despite strenuous efforts, the only clue the Police have managed to uncover is that the brains behind the drug-smuggling is someone known only as The Stallion. Further investigations, and a lucky break, lead the investigators to the conclusion that The Stallion is, in fact, one Chow King Kwok, a Chinese businessman. The Police set out to trap Kwok, but, every time they came close, a mystery mole within their investigating squad tipped the criminal mastermind off ... and he evaded them! Stymied, but still determined that Kwok should be brought to justice, the Police pass the case over to an ultra-secret Government department ... with power to act outside the Law!!

The first part of the adventure is fairly straightforward. You simply have to find your way from your own office, in a building somewhere in Whitehall, to that of your Boss, in the same building and just one floor up. Once there you will be briefed on your mission and told what you will be required to do. You will then be allowed to prepare yourself for your task by selecting weapons and equipment from a large catalogue of 24 different items! You will not be allowed to take them all however, so you'll need to consider carefully what is likely to be of most use to you.

You may have also found, in and around your office, a large number of other items. You may wish to take some of these into Part Two with you also! The choice is entirely yours!

In Part Two the mission starts proper ... and you are given just 17 hours in which to complete it! As each and every move you make is deemed to occupy exactly 6 minutes, you don't have to be a mathematical genius to work out that you have a maximum of only 170 moves in which to do the job ... or it's curtains!!

The game has a whole host of "instant death/random death" features, which means you are going to end up getting killed without warning on more occasions than you'll be able to count.

It doesn't help either that, each time you are killed, it's necessary to reload your saved position from Part One, and/or a saved position from Part Two. This effectively kills the Ramsave feature completely!

If you reach 170 moves and run out of time, you are not given the choice of starting again ... the computer simply resets itself! If you wish to try again, you must reload the game (and your saved position from Part One)!

The author may have thought this was fairly clever of him ... I found it to be intensely irritating!!

You will also find it necessary to return to Part One every now and again in order to exchange some of your items for others which you have previously left behind ... unless you are lucky enough to pick out all the really useful items first time!!

Doing this requires you to reset the computer, load part One, load saved position, re-select from the Catalogue, save position, reset the computer, load Part Two, load saved position from Part One, replay game through to the point where you wish to use the object you have gone back for! Bloody tedious!!!

The adventure operates on a set of very strict conditions. Failure to comply with the conditions fully will mean that you will be denied further access within the adventure ... usually by the expedient means of an "instant death".

For instance, the first time you attempt to enter the Guards Washroom from the Ventilation Vents, you will probably find a Guard inside who will shoot you immediately. For this Guard not to be present, you must first make some Lead Pellets (by smelting pencil lead in a furnace), and then enter the Washroom only after turning your Torch off! Likewise, there are other rooms accessible from the Ventilation Vents where, if you are carrying a Tape Recorder, there will be Guards there who will shoot you immediately you enter. If you do not carry the Tape Recorder, there will be no Guards ...! As you can see, neither the problems nor the conditions imposed are entirely logical.

The almost continual instant death, random death, searching for the means of filling obscure conditions, and reloading of saved positions, makes this an incredibly frustrating game to play.

.....

THE CROWN - Wrightchoice

This is a text-only adventure which includes a combat routine which, the author claims, occupies about 17K of memory and does not depend completely upon the generation of random numbers. You choose your method of attack from a menu of three - lunge, swing or hack - and then choose a defensive manoeuvre from another menu - retreat, duck or dodge. Your opponent then selects his moves, and the result of the first round of hostilities is displayed. You may break off the attack between rounds, or continue until either you or your adversary is dead. The system works fairly well, although I did notice a tendency for attacks by both parties to "miss" more often than not!

Anyway, The Crown is also a two part adventure ... but the second part will not be released until June. This first part is subtitled "Journey", and the plot goes as follows

For many years the land of Tharg was ruled by the kindly King Rasselhague. His evil half-brother, Chaleb, had tried to bring the powers of darkness into the land, but Rasselhague had stopped, and then banished him. The victory was shortlived however, for Chaleb continued to study his black arts and grew even more powerful. In return for this power, he was forced to store his human genetic coding in several horological stones, which he then mounted in a golden crown and hid in the bowels of his Tower, guarded by goblins.

In due course, Rasselhague and Chaleb clashed again in a mighty, bloody battle. The good King was killed and Chaleb seized power over the land. Luckily, Rasselhague's wife and baby son had fled into hiding before Chaleb could capture them. There then followed 21 years of Chaleb's unbroken, tyrannical rule. The land suffered, the people were cruelly exploited, all hope seemed gone. But now, Rasselhague's son has reached manhood, he has learned of the death of his father, and the evil of his half-uncle. He is young, he is brave, he is angry ... and he is about to set out on a quest to reclaim his father's kingdom as his own!! A new hope is born!!

Thankfully, this game seems to be relatively free of "instant/random death" features. However, progress will still depend on your ability to fill strict conditions at certain times. For instance, you will come across a pawnshop fairly early on which seems to be continually "closed for lunch". Until, that is, you discover a Purse which is well concealed on the body of a dead Guard ... then the Pawnshop is miraculously open ... but only for one visit, then it closes again!!!

This game plays much better than Operation Stallion and I found it to be fairly atmospheric and involving. I liked the redesigned character set very much ... it fits the adventure very neatly. There are also some good puzzles here.

You may, for instance, find yourself limited to just the first three locations for quite a while, until you figure out the way of getting past the Gate Guard and into the City. I also particularly liked the sequence featuring a Sea Chest, a Sinking Ship, and several objects which may or may not disappear ... depending on what you do with them!

When I first laid eyes on these WRIGHTCHOICE games, I was very impressed. The adventure seemed to be very well plotted, very professionally presented and packaged, and to possess a small spark of originality into the bargain! I looked forward to playing them immensely.

However, the author has employed nearly every device possible to disrupt and destroy the adventurers enjoyment of his games. Where he has simply tried to make the games harder ... he has merely succeeded in making them infinitely more frustrating! I am almost sure that this is solely because of the £500 prizes on offer ... you can't just give that kind of money away, after all! In my opinion though, I think the author would have been better advised to have forgotten about the prize money, dropped the price of the games by a couple of pounds or so, and concentrated on trying to pull the adventurer into the world of his games ... instead of employing every means of keeping him out!!!

But, if you would like to take a stab at winning one (or both) of those prizes, Wrightchoice have kindly offered a £1.20 reduction on the price of each adventure to Probe readers. They are also offering the 2nd part of the "Operation Series" (scheduled for release in April) entirely free of charge to the first 100 adventurers to purchase Part One. Full details of these offers, and the address to write to, should be elsewhere in this issue of Probe. (see page 8)

Reviewer - Jim O'Keeffe - Spectrum

INCENTIVE SOFTWARE

GAC OWNERS! You can now buy the new supplement to the GAC handbook directly from Probe for £1 including p & p, and save yourself 25p.

ADVENTURES

APACHE GOLD - CBM 64, Spectrum, Amstrad CPC - £7.95

WINTER WONDERLAND - CBM 64, Spectrum, Amstrad CPC and BBC B - £7.95

Incentive Software, (Dept. AP), 2 Minerva House, Calleva Park, Aldermaston, Berkshire. RG7 4QW

THE ARNOLD BLACKWOOD COLLECTION

THE TRIAL OF ARNOLD BLACKWOOD - Help Arnold fins his way through the grounds and house to reach Lord Erebus and solve the final problem.

ARNOLD GOES SOMEWHERE ELSE - Arnold is lost in the realms of Greek mythology, in the company of a friendly dragon. Can you help him?

THE WISE AND FOOL OF ARNOLD BLACKWOOD - In this fanciful tour of Rochdale and the surrounding areas you must help Arnold to overcome a variety of problems.

BRAWN FREE - In this lighthearted romp through the wild west you will meet all the characters you would expect to encounter ... but not necessarily as you imagined them!

AMSTRAD CPCs - Tape £4.50 each - Disc compilation £13.95

AMSTRAD PCWs - Tape £4.50 each - Disc compilation £15.95

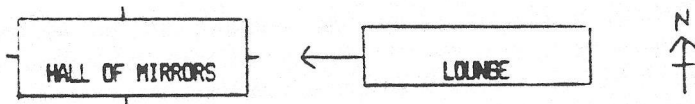
NEMESIS, 10 Carlow Road, Kettering, Northants. NN14 4DW

FINDING YOUR WAY ROUND A MAZE ... Beginners Maze Mapping
by Paul Serbert

Mazes exist, whether you like them or not, many adventures include one, or more, and it seems they're here to stay. So how would Dirk the Dumb go about negotiating your Mr. Average Maze? Dirk tries stumbling blindly through and soon becomes hopelessly lost, stuck in a rut. What's more, he misses the all important exit which leads to the room containing the jewels, torch, gun and kitchen sink.

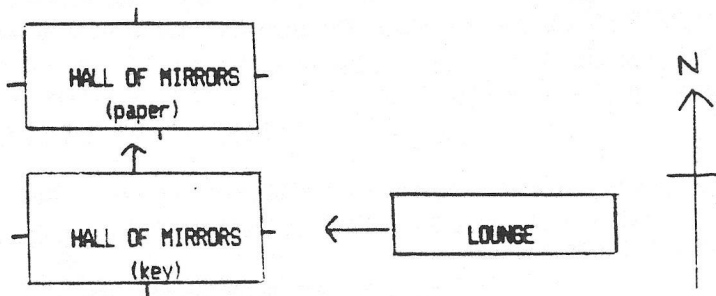
Clever Eric, on the other hand, draws a map. A lot of questing knights have trouble mapping mazes, but Eric knows that all that's needed is patience and a dash of common sense - pencil and paper are useful of course. Eric always draws his maze on a separate sheet to the main map, after all, mazes can get rather messy with all the various routes and Eric doesn't want to ruin his only map to the priceless treasure. Also, he always tries to be carrying as many objects as possible upon entering a labyrinth.

Let's take the maze from MAXWORKS as an example. Eric moves west from the lounge:



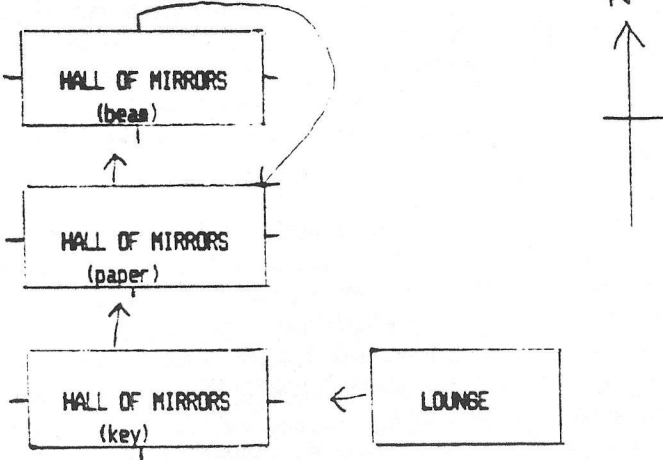
His inventory shows that he is carrying: wooden beaa, key, matches, coin, paper.

