

ADVENTURE PROBE



Vol IV Issue 6 June 1990

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All back issues are still available from issue 1 (June 1986). There are 19 issues in Vol 1. Vol 2 started Jan 1988. Subsequent volumes begin each January (12 issues each). Prices as above.

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DISTRIBUTION

Adventure Probe is distributed during the first week of the month. COPY DATE for contributions, advertisements etc is 14th of the previous month.

CONTRIBUTIONS

All contributors sending in material between 14th of the previous month and up to copy date will have their names entered in the Hall of Fame for the subsequent month. CONTRIBUTIONS are always needed and ALL readers are invited to send in items for every section. Anything from a single hint or tip to a full blown article are all very welcome. Reviews of the adventures you have played are especially welcome. Please check first to see if a review has already appeared. Don't worry if you cannot send in typed material as handwritten is just as welcome. If you send in contributions for more than one section please use different sheets and make sure you include your name and computer. If you do send in items ready typed then please use A4 with a nice margin all round with text being approx 70 chars across and 60 lines per page. Items can be sent in on disc (all discs will be returned). The Editor is able to print out from Amstrad CPC6128 (Tasword or Protext), C64/128 on (Easyscript or Mini Office II) or Atari ST (First Word Plus). Sorry no printer for the Spectrum. If you send in items for the IN-TOUCH section please clearly mark which are adventures, utilities, arcade etc.

POSTAL ADDRESS

Please send all correspondence, subscriptions etc to the Editor: MANDY RODRIGUES, ADVENTURE PROBE, 67 LLOYD STREET, LLANDUDNO, GWYNEDD, LL30 2YP. If writing from overseas please add UNITED KINGDOM.



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HALL OF FAME



Sincere thanks to all the following readers who took the time and trouble to send in contributions during the past month:

Matthew Dodwell, Bob Adams, Martyn Westwood, Jim Struthers, Jackie Holt, Sandra Sharkey, Vicky Jackson, Robin Matthews, Phil Glover, Dave Havard, Jack Higham, Dave Perry, Antcrusher, Dave Evans, Roy Milliken, Larry Horsfield, Pete Gerrard, Steve McLaren, Christopher Hester, Graham Wheeler, The Grue! Ron Rainbird, Margo Porteous, Barbara Bassingthwaight, Neil Shipman, Paul Brunyee, Claire Dyard, Sue Roseblade, Tony Melville, Dorothy Millard, Jim Donaldson, Stuart Whyte, Mike Gerrard, Alf Baldwin, Paul Cardin and Nic Rumsey.

Special thanks to Claudio Balzi for this months cover picture.



EDITORIAL

Welcome to Volume 4, Issue 6 of Adventure Probe!

This month is Probe's FOURTH birthday! Back in 1986 our Sandra Sharkey and Pat Winstanley launched the very first issue. I know I have said it before but I really think we all owe them both a big thank you for all their hard work. If it hadn't been for their inspiration and dedication you wouldn't be reading this now. Both Sandra and Pat still read Probe and contribute when they can and Sandra, especially, maintains a very keen interest in her "baby". Thank you both very much.

If you remember, I was worried about how to go about including the Solutions Available from Probe list in my last Editorial. It has grown to four pages and it seems a waste of space to include that lot within Probe. Quite a few of you came to the rescue this month with helpful suggestions which I am happy to adopt. You should find the full list enclosed with this issue (unless I have "boobed" again, in which case do let me know!) and from now on I will include a list of the NEW SOLUTIONS RECEIVED in Probe to keep you updated. Any new readers will receive the full list with their first issue and, of course, anyone wanting the full list from time to time has only to drop me a line. My thanks to all who came to the rescue. It is great when you all take an interest and offer helpful suggestions when needed.

Since the last issue there has been a lot happening. Tom Frost managed another visit this month and we all spent a most enjoyable day. Tom took us out and we had a great time - thanks Tom! Also, during our local Llandudno Victorian Extravaganza, when I was standing beside a stall in full Victorian gear (and looking a real whally) I looked up and saw someone with bright twinkly eyes and a very wide grin looking at me. He was wearing a black baseball cap with two large black eyes on it. It was non other than The Grue himself! It was really lovely meeting him. Mrs Grue and Baby Grue. I even managed to survive the experience as Mrs Grue kept the slaving Grue firmly in order, but I think the bright sunlight kept him subdued though I did notice that it didn't stop him paying a few visits to the bobsly ride near the ski-slope and subjecting everyone to a few hair-raising minutes as he travelled down at full speed, completely ignoring the brakes! No wonder he is always breaking bones (his own too!).

Enclosed with Probe, as well as the solutions list, you should find a questionnaire asking you what you think about a Grand Probe Convention when we can all meet at last, put names and voices to faces and generally have a good time. Please fill in the questionnaire and return it to the address shown as soon as possible so that arrangements can get under way. I think it would be a nice idea to have our very own Awards Ceremony at the convention and categories and voting forms will be forthcoming very soon, but it all depends on your response so please do try and attend as the more people we have the better the convention will be. Also, any ideas you may have to help make the convention a success will be gratefully received. Also, anyone willing to help with the arrangements and organisation of the event will be most welcome so please get in touch.

There was so much news to tell you this month that the Editorial space just wouldn't run to it so please check the Adventure News section for all the latest information. Well, that's all from me for this month. I hope you enjoy this issue and will see you all again next month.

Mandy

REVIEWS



COMPUTER ADVENTURES - THE SECRET ART

Published - February 1990. Author - Gil Williamson and published by Amazon Systems at a RRP of £7.95 also available from Adventure Probe.

Computer Adventure games have hundreds of thousands of followers throughout the world. In these games, the player pits his wits, rather than his reflexes, against the author of the adventure. They belong to role-playing, graphic art and fiction rather than computer science. There are a number of books on how to play these games, but (say the publishers) Computer Adventures - The Secret Art is the first authoritative work on their creation by a well-known adventure games author. The book is an entertaining "good read" in itself but will also advise the reader on Choosing a theme for a game, plotting a game - puzzles, codes etc, characterisation, presentation and style, use of graphics and sound and how to publish games. So says the blurb which accompanied the book that was sent to Probe for review.

I was quite intrigued after reading this and, I have to say that I was not disappointed. The first chapters are very comprehensive in their advice on how to present your adventure with details of screen images, sound effects, inspiration, plot elements, transformation, weapon creation, puzzles, geographical mazes and the one thousand and one different elements which go into the production of an adventure game. Everything you could think of is covered in depth in these first pages with advice on how to create codes and cyphers and how to make characters within your adventure come to life.

Later chapters go into detail about marketing your game and advice on how to market your games yourself or how to go about getting someone else to publish your work. Details about copyright and the law are also covered as well as copy protection. In fact, there is very little that is not covered in this book. And best of all, it is all layed out in a way that is easy to understand. The reader is made to feel comfortable as the author uses adventures which we are all familiar with to illustrate various points and to explain how things are done. To give you an example of how the author advises the reader I will quote a short passage from the book entitled: CHEAT PROTECTION: "A subject allied to copy protection is cheat protection. Many of the early adventures could be solved by running the games data file through an editor program and reading messages. Even though the instructions could not be readily comprehended, the messages could give away the secret of how to do something. Typically, a message might read: "As you put the coin in the slot, you hear a click" - which is pretty revealing. The way to prevent this happening is for the game-writing system to encipher the data files before distribution, and decipher the data in the messages just before displaying it".

The author very obligingly goes on to explain just how to go about protecting your messages and text in a choice of ways. There are detailed explanations about variables, flags and counters and a comprehensive chapter on the games writing utilities which we are all familiar with such as GAC, Quill, STAC, PAW, ADVSYS and many that are not so familiar, together with hints and tips on how to use them.

If you are an adventure games author (or prospective author) or are simply a player who is interested in how your favourite games are produced then I think you will find this comprehensive book invaluable!

Reviewer - MANDY



Available as Shareware for the Atari ST from SynTax

Reviewer - Neil Shipman

You're a student of Information Technology at South Yorks Polytechnic - or rather you were until you failed your exams. If you wanted to stay there then the only thing to do was to transfer to the new Parapsychology course. When the adventure begins, you find yourself in a lecture room on the 11th floor of the college building with your assignment on the desk in front of you.

"With reference to any respected contemporary (sic) grimoire, discuss 14th Century lycanthropy techniques. Sources to be appended," it reads. Your evil-looking lecturer makes it quite clear that you've got to find a grimoire (a collection of magic spells) for your essay and, indeed, the aim of the game is to do just this and return to the classroom.

Leaving your fellow students, you make your way out of the room and immediately come across Furry Julie. She's a cat who'll prove useful before too long, so be kind to her. Outside, the Student Union looks inviting and a beer would go down really well. The greengrocer's stall outside the bus station has got some goodies on it too. But you're a bit strapped for cash at the moment, so perhaps a quick trip to the library to flip through some reference books would at least show willing. You never know, someone might have left some money lying about.

Don't be too quick to go down the open manhole in the library basement because it will crash shut behind you - and you won't be able to get back up! Underground passages lead to a satanists' chapel and a lake, and success in solving this part of the adventure will bring you out above ground onto rolling downland in a paranormal world inhabited by vampires, werewolves and a dragon.

You will have to work out how to deal with each of these creatures in order to get your hands on the grimoire you're looking for. Then it's a matter of getting back to the real world and returning to the lecture room. This is the largest section of the adventure with about 30 locations to explore and many items of interest to be found and used. You don't need everything, though, and there are quite a few red herrings to confuse you.

The problems in The Grimoire are, on the whole, not too difficult and most adventurers should make fairly rapid progress. Make sure you examine everything because there are many clues to what you ought to be doing. There is one particular series of puzzles leading up to getting everything necessary to defeat the vampire which is cleverly thought out and which, for me, was the best part of the adventure.

You will undoubtedly make quite a few trips to hell, where you'll find that your lecturer really is the devil incarnate, and from which there is no return. Well there is, but that means the end of both your life and your afterlife - and you really are dead then and have to start again. However, if you are worthy enough then heaven is your reward instead of hell and you'll find yourself floating with the angels in a clear blue sky. If you were upset by The Last Temptation Of Christ, though, just wait till you see what you need for entry into heaven!