Eric drops the key in the hall of mirrors and moves north. Since he sees no key here he knows he is in a new location - obviously - and consequently drops the paper to act as another marker. His map now looks thus:

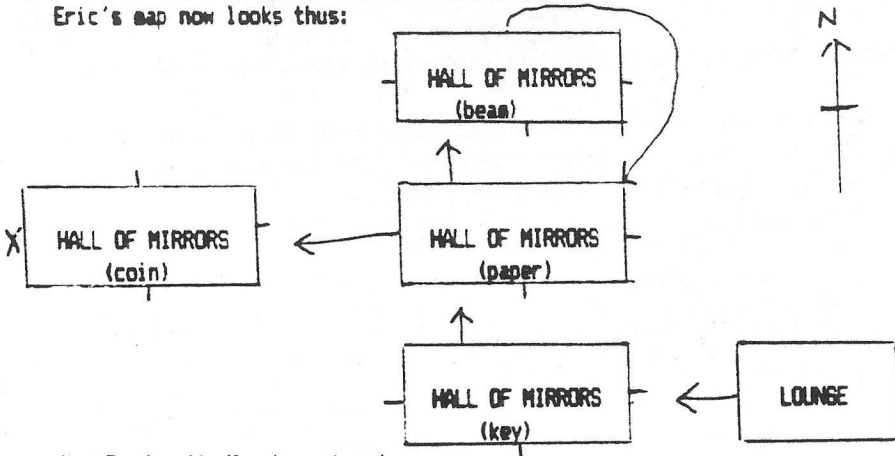


What next? North again.

This takes him to another empty location, so he drops the beam as a marker. His next move, which is also north, takes him back to the room containing the paper. Eric's map now looks like this:



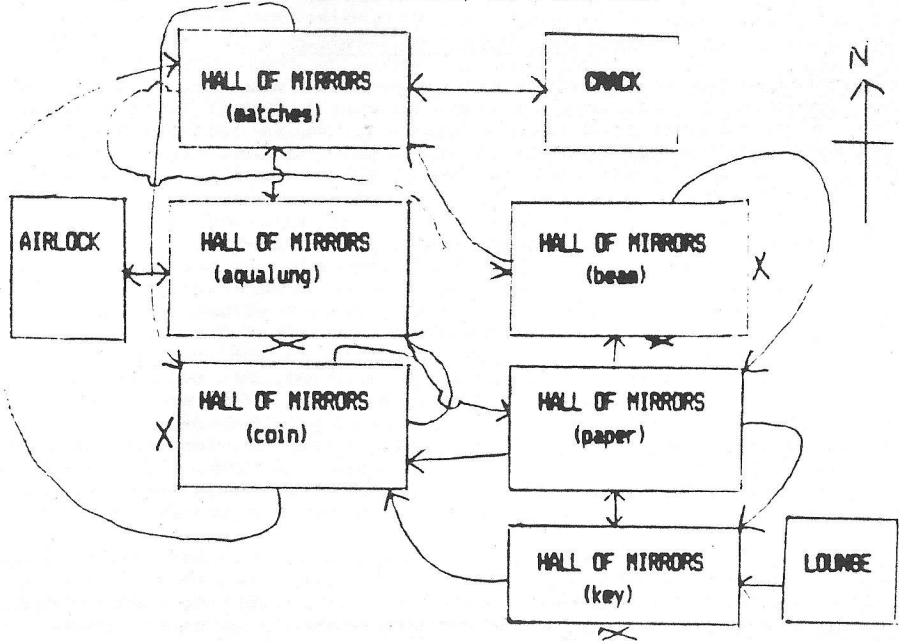
Clever Eric now decides to explore west. This takes him to another empty location where he deposits the coin. Moving west again just returns him to the coin room. Eric uses a cross to mark on his map that this is a dead exit. Eric's map now looks thus:



X = Dead exit (leads nowhere)

By now you should have the idea; record each route from each room and drop an object in each empty, newly found location, until your map is complete.

Eric's map of 'Maxworks' Maze eventually looks like this:



X = Dead exit (leads nowhere)

Eric can now see that to travel from the lounge to the airlock he would move W,W,E,W.

You will have noticed that there are 6 rooms in the Hall of Mirrors and Eric had only 5 objects. Luckily the aqualung was present in one room. If there had been say 10 rooms, Eric, after dropping his 5 objects, would have had to find his way out of the labyrinth and return with 5 more objects to continue mapping. Obviously some mazes have more than four exits per room e.g. Up, Down, Northeast etc., but the same basic principles apply. Having seen that maze maps tend to get messy and confusing keep plenty of space between locations and, if necessary, split your map into segments.

If you are unlucky enough to stumble across a maze where somebody keeps stealing your objects, ignore all you've read - you're in trouble! Eric's solution, if all else fails, is:-

Dear King/Queen of the Castle, HELP!!! Eric
By the way Eric doesn't like mazes.

THE FINAL QUEST (Continued)

We approached the solid timber drawbridge with some trepidation, the moat looked very deep, and Jim insisted upon testing it. He rummaged about in the handcart and came up grasping the greasy pole, I was impressed. Jim lowered the greasy pole into the moat, but he objected violently, so we put him back in the cart and trundled on across the drawbridge towards the uninviting entrance.

We were now confronted by a massive timber door, which was wreathed in cobwebs. In the centre of the door there was a huge ivory door knocker, carved in the likeness of a human skull. Jim grasped it firmly, and rapped three times. In the distance we heard a bell begin to ring. The next few minutes were like a gothic nightmare.

First we heard a slobbering sound, followed by heavy footsteps shuffling across a stone paved area. Then to the sound of more slobbering, we heard massive bolts being withdrawn from rusty sockets. By this time my feet were ready to do an impersonation of the Road Runner in full flight. Jim gripped my arm. "Steady," he muttered. Slowly the great door creaked open, and we were faced with one of the most hideous spectacles that we had ever encountered.

They were perched on the nose of a decrepit old butler, who stood there, blinking at us through the cracked and distorted lens. Jim swiftly bent over the handcart and came up clutching the rimless spectacles without lens. "Take these old fellow", he said. The butler accepted them gratefully, looking slightly bemused, then he led us into the ancient hallway. Jim gave a thumbs up sign, "People won't do anything for nothing," he said. We were in!

We were now alone in the Library, or so we thought, and remembering the immortal words of MIKE GERRARD we decided to examine everything. This idea was short lived, because a sudden growling sound rose from behind us. I turned round, but Jim was too petrified to move. "What is it?" he stuttered. "I'm not sure," I replied, "but I don't want to be here if it gets hungry." The words froze on my lips as the apparition padded into the doorway. "It's not your average urban pet," I tried to say, but it's difficult to speak when your mouth is frozen.

Jim turned slowly towards the doorway, he gulped and said, "Leave this to me." I did not argue. He fumbled into the handcart for a few seconds, then he emerged triumphantly wearing the hair net. The growl deepened. "Damn," said Jim, "I thought that might work."

The apparition displayed its perfect white teeth, and took one step forward. I sank down into my boots, and peered out through a lacehole. I could see Jim hanging from a chandelier, swinging to and fro.

We might have remained in this ludicrous situation for ever, had it not been for a sudden change of fortune. A long low whistle was signalled from somewhere in the distance, and our friendly household pet was suddenly gone. "We handled that quite well," said Jim, as he swung down to the floor. "Of course we did," I said pulling myself up to full height and staring him in the kneecap. Then we two magnificent liars beat a hasty retreat from the room.

A few hours later, we could be seen exploring various parts of the huge residence. Occasionally the sound of maniacal laughter drifted towards us from a distant corridor. I pretended not to hear it, and Jim was either deaf or sensible, depending on your viewpoint. Finally we could ignore it no longer, though God knows we tried! It was just a question of who would go first. It was no problem, because just then we heard a familiar growl, and we left together in a most undignified manner. I would of course have volunteered anyway, feet permitting.

An hour or two later we were still exploring, and our cart was stuck at a sharp bend in the passage. Jim pulled forward, whilst I pulled backward, but for some reason it would not budge. A small lamp flickered brightly above our heads, and as we toiled, our three shadows were clearly outlined on the passage wall. It took me about ten seconds to realise that there were only TWO of us. We were no longer alone. She stood, mouth open, at the end of the passage. Looking like a fugitive from a horror script. As she emitted another burst of maniacal laughter, we saw the solitary tooth which grew from the centre of her upper gum. With practise, she could have used it to spear an apple through a wire net fence. I guessed that she might have been named Juanita, and Jim whispered that she had inbuilt central eating. But it was no joke when she advanced towards us, with claws extended.

As usual, my feet were quick off the mark, but for once Jim beat me to it, he seemed to have vanished into thin air. (Jim takes over the story here to explain his absence.) When I saw the thing coming towards us, I knew that I had to frighten her away before she caused any damage. I ran to the cart to find the scythe. My plan went wrong as I hoisted the scythe over my shoulder. The blade hit a curtain rail on a nearby window, and the curtain fell straight on top of me. I remember staggering round the corner trying to untangle myself, and when I did, the creature had gone. (As Jim ends his explanation, I will resume the events that followed.)

The evil one was about to test her claws on my face, when Jim suddenly re-entered the passage. He was clad from head to toe in a black flowing material, carrying a glinting scythe upon his left shoulder. The resemblance to the GRIM REAPER was uncanny. The ancient one must have thought her time had come, and she made a magnificent exit, the skid marks were at least three metres long.

As our nerves began to calm down, we continued our exploration. Our arrival into the cellars was nothing short of spectacular. We were both pushing the cart up a small incline, when Jim trod on my foot. "Not again", I groaned, as I somersaulted into the back of the cart. I tried to grab Jim's arm for support, and he tumbled in on top of me. As the cart careered crazily backwards, gathering speed, we heard the greasy pole counting his rosary beads in the corner.

The cart paused only once, as it smashed through a flimsy door at the top of the cellar steps. I remember little of the journey down the steps, except for the screaming, which began when Jim got trapped beneath the gas cooker. The joy ride ended when the cart overturned amidst a shower of sparks, and we were flung headlong onto the cold stone floor of the ink black cellar. For a while we lay dazed, then Jim slowly got up and lit the gas cooker, we could see!