Written with STAC, The Grimoire boasts all the usual commands you'd expect, like ramsave, oops, again, get/drop all, a choice of 40 or 80 column text etc. The program has been placed in an auto folder so that it boots up automatically, but this is a mistake because doing so disables the desktop and means that only one ordinary saved position is possible. To get round this simply boot up using another disk then run the program from desktop.

There's a well drawn loading screen showing the grimoire that you're looking for and there's a picture in every one of the 50 locations. Some of these are really quite good although they are, inevitably, interspersed with rather more simple and uninteresting ones. In some cases, they don't tie in very well with the text. For example, in the first location the door is to the west and the window to the east in the picture - but it's the other way round in the description.

Presentation is mostly white text on a black background but - a nice touch this - the author has incorporated some colour. Yellow is used when people are saying something to you and, later on, there is some green writing too. This looks good although the effect is spoilt on a few occasions where lines of text are truncated and where words are split awkwardly across the ends of lines.

This lack of attention to detail also shows up with the spelling which is, quite frankly, appalling. Some of it (e.g. "arn't", "arround" and "avalance") is just the result of the author's carelessness, whereas other mistakes (e.g. "disolute" and "poor dammed souls lamment") could easily have been corrected with the help of a dictionary. But most glaring of all are "psycology" and "physic". If you're writing about parapsychology and psychic phenomena then it really is crucial that you should be able to spell these words correctly! And any author who knows that spelling is not his strong point should make absolutely certain that his playtesters aren't just as bad.

All in all, The Grimoire is a simple little adventure with nothing too taxing in it and it should help you while away a couple of hours. I didn't feel that it had very much "atmosphere" and the humour wasn't to my taste - but, as the French say, "Chacun a son gout." And to the author I'd say, "Put your shareware fees towards a good dictionary rather than spend the money on a few (more?) beers at the Student Union!"





MAGIC MISSILE - Reviewed by Barbara Gibb



MAGIC MISSILE (hereafter called M.M.) is a bi-monthly tape magazine for Spectrum adventurers. The first issue appeared in September 1989. Number Four was published in March this year and that is the issue that I have been asked to review.

Side A - While the main section loads you are treated to a very colourful screen drawn by Crazy kez Gray. A 'Welcome to Magic Missile Issue 4' and the credits come first (only 5 people involved!), then the editorial by Matthew Wilson, who explains that starting with this issue M.M. will be written using the F.A.W., allowing access via a menu for most items so that you can read whatever you want in whichever order you choose. All credit to Les Floyd for thinking of using the F.A.W. in such an unusual way. The editor welcomes Les and then kez to the team which suggests, to me at least, that the previous three issues were produced almost single-handed.

Press 1 on the main menu and you are given the choice of 4 reviews to read - Agatha's Folly, Slaughter Caves, Starship Quest and Behind Closed Doors 3. Every one was rated 80% or more so they were obviously enjoyed by the reviewers. I did notice that Matthew Wilson admitted he had only had time to play Part 1 of Agatha's Folly because the original reviewer pulled out at the last minute - a hazard most editors probably have to put up with.

Next on the menu were details of a competition. All you have to do is send in your ideas for the storyline and the best one will be programmed by Les Floyd and published in Issue 6 of M.M. A chance for those who can devise good plots and puzzles but haven't the time or ability to convert them into playable adventures.

Press 3 for an article on writing adventures. It has to be loaded in separately. I will have to come back to it later, so I tried Number 4 and got details of what will be in the next issue. The editor promises it will be at least as good as this issue!

Press 5 - another separate load.

Number 6 on the main menu is a table of all 15 reviews to date. Alien Research Centre is top with 93%.

Press 7 for a sub-menu of Hints and Tips. These are Behind Closed Door and BCD 3 (supplied by John Wilson himself) and Hampstead, Hunchback, Journey to the Centre of Eddie Smith's Head and Nightmare, all supplied by Joy Cooper. This is where a printed magazine has the advantage over a tape magazine. It is a lot easier to flip through printed pages looking for one particular item, than load in a cassette tape, particularly if you are already playing an adventure. All that turning-off, loading and re-loading can be very tedious. There should also have been hints for Missile Command Base, but the editor had to apologize for its no-appearance - someone let him down, again?

I was surprised as to how much had been crammed into the main section - hence it's name I suppose! I noticed some spelling mistakes, which, as I am feeling charitable, I will put down as typing errors; also a little more care with punctuation would be appreciated. e.g. in the review of Slaughter Cave it should be "man-eating beetle" not "man eating beetle", but on reflection, perhaps the original is also at fault!

I re-set the computer and loaded in Adventure Writing by Les Floyd; a well-written article about his own experiences as an adventure writer. At 13 he had visions of loadsa money, and now, 2 years later he has accepted the fact that adventure writing is a time consuming hobby that will probably cost him more money than he will get in return. Les ends on a cheerful note and passes on some good advice to those who may wish to try their hand at adventure writing.

The next section is Screens. This is where M.M. has a distinct advantage over a printed magazine. M.M. can show the reader exactly what an adventure looks like - displaying the loading screen in full colour and the text in the actual character set used by the author. The samples on the tape are loading screen and text for Agatha's Folly and Behind Closed Doors 3, and text only from Slaughter Caves and Starship Quest, complimenting the earlier reviews.

Brief details about the first issue of M.M. complete this side.

The "B" Side starts with "Twilight Zone" by Crazy Jez Gray. It is a magazine within a magazine, with the screen display in the style of the CEEFAX and ORACLE teletext system. You are presented with an index (page 100 returns you to it). Page 101 is the Dedications, and right away you realize most of the following pages are going to be packed with "in" jokes at the expense of the Balrog, Mike Gerrard, animals, scotsmen and Sean Doran. It is similar to John Wilson's Goblin Gazette (J.W. please note 2 "z"s") and I suspect he had a large part in the writing of it.

My favourites were Pages 128 and 194 of Poets Corner, and Page 165 in the jokes section. It's one hundred pages of ? entertainment - you'll have to buy the tape to find out what I mean because I refuse to quote anything from Twilight Zone in this review; my daughter may read it as I type it.

The "Twilight Zone" is a difficult act to follow. "Mouse-man" by Les Floyd is a delightful 10 location mini-adventure. Nice clear character set with small, neat and colourful illustrations, and no spelling mistakes (I hope). What more could you want? Well, there is a £5 prize for the shortest solution. I did it in 19 moves but I won't enter as I had a slight head-start.

The second adventure is "The Ball" by Joy Cooper. It has an interesting storyline. You have to gain admittance to the Ball, suitably attired and with the correct ticket. It is much larger than I first thought and I ended up with a very messy map because Joy doesn't seem to map the same way as I do. The presentation is standard Quill -

white on blue with the colours tending to merge on my old television. I spotted quite a few spelling mistakes which a playtester would have reported. A good adventure which, with some tidying-up, will be very pleasant to play.

Next on the tape is the first part of "Protect and Survive" by Les Floyd. This is an excellent appetizer for his full 3-parter of the same name, due for release soon.

Side B is completed with advertisements for Armageddon & Cream's 4 for the price of 1 games pack; also Zenobi Software's Fawns of War 1 and 2.

The use of P.A.W. has made it easier for producers and reader alike. There is more on the tape than at first appears, and it can take a long time to work your way through everything. Its main advantage is the facility to show true screen shots, but as already mentioned, it isn't possible to consult at a moment's notice.

I understand that due to approaching examinations, Matthew Wilson has decided to hand over the magazine to Les Floyd. I am sure it will flourish, if only more people would get involved.

Numbers 1 - 4 are still available for £1.50 each from

Futuresort
75 Ben Rhydding Road
Ilkley
W. Yorkshire
LS29 8RN

Issue 5 (May 1990) onwards will be available from

Les Floyd
37 Millriggs
Corby Hill
Carlisle
CA4 8QP





THE TEST

Available from Ken Bond, 17 Adel Park Gardens, Adel, Leeds, LS16 8BN
For Amstrad CPC's and Amstrad PCW's. Price £4.50.

Reviewer - VICKY JACKSON

You are floating free. It seems very quiet after the noise and vibration of the plane. Dawn is just about to break and you can perceive far below a small white cross. There is hardly any wind and as far as you can see you are not drifting much. Above, you can see the great white canopy of the parachute, you gently pull on the cords to change your direction slightly and suddenly the earth that seemed so far below is rushing up to meet you.

So begins your initiation test into the E.F.F. the Elite Fighting Force. Having released yourself from the parachute you are free to go north which is the only exit open to you. However, the first thing you should do is read the letter that you have with you. This explains your mission and also help you gain access to a door with no keyhole. The letter also comes in handy somewhere else in the game. This is not a large game as far as locations go, but it does have plenty of problems to solve, these include an exploding bulldozer, a rampaging bull and a minefield to be crossed. You also get to drive a train if you can get up enough steam. The puzzles are very well thought out and range from logical to not so logical, you really need to think carefully about some of them. Some require more than one object to solve. The game is well written and is free of bugs and spelling mistakes also the grammar is excellent. It supports Ramesave/Ramload and can be saved to disc. It can also accept multiple commands. The game is in two parts and having completed part one you are asked to save the game and give it a file name, if you do not you cannot load part two.

All in all, a great game and well worth the £4.50.

PREVIEW SECTION THE AXE OF KOLT

See centre pages for details of price and availability.

Reviewer SUE ROSEBLADE played on Spectrum 48K



The legendary Axe of Kolt is missing, and the kingdom has been overrun by hordes of Xixon lizardmen. Your task is to recover the magical axe and deliver it to King Kelson who is imprisoned in Castle Dorniel. This is the latest text adventure from Larry Horsfield and like his previous games it shows how the small independent software companies can be relied upon to produce adventures of an extremely high standard in every way.

The game is in four parts, each one having its own individual theme. In part 1, "A Tale of Two Villages", you begin your quest by purchasing various bits of equipment and meeting local characters who will help you in return for your helping them. Between the villages is a dangerous mountain pass, where you will encounter the ferocious Dwarf, my favourite bit in this part!

Part 1 is fairly easy by Larry's standards, but I still managed to get stuck several times!

Part 2 takes place in "The Forest of Evil", which is populated by various species of flora and fauna, some helpful and some not. A river full of piranha fish represents only one of the obstacles to be overcome before you can finally confront the witch, Morgeth, who has a nasty line in finger-power.

In part 3, you soon become trapped in the "Mines of Terror" and getting out of there requires some technical expertise, and a lot of patience. This was my favourite part I think. I've obviously missed my vocation! The mines will eventually lead you into an ancient tomb, where you will find the Axe of Kolt itself. Part 3 has a distinct Indiana Jones flavour.

Having got the Axe, you unfortunately lose it again as you are soon captured by those slimy lizardmen. Part 4 involves your escape from the dungeons and your survival within the fortress, avoiding capture and execution until you can find both the Axe and then King Keison. This game is certainly not short on atmosphere and excitement, and I thoroughly enjoyed playing it. As before, I was impressed with Larry's imaginative style and the high quality of presentation. The 128K version contains even more game-play and many of the puzzles are greatly enhanced. Whichever version you buy, you can enter a name-finding competition and stand a chance of winning £50. Not a chance to be missed as a bonus to such an excellent adventure.

POETS CORNER

HIP HIP HOORAY!



Happy Birthday, sing and cheer,
 Adventure Probe is four this year.
 Packed with stories, tips and Grues!
 Puzzles, letters, news, reviews.
 You'll find something there for you
 'Bout 'ventures old and 'ventures new.
 International is Probe -
 Readers spread across the globe
 Thumb through post, their eyes agleam,
 "Here's my favourite magazine."
 Dragons, robots, 'tecs and mages,
 All are mentioned in its pages.
 You'll read of flights of fantasy
 Produced for nuts like you and me.
 Readers write from far and wide,
 Our Mandy edits Probe with pride.
 Birthday Greetings for many more years,
 Each adventurer gives three cheers!



By NEIL SHIPMAN

HAPPY BIRTHDAY PROBE

Four years ago it all began
 They came and went, the also-rans.
 Four years ago this very June
 They came and went, so very soon.

We've had our laughs, we've had
 our fun,
 Did Sandra know what she'd begun?
 We've had our ups and we've had
 our downs,
 But Probe's still doing the rounds.

Four years ago a star was born,
 Began in June when it was warm,
 Four years ago lets wish for more
 Or life will become such a bore.

Let everyone in this exclusive
 club,
 Raise glasses and give 3 cheers,
 Without our Probe,
 We'll not last another four
 years!

By JIM STRUTHERS

ADVENTURE NEWS

A FINAL FAREWELL TO INFOCOM!

Gordon Inglis kindly sent me a copy of CTW magazine in which it was reported that Mediagenic continued its battle for survival last week as it closed down its Infocom label and predicted massive losses for its imminent full-year financial results and considered putting itself up for sale. The firm bought Infocom back in 1986 but the subsidiary has never traded profitably under Mediagenic. Last June it actually closed the label's offices and brought the operation into its own California head-quarters. Now the troubled US publisher has given up altogether and has written the subsidiary off completely at a cost of \$9 million. The Infocom brand name will, however, be kept alive for "story-telling" products originated by Mediagenic's own team. Another Mediagenic arm to get the chop is Triton, a mail order business that, like Infocom, was trading unprofitably. The Triton write-off will cost \$3.5 Million. Mediagenic has already warned that its imminent full-year financial figures will show a staggering loss of \$19 million.

In a statement intended to ease shareholders' fears, chairman Bruce Davis explained that all areas of Mediagenic's business are currently being examined and that he is looking to "ease the financial strain" caused by any that are found to be unprofitable. Certain to be spared from the chop are the firm's European and Japanese subsidiaries, its Nintendo publishing activities, the ZSoft label and the affiliate business with Interplay, Absolute and Sierra On-Line. All are areas which Davis claimed are in a profit making situation.

The only unprofitable aspect of Mediagenic's business to be retained is its own label, Activision Computer Entertainment where "we think our investment technology over the last couple of years should begin to pay off". There will, however, be "far fewer" titles produced by Activision, even though it is now also responsible for the Infocom branded products.

This, for many of us, is very sad news indeed. As I see it, not only have the old Infocom been written off completely, but with Mediagenic retaining the brand name they are to all intents and purposes ensuring that Infocom cannot rise again as an independent company even if they so wished. I am horrified that Infocom have been so mismanaged in this way. Is there any hope left for Infocom? We shall wait and see.

NEW ADVENTURE CLUB BITES THE DUST

Inter action's new adventure club, Harlequin and Steel, which was reviewed recently in Amstrad Action has, I have been reliably informed, folded. This is very sad news as it promised to be a very good magazine. I do not consider other adventure magazines to be rivals at all and I am always very sad to see one fold. The more adventure magazines there are, the better for ALL adventurers so please do support as many of these magazines as you possibly can to ensure that adventuring is kept alive and healthy.

ANOTHER ADVENTURE COLUMN VANISHES

Not only have C & VG magazine decided, in their infinite wisdom, to drop Keith Campbell's adventure column but, after eight years of loyal and reliable service, they didn't even give Keith the chance to write a last column to say farewell to his readers. Keith tells me that that was the saddest part of all for him. Keith has been an invaluable source of help and information to adventurers with all kinds of machines and has supported Probe since the first issue. Not only is Keith a dedicated and expert adventure columnist, he is also a really smashing person and I, for one, am extremely angry that he has been treated in this disgraceful way. The excuse for this is that C & VG think that adventures are not popular enough to warrant continuing!

I feel that it is time that we adventurers, once again, made our opinions known. Please, if you value your hobby, write to C & VG and demand the return of the adventure column. Even if you are not a reader of C & VG please write. You never know, if this is allowed to continue without protest it could be your favourite adventure column to be attacked next!

GOOD NEWS FOR QL ADVENTURERS

Following Confidential magazine publishing the article "No This Isn't The End" from the March issue of Probe, I received a lovely letter from Richard Alexander, the Editor of QL Adventurers Forum, who enclosed the latest issue of this excellent magazine. The magazine is dedicated to QL Adventurers and contains articles, reviews, hints, helplines and solutions for QL adventures. If you would like a copy then write to Richard at C.G.H. Services, Cwm Gwen Hall, Pencader, Dyfed, SA39 9HA. The magazine costs £1.25 an issue.

.....

GUESS WHO THIS IS? COMPETITION RESULTS!

The correct answers to the Guess Who This Is? featured in the May issue of Probe were as follows:

Face A was Allan Phillips. Face B was Hugh Walker. Face C was Bob Adams. Face D was Jim O'Keefe and Face E was Chris Hester.

Many thanks to everyone who entered the competition (there were lots of entries this time!). All the winning entries were put into the hat and the winning name drawn out was:

LARRY HORSFIELD

Congratulations to Larry who wins a copy of the new book entitled, COMPUTER ADVENTURES - THE SECRET ART.

This particular Guess Who? proved so popular that another one featuring some ladies will be forthcoming - watch this space!

.....

INTERESTING INVENTORIES

In a game called GREAT MISSION it is necessary to wear swimming trunks before going to the beach or you die. However, these can only be put on at one location and you must get a blue taxi, a green taxi then a red taxi, followed by an airplane and a purple taxi (colourful taxi cabs here!) to arrive at the beach - all in your swimming trunks!

DOROTHY MILLARD

In one adventure I was going around and on being told I couldn't carry any more I checked my inventory and found I not only had a ladder among my possessions, but that I was still carrying the boat! (rather endearingly described as A WOOD BOAT WITHOUT ANY HOLES IN IT AND SOME CORD WITH A HOOK (that's because when you first find the boat it has a hole in it until you plug it)!

MARGO PORTEOUS

.....

SAM COUPE - 8 BIT WONDER OR 8 DAY WONDER

By DAVE PERRY

June Rowe's request for an opinion of the Sam from an owner refers. I purchased a Sam in December 1989 and must have been among one of the first to receive a machine. MGT have had one or two teething problems with the machine and in some ways the computer press have been very generous towards MGT. This said, all new machines have initial problems and MGT are putting things right by issuing a new ROM to all existing owners free of charge and also sending out updated DOS as the disc commands are improved.

To date there has not been a flood of software specifically for the SAM, ie. programs that take advantage of all that memory, colours, sound etc, but hopefully the next couple of months should see some interesting releases. This particular letter is written on the SAM using Tasword Two (Coupe version) although I personally prefer the DTP suite of programs by PCG who have informed me will be releasing this for the SAM by the end of this month once they have checked the program with the updated ROM. I have also been informed that Gilsoft will be releasing a SAM version of the PAW and hopefully this will support disc access which will mean that we could see much larger adventures than those written for the Spectrum and with decent graphics as the SAM can support ST quality graphics, in fact I am assured that ST screens can be read by the Art Package supplied on disc with the machine (the Art Package was written for the SAM by Bo Jangeborg of Fairlight fame) I haven't actually done it myself but I have seen pictures of ST screens on the SAM in various magazines.

With regard to the widely advertised Spectrum compatibility MGT supply an emulator with the machine which you load first followed by your Spectrum program. I have found that this particular routine gives about 50% compatibility with my Spectrum software library. The result with regard to adventures was very poor, in fact only two from my extensive library would load and run correctly and it was at this stage that the machine was in dire peril of being shipped back to MGT with a request for a refund. It was then that my subscription to Format came to my rescue as they printed a method of copying the Spectrum ROM and loading this into the SAM - lo and behold, virtually 100% compatibility with my software library, all adventures now loaded and ran, in fact the only game in my collection that won't run in Bombjack and no doubt someone will find a fix for this sooner or later. My next problem was to obtain disc access to all my software as having the speed of a disc it was infuriating waiting for tape to load. Once again Format came to my rescue with a routine in the letters page explaining how to transfer the Spectrum ROM routine to disc and to transfer 48K software to disc. A single DD disc will hold 16 48k snapshots and loading time is seconds as opposed to 4 or 5 minutes. I understand that in the same way that the Spectrum can be emulated on the SAM it should also be possible to emulate other Z80 based machines thus giving access to an even larger existing software base. It just needs those with a better understanding of how the machines work to come up with the necessary routines. I feel that the SAM is an ideal upgrade for any Spectrum user who doesn't want to lose the use of their extensive software library built up over the years. I further believe that if like me, you are of an impatient nature then a disc drive is an essential add on. Hopefully though the SAM will not be just confined to being a Spectrum clone but will become a machine to rival the 16 bit ST and Amiga, this will, however, depend on software support.