It was a pity to waste the gas, so we had tea and biscuits, whilst we recovered our strength.

Our surroundings could best be described as cellar-like, the room was big, and fairly dark, and in the corner there was a huge wine vat, which appeared to be full. The only way out of the cellar was back up the steps, and as we turned to leave, we saw the first of the eyes. They were everywhere, red, gleaming, followed by thin tails, and backed up by razor sharp teeth. "Rats!" I screamed. "Stop swearing," said Jim reproachfully. His next utterance was more appropriate, as several small teeth began to chew on his right leg.

It was then that I made my major contribution to our quest. I rushed across to the cart, and grabbed a sharp axe which I remembered packing. Then using my awesome foot power, I squashed my way across the cellar, towards the wine vat. With a mighty blow, I split the vat almost in two, and the wine poured out, flooding the entire room. The drunken rats floated happily along on the tide, and we heard rodent type singing, as they vanished down the cellar drains. "Well done", said Jim, as he dipped his helmet into the wine for the third time. "Try some of this." So I did, and we went on our way a little merrier.

It was almost midnight when we discovered the locked room in the attic, someone was moving around inside, and we saw a thin strip of light beneath the heavy door. "This is the place", said Jim nervously. And I knew he was right. I knocked firmly on the door. "Open up," I shouted, but no one answered. "Let me try," said Jim. He tapped softly, and said "Inland Revenue", the door swung open. Our first view of the legendary Adventure Author was beside a pile of discarded notes, which were scattered across a large wooden desk.

He was muttering incoherently about his next deadline. He seemed to be harmless, and there was nothing unusual about him, apart from the large crimson Parrot, which was perched on his left shoulder. He was busy writing, and occasionally stuffing sheets of text into an overflowing waste paper basket, beside the desk. He became aware of us, when the Parrot suddenly screeched "Rape!". He swung his chair towards us, and I will never forget the sight for as long as I live.

As we stared at the Adventure Author, his glazed eyes wandered around the room, then he noticed that they had escaped. As he bit the end off another pencil, he said, "I am not really here, you know." And I thought he was partly correct. "I could use you two in my next story," he said, "have you had any experience with Dragons?" My feet began edging towards a doorway. Suddenly a huge green serpent slithered out from beneath a sheet of text, the Author gazed at it blankly. "Hiss off", he said, and it was gone.

Jim and I were petrified by now, a sudden flame belched up from a paragraph on the desk, and the Parrot screeched, "Use two words only." I did, but the Parrot ignored them. Another sheet of text fell to the floor, and a huge tentacle snaked out and grabbed Jim's leg. "It's all in my mind," said the Author. a sword appeared in his hand, and he hacked the offending limb away. Spikes began to descend from the roof. "Help!" I shouted. A voice boomed "try examining things". I could not think of a suitable reply.

The Author began writing furiously, and the air was filled with long forgotten spells, and magic potions. A huge boulder suddenly appeared from the roof, and it bounced off the desk onto my foot. I yelled in agony.

Jim was suddenly holding a lit torch, and I saw the inspiration flicker brightly across his face. "Drop all", he shouted. The room was suddenly littered with objects. "Inventory", he commanded. At last I caught on, "Gag Author", I shouted. And the room went silent. After that it was easy, a few more well chosen commands had the situation under control, and we tied the Author up with our sharp string. As an added precaution, Jim cut off the knot so that he couldn't escape, and we bundled him into the cart.

As we trundled homeward, across the drawbridge, we vowed to take up knitting as our next hobby. At least we still had our subscriptions in tact. We had been sustained throughout our quest by good health, and a sense of humour. Our health remains strong, and we intend to keep our sense of humour, right up to the beginning.

DEDICATED TO JIM O'KEEFFE, THE AUTHOR WHO STARTED IT ALL.
TO PAT AND SANDRA, FOR ALLOWING INSANITY TO PREVAIL.
TO ANY READER, WHO LAUGHED AT LEAST ONCE.

WIMBERLY, WAMBERLY, GRIMBERLY, GROM.
THERE ARE LOTS MORE STORIES WHERE THIS CAME FROM.
MALCOLM SERBERT. (ADVENTURE AUTHOR).

(JUANITA) IS PRONOUNCED (ONE EATER).

LETTERS

Some of you Amstrad owners out there may be aware of the fact that Vidipix released pts 1 and 2 of The Lost Phirious quadrilogy last year. In fact some of you bought and played the games. A few customers, however, tried to order the adventures directly from us at the end of last year but were informed that they weren't available for various reasons. As it's been a while since this happened I feel that I should inform those as to the situation as it stands at the moment. Also read on if you're interested in buying part 3.

Due to various reasons Vidipix decided to get another company to market the adventures, this was in August. In September a company did show a great deal of interest and a sum was fixed for parts 1 and 2. The sale of the Phirious programs were stopped because a) they were being enhanced for re-release and b) Vidipix didn't really own the rights to them by that time. Since then the said company has done absolutely nothing on the matter and have ignored any letters sent to them.

Around November another company showed an interest in the adventures but there wasn't much we could do about it, having already agreed to a price with company A. Company A was given an ultimatum which they didn't acknowledge (and in fact still owe us the original disc!) and by January 10th the programs belonged to Vidipix again. An offer was then made to company B who, by that time, had lost interest. We ended up with no-one wanting the games!

MORE LETTERS

Since that time Vidipix have been in contact with other companies but at this moment in time (Feb 12th) we've had no luck. It now looks unlikely that anyone will buy up the Phirious rights and, if that's the case Vidipix will then revert to the original system of selling them ourselves. So to anyone out there who's desperately waiting to order any programs from us our apologies but it's not really our fault. When the matter is sorted out we'll place an ad in Adventure Probe to let you know.

For those who are waiting for part 3, it is ready but due to the above reasons it's launch has been held back. It will cost the same as the other progs, £2.50, but it had to be produced with the Quill rather than GAC as promised. The simple reason was that we ran out of memory using GAC. The play testers, one of which is Sue Burke who mentioned TLP3 in a recent letter, have given a good response to the program. Hopefully this means using the Quill has not degraded the game much.

Anyway I hope that this letter has cleared up any confusion regarding the Phirious programs. Keep a look out for the ad in Adventure Probe, by the end of March the situation will be sorted out, one way or another!

NEIL SCRIMGEOUR, Vidipix, 125 Occupation Road, Corby, Northants.

Has anybody got started on 'Masters of the Universe'? I'd like to know the significance of the 'rumbling' at the start, not being familiar with the TV programme.

JOHN BARNESLEY, 32 Merrivale Road, Rising Brook, Stafford, Staffs.

I have an adventure called 'Shrinking Professor' by A & F SOFTWARE. I have had it a year or two now. I find after doing mainly Level 9 that I cannot think simply. I tend to think there is more there than there really is. I just can't finish it.

Does anyone out there have it, or even have heard of it. I have never seen any hints or clues for it. My machine is a BBC B. I can't remember if it was made for other machines. I would like to see the back of it and finish it.

BARBARA BASSINGTHWAITE, 70 Coronation Avenue, Yeovil, Somerset.1

I once saw advertised a game called 'Fahrenheit 451' - as I have read and thoroughly enjoyed Ray Bradbury's book, I would dearly love to get hold of a copy. However, I cannot get a copy anywhere. Does it exist for the C64, or was I hallucinating? Your readers are my last hope!

FIONA BISSETT, 50 Chelmsford Road, Southgate, London. N14 5PT

Advantage

ADVENTURES AND ASSORTED GAMES

Below is a selection of discs offered to subscribers of ADVENTURE CONTACT and ADVENTURE PROBE at the specially reduced prices shown, which include VAT and postage in the UK (Overseas please add £1) Cash with order or you can pay by ACCESS or VISA over the phone.

- * FIVE ADVENTURES FOR THE CPC Blue Raider Parts 1 & 2, Island, Holiday and Mission 1940 £8.95
- * BESTIARY An adventure game specially written for the PCW £8.95
- * QDR An imaginative sci-fi graphics adventure game for CPC's £8.95

CP/M Games Compendium for PCW & CPC £6.95. Colossal Cave Adventure, Computer Chess, Othello, Golf Simulation, Life, Mastermind, Polish Pong, Pressup, Awari, Noughts & Crosses, Word Search Puzzle Generator, Maze Maker, Biorhythm Calculator, Calendar Printer, Large and Small Banner Printers and Sorted Directory.

FOUR CLASSIC NEMESIS ADVENTURE GAMES FOR CPC or PCW £8.95. The Trial of Arnold Blackwood (May confound many an experienced adventurer) Arnold Goes To Somewhere Else (You will need logic and a lot of stamina), The Wise And Fool Of Arnold Blackwood (The definitive tour of Rochdale) and Brawn Free (poking affectionate fun at the great American West). Disc includes CHEAT files. "A good challenge, lots of hints and a good range of responses" - 8000 PLUS Magazine, Jan 1987

THE FOLLOWING DISCS (each marked by an asterix) ARE FOR AMSTRAD PC1512 & IBM PC COMPATIBLES £7.95 EACH:-

- * PC-CHESS A comprehensive game with many useful features and graphics
- * STAR TREK A superb new version of the classic game complete with graphics. Disc also includes the original text version.
- * COLOSSAL CAVE ADVENTURE The well-known main-frame game. Includes the C source code for anyone wanting to get in and change things.
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- * CAVE QUEST You start as an Immortal, you choose your new mortal attributes and are sent to Earth to seek out fame and fortune.
- * NORLAND HANGMAN Select from a wide range of lists supplied or input your own words. A well-presented version of this popular game
- * FUNNELS & BUCKETS A learning game to improve a child's skill at arithmetic by solving problems within a user-definable, time span.
- * SPACE WAR A one or two player game space battle game
- * BEST GAMES - Space Invaders, Packman, Bugs, Life, Castle (a graphics and text adventure game) plus others.
- * ARCADE GAMES - 3-Demon, Bricks, Fortune, Donkey Kong, Pango, PC-Golf, Pitfall, Pyramid (Cubit variation)
- * ASSORTED GAMES - Pinball, Catch the Baby, Frogger, Multi-Maze, War
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- * MORE GAMES - Airtrax (air controller game), FOREST FIRE, HOSTAGES, LANDMINE, PACKGAL, POKER, PARATROOPER, Q-BERT
- * GREATEST GAMES Flightmare, Jumping Joe, Solitaire, Spacewar, Striker

ADVANTAGE (SAN) 33 MALYNS CLOSE CHINNOR OXFORDSHIRE OX9 4EW UK
Telephone 0844 52075

IN-TOUCH

Has anyone got "Robin of Sherlock" to sell or swap, (Spectrum). I can offer "Spiderman", "Eureka", "Tir Na Nog", "Lords of Time", "Emerald Isle", "Adventureland", (last three are originals, but not in original packing).