I hope my disjointed thoughts may be of some use to fellow Probe subscribers. Oh! one further comment about the SAM for the lazy, or like me useless, games player it is possible at the push of a button to enter Multiface pokes giving infinite lives etc. Format can be contacted at 34 Bourton Rd, Gloucester, GL4 0LE. c/o Bob Brenchley.

(I would like to thank, also, PHIL GLOVER who kindly sent in an article on the SAM COUPE and also wrote directly to June.....Mandy)

WELCOME TO DUNGEON

By THE GRUE!

PART TWO

About mid 1977 came the first major addition to Zork, this was the Frigid river section and was designed by Marc Blank. The river section still remains almost unchanged in Zork1 but the main problem they encountered was a new concept of Marc's, that of a vehicle for a player to travel about in. These were in effect mobile rooms and required vast changes with the verbs, objects and rooms as interpreted by the parser. The people playing Zork as usual tried to manipulate the boat in anyway possible, although the code for the boat was never designed for use outside of the river section, some carried the deflated boat to the reservoir trying to sail across in it. Eventually the boat was allowed to be used in the reservoir but the general problems always remained. The boat, due mainly to the way they had implemented its design turned into a bag of holding and players could put virtually anything they wanted into the boat and carry it around, even if the weight of the contents exceeded what the player was allowed to carry. How the player achieved this was the boat being two objects, a deflated boat and an inflated boat. The inflated boat held any items the player had put into it, the deflated boat was carried around by the player, the items put within it disappeared in this state, re-appearing when the player once again inflated the boat.

By now Zork was about 4-6 weeks old and still was only a small game, only about half the size of the final mainframe version. Further additions arrived over the next 4 weeks, Marc and Dave asked Bruce to design a nasty section for the game, what he came up with was the coal mine section. This later was changed due to popular demand for his original maze in the coal mine was even worse than what eventually appeared in Zork1. Everyone agreed that his maze was a fine example of making things hard by making them tedious.

The volcano section was yet another vehicle idea of Marc's and forced them once and for all to use a better concept of the time element within the game. Up until now the boat and the balloon had moved mostly on their own and now with the volcano section requiring the use of explosives and fuses, Marc designed a clock daemon which would process the events that would not happen until a fixed number of moves had elapsed. This clock handled all movements of the vehicles, the fuse and the lantern burning out. It also handled the mysterious gnomes that appeared if a player got trapped in the upper reaches of the volcano by forgetting to tie his balloon up, after a few moves a gnome would appear offering a player the chance of freedom in exchange for a treasure he had previously collected. The main reason for putting the gnome in the game was amazing. The player couldn't save his position. This gave the player an opportunity to continue playing even if they made a mistake.

As with the boat the new concept of using explosives caused a few minor hitches when the player used the explosives in the wrong place. As most people who have played Zork II know, if you use the explosives in the correct place and fail to get out in time, 20,000 tons of rock land on your head, this also happened if you used the explosives in the wrong place which, if you were up the tree in the forest, didn't make any sense at all. No further additions were made for a few months but improvements continued. It was at this point that they gave way to requests/demands for a copy of Zork, when they were given an account on a TUPS-20 machine on ARFAnet. They set to work making the adjustments to the software, this enabled them to make many copies and soon a mailing list developed so Zork owners could get updates when

they appeared. One of the things that had appeared in the game was the use of graphics! and that from a company which for years had stated "Graphics should be put where the sun never shines". At last the player could visibly view a Zorkaid coin, note or stamp, even down to the portrait of J. Pierpoint Flathead, chairman of the local bank.

It was also now they decided to try and protect the source of the game as there was no protection at all on the computers in MIT, if there had been we might not have seen Zork at all. The sources were kept in encrypted form and the team had to keep patching the system to try and protect the directory where the sources were kept. This eventually failed when a system hacker broke in and was able to modify the running operating system. He was also smart enough to figure out how they had patched the system, all he had to do then was to decrypt the source, this he managed to do and soon this hacker had a readable copy of the source. This hacker was to feature in the Zork saga again at a later date.



The main reason players couldn't save their position was that the first method used took several hundred thousand bytes for each save, this on a time-sharing system was too excessive. Marc by now had invented a new way that dramatically cut the size down, the problem was any new rooms or objects added to the old game would corrupt existing saved files, still it did make the game easier to play.

In the autumn of '77 two major additions were made to the game, mainly because Marc decided to take a break from his medical studies. The bit in Zork II with the magic bucket, cakes and robot was added, this Infocom called their Alice in Wonderland section. The robot was Infocom's first "Actor" an object that could perform the same tasks a player could. The first version of fighting was also added at this time, Dave Lebling who was a fan of the Dungeons and Dragons game and didn't like the way a D&D player was killed off thinks in a very predictable way. In the original version you killed the troll by throwing a knife at him, he would then catch the knife and gleefully eat it, he would also do this with any item you threw at him and then haemorrhage as a result. Dave added the D&D style of fighting, with each different weapon being given a different strength, wounds, unconsciousness and finally death. Each creature had its own set of messages so a fight between the troll and the thief would be very different.

It was time for the elusive hacker to make a reappearance. He had by now decided to translate Zork to FORTRAN. They had always thought this would be impossible for him to do as fortran was so very different from MBL and much more complicated. He eventually got a working version and now it was in fortran it could be run on almost anything. Unfortunately they had decided to change the name of the game from Zork to Dungeon. Zork they thought was too much of a nonsense word and not descriptive of the game. When the hacker released his version to the DEC users group Dungeon was the name he used and that's the reason why Dungeon is so similar to Zork, it is basically the same game except it was the stolen and not yet complete version of Zork. The reason they changed the name back to Zork was a certain company who decided that it had trademark rights to the name Dungeon because of certain games it sold. Marc, Dave and Co didn't agree and MIT soon had some very expensive lawyers on a retainer who also agreed with them. They were encouraged by this and did the right thing...changed the name back to ZORK!.....TO BE CONTINUED

PAWS for Thought
by Larry Horsfield



Hello there! I'm back after a lay-off of umpteen months. First of all, I'd like to thank all those of you who wrote to ask me to continue with these articles. I've been very busy working on my latest adventure, the 4 part "Axe of Kolt", but as it nears completion, I have managed to find some time to write this article.

In this article, I thought I would detail one method of changing the location description when you perform an action such as opening or closing a door. To do this you need to use a flag to check whether the door is open or closed, and I will use flag 11. As the door starts off closed, let's say that if flag 11 is zero, the door is closed, and if it is not zero the door is open. The location description can be whatever you want, but it must look something like this:

"You are in a small room. The walls, floor and ceiling are bare stone and the only thing that breaks the monolony is the door in the west wall, which is " Note that there is a blank space after the last word. This is needed as we are going to tag on one of two messages, according to whether the door is closed or open. These messages are simply:

Message 1: "open. "; Message 2: "closed. "

Note that these messages should also have a blank space after the full stop, especially if you are including a "LET 53 64" line in Process Table 1 in order to print object lists as valid sentences.

To actually print these two messages on screen, you must insert two entries in Process Table 1 using the star and underline characters, i.e. "* _". If you screenprint Process Table 1 (PT1 from now on), you will see that there are two existing "* _" entries. These control the way the objects are printed on screen. The two entries we are going to insert need to appear BEFORE these existing two entries, so when you go to insert the first entry, you should type "I * _ 0". This will ensure that it is inserted as the first "* _" entry in the table. The next one will be "I * _ 1". So, using flag 11 as the check flag, the two entries required in PT1 are as follows:

```
* _ 0 AT 0 ZERO 11 MES 1
* _ 1 AT 0 NOTZERO 11 MES 2
```

You will see immediately that I have used MES instead of MESSAGE. This is because we do NOT need a NEWLINE below the location description.

Now for the Response Table (RT) entries to actually open and close the door. Of course, the words OPEN and CLOSE should be inserted as verbs and DOOR as a noun, with SHUT as a synonym of CLOSE if you wish. The two entries, in their simplest form, will be thus:

```
OPEN DOOR AT 0 ZERO 11 SYSMESS 15 PAUSE 75 SET 11 DESC
SHUT DOOR AT 0 NOTZERO 11 SYSMESS 15 PAUSE 75 CLEAR 11 DESC
```

What, however, if you type in OPEN DOOR when the door is open, or SHUT DOOR when it is shut? First of all, you need to insert a new SYSMESS, e.g. SYSMESS 60 "The door is already " (not forgetting the blank space.) You will need two new RT entries, which will be:

```
OPEN DOOR AT 0 NOTZERO 11 SYSMESS 60 MESSAGE 2 DONE
SHUT DOOR AT 0 ZERO 11 SYSMESS 60 MESSAGE 1 DONE
```

So, if the player types in OPEN DOOR when flag 11 is notzero, he/she will get the response "The door is already open."

We will also need two RT entries to stop the player being able to move west from location 0 if the door is closed. Say that going west takes you to loc'n 1, then you should amend the Movement Table accordingly, i.e. Loc'n 0: W 1 ; Loc'n 1: E 0 ; You must, of course, insert location 1 in the location table (silly me for not mentioning it!). Insert a new message, e.g. MESSAGE 3 "Thud! You walk into the closed door!" The two RT entries now required, if you haven't already worked 'em out for yourself, are:

```
W * AT 0 ZERO 11 MESSAGE 3 DONE
E * AT 1 ZERO 11 MESSAGE 3 DONE
```

If you want to be able to open and close the door from BOTH locations, and indeed, do location 1 the same way as location 0,

with the "open." and "closed." messages at the end, you will need to replace the AT 0 line in the "*_" entries in PT1, and the OPEN/CLOSE DOOR entries in the RT, with the line ATLT 2. Note that if the locations you are using are, for example, locations 6 and 7, you would need to insert two lines, ATGT 5 and ATLT 8. Incidentally, the reason that the above RT entries will be implemented rather than the entries in the Movement Table is that PAW always scans the Response Table, and Process Tables 1 & 2, before the Movement Table, thus if it finds an RT entry such as either one of the above, it will carry out the entry and ignore the movement table. Of course, if flag 11 is NOTZERO, then the RT entries are ignored and the Movement table entries are implemented.

Well, that's it for this first article. I hope it has been of some use to PAW users who read "Probe". I used to finish my articles with "If you have any problems with PAW programming....", but seeing as how nobody bothered writing, (apart from one or two of course - Hi Gordon!) I won't bother any more! My next article will detail how you can have a stairway (for example) consisting of as many locations as you want, but which in reality is only ONE location! It's all done with one flag!



BUGS AND AMUSING RESPONSES

AN EVERYDAY TALE OF A SEEKER OF GOLD

By JIM STRUTHERS (with consent of John Wilson!)

The aim of this game is to defeat a dragon called Smog and get a casket of gold and deposit it in a chest in your house. While playing it I became stuck at the part where you have to kill Smog, so I saved to play again. But later when I tried to load my saved position which was a few moves away from Smog, after crossing the river what do you think I saw just lying in the middle of the road? A headless dragon, a cask of gold and a clay pipe! I didn't remember dropping any of those things and I hadn't yet killed Smog! I tried taking the gold back to my house to put in the chest. I tried every input I could think of - Put coins in chest, empty casket into chest but all to no avail. So I examined the casket to get a better idea of the input. Result - I had no casket! Whatever happened to it? I decided that, as I was nearing the end of the game, I would check my score. Result - "You have scored nothing on the gold meter!". I was at a loss so I wrote to John Wilson at Zenobi explaining my predicament. He promptly replied (as he always does), asking if I had been supping Brown Ale! but seriously he thought that the database might have become corrupted and asked me to send him the faulty saved position so he could check it. I waited for his reply. Back it came - strange happenings in Smogland! John had discovered something even odder. Three times he loaded it in and got something different. He found that Bulbo had in his backpack, a headless Dragon and a large spiders web with the obligatory spider in the top left-hand corner! Then on another go in a part of the adventure where an eagle carries you to the top of a cliff and deposits you in its nest you are supposed to find a small eaglet. However, John found - a small mound of sand!! John has advised me to market my saved tape just so that people can try to find out what they can conjure up next! However, in the meantime, if anyone has seen the head of a Dragon knocking about can they let me know. Also if anyone knows who did the dastardly deed and killed him while I was asleep would they please own up!

LEGEND OF THE SWORD

An extract of my conversation with the Atari ST following the input of a dirty, naughty swear-word (I just got frustrated, honestly!)

Atari - Don't swear, you are supposed to set an example to your men.

Mandy - Hello!

Atari - Hello! My name's computer whizz bang! How do you do?

Mandy - Help.

Atari - Work it out for yourself!

Mandy - Oh thank you!

Atari - You're welcome!

Mandy - Oh (piddle) off!

Atari - With my computer arm, I'm clipping you around the ear.

Mandy - No you are not!

Atari - That's alright then.

Mandy - I'm fed up!

Atari - If it's the cliff you want to ascend, say so!

Mandy - Yes.

Atari - I thought as much.

Mandy - No you didn't!

Atari - I was just checking!

Mandy - Oh go away!

Atari - Go where?

Mandy - Get out of here!

Atari - You can't do that!

Mandy - Yes I can!

Atari - Don't be so damn cheeky!



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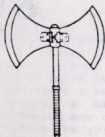
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...What more do we need to say?

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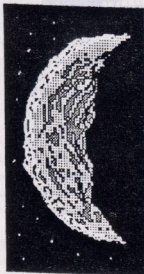
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All the letter had said was ... 'Please attend the studio at 8.00pm on the 19th of this month and once there, make your way to the 'GREEN ROOM' to await further instructions.' You would have thought that the producers of a nationally televised show such as 'A.O.T.Y.Q.' would have been a shade more explicit in their instructions, but no that was all it said. So, with just a slight case of butterflies quivering in your stomach, you set off for the studios and that infamous 'GREEN ROOM'

ATARI ST

NOTES

Whilst your sole intention was initially just to compete in the television game show, you might just find that winning it was more than you bargained for, so if things should get out of hand just remember that home and your loved ones are just through the 'portal' ... that is if you can locate it and figure out how to use it to return to the 'real' world.

This game will accept all the standard commands such as EXAMINE THE RIVER and also OPEN THE GATE, though it will also accept such complex commands as TAKE THE CUSHION AND EXAMINE IT. However normal VERB/NOUN input should suffice in most cases.

To load the game just insert the disk into your computer and then 'double-click' on the icon labelled ADVENTUR.PRG or if you prefer, select the READ ME icon to display a list of acceptable 'commands'. Do NOT use the game disk to save your game positions on, instead use a freshly formatted disk.

Should the task in hand prove too much then a set of tips can be obtained by sending a stamped S.A.E. to ... "Sheesh, I'm Stuck", 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL12 7NX ... it would also help to grovel just a shade.



THE ADVENTURER



LETTERS

I was interested to read the correspondence from Frank Gray, who is one of my FSF Adventures customers, regarding the new 128K Spectrum +2A computer. When I first started selling MAGNETIC MOON, I became very alarmed at the number of cassettes that were returned because they would not load. At the time, I had an ordinary 48K ZX+ Spectrum which I'd bought second hand, but the datacorder was quite new. I had, and still do, make a point of test-loading ALL the adventures I'd sent out, so I was very concerned when the tapes were sent back. I phoned Tom Frost for advice and he said that the customers who sent the tapes back probably had the 128K +2. He told me that this machine was a notoriously bad loader, and that he had encountered the same problem. The easiest way to get around the problem was to get a +2 and do the copying on that! I phoned all the adventurers who had sent back the tapes and, sure enough, they all had the 128K+2!

Following the advice of Allan Phillips, I decided to try and get one of the pre-Amstrad 128K ZX+ Spectrums, which I did, for £50. This machine has proved to be extremely reliable, and I do all my work and copying on it. I eventually swapped my 48K for a friends 128K +2, and started to experience all the loading and saving problems that were associated with this machine. Now I only use it to test the newly-copied games - after all, if it'll load on the +2, it'll load into ANYTHING - and play the odd game on if I've got the time.

In my humble opinion, any 48K Spectrum owner who is contemplating upgrading to the 128K machine should ignore the +2 and try to get one of the pre-Amstrad ZX+ 128K Spectrums. A company called E.E.C.Ltd advertised in some of the Spectrum magazines, and they offer the 128K ZX+ Spectrum for about £90 (although this may be for a computer that has been reconditioned). Otherwise, you can certainly see them advertised in FOR SALE columns, etc, and even - as I did the other week - in a car boot sale!

Having said all that, one does wonder why a 48K owner would want to upgrade to a 128K machine, especially if they only want to play adventure games on the computer. The majority of Spectrum adventures are 48K only, there being very few for the 128K only. As my customers know, all my adventures are available in both 48K and 128K versions, and I think it is silly not to use the vast amount of extra memory to expand and enhance a 48K adventure if the author has a 128K computer. When I sent MAGNETIC MOON to Mike Gerrard for review, he sent back the 128K version, saying that he would review the 48K version only, "...as that's the machine most people will have." (his words). My sales have proved Mike wrong as approximately two thirds of my sales have been for the 128K versions of my adventures. Mind you, the 128K Magnetic Moon was almost identical to the 48K version in terms of actual gameplay, I just used the extra memory to beef up location descriptions, and to inject a bit of humour into the adventure, especially in the spaceship at the start of the game.

In STARSHIP QUEST and my new adventure, THE AXE OF KOLT, I have used the 128K's additional memory to expand and enhance the adventure. I have found all too frequently that as I have been writing the 48K version of an adventure, the ideas I've had won't all fit into the database. I therefore then do a 128K version into which all the ideas I had WILL fit in!

LARRY HORSFIELD, Charlton, London.

(Anyone who has experienced the dreaded loading problems of the Spectrum +2A need despair no longer. Read on for the answers to your prayers!.....Mandy)

I was under the impression that anyone who had a Spectrum +2 or Spectrum +2A knew about the loading quirks of these machines, but from recent correspondence in Probe this is obviously not the case. The solution to the vast majority of loading difficulties with these computers is to invest in the Azimuth Head Alignment Tape from Interceptor Software, Mercury House, Calleva Park, Aldermaston, Berkshire. The price is about £8.99 and comes complete with screwdriver and cut-out pointer.

You should now follow the instructions that come with the tape and align the head to the standard setting. At this setting most commercially produced tapes will load, but if you think all tapes will load at this setting, I'm afraid you are in for a disappointment. So what do you do with the tapes that will not load at this setting? No, don't throw them in the nearest bin. Load the tape into the machine as usual and follow these instructions:-

- 1) Rewind the tape.
 - 2) Press PLAY and PAUSE together on the tape deck.
 - 3) Insert screwdriver in the hole on the tape deck and turn the screw about an eighth of a turn, clockwise.
 - 4) Select LOAD on main menu and press ENTER.
 - 5) Release PAUSE and try to load the tape into the computer. If it loads OK, if not, go back to figure 1 and try again.
- Keep turning the screw a bit at a time and try to load the tape. If still no success try loading the tape in 48K mode i.e. LOAD"" and try again.

If there is a break in the loading bars as you try to load then you are turning the screw the wrong way so return the screw to its original position and start turning it anti-clockwise instead. If the tape appears to be loading but crashes at the end, try making minute adjustments to the screw.