Other swap suggestions welcome. Please contact:

JOY BIRLEY, Eryl Don, Mona Terrace, Criccieth, Gwynnedd. LLS2 0HG

I must recommend an Amstrad game to you, BESTIARY by Perry Williams. I normally dislike graphics and switch them off, but this is the exception to the rule. The pictures are of creatures you meet in the adventure and are excellently done. As for the ending to the game, it's well worth seeing. It's so original. Without reservation, I would say it's the best ending I've ever seen.

LORNA PATERSON, 17 Ochil St., Tillicoultry, Clacks. FK13 6EJ

(Have you played an adventure that you'd like to recommend? ... Sandra)

I would like to buy the following adventures on Spectrum if anyone has them for sale: Emerald Isle, Worm in Paradise, ZZZZ, Subsunk, Denis through the Drinking Glass, Twin Kingdom Valley, Return to Ithaca, Aftershock, Pen and the Dark, Winter Wonderland. Please send prices wanted to:

730 Sgt. JOHN MOORE, c/o Sgts. Mess, RAF Wildenrath, BFPO 42

Exchange Dun Darach (Amstrad 464) for one of Lords of Time, Valkyrie 17, Snowball or Red Moon. Please contact:

LON HOULSTON, 3 Pritchett Drive, Littleover, Derby. DE3 7AX

(All Spectrum)

Minder - £3.00 Spy vs Spy - £3.00 Lords of Midnight - £2.50
Shadowfire - £ 3.00 Father of Darkness £1.00 Rifts of Time - £1.00
Philosopher's Stone £1.00 Murder Hunt/Last Will and Testament £1.00

TERRY ROBERTS, Woodlands, Church Road, Harrietsham, Kent. ME17 1AP

If you have any games you have finished with you can advertise them in Probe free of charge. Just send a list with prices, and make of machine.

!!!!!! NEWS !!!!!

NEW Computer Adventures from Riverdale Software.

SUDS - An hilarious spoof which has you trying to wend your way through the sets of British soap operas in a bid to reach the mecca of TV soaps - the East End of London. The adventure comes in four parts on one tape (BBC/Electron) or disc (BBC). RELEASE DATE: March 23rd. PRICE: £4.00

WHAT THE DICKENS - Another four-parter which crams Dickensian characters in a Victorian adventure. Characters such as Oliver, Fagin, Mr. Pickwick, may help or hinder you as you journey through the streets of London.
RELEASE DATE: Early June.

AMERICAN SUDS - The sequel to Suds - where you journey on to boost your ratings by taking the American soaps by storm. More details available in April.

RIVERDALE SOFTWARE is available from: 95 Printon Avenue, MANCHESTER M9 3HW or phone 061 795 4549 (DAVID EDWARDS or CHARLES LOMAS).

INCENTIVE - It seems very unlikely that GAC plus will materialise in the very near future.

SPECTRUM plus 3 - Good news for Speccy owners who are thinking of upgrading. The new Spectrum plus 3 is expected to be available in the summer. It will have a 3inch disc drive and printer port and sounds like good news to me. Anyway, I've started saving up. The price is expected to be about £199.

AMTIX - We have to say goodbye to Amtix, sad news indeed! Apparently Newsfield Publications don't feel that there's any future for the Amstrad CPC 6128 as a games machine. Bad news for Amstrad owners, me included!

ATLANTIS SOFTWARE - A big thank you to Atlantis for putting Probe on their mailing list. ESCAPE FROM KHOSHIMA is available now for Amstrad CPC machines, price £1.99. A text graphic adventure that's been written on GAC. Review in the next issue of Probe.

GOLDMARK SYSTEMS, 51 Comet Road, Hatfield, Herts. AL10 0SY Tel: 07072 71529
If anyone wants to convert Amstrad tape to disc Goldmark have a routine £1 to non-members of the Goldmark Club.

HINTS

SORCEROR OF CLAYMORGUE CASTLE - Allan Shortland

To open the stone door - SQUEEZE TOWEL, and cast the Seed spell.

The lava will dry the towel.

To find the unravel spell - Go to the plain room and PULL WEST.

Throw the dust at the dragon to get a star then examine dragon.

ADVENTURE QUEST - Goldmark Systems

Do NOT eat the onion. If you do you will never finish the game. It is needed towards the end to get rid of Dracula. Also, no point in going up Pinnacle, reading scroll or getting stick. Throwing anything will get rid of wolves.

COLOUR OF MAGIC - David Heard

Having a communications problem? - then TRANSLATE.

Don't try and do a disappearing act with Twoflower's money, you could end up worse off!

Lost Twoflower? - TALK TO GUARD and leave the rest to the luggage!

CURSE OF CROWLEY MANOR - Chrissie Norris

To get handaxe and letter opener try - Make growth eat plate of delicious food.

To open the rosemary chest - Undo screws with letter opener.

To find vial - Look driver in taxi.

When you are in the silver room - Drop crystal ball.

To find the crystal ball - Open desk in study.

Try - Chop plywood wall with handaxe.

To get past the monster be careful not to miss anything in your journey from Scotland Yard.

Having trouble with the growth - The growth must feed, you must NOT!

Red brick room a problem? - You're missing an item, take a ride if you need to!

Need to go north from the crystal room? - Solve the South path first.

ESCAPE FROM TRAAM - Chrissie Norris

Dying in the icy river? - There's a path.

Can't escape from the cell? - What may look like a problem is the solution.

IMAGINATION

Only a black belt will frighten the Jap.

Snow melting a little? - Help it along with something warm!

Lubrication will work wonders with the large gun - but make sure you've read the plaque in the bell tower before firing.

MORE HINTS

THE PAWN - Fiona Bisset

Use the alphabet decoder:

ABCDEFGHIJKLM

ZYXWVUTSRQPON

Trouble with a rock fall?	- XORNY LEVI GSVN!!
Where is the lead?	- ZG GSV YLGGLN LU GSV DRUG H SZUG.
How to open the tomes.	- XZHG Z HKVOD LM GSVN.
What about the rice?	- TREV RG GL GSV ZOXSVMRHGH.
Snowman trouble?	- NVOG SRN DRGS GSV DSRGV
What about the whiskey bottle?	- YIRYV GSV KLIGVI ZG GSV WLLIH LU SVOD.
How can you get the devil to answer?	- ZHP SRN ZYLFG DRUV!

VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE (Part one) - John Barnsley

Say NO to the bull's question.

Insert a penny in the door.

Examine the spring to leave the building.

Wear the wellies in the Gulley.

Throw the bomb at the bull.

Say the "word" in the Debris room.

Get water at the stream (with the bottle).

Bridge the chasm with the log - step by step (i.e. DROP LAMP, GET LOG, W, DROP LOG, E, GET LAMP, W, DROP LAMP, GET LOG, etc., etc.)

To get the bird, open the can (and do it again for the Python!)

SEABASE DELTA - John Barnsley

Wake the hen with a sticky bubble, after you've chewed it over.

"Walk plank" to use your seesaw right at the end.

Release the minisub before leaving security.

Make a pancake and cover the camera lens.

Play the cassette at the mike to keep sliding doors open.

KENTILLA - John Barnsley

Large key opens green and red doors.

Small key unlocks a chest.

Tie a rope to the stalagmite, PULL ROPE. It will break, so re-tie the rope then CLIMB DOWN.

Kill the Quarg and carry it to Caradoom - the creatures there are scared away.

Examine the Cavezat's lair to find a torch.

OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

SPHINX ADVENTURE - Gill Coppenhall

Stake	-	Kills vampire.
Wand	-	Wave it in the Fairy Grotto for Mithril ring.
Bank vault	-	Say DIAXOS to open safe.
Matches	-	Light them in sea serpent.
Stilton Cheese	-	Feed mouse and take him to scare elephant.

MONSTERS OF MURDAC

Wig	-	Wear it to visit the dungeon a second time.
Plank	-	Throw it to cover the live wires.
Lamp	-	Switches on and off automatically.

APACHE GOLD - Linda Friend

Blanket	-	Wear it
Barrel	-	Examine barrel, Take lid.
Lid	-	To repair wagon.
Squaw's handbag	-	Scares off the crocodile.
Loose dirt	-	Put on fire to make smoke signals.
Spirit Stick	-	To read smoke signals (cowboy tells you how).
Pearly wigwam flap	-	Find sacred word from smoke signals.
Fern	-	SPREAD MANURE get moccasins with it at trading post.

WINTER WONDERLAND - Linda Friend

Snowshoes	-	NOT NEEDED!
Scissors	-	NOT NEEDED!
Vacuum	-	Give to Mrs. Thompson for a bar of soap.
Cleaning fluid	-	POUR BOTTLE to get ski pass.
Rose	-	PLANT ROSE in fertile valley TAKE POLLEN.
Bee	-	GIVE POLLEN, TAKE BANANA, EAT BANANA.
Banana skin	-	THROW BANANA SKIN (in igloo) TAKE MALLET.
Icicle, mallet and rope	-	HIT ICICLE, TIE ROPE TO ICICLE (at chasa).
Dry martini	-	POUR MARTINI (at marshy area)
Beard	-	Wear it to get into the off-licence.

SOULS OF DARKON

Robot	-	Zap robot and get crystal from his arm.
Crystal	-	Put it in the fountain to find gold.

PRECISION CORNER

THE PAWN - Fiona Bissett

Complete solution to the 'paper room' problem:-

Tear the paper wall with the trowel. Open the cupboard, tie the rope to the hook. Climb down the rope. Drop the rope and go South.

HITCHHIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY - Chris Hester

ALTERNATIVE UNIVERSE: The Bugblatter Beast of Traal.

Wait until asked your name, then... Beast, I am Arthur Dent, East, Get stone, Cover head with towel, Carve Arthur Dent on memorial, Remove towel, Footnote 5, West, Southwest, Get all....

ALTERNATIVE UNIVERSE: At the start again, but as Ford Prefect.

North, Open satchel, Give towel to Arthur, Go to Prosser, Prosser, Lie down, South, West, Buy beer, Drink beer, Drink beer, East, North, Wait repeatedly.....

ALTERNATIVE UNIVERSE: At Arthur's party as Trillian.

(Examine Phil), (Examine Arthur), Wait - until Arthur comes to you, Drop all, Get fluff, Get - each object offered to you, then Phil will lead you out.