I can assure you that with these simple instructions the vast majority of tapes will load. I have about 200 tapes and out of these only about 3 will not load, but I had great difficulty loading them on the old original 48K Spectrum anyway.

JACK HIGHAM, Fearnhead, Warrington.

(Many thanks, Jack, for the information which I am sure will prove invaluable to +2 and +2A owners. I would also like to thank CLAIRE DYARD of Aubrives, France who also wrote in advising the use of the Azimuth Head Alignment Tape for these loading difficulties. Claire also added a warning to make sure you don't stop the tape with the screwdriver still in the hole!.....Mandy)

=====

A belated thanks for sending me the copies of Probe for this year as requested. These are my excuse for not thanking you earlier! I've been too busy reading up every single article several times in the hope of learning mainly what people judge to be a good adventure. As you can see from the enclosed article, I know absolutely nothing about adventuring, and, dare I say it? - had thought that people who played adventures of the typical commercial variety must have one hell of a streak of masochism in them! Mind you, I have only ever bought one commercial adventure in my life, and that was THE PAWN, which suffered an ignominious fate. CASTLE BLACKSTAR came free with a sub to 8000 Plus Magazine, and as an amateur programmer, I must say that the illogicality of the game grated too much, - like two pieces of coarse emery cloth being rubbed together! Yuggghh. Who ever thought of

finding oil at the bottom of a well, and that same oil being fit to put in a lamp and burn! Well, well - one lives and learns. (Sorry about the pun.)

Of course, my particular machine does not lend itself very well to graphics, especially coloured graphics, but text only adventures can be presented quite decently on it. My local software dealer has been at me for some time to produce a decently packaged adventure for the Amstrad PCW's as he says he has lots of enquiries for adventures; however, that sort of packaging requires capital which one is prepared to gamble, and I am not all that sure of my capabilities in producing what the adventurer wants, and that is what counts.

So, Mandy, I won't take any more of your valuable time, coz I've nearly read all of the May issue and I do not wish to delay the next one in June. I've been wondering...? is your Mike Gerrard the same one who writes for the Amstrad PCW on adventuring??

ROY MILLIKEN, Long Eaton, Nottingham.

(I think that the two adventures you first tried were, perhaps not the very best ones for a beginner to adventures to tackle. LORDS OF TIME which is available with RED MOON and PRICE OF MAGIC from Level 9 under the title of TIME AND MAGIC and available for the Amstrad PCW would have been one of those I would recommend for a beginner as it can be tackled in easy stages with the problems getting progressively harder. Perhaps other readers could recommend other adventures for your machine which would be ideal for you. Yes, our Mike Gerrard is the columnist in Amstrad PCW and also writes excellent adventure columns in many other magazines.....Mandy)

I found the article "No This Is Not The End" very encouraging, very optimistic when everyone else is pessimistic and I agree heartily with you. In the March issue of Probe, there was the answer to the "Guess Who This Is?" of February. Fine, but I've got a small problem: where can I find this "Guess Who This Is?" section? I know it sounds like in an adventure but I'm unable to find the article and the photography! I searched the contents thoroughly and found nothing. I even searched through the January issue of Probe but without any result! Am I dense or... did I get a BUGGED copy of Probe or... did you put the "Guess Who?" section in another magazine (this would be a wonderful mistake!) or... or... I don't know but I'd like to have the answer... and to see the photo!

CLAIRE DYARD, Aubrives, France.

(Oooops! Yes, you did get a BUGGED copy of Probe, Claire, I put the "Guess Who?" section on a separate sheet to enclose with the February issue and obviously forgot to put the sheet in your copy. The missing photograph is now on its way to you with my apologies. If anyone else had a BUGGED copy then please let me know.....Mandy)

I read your article in the April/May issue of Confidential Magazine with interest (They reproduced the NO THIS ISN'T THE END article from the March issue of Probe....Mandy) and I must admit with great agreement on many of your comments. As one of the 28% of those aged between 30 and 40 years old, I have worked my way steadfastly over the years through many adventures starting with the humble INCA CURSE on

the 48K Spectrum and worked through BBC adventures, Infocom adventures on the CPC6128 and finally to the Amiga and solving such games as DUNGEON MASTER, FUTURE WARS etc. I too feel there is a great absence of good adventures for the mighty Amiga especially from English companies. I must admit too to a liking for RPG's and especially the ULTIMA and BARDS TALE games (is Ultima V available on the ST?). However, as you say, there are very many great games available for 48K's worth of Spectrum, what indeed is happening to 1MB of Amiga just waiting to be fully utilised!?!?

J.SIMPSON, Workington, Cumbria.

(Ultima V is now available for the Atari ST after a rather long wait. May I suggest that you try THE HOLY GRAIL by Jim MacBrayne which was reviewed in the April issue of Probe which makes full use of the 1MB memory of the Amiga. It is an advanced level adventure and should keep you happy for quite some time.....Mandy)

=====

I really enjoyed Alan Davis' article in the May issue and agree absolutely on the aim of adventuring, to quote him "to indulge in Adventure to explore strange and exciting new places, to do strange and exciting new things; to take risks and pursue lost causes against impossible odds; and even, now and then, to solve the odd puzzle, if you must.....". That is exactly how I feel about adventures! It was Alan Davis, by the way, who wrote THE GOLDEN CHALICE as I mentioned before, that was the first adventure I ever typed in and the first I ever played. I was also interested in Hugh Walker's letter too - didn't realise he had written WARLOCK. I remember typing that one in too - eventually, I stopped typing in programs though, as I spent so much time doing that I never had time to play them!

Re: Tony Fleck's letter in the Help Wanted section (May Probe), I also am stuck in THE HERMITAGE, in exactly the same problem. So if anyone does write in, will you please print it in the mag?

Thanks for the solution you sent for THE LOST CITY but unfortunately it was for a different game than the one I have but the good news is that the one I wanted has been serialised in Probe for the last two issues (June Rowe's solution) and thanks to that I have now finished it - I was going completely crazy trying to get that blessed dust from the boat. I mentioned the other solution because it looks like a good game and I wondered if you have any idea if it's still available, if its for the Spectrum etc? If I can't buy it then perhaps I can include it in my list for Paul's Swap Club. It is the one where you start in the depths of the jungle, but I'm afraid there's no name on it so I don't know who's solution it is.

MARGO PORTEOUS, Spondon, Derby.

(If anyone comes up with the help on HERMITAGE I will print it in Probe with pleasure. If anyone does have any information on the other adventure THE LOST CITY I would be very grateful if you could let me know so I can keep the solution files updated.....Mandy)

=====

Having just received my first Adventure Probe, it was with some trepidation that I read the first page, but from then on I was totally hooked. I haven't been adventuring very long but since my children bought me the TOLKEIN TRILOGY for Christmas I have gone on to buy

more, and now have a fair supply. I read with particular interest the letter from Sue Roseblade (February issue). I am glad that I'm not the only female over 25 to be interested in Adventuring. All my friends think I've gone totally nuts and even I was beginning to wonder! Mind you, reading some of the articles I'm not sure that we're NOT all totally bananas. Expect to hear from me again.

SHARON HARWOOD, Southend-on-Sea, Essex

In the April issue of Probe, Mr Steve McLaren wrote an article which included the following passage, "There must be a lot of people holding adventures when they have completed them, so why don't they sell them?" This got me thinking, is there a lot of people who have adventures lying in some cupboard, or box, or a shelf. Adventures they have played and will never return to. I believe this to be true so why not give others a chance to play them? Could it be that some folk are just natural hoarders, or could it be that someday they expect to return to these games (knowing in the back of their minds they never will) or could it be that some folk just like to have what others can't? I am not sure of the reasons behind such hoardings, however, someone, somewhere must have these gems that we are all after. I admit myself that I have quite a few games lying. Most I haven't played yet and some I have. Why don't I sell some then? Especially as I can hardly move on my computer desk for games getting in the way. I do sell some but could probably sell a lot more and give others a chance to play. So I reckon we should all search amongst the dust and cobwebs and have a national sell or swap day once a year for adventures. All Probe subscribers can advertise for free in the In-Touch section.

JIM STRUTHERS, Blyth, Northumberland.

(Many adventurers do, indeed, sell or swap their completed games for others but there are many, myself included, who get rather sentimental over an adventure they have enjoyed. I look upon them rather as a good book and will keep them to play once again in the future and I DO play them again. I recently played LORDS OF TIME once more just to recapture the excitement of my early days of adventuring. But, for those who would like to sell or swap their completed games I think a National Sell or Swap Day could be very useful.....Mandy)

I really enjoyed the last issue of Probe but I'm sure that doesn't surprise you. I do foresee a problem with Probe, but I really don't see how you can overcome it. The name Adventure Probe makes it clear that it is without any doubt for adventurers, but out of the 48 pages only 8 were devoted to hints, tips, serialised solutions etc. A large amount of adventurers would not call this a fair amount of direct help, the obvious answer seemed to be that some other article/s should be dropped or shortened to give more room for direct help. I decided to take an in-depth look at the April issue with this in mind, here are my own personal conclusions.

The Editorial is always full of witty remarks and interesting subjects! The news of Allan and Anita Phillips baby was really lovely. I love the Editorial and look forward to it every month, there is no way that this can be tampered with (excellent, Mandy!) Next was the Review section which is top class, and the review of WIZARDS TOWER was of great interest to me. I reviewed this adventure for SYNTAX and in

my opinion it is an outstanding adventure and is excellent value for money!!, but in Probe it is ripped to shreds by Merc who hates it. It is really interesting how much different people can vary in their opinions of games, this section of the magazine is a MUST!! At this point I must give a special mention to the excellent article Kartoon Klues, the drawings by Krazy Kez Gray were superb (more please!!) By this time I had arrived at page 28 which of course is the start of the Letters pages. 12 pages of letters must be too much? This must be where a couple of pages could be saved I thought as I started this section. The letters section was VERY lively indeed! The letters on the subject of Piracy were very interesting and raised some extremely original points on what constituted piracy. The letter from Linda Wright was very nice indeed, it is a pity that she will not be writing anymore adventures.

You will have guessed by now that I was unable to find anything that I thought could have been shortened or left out, without any doubt Probe gets better with every issue. I would like to see a couple more pages dealing with direct help but how is this possible I haven't got a clue. May I congratulate you once again on making Probe such an excellent magazine.

GRAHAM WHEELER, Bath, Avon.

(You raise some interesting points, Graham. It is always difficult to make sure that every aspect of adventuring is covered and perhaps more readers would like to see more direct help given in Probe. I think the best thing to do is to find out what all of you feel about Probe with some kind of questionnaire so that everyone can have a chance to express their views of the various sections of Probe. It was too late to organise one for this issue but I will see what can be done as usual as I possibly can.....Mandy)

=====

What's all this I've been reading in the latest edition of Probe?! A Grue! being Sweet, Cuddly and Fluffy!! I think Dicon Peeke is mistaken, he's probably confused me with the black cat I've just eaten...cough! cough! splutter... Damn those fur balls get everywhere. As for your Editorial! How on earth can you believe that anyone who attended the Bugblatters Ball could think The Grue good-looking! Honestly, anyone would appear good-looking if you'd just spent four hours drinking in a pub.

Now I did enjoy the article by Alan Davis and I felt myself agreeing with his comments, adventures must be more than just puzzle solving otherwise we'd all be content doing the daily crossword.

Readers may like to know that the Hellhound I sent in search of the Wayfarer must have found him as a huge steaming sole recently turned up on a small outcrop near the Grue cave. If you thought the Yeti was only a myth, you're wrong. BIG FOOT is alive and well!

I know the answers to the Guess Who This Is?! Pic A - Ronald Bigs. Pic B - Bella Lugosi. Pic C - Bill Oddie. Pic D - Rudolph Hess. Pic E - Pancho Villa.

THE GRUE!

(I wouldn't cross swords with The Wayfarer if I were you, Grue! I asked him what size shoes he takes and he told me they were size ELEVEN! Not only that but he is 6 feet 4 inches tall!.....Mandy)

=====

HAPPY FOURTH BIRTHDAY ADVENTURE PROBE! Quite a few important events have happened during the month of June over the decades, apart from the wondrous birth of our favourite adventure magazine. I have been delving into the archives and can reveal that:

Marilyn Monroe was born 64 years ago. 77 years ago "The Times" reported that the Kings horse was injured in the Derby. (At the end of the item, they also added that Suffragette Emily Davison was killed). The Arab-Israeli 6 day war started 23 years ago. The worlds richest private citizen (John Paul Getty) died in 1976. 27 years ago, the Rolling Stones appeared for the first time on TV (The group was advised to get rid of Mick Jagger if they ever hoped to become stars.) 61 years ago, Oxford won the first ever Boat Race. In 1922, Judy Garland was born. 32BC. saw the death of Alexander the Great. Jane Russell was born 69 years ago. (Howard Hughes is supposed to have said "There are two good reasons why men will go to see her"). In 1746 Bonnie Prince Charlie escaped to Skye (dressed in a frock and apron). Gone with the Wind was published in 1936 and finally, on June 25th 1948, I was born. I also share my birthday with George Orwell but he is a little older, arriving in 1903.

So happy birthday Probe, happy birthday me and may we both go on enjoying each other for years to come. (If anybody considers that this letter is an outrageous attempt by me to invite a huge number of Birthday cards, then please feel free to contribute.)

The May Probe. Beautiful! Letters pages, superb. Oh deep joy. Welcome back clean un-cluttered straight forward printed letters. Desk Top Publishing? I think Tony Bridge summed it up perfectly.

I also think Tony went a little over the top with his "if you can't buy a Bugatti because they don't build them, then it's okay to steal one" analogy. If he had said "it's okay to build your own (i.e. copy)" then I would have agreed with him. On the subject of the infocom copyright message, I am not a lawyer but as all infocoms come in sealed boxes and "that" message is inside the box, I cannot see how their claim could possibly stand up in court when you cant see it until after you have bought the product and opened it. I have bought my infocoms and will happily sell them again when I have finished with them.

Guess what? When Probe is Five years old, then it'll be my Birthday again! Okay. Okay, I'm going.

BUB ADAMS, Welwyn Garden City, Herts.

I read the review for AGATHA'S FOLLY, and thought it sounded just right for me, but alas it is for the Spectrum and we own an Amstrad 6128. The same happened with THE SECRET OF LITTLE HODCOME. Please, please can anyone convert these games for the Amstrad. I am not a lover of the Space type adventure. Looking through the Zenobi Software list sometimes makes me wish we had bought a Spectrum instead of an Amstrad. Cries of "It's not fair" as I read Probe is getting on everyone's nerves. Are we the only one's who have an Amstrad I ask myself.

PATRICIA NAYLOR, Prescott, Merseyside.

(I sympathise with your problem, Patricia, but as has been said before in Probe, the authors just cannot justify the outlay of an Amstrad machine to convert their games as the resulting sales just wouldn't cover the costs. Good news though, some new Amstrad games are on the way and will be reviewed in Probe soon.....Mandy)



HELP WANTED



"Has anyone got any experience of fitting and using PC emulators like PC-Speed, PC-Ditto and Supercharger on the Atari ST? Any information at all would be much appreciated. Please contact:"

NEIL SHIPMAN, 1 Heath Gardens, Coalpit Heath, Bristol, BS17 2QT
Telephone 0454-773169

"Please could someone help me on SPACE QUEST (Amiga)? I am in the Cavern and there is a pool there. Is the pool of any use or should I somehow get in the pool? On the next screen there is two units emitting beams of light, how can I disrupt the beam please? Please someone help before I tear my hair out!"

STEVE McCLAREN, 6 Mere Gate, Margate, Kent.

"Could someone please help with with a problem in BEYOND ZORK? How do you get light to the Urgrue? I've got the magic mirrors but cannot get sunlight to reflect off them."

MATTHEW DODWELL, 10 Hurst Way, South Croydon, Surrey, CR2 7AF
Telephone 01 688 5632

"Could you please let me know if there is any literature I can purchase to help with my computer game HEROES OF THE LANCE? US Gold's helpline told me to contact Probe for help." If anyone can help "save Probe's reputation" by providing the aforementioned literature or an address then please contact:

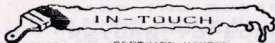
MRS J C ADAMS, Waterside Cottage, 5 Breakwater Rd, Bude, Cornwall.

"Could someone please help me with some clues for a couple of adventure games I have been playing. The first is TWIN KINGDOM VALLEY, I have lost the inlay card and am not quite sure what my goal is. I have got as far as the desert kings castle. I am unable to get the gold staff from the witch or the master-key from the dragon. I have also come across a dwarf with a diamond ring but cannot obtain it from him. My second problem is with PIRATE ADVENTURE by Scott Adams. I have got to Treasure Island, got the doubloons and deposited them in the flat and I have returned to Treasure Island but am unable to find any other locations to go to find the rest of the treasure. I do hope somebody can help me."

MRS SANDY WARWICK, 2 Rushton St, Lee Mill, Bacup, Lancs, OL13 0DP

"I wonder if someone out there can help me. I'm working on THE GOLDEN MASK and I'm stuck! I've been to Ella, killed her and broken the broom-stick, but I can't seem to do anything else there so I then teleport to the plains, go down into the labyrinth and find Ashheads as (clutching the mask). I have every item with me (or do I?) by going backwards and forwards. I have saved the game at this point and have systematically tried every item. By reading the scroll I have summoned Medusa. By throwing the curved stick I have knocked her out, but that's about it!! I don't want the solution, all I really want to know is whether I've missed something at Ella (Why is the caudron smelly?) or am I so thick that I'm just not going to complete this adventure without a lot of help? Oh God! save my sanity! My poor kids have been banished to the garden while "Mummy just has a go at getting Medusa to lift the spell!!"."

SHARON HARWOOD, 9 Brighton Ave, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 2QN



SOFTWARE WANTED

AMSTRAD CPC: SORCERER (Infocom) for sale or swap. Also SHADOWS OF MURDUR AND MINDSHADOW on cassette for £2.50 each.

JIM HAZLETT, 24 Walnut Close, Thornaby-on-Tees, Cleveland TS17 8NQ

AMSTRAD CPC: Second hand cassette games for sale from 75p each. For details please phone C.BURY on (0432) 274169.

AMSTRAD CPC: Discs for sale: GNOME RANGER, TIME AND MAGIC, SCAPEGHOST at 15 each. DRILLER + MATCHDAY II £6. FIRMWARE 158 £7. G.A.C. £8.

PETE SIMPSON, 5 Keistern Close, Leven Park, Yarm, Cleveland, TS15 9SX

AMSTRAD CPC: Software for sale or exchange: All on cassette: SEAS OF BLOOD, NEVER ENDING STORY, JEWELS OF BABYLON, THE BOGGIT, MYSTERY OF ARKHAM MANOR, TOP SECRET/MOUNTAINS OF KET, EMERALD ISLE. £2.50 each. SEABASE DELTA £2. NECRIS DOME, ESCAPE FROM KOSHIMA, FOREST AT WORLDS END £1.50 each.

AMSTRAD PC1512: 5.25" discs (IBM compatible). PERRY MASON; THE CASE OF THE MANDARIN MURDER £8. JEWELS OF DARKNESS TRILOGY £7.

Plus 50p postage for one or more adventures. If you wish to exchange please state what you require and what you have to offer.

KEN DEAN, 63 Elmhurst Ave, Gulton Broad, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 3AR.
Telephone 0502 566538

AMSTRAD CPC 464: Cassettes for sale: MESSAGE FROM ANDROMEDA, HEROES OF KARN, SUBSUNK, JEWELS OF BABYLON, MINDSHADOW.

MSX: Cassettes for sale: EMERALD ISLE, JEWELS OF DARKNESS (3 tapes), CASTLE BLACKSTAR, THE HOBBIT and CASTLE DRACULA £10 the lot inc P&P.