TEACHER TROUBLE - Sue Burke

To get in secretary's office - HIT ALARM WITH MALLET.
To get rid of Mr. Dinsdale - DROP RUGBY BALL (Filled with concrete).
To get honey - FILL JAM JAR WITH HONEY.
To find out what teachers want - ASK DILLON ABOUT MR.

ICE STATION ZERO - Sue Burke

Natural cave - WEAR GOGGLES.
Moving snowplough - REMOVE PIN, THROW GRENADE.
Pterodactyl - PRESS PLAY TWICE.
DROP SHOES at nest

AFTERSHOCK - Sue Burke

Utility room - SWITCH ISOLATOR OFF.
Filling station - CLIMB OVER RUBBLE.
Sluicagate - FIT HANDLE TO SHAFT, LUBRICATE MECHANISM (need oil).
Derelict House - SUPPORT STAIRS USING BEAM.
Chasm - LAY RAMP NEAR CHASM, DRIVE CAR ON RAMP.

SERIALISED SOLUTIONS

COLOSSAL ADVENTURE

26. GO SOUTH, SOUTH, SOUTHWEST to the Secret E/W Canyon, DOWN, NORTH, NORTH to the Swiss Cheese Room. GO NORTHWEST to the Oriental Room and DROP SANDWICHES. GO NORTH and WEST to the alcove where you will find the emerald. The crack goes to the Plover Room. TAKE EMERALD, GO NORTHWEST, SOUTH, SOUTHEAST to the Swiss Cheese Room.
27. GO WEST, WEST, DOWN to the bottom of the West Pit and WATER the seedling. GO UP, WEST, UP, NORTH, NORTH to the reservoir and FILL BOTTLE with water. GO SOUTH, SOUTH, DOWN, SOUTH, DOWN to the bottom of the pit and WATER the large plant which grows yet again. Then GO UP, EAST and DOWN into the East Pit and FILL BOTTLE with oil. GO UP, WEST and DOWN and DROP BOTTLE by the plant.
28. GO UP, WEST, UP, SOUTH to the Dragon. ATTACK DRAGON who runs away and TAKE RUG. GO EAST, EAST to the Hall of the Mountain King, NORTH, NORTH, TURN OFF lamp, SAY PLUGH, DROP RUG, DROP EMERALD, TAKE KEYS, SAY PLUGH, and TURN ON lamp.
29. GO SOUTH, SOUTH, SOUTHWEST, DOWN, NORTH, NORTH, WEST, WEST, DOWN to the bottom of the West Pit and TAKE BOTTLE.
30. CLIMB PLANT, WEST to the Giant Room and note the inscription FEE FIE FOE FOD and the Golden Eggs. Leave the Eggs and GO NORTH to the Gigantic N/S Passage, OIL the GATE and GO NORTH to the Magnificent Cavern and DROP BOTTLE and TAKE the TRIDENT.
31. GO WEST, DOWN to the large low room and DROP KEYS. GO SOUTHEAST, SOUTHEAST, SOUTHEAST to the Swiss Cheese Room, WEST, WEST, WEST to the Slab Room.
32. NORTH takes you to Bedquilt and the locations you end up in from Bedquilt are at random. Therefore it is better to return to the Hall of the Mountain King.
33. From the Hall of the Mountain King GO NORTH to the Low N/S Passage, DOWN to the Dirty Broken Passage, WEST to the Dusty Room, DOWN to the Complex Junction, EAST to the Ante-room and TAKE SPELUNKER'S Gazette. GO EAST to Witt's End and DROP SPELUNKER. To escape from Witt's End repeatedly GO SOUTH until you reach the Ante-room.
34. GO UP to the Complex Junction and NORTH to the Shell Room. OPEN CLAM (with Trident) and a pearl rolls out. Follow the pearl DOWN, DOWN to the end of the cul-de-sac. TAKE PEARL and GO UP, UP, SOUTH, UP to the Dusty Room, EAST, UP, NORTH, TURN OFF lamp, SAY PLUGH, DROP TRIDENT, DROP PEARL, SAY PLUGH, TURN ON lamp.
35. GO SOUTH, SOUTH to the Hall of the Mountain King, SOUTHWEST, DOWN, NORTH, NORTH, WEST, WEST, DOWN, CLIMB PLANT, WEST to the Giant's Room, TAKE EGGS, NORTH, NORTH, WEST, DOWN to the Large Low room and TAKE KEYS.
36. GO SOUTHWEST and NORTH to the Southwest Side of the Chasm and DROP KEYS. Then GO SOUTHWEST, DOWN, SOUTHEAST to the Oriental Room and TAKE SANDWICHES. GO WEST, SOUTHWEST, NORTH to the Southwest Side of the Chasm.
37. GO NORTHEAST and the Troll demands payment so GIVE him the EGGS and TAKE KEYS. GO NORTHEAST to the Northeast side of the Chasm.
38. GO NORTHEAST, EAST to the fork in the paths, SOUTHEAST and DOWN to the Barren Room with a warning sign about bears. GO EAST to the bear room and FEED BEAR, UNLOCK BEAR, TAKE Silver CHAIN and TAKE BEAR. GO WEST, UP, UP to fork, EAST, EAST to the Northeast Side of the Chasm. DROP CHAIN and GO NORTHEAST, EAST to the fork.
39. GO NORTHEAST and EAST to the Small Chamber and TAKE rare SPICES.

40. GO WEST, SOUTH, WEST, WEST to the Northeast Side of the Chasm and RELEASE BEAR who chases the Troll away. TAKE CHAIN and GO SOUTHWEST, SOUTHWEST, DOWN SOUTHEAT to the Oriental Room. Then GO SOUTHEAST, SOUTH, EAST, UP, EAST to the Hall of the Mountain King, NORTH, NORTH, PLUGH to the interior of the Hut. TURN OFF lamp, DROP SPICES, DROP CHAIN.

41. SAY PLUGH, TURN ON lamp, GO SOUTH, SOUTH, SOUTHWEST, DOWN, NORTH, NORTH to the Swiss Cheese Room, then GO WEST, WEST, DOWN, CLIMB PLANT, WEST, WEST to the Giant Room. Remember the inscription and type FEE (press return), FIE (press return), FOE (press return), FOO (press return) and the Golden Eggs will now re-appear. TAKE EGGS.

42. GO NORTH, NORTH, WEST, DOWN, SOUTHEAST, SOUTHEAST, SOUTH, EAST, UP, EAST, NORTH, NORTH, SAY PLUGH, DROP EGGS.

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ADVENTURE QUEST

31. SOUTH to a gloomy room, DOWN, DOWN, DOWN, DOWN to the south tower room. EAST to the small room and TAKE the ROPE. WEST, SOUTH to outside the south door of the tower, DOWN to the stone staircase where there is a sign saying 'Keep away or you will die'. DOWN onto the staircase where the path joins it.

32. GO WEST, WEST to where the giant was. WEST, UP the mountain, UP to the sheep-track, UP, UP the sheep-track, UP to the stone steps where there are Orcs and a pile of rocks, UP, UP, UP to the snowfield and DROP EYE, DROP ROPE.

33. DOWN, DOWN, DOWN to the pile of rocks, GO DOWN, DOWN to outside the north door of the tower, SOUTH to inside the north tower room, SOUTH to the south door of the tower room, DOWN to the stone staircase where there is a sign saying 'Keep away or you will die'. DOWN onto the staircase where the path joins it.

34. GO DOWN, DOWN, DOWN, DOWN to the end of the wadi, WEST, WEST, WEST to the dry canyon, SOUTH to the north edge of the oasis where there is a djinn.

35. OPEN BAG to scare the djinn away and GO SOUTH to the oasis and TAKE the oriental LAMP, IN to the oasis and TAKE TRIDENT, OUT, DRINK, FILL BOTTLE, NORTH, NORTH, NORTH to the dry canyon.

36. GO EAST, EAST, EAST to the end of the wadi, DRINK WATER, FILL BOTTLE with oil, UP the side of the mountain, UP to a stone staircase, UP, UP the staircase to where a track from the west is seen. WEST to the east west track, WEST where the giant was.

37. GO WEST, UP the mountain, UP to the sheep-track, UP, UP the sheep-track, UP to the stone steps where there are Orcs and a pile of rocks, UP, UP, UP to the snowfield where there is an abominable snowman.

C) The cave and lake

38. ON LAMP and IN to enter the dark smelly cave. THROW BOTTLE, THROW BAG, THROW TRIDENT, OUT, TAKE ROPE, TAKE KEYS, TAKE EYE, IN, THROW KEYS, TIE ROPE to the stalactite, THROW EYE, OUT, TAKE MEDALLION, IN, THROW MEDALLION, OFF LAMP, THROW LAMP.

39. GO DOWN the rope to a ledge which collapses and you are swept into a fast flowing river. CLIMB UP and you are on a ledge by the side of a deep chasm. GO EAST along the ledge where there is a model of a lung-fish.

40. You will note that when you TAKE the LUNG-FISH you cannot breathe. Dropping and taking the lung-fish will determine whether you can breathe on water or land.

41. GO DOWN to the rapids where you will be swept along. LOOK to see you are in a quiet pool by a gravel beach. GO UP to the gravel beach south of the lake in a volcanic crater and DROP LUNG-FISH, TAKE LUNG-FISH so you can breathe on land. You will see everything you threw down from the cave plus a fishing net.
 42. DROP LUNG-FISH, TAKE BOTTLE, TAKE TRIDENT, TAKE LAMP and TAKE LUNG-FISH, IN to the lake.
 43. GO NORTH to the lake bed by a clam, WEST to the lake bed, WEST to the drowned graveyard outside a church, NORTH to above a dark trench, WEST to shallow water at the edge of the lake and UP.
 44. DROP LUNG-FISH, TAKE LUNG-FISH so you can breathe on dry land. LIGHT LAMP to see you are south of a huge door on the crater lake where lots of carved heads glare at you. To the east is a small black dot.
 45. The small black dot is a teleport to the house.
 46. OIL DOOR and FILL BOTTLE with water from the lake. DROP BOTTLE, LAMP OFF, DROP LAMP. As yet you cannot go through the door. DROP TRIDENT.
 47. DROP LUNG-FISH, TAKE LUNG-FISH, DOWN to the lake, EAST to above the trench, SOUTH to the lake bed, SOUTH to the clam, SOUTH to the pool.
 48. GO UP to the gravel beach and DROP LUNG-FISH, TAKE LUNG-FISH, TAKE KEYS, TAKE EYE, DROP LUNG-FISH, TAKE LUNG-FISH, DOWN, DROP LUNG-FISH, TAKE LUNG-FISH.
 49. GO NORTH to the lake bed by a clam, WEST to the lake bed, WEST to the drowned graveyard outside a church, NORTH to above a dark trench, WEST to shallow water at the edge of the lake and UP.
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RETURN TO EDEN

31. The bug and cloak protect you. DROP STICK, DROP STEM and GO WEST, WEST to the Hot House Forest and TAKE RUBBER BAND, GO WEST, WEST, WEST to the platform and TAKE STONE, SEED, COMPASS, WISHBONE and GO EAST, EAST, EAST, EAST, EAST to the patch of Clear Land to the northeast of the Observation Tower.
32. ATTACH RUBBER BAND TO WISHBONE to make a catapult and SHOOT CHERRY, which is a bomb and will detonate the mines in the minefield ahead. Your score is now 500. You can now go EAST to the Clear Land, SOUTH, SOUTH to the Western End of the Beach.
33. At the beach ignore the seaweed and WAIT until the autoscythe appears. When it does ENTER AUTOSCYTHE, WAIT, usually twice until it is at the East End of the Beach by the River. LEAVE AUTOSCYTHE.
34. WAIT until the weeder appears then WAIT one move for it to discharge its load. ENTER WEEDER, WAIT whilst it crosses the Wheat Field. Any attempt to leave the weeder in the Wheat Field is fatal. Three WAITS are required before the weeder is in the north western corner of the Wheat Field on the banks of a wide river. LEAVE THE WEEDER.
35. GO NORTH (EAST is to death in the Wheat Field) to the River. You will be swept along but as you have the stone and the seed you will survive.
36. GO EAST, EAST, EAST, EAST, EAST, EAST to the Tunnel, TAKE CREDIT CARD, GO UP, EAST to south of the River where you meet Graunch who asks you nine riddles.

You receive 100 creds for each correct answer making a total of 900 creds. It is essential to obtain this money or you will be in trouble later on in the game!

The Riddles are:-

1. I'm the genii in the box, I think but I am not. I have no arms or legs and yet, I work until I'm hot. To talk to me you hit my head, and coffee makes me fail. I have no mouth and so I must, eat my food through my tail?

ANSWER: COMPUTER

2. What goes on four feet, on two feet then three, but the more feet it goes on the weaker it be?

ANSWER: MAN

3. The rich man wants it, the wise man is sure of it, the fool understands it, but the poor man already has it.

ANSWER: NOTHING

4. Our blood is cold. We do not sleep quiet whispers are our talk. We are the giants who eat the sun, beneath our arms men walk.

ANSWER: TREES

5. This blind god conquers all, with a kind of madness. Foolishness from wisdom, happiness from sadness.

ANSWER: LOVE

6. You all know me, you don't trust me. Yet you give me life. Without muscles, I am mightily, no man is my chief. You can't see me, only hear me. I'm the secrets' thief.

ANSWER: NEWS

7. A great healer, wanted yet kept by many. Beaten he runs out and flies away.

ANSWER: TIME

8. When I came, you didn't feel me. I am here though you can't see me. When I've left you, you won't miss me. No-one even knows what I'll be yet I am your most valuable possession.

ANSWER: LIFE

9. A pet to many folk belongs, to welcome us he licks warmly. Hungry, he eats with raging tongues, a dangerous playmate is he.

ANSWER: FIRE

37. Having answered Graunch's riddles GO WEST and DOWN to the Tunnel and SOUTH to the North End of the Hall of Echoes. DROP the SEED, DROP the STONE.

38. GO SOUTH, SOUTH, SOUTH to the Massive Double Doors and GIVE the ROBOT your CREDIT CARD. The Robot will now let you proceed SOUTH to the Cross Junction. Your score is now 550.

39. GO WEST to the Room with Twisty Roots and TAKE the CUTTERS and GO EAST and DROP ROOTS.

40. GO EAST to the Ventilator Junctions, WEST to the Blocked Vent and PULL the PLUG to disable the Big Robot. Go EAST and UP, UP to the Flat Roof and TAKE the FLASK of water.

41. GO DOWN, DOWN, DOWN to the Cross Junction and NORTH to the Double Doors. TAKE CREDIT CARD which is immediately stolen.

KENTILLA

Give sword to chief (you know you can get this back!), Take rope, Examine cavern (note graphic), Take lit torch, W, Tie rope to stalagmite, Pull rope, (the stalagmite will break), Tie rope to stalagmite, Pull rope, (this time it holds), Climb rope, Take crystal (you are told it's dull - in sunlight it glows and will turn any Troll in the vicinity to stone!), Put crystal in sack, Give sack to Elva, Go Waterfall, Take lamp, Examine lamp (reading that it was stolen from Aladdin will tell you what to do), Rub lamp, (you'll need this Jinni later), Give lamp to Elva, W, Climb rope, Untie rope, Take rope,

Say Kentilla (to retrieve your sword), W, (When you meet the rattling quarg - who is randomly allocated around this area), Kill quarg (Refer to map and proceed to the river bank), Examine river, Take damp moss, S, S, Drop damp moss, Look, (the moss is now dried), Take dried moss, Give dried moss to Elva (now go to where you killed the quarg), Take quarg (it scares off the swamp predators - well they don't know it's dead!) Make your way back to the river bank: (At this stage check your score. If wound percentage is high then get the yellow scroll from Elva and CAST HEAL spell),

Throw rope, (you will hang it from a tree), Pull rope (it will hold your weight), Swing across river (you are now on the north bank of the River Cara), N, (Elva now makes a longbow and some arrows from an elm tree with the knife you gave him (her?). If you get lost in Carawood, study the graphic - the flower arrangements are ALL different), N, W (you can now see the 'Carawood Oracle'), Say to oracle "Hello", (the Oracle says "Grako can't be beaten without Velnor's staff"),

N, E, E, E, N, E, E, E, (you now see Timandra tied to a tree and she should be ALIVE - if she isn't then you have taken too long and will have to restart as without her, Zelda the Dragon will not help you into Tylon's Castle)

Untie Timandra (she thanks you), S (Timandra now follows you), S, S, W, (Timandra and Zelda exchange greetings and Timandra tells you she rescued Zelda from a knight), Drop quarg, Climb tree, Take mushrooms, D, Give mushrooms to Elva, Take green scroll, Read green scroll, (it is the FIRE protection spell and you'll need some graphite to cast it), Give green scroll to Elva, Give large key to Elva, Give small key to Elva, Say to Zelda "Hello", (just checking she's friendly!),

Take quarg, S, S, (you will now be beside Tylon's Castle), Wait, (until Zelda flies in with Timandra and accept her offer), Climb up, (you're now at the entrance to the castle and Zelda and Timandra leave you),

E, S, W, Open drawers, Look in drawers, Take gold ring, Give gold ring to Elva, E, N, N, W, Examine rags, (you find the talisman), Examine talisman (it's studded with diamonds), Give talisman to Elva, E, Say to Elva "Give gold ring to me".

(to be continued in next issue)

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THE HELPER

Chaos still reigns!!! I am writing this from 'north of the border' where I shall be spending an ever increasing amount of time as the weeks go by. The countryside is beautiful and the wide open views and fabulous scenery are distracting me from adventuring. No doubt in the winter months when the rain is beating down and the wind is howling around and finding all the cracks in our draft proofing I may well be getting more immersed in the old adventuring. Just at the moment doing all those jobs which simply have to be carried out in a new home seems to be the priority, although the real essentials are catered for I have managed to get one computer up and running and I am hopeful it will not be too long before the others are happily installed in their new homes. The only snag encountered so far was a mains filter to cope with the fluctuating voltages.

It seems that quite a few of you are beginning to ask who this weird Helper person is - so far one person, who knows me well, has guessed, but the letters written to Probe that I have seen or had my attention drawn to have been wrong so far. I am really quite flattered that some of you think I may be one of the better known columnists and I really must point out that I am not Tony Bridge. However, if Tony reads this and is not incensed at the thought that someone may mistake my scrawlings for his, I am quite sure I would be prepared to forfeit my space in Probe in favour of more honoured scribings. Seriously, if anyone out there feels he or she would like to contribute something to the column - or to Probe in general - no matter how large or small, please do write. Any news you can give us, opinions on software you have, new software releases, tips, or indeed anything printable on Adventuring will all be gratefully received. Probe has some younger readers and I think it would be nice to print some of their ideas as well.

I feel we should take a positive, rather than a negative attitude towards software houses. That is to say, I intend to plug good software houses who give support to their customers, rather than to knock the bad ones - although an adverse comment here and there may sneak in. Well, as you will already have read in Sandra's patch, Atlantis Software have been very generous to Probe. They have offered Sandra copies of their software for review, and advice in respect of solutions etc. So, despite the fact that Sandra has already thanked Atlantis, I will say thanks again for Probe could do with more software houses like this. I must also point out that Incentive have been extremely supportive, so lets give them what support we can in return. Please write in and let us know which software houses have given you good service and which have produced the best adventures.

Some more good news for BBC owners is that Incentive have produced a compilation of the Ket trilogy for the Beeb - Mountains of Ket, Temple of Vraan and the Final Mission, all for nine pounds ninety five pence. O.K. so they are oldies but if you have not played them before, they are well worth having a go at, and at about three pounds thirty each, it isn't bad value. WAR has also been released for the BBC but as yet I have not tried this out. However, I have tried Crystal Castles from US Gold and can echo every review I have seen by saying do not waste your money on what is a re-hash of a very old arcade game. It is not an adventure by any stretch of the imagination as the title might lead one to believe. If you are desperate buy M.R.M.'s Castle of Gems II for a fraction of the cost!!!!

Geoff Larsen has now formed a software company and I have had the pleasure of playing some of his games - Whywood, Prophecy and Return of the Warrior. As far as I know Geoff only writes for the BBC using the Quill. Tom Frost produces an excellent compilation tape at a bargain price - Spy Trilogy on Spectrum.

Here is a starter for Kayleth. I have enjoyed this saga and I reckon it is the best the Adventure Soft stable has produced to date, even though it is marketed by US Gold. The parser understands some quite complex commands but is a little pedantic. It does have the facility to go back a move and Ramsave facilities.

You start off lying spreadeagled on a conveyor belt which is edging towards electrified robotic claws.

BREAK CLAWS and the steel bends and frees you, GET UP and you are surrounded by the conveyors and complex machinery of an android production unit. Alarm sirens are screaming out and a destroyer droid heads towards you. Firstly you must deactivate the droid.

Immediately GO UP to the production control unit where there are flashing lights and a small lever. PULL LEVER to silence the sirens and send the destroyer droid to an A-down section. GO DOWN to the conveyor belt and EXAMINE MACHINERY to see a strip of tape.

TAKE TAPE which is a sealed strip of OPKAN ACID, sticky tape. GO NORTH to the parts supply annexe and TAKE the FUSE. GO EAST to the warehouse where there are hundreds of inoperative androids, EAST to the android conditioning unit where there is a view port and a reclining chair. EXAMINE VIEWPORT to see an orbital view of Mother Zyron and EXAMINE CHAIR to find the knob. TURN KNOB and the chair reclines to reveal a pair of gloves. TAKE GLOVES.

GO SOUTH to the cartridge room where there are filing cabinets and a reflective sheet. EXAMINE CABINETS to see a micro cannister which has welded edges. TAKE MICRO CANNISTER and GO WEST to the corridor where there is a service aperture with a blue eye on its side.

WEAR GLOVES, OPEN TAPE and the tape now begins to dissolve, STICK TAPE ON MICRO CANNISTER (Canister will not work), REMOVE GLOVES, DROP GLOVES, the cannister has dissolved to leave the contents (three program cartridges - Masta, Serta, and Dexta). TAKE ALL.

INSERT SERTA and you are programmed as a service droid. OPEN APERTURE and you pass through onto the outer hull of the cruise-ship Kromar orbiting Zyron. EXAMINE APERTURE to see A.C. ROO.

Just a few more tips if you have made further progress - they are not in the correct order to avoid spoiling too much of the game:-

Spin the Bar to defeat the Mokki Ray. Climb the tree, examine the door and after wearing the lenses from the pyxis open the door. Examine and break the tablet to get the AZAP CODE AKN. WHIRL ROD at the Zemps. At the hall enter socle and Drop rod, cube and pyramid and visit the Zenron Temple. Examine the rubble on Yagmok's Island to find the trapdoor which can be opened if you are wearing the key badge.

Unfortunately, my mail is a little erratic at the moment and so if you have not received a reply to your letter I proffer my apologies. Hopefully, your letter will catch up with me and will be answered in the not too distant future.

Here are a few starters for you to have a go at. Once again I have given full location descriptions so that you can judge the game for yourself.

FANTASIA DIAMOND

1. You commence in a pleasant garden with a gnome fishing. Take the rod from the gnome and cast it until you catch some fish. Eat fish and give rod back to gnome.
2. OPEN DOOR and GO SOUTH into a long passageway in a small house. If you EXAMINE PICTURE it shows an orchestra, conductor and violinist which is a useful clue later on.
3. GO WEST into the front room and OPEN CUPBOARD, EXAMINE CUPBOARD and TAKE BATTERY.
4. GO EAST and SOUTH into the main living room. OPEN SIDEBOARD, EXAMINE SIDEBOARD and TAKE SANDWICH, EAT SANDWICH then OPEN DOOR and GO EAST into the store.
5. There is a toy robot in the store. OPEN ROBOT and PUT BATTERY INTO ROBOT.
6. GO EAST, (ensure robot follows you) NORTH, NORTH into the garden and OPEN GATE. GO EAST, NORTH, NORTH onto the curving yellow path. Going north twice takes you to the river. As yet it cannot be crossed.
7. From the curving yellow path GO EAST to a road sign. EAST, where you may meet a wise old man and EAST into a comfortable little house, TAKE FOOD.
8. OPEN the green CURTAIN and GO SOUTH. There is a manhole here and ensure robot is with you. SAY TO ROBOT "OPEN MANHOLE".
9. GO DOWN into a complex of dark caves.
10. You will be captured by the Ugly Pixie. In the prison cell take the small key to unlock the door. If the key is not on the floor there SAY TO green ELF "GIVE ME THE KEY".
11. GO SE, SE until you are in the dark tunnel underneath the trapdoor. UNLOCK DOOR with the small key and GO UP.
12. OPEN CHEST and get the glass and wine. RUB the GLASS to break the window.
13. GO NE and OPEN the arched door and the Iron Door but not the curtain. Boris will follow you. To open the Iron Door get Boris to kill the Guardian for you or use his gun yourself.
14. Once you are in the corridors beyond the arched door you will probably be captured again and this time you must wait until the door is opened.....

OLD FATHER TIME

To get into the cave, find and wave the rod in front of the cave. Before you go in make sure you have the bag of coins. Once in, go to the damp cave and dig three times to find the key to the wooden door. Type OPEN DOOR WITH KEY to unlock the door. To get a light keep going north until you get to the catacombs and type GET and you will find a lamp in your hand. Do NOT go through the beam of light. After you have the lamp go back through the door and go into the west cave then turn the lamp on and get the mirror.

Go back through the door and read the writing on the walls by following the wall round. You will end up with the letters A, O, M, G, E. GO NORTH, NORTH to the beam of light and say EQUILIBRIUM and walk through. The mirror will reflect the beam and you find yourself in a cylinder like room. The letters are an anagram of OMEGA. Turn your lamp off and say OMEGA. When you are at the end of the passage wave your rod with your lamp off and follow the passage round until you become visible. Now turn the lamp on and type LOOK and you have exits north, east or south to follow.....

PYRAMID OF DOOM

1. You start off in the desert by a pool of water with an unlit flashlight and an empty canteen. There is a long pole by the pool.
2. GO POOL and TAKE LARGE KEY then EAST and GET WATER and GET POLE. (In reality this is a shovel). Go WEST, NORTH and DIG. TAKE SMALL KEY, GO SOUTH, GET STONE.
3. DIG and GO HOLE. There is tiny door. UNLOCK DOOR, UP, UNLOCK DOOR (of pyramid) and GO DOOR to enter the pyramid.
4. LIGHT FLASHLAMP. You are in a rocky entrance and you can see mouldy bandages a pistol and a closed sarcophagus. The pistol is used to shoot the nomad if he becomes troublesome, but in most cases ignoring the nomad is safe. DROP SHOVEL, DROP KEY, DROP KEY, OPEN SARCOPHAGUS, DROP STONE.
5. GO SARCOPHAGUS then either GO STAIRS or GO DOWN into the burial room. Here there is a mummy and burning tanna leaves.
6. POUR WATER ONTO LEAVES and DROP CANTEEN. You have killed the mummy and can get the antique tapestry. The alcove is now visible so GO ALCOVE.....

Before I sign off I'd best mention a few of the latest pleas for help. Unfortunately, I cannot answer the queries yet, so perhaps someone will drop Probe a line with the answers so we can put these lost travellers out of their misery.

Sgt. John Moore, who is now becoming one of the most regular correspondents is stuck in Dodgy Geezers. He writes, "Can anyone help on Part II of Dodgy Geezers. I have completed??? part I, but as you must choose your gang and save Part I to load into Part II, I don't know if I've done it right as once I've been through the sewers and on to the bank roof I can't go any further. I will telephone anyone who can help." If anyone can help John, his address is 730 Sgt. John Moore, c/o Sgts. Mess, RAF Wildenrath, BFFPO 42.

Lorna Paterson is playing Island of Riddles by Redbeard and wants to hear from anyone who is playing this game. Lorna has reached the oasis but is stuck there. She would like to know if anyone has entered the competition or, more pertinently, whether anyone has won it!

Well, I really must sign off now - those fabulous hills are beckoning but someone keeps on waving a paintbrush about and then there is the garden which seems to be very fertile if the weeds are anything to go by, and I suppose I really ought to do something about fixing those shelves up. Oh well!!!

Byeeeeeeeeee!!!

TELEPHONE HELPLINE

LINDA FRIEND, Westland House, Front Street, Chedzoy, Bridgwater, Somerset.
Tel: 0278 428641 Monday to Friday - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Aftershock, Apache Gold, Classic Adventure, Dungeon Adventure, Emerald Isle, Erik the Viking, Fantasia Diamond, Flook 2, Forest at Worlds End, Hacker, Heroes of Karn, Jewels of Babylon, Lords of Time, L'Affaire Vera Cruz, Message from Andromeda, Mindshadow, Mordon's Quest, Return to Eden, Robin of Sherwood, Snowball, Subunk, Terrormolinos, Warlord, Winter Wonderland, Worm in Paradise.

SUE BURKE, 122 Glenwood Drive, Middleton, Manchester, M24 2TW.
Tel: 061 653 0005 - Monday to Sunday - 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Aftershock, Al-Strad, Beerhunter, Bored of the Rings, Brawn Free, Castle Adventure, Desert Island, Espionage Island, Flook 1 & 2, Forest at Worlds End, Heroes of Karn, Ice Station Zero, Inca Curse, Jewels of Babylon, Klondike Gold, Mafia Contract, Mansion Quest, Message from Andromeda, Miami Mice, Microman/Project X, Mission X, Lords of Time, Mindshadow, Mordon's Quest, Mystery Mansion, Nythyel 1 & 2, Planet of Death, The Hermitage, The Hollow (Text), The Hollow (Text/Graphics), Theseus 1 & 2, Seabase Delta, Ship of Doom, Smuggler's Cove, Souls of Darkon, Spytrek, Strytische 1 & 2, Subunk, Teacher Trouble, Terrormolinos, Trial of Arnold Blackwood, Warlord, The Wise and Fool of Arnold Blackwood.

ALF BALDWIN, 1, Bybrook Gardens, Tuffley, Gloucester, GL4 0HG.
Tel: 0452 500512 - Monday to Friday - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Adventureland, Adventure Quest, Aftershock, Arrow of Death I & II, The Boggit, The Castle, Circus, Classic Adventure, Colditz, Colossal Adventure, Devil's Island, Dracula, Dungeon Adventure, Escape from Pulsar 7, Espionage Island, Eye of Bain, Fantasia Diamond, Feasibility Experiment, The Final Mission, Gauntlet of Meldir, Golden Apple, Golden Baton, Greedy Gulch, Ground Zero, Heroes of Karn, Hobbit, The Hulk, Hunchback, Inca Curse, Invincible Island, Kentilla, Jewels of Babylon, Knight's Quest, Magic Mountain, Message from Andromeda, Mordon's Quest, Mountains of Ket, Odyssey of Hope, Perseus and Andromeda, Pharaoh's Tomb, Planet of Death, Quest for the Holy Grail, Rebel Planet, Red Moon, Robin of Sherwood, Se Kaa of Assiah, Seabase Delta, Secret of St. Brides, Secret Mission, Ship of Doom, Sinbad and the Golden Ship, Sorcerer of Claymorgue Castle, Temple of Vran, Ten Little Indians, Time Machine, Twin Kingdom Valley, Urban Upstart, The Very Big Cave Adventure, Winter Wonderland, Wizard of Akryz, Woods of Winter.

TELEPHONE HELPLINE (CONTINUED)

ALEX AIRD, 139 Bromford Road, Hodge Hill, Birmingham. B36 8HR.
Tel: 021 327 5046 - Monday to Friday - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Colossal Adventure, Forest at Worlds End, Heroes of Karn, Message from Andromeda, Red Moon.

MIKE WADE, 18 Woodford Walk, Thornaby-on-Tees, Cleveland County. TS17 0LT
Tel: 0642 763793 - Monday to Friday - 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Adventureland, Adventure Quest, The Boggit, Bored of the Rings, The Castle, Castle Colditz, Circus, Classic Adventure, Colditz, Colossal Caves, El Dorado, Emerald Isle, Espionage Island, Eureka, Eye of Bain, Fantasia Diamond, Feasibility Experiment, Final Mission, Forest at Worlds End, Galaxias, Ghost Town (Virgin), Golden Apple, Golden Baton, Greedy Gulch, Grelins, Hampstead, The Helm, Heroes of Karn, Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy, The Hobbit, The Hulk, Ice Station Zero, Inca Curse, Invincible Island, Jewels of Babylon, Knight's Quest, Lords of Time, Mafia Contract, Mafia Contract II, Magic Mountain, Marie Celeste, Message from Andromeda, Morden's Quest, Mountains of Ket, Neverending Story, Perseus and Andromeda, Peter Pan, Pharoah's Tomb, Pirate Adventure, Planet of Death, Price of Magik, Project X/Microman, The Quest for the Holy Grail, Red Moon, Return to Ithaca, Robin of Sherlock, Robin of Sherwood, Seabase Delta, Secret Mission, Sherlock, Ship of Doom, Shrewsbury Key, Snow Queen, Sorcerer of Claymorgue Castle, Souls of Darkon, Spiderman, Subunk, Temple Terror, Temple of Vran, Ten Little Indians, Terrormolinos, Tower of Despair, Urban Upstart, Valkyrie 17, Very Big Cave Adventure, Velnor's Lair, Voodoo Castle, Warlord, Waxworks, Wizard of Akyrz, Zacaron Mystery.

(Mike would also like penfriends, his hobbies include listening to good music apart from playing adventures. He'd also like to swap games and tips etc.)

If you would like to volunteer for the telephone helpline then send in a list of completed adventures, your name and address and the days and times when you would be available.

If you do telephone one of our volunteers then please make sure you ring at the times shown. Even adventurers need time off to eat and sleep.

KINGS/QUEENS OF THE CASTLE

TOM FROST, 61 Bailie Norrie Crescent, Montrose, DD10 9DT, has completed the following:-

Alter Earth, Castle Adventure Crystal Frog Crystal Quest, Earthbound, El Dorado, Eureka, Espionage Island, Eye of Bain, Final Mission, Golden Apple, Greedy Gulch, Hexagonal Museum, Holy Grail, Inca Curse, Island Adventure, Jewels of Babylon, Knight's Quest, Legacy, Mafia Contract, Marie Celeste, Magic Mountain, Mansion Quest, Mission X, Mountains of Ket, Operation Nightingale, Pharoah's Tomb, Prospector, Rifts of Time, Se Kaa of Assiah, Sea of Ziron, Ship of Doom, Spy Trilogy, Subsunk, Temple of Vran, The Helm, The Traveller, Time Quest, Urquahart Castle, Warlord, Zacaron Mystery (Pt.1), 1942 Mission.

MALCOLM & PAUL SERBERT, 171 Kings Road, Harrogate, HG1 5JQ offer help on the following:-

Arrow of Death (Pt.1), Bored of the Rings, Circus, Colditz, Crowley Manor, Feasibility Experiment, Fools Gold, Golden Baton, Hampstead, Heroes of Karn, Hobbit, Hulk, Inferno, Invincible Island, Lords of Time, Mindshadow, Moriana Quest, Perseus and Andromeda, Quest, Return to Eden, Ship of Death, Snowball, Spiderman. Subsunk, Ten Little Indians, The Pen and the Dark, Time Machine, Urban Upstart, Valley, Waxworks.

PETER BROWN, 57 Ropers Avenue, Chingford, E4 9EB offers help on the following:-
Adventure Quest, Arnold Goes to Somewhere Else, Beerhunter, Bored of the Rings, Brawn Free, Castle Dracula, Colossal Adventure, Dungeon Adventure, Emerald Isle, Erik the Viking, Espionage Island, Forest at Worlds End, Gremlins, Heroes of Karn, Hobbit, Hunchback the Adventure, Inca Curse, Jewels of Babylon, Lord of the Rings, Lords of Time, Message from Andromeda, Mordon's Quest, Neverending Story, Planet of Death, Price of Magik, Red Moon, Return to Eden, Robin of Sherwood, Seas of Blood, Ship of Doom, Snowball, Souls of Darkon, Spytrek, The Lost Phirious Pts. 1 & 2, Time Search, Trial of Arnold Blackwood, Warlord, Wise and Fool of Arnold Blackwood, Worm in Paradise.

NEIL TALBOT, 31 Chadcote Way, Catshill, Bromsgrove, offers help in the following:-

Adventure Quest, Africa Gardens, Espionage Island, Fantasia Diamond, Golden Apple, Hobbit, Knight's Quest, Lords of Midnight, Mountains of Ket, Return to Eden, Sinbad and the Golden Ship Pt. 1, Snowball, The Inferno, Urban Upstart, Velnor's Lair, Warlord

KINGS/QUEENS CONTINUED

M. TYLER, 12 Longmore Road, Hersham, W-D-T, Surrey, KT12 4NU, offers help in the following:-

Circus, Espionage Island, Golden Apple, Invincible Island, Planet of Death, Quest for the Holy Grail, Seabase Delta, The Count, Valkyrie 17.

JANET LOXHAM, 7 Newbury Street, Fulwell, Sunderland, Tyne & Wear offers help in the following:-

Espionage Island, Hampstead, Heroes of Karn, The Hobbit, Lords of Time, Mountains of Ket, Robin of Sherwood, Sherlock, System 15000, Temple of Vran, Terrormolinos, Urban Upstart.

A. McCRANN (MAC), Taunton School, Taunton, Somerset, TA2 6AD offers help in the following:-

Adventure Quest, Emerald Isle, Erik the Viking, Fantasia Diamond, Forest at Worlds End, Heroes of Karn, Jewels of Babylon, Lords of Time, Message from Andromeda, Morden's Quest, Red Moon, Warlord.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, 116 Westmead Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 4JH offers help in the following:-

Jewels of Babylon, Message from Andromeda. Limited help is also offered on Castle Blackstar, Dungeon Adventure, Heroes of Karn, Redhawk and Warlord.

JOY BIRLEY, Eryl Don, Mona Terrace, Criccieth, Gwynedd offers help in the following:-

Blade the Warrior, Bored of the Rings, Emerald Isle, The Hobbit, Lords of Time, Quest for the Holy Grail, Sinbad and the Golden Ship, Time Quest, ZZZZ.

GEOFF WING, 171 Beadlemead, Netherfield, Milton Keynes, MK6 4HU, offers help in the following:-

Gremlins, The Hulk, Return to Eden, Seabase Delta, Snowqueen 1 & 2, Spiderman, Subsunk, Terrormolinos, Valkyrie 17.

COLIN READ, 80 Beech Gardens, Rainford, St. Helens, Merseyside. WA11 8DN, offers help in the following:-

Doomdark's Revenge, The Hobbit, Invincible Island, Lords of Midnight, Pyjamarama, Seabase Delta, Seas of Blood, Subsunk, Terrormolinos, Urban Upstart.

KINGS/QUEENS CONTINUED

730 SGT. JOHN MOORE, C/O Sgts. Mess, RAF Wildenrath, BFPO 42, offers help in the following:-

(Spectrum and Dragon)

Adventureland, Arrow of Death I & II, Circus, El Diablo, Escape from Pulsar 7, Feasibility Experiment, Final Mission, Forest at Worlds End, Ghost Town, Golden Apple, Golden Voyage, Hampstead, The Hobbit, The Hulk, Knight's Quest, Lords of Time, Magic Mountain, Mountains of Ket, Mystery Funhouse, Perseus and Andromeda, Pharaoh's Tomb, Pirate Adventure, Pyramid of Doom, Savage Island I, Seabase Delta, Sea Quest, Secret Mission, Se Kaa of Assiah I & II, Shennanigans, Smugglers Cove, Snowball, Temple of Vran, Ten Little Indians, Terrormolinos, Time Machine, Touchstones of Rhiannon, Urban Upstart, Voodoo Castle, Waxworks, Wizard of Akyrz.

DEREK DIGGER, 7 Bigbury Lane, Wilden, Stourport-on-Severn, offers help in the following:-

Bored of the Rings, Brawn Free, Emerald Isle, Forest at Worlds End, Gems of Stradus, Ice Station Zero, Message from Andromeda, Microman, Neverending Story, Planet of Death, Quann Tulla, Ship of Doom, Subsunk.

JACKIE HOLT, 36 Eland Street, New Basford, Nottingham. N97 7DT offers help in the following:-

The Boggit, El Dorado, Galaxias, The Helm, Heroes of Karn, Hobbit, Incredible Hulk, Ludoids, Message from Andromeda, The Mural, Neverending Story, Noah, Planet of Death, Project X/Microman, Quest for the Holy Grail, Randy Warner and the Aztec Idol, Return to Ithaca, Seabase Delta, Sinbad and the Golden Ship, Sorcerer of Claymorgue Castle, Souls of Darkon, Spiderman, Ten little Indians, Thompson Twins Adventure, Waxworks, Zacaron Mystery.

ALVAR SVERRISSON and ULFAR ERLINGSSON, Hverfisgotu 53, 220 Hafnarfiroi, Iceland offer help in the following :-

Ballyhoo, Enchanter, Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Infidel, The Pawn, Planetfall, Seastalker, Sorcerer, Starcross, Wishbringer.

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HALL OF FAME

Thank you to the following readers who have sent in contributions during the last month.

Alf, Baldwin, John Barnsley, Fiona Bissett, Sue Burke, Derek Digger, Mihail Evans, Linda Friend, Terry Gray, Chris Hester, Jackie Holt, John Hunter, Jack Lockerby, John Moore, Jim O'Keeffe, David Oya, Ron Rainbird, Neil Scrimgeour, Paul Serbert, Malcolm Serbert, Allan Shortland, Mike Wade, Jeff Walker, Edward Yeong, The Helper, and The Kraken.

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