JIM STRUTHERS, 112 Disraeli St, Cowpen Quay, Blyth, Northumberland.

COMMODORE 64: Disks for sale: GEMSTONE WARRIOR £3. KNIGHT ORC £5. PHANTASIE III and POOLS OF RADIANCE £8 each.

JOY BIRLEY, Abergeraint, Criccieth, Gwynedd, LL52 0HT

SOFTWARE WANTED

AMIGA: Infocom adventures wanted: ZORK I, ZORK II, ZORK III, INFIDEL, PLANETFALL, WISHBRINGER and ENCHANTEK. Please write with price required to:

STEVE McLAREN, 6 Mere Gate, Margate, Kent.

COMMODORE 64: I am trying to obtain the following disk/cassette games and will pay a fair price: STATIONFALL, SORCERER, SPELLBREAKER, BALLYHOO, WITNESS, SUSPECT (all Infocom), DUNGEON ADVENTURE, SNOWBALL, RETURN TO EDEN (Level 9), DRAGONWORLD (Telarium), RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA. Please write with price required to:

JENNY WHEELER, 115 Hythe Cresc, Seaford, E Sussex, BN25 3TZ

AMSTRAD CPC: Adventures wanted: ADVENTURELAND, ASHKERON, AVON, BOOK OF THE DEAD, BRAINLESS, CASTLE DRACULA, CASTLE OF EAGLES, CIRCUS, CORRUPTION, DARK SCEPTRE, DEAD-ENDERS, DIE YOU VICIOUS FISH, JEKYLL AND HYDE, DRUIDS MOON, FEDERATION, FISH, FLASH BACK, HAMPSTEAD, HRH, INGRIDS BACK, JACK THE RIPPER, LAST BELIEVER, LOST LEGACY OF XIM, MAD JOCKS FAMILY, MALEVOLENCE, MANDRAGORE, MAYDAY, MISSION ONE, OLD SCORES, RETURN TO DOOM, RICK HANSON, ROYAL QUEST, SECRET OF ST BRIDES, SHREWSBURY KEY, SNOW QUEEN, VIDEOWORLD. Please write with price required. Also FOR SWAP OR SALE at £1.25 each: SEABASE DELTA. SUBSUNK. Has anybody got or knows of an EMULATOR that would allow Spectrum adventures to run on an Amstrad CPC? Any information etc gratefully received:

BOB ADAMS, 81 Uplands, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 7EH

HARDWARE FOR SALE: Commodore C128D with built in 1571 drive. Commodore MPS803 printer and Commodore Modem. RGB1 to RGB Converter, Manuals, dust covers and some software. Contact THE GRUE! if interested. (See telephone helpline page for address).

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If any Probe readers would like disc labels, help sheets and instructions making for their games (see ad for Asteroid in centre pages for example work) I produce them on an Apple Macintosh using Aldus PageMaker and then laser print. I could probably do an A6 advert (as per Asteroid Adventure) for £5. and for the same price I can produce 54 3.5" disc labels (the labels measure 66 x 47mm and come on A4 size sheets with each sheet containing 18 self-adhesive labels). Anyone wanting to make use of this service would have to supply a rough outline of their design. Complicated graphics should also be supplied, drawn with black ink on white paper - the graphics can then be "scanned" into the computer and re-sized to fit the rest of the artwork. Please contact:

JOHN URE, 6 Oak Ave, Runcorn Rd, Balsall Heath, Birmingham, B12 8QT
Telephone 021 449 7825

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VOLUNTEERS WANTED for expedition to the Flathead Mountains. Object: the search for evidence of bottomless pits purportedly filled in before Grues roamed the Empire. All treasures to be shared between successful party members. Waybread and lantern provided, but supply your own Grue repellent. No Frobs please. Apply to: Professor Ivor Fossil, Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, Rockville University, Rockville, Dakota.

=====
KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE CASTLE

JIM STRUTHERS, 112 Disraeli St. Cowpen Quay, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 1JB can offer help with the following Amstrad adventures: AFTERSHOCK, APACHE GOLD, BIG SLEAZE, BEERHUNTER, CASTLE BLACKSTAR, CITY FOR RANSOM, D.A.A., DRACULA, EMERALD ISLE, HEROES OF KARN, IMAGINATION, JEWELS OF BABYLON, HAUNTED HOUSE, MINDSHADOW, NEVER ENDING STORY, NOVA, RED MOON, QUEST FOR THE GOLDEN EGGCUP, SCARY TALES, SUBSUNK, SEABASE DELTA, RICK HANSON, CASE OF THE MIXED-UP SHYMER, FRANKENSTEIN, WEREWOLF, VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE, WINTER WONDERLAND, VILLAGE OF LOST SOULS, PANIC BENEATH THE SEA, ICHOR. And can also help on Spectrum adventures: BLACK KNIGHT, CANASTO REBELLION, CUSTERDS QUEST, VALKYRIE 17, QUEST FOR THE GOLDEN EGGCUP, BEHIND CLOSED DOORS 1 & 2, NIGHTWING and THE SECRET OF LITTLE HODCOME.

JACKIE HOLT, 13 Montague St, Bulwell, Nottingham, NG6 8EU offers help with the following Spectrum adventures: ADV 100, BORED OF THE RINGS, BULBU AND THE LIZARD KING, BLACK KNIGHT, BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, CRYSTAL QUEST, CASTLE OF THE SKULL LORD, CURSE OF SHALETH, CASTLE COLDITZ, CRYSTAL CAVERN, CANASTO REBELLION, THE CURSE, DOMES OF SHA, EARTHBOUND, ENCHANTED COTTAGE, ENERGEM ENIGMA, FOR YOUR THIGHS ONLY, FORTRESS OF KELER, FROM OUT OF A DARK NIGHT SKY, GOLDEN CHALICE, THE HERMITAGE, HOLIDAY TO REMEMBER, JACK AND THE BEANSTALK, MINDSHADOW, MANOR OF DOOM, MAHOWNIES LIGHT, NYTHYHEL, NOSFERATU, PEN AND THE DARK, REALITY HACKER, RED LION, THE SWAMP, SURVIVAL, VELNORS LAIR, WIZARDS WARRIOR and WEAVER OF HER DREAMS.

ROBIN MATTHEWS, 44 Fairwater Grove West, Llandaff, Cardiff, CF2 2JQ can help with ULTIMA I, II, III, IV, V & VI, WIZARDY I, II, III, IV & V. If writing please enclose a large S.A.E.

A-MAZE-ING ESCAPES
By RON RAINBIRD played on Atari 800XL
RETURN TO EDEN

TO ESCAPE DEATH AT START OF GAME

Go into cupboard, wear the Radsuit, get the Geiger Counter and compass, then go out and out again into the open air. Go east and dig, then Down, Down, Down, East and South, where you can sleep in a comfortable Cave, thereby escaping the death blast. When you awaken, go up, East and get the Shovel.

THE MAIZE MAZE

From River Bank North of River, go North, East, West and South; you can now recover items previously stolen by the bird. The go South to North Bank near Waterfall.

THE CORRIDORS OF POWER MAZE

From Reception Area after voting, go North, West, North, East into Council Chamber. To return go South, South, East, South into Reception Area.

SORCERER

THE INFAMOUS "GLASS" MAZE

First you must SLEEP before entering the Maze. Memorize the FWEEP spell four times, then cast FWEEP at yourself and renew whenever the spell dissolves in the Maze. Go East, North, East, South twice, West, Down, East twice, North twice, up twice, South and East to Hollow. The return journey is completely different because the Maze has been magically altered by your opponent. Go back into the Maze after solving the problem of getting the SWANZO scroll out of the Hollow (you cannot carry anything whilst a bat), but ensure that you keep a move ahead of the Dorn Beast. Return route after casting FWEEP spell on yourself again, West twice, South, East, down twice, West twice, up twice, North twice, Down, East (you should now need to renew the FWEEP spell on yourself), South, East, North, Down, West, South, West, Up, West. You should now be out of the Maze, but must wait until the FWEEP spell expires.

TEN LITTLE INDIANS

ROUTE FROM STATION TO GATEHOUSE

North, West, North, West, West. To return to Station go East, North, East, East.

ROUTE FROM STATION TO WHARF

North three times, then East twice. Examine and then go West, South. To return, go North after swimming.

THE TIME MACHINE

TO REACH THE HOUSE AT THE BEGINNING

Go North, North, West, South, then North to get Gloves.

DAVY JONES LOCKER

OBJECTS AND USES - BY ALF BALDWIN

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1. ROPE AND HOOK | Will fish up useful items from sea bed. |
| 2. SOCK | One-legged pirate would be glad of it. |
| 3. ELECTRIC EEL | Would serve as a torch battery. |
| 4. BIKE FRAME | The pump on it is all you need. |
| 5. RAZOR FISH | Shave with it. |
| 6. DINGHY | Inflate it with pump. |
| 7. SQUID | Mermaid will let you in for six quid. |
| 8. COMPUTER GAME | Playing it will help you answer old man's problem. |
| 9. PALM TREE | Read palm. |
| 10. SCALES | A cloak to breathe underwater. |
| 11. LITTLE DOG | Dogfish guard falls in love with it and they swim off together. |
| 12. SEA HORSE | Ride it over the sargasso. |
| 13. TRIANGLE | Powerful magnet. Mechanical sorter will put you on conveyor belt if carrying it. |
| 14. SHELL | Unexploded. Fire it from U-boat gun at treasure chest. |
| 15. LOBSTER | Powerful claws can cut cables. |
| 16. TUBS | Transport to reach power rooms. |
| 17. MUSSELS | Big muscles make you strong. |
| 18. BOTTLE | Cod liver oil will lubricate winch. |
| 19. WINCH | Turn it to point gun in right direction. |
| 20. GOLD CHALICE | Carry it and the mechanical sorter will escort you to commander of Alien ship. Gold is just what he needs to repair the ship. |

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS III

OBJECTS AND USES - BY ALF BALDWIN

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| GOBLIN GAZETTE | Points awarded for completing the crossword. Unfold it to read it. Roll it up to push the hammer off the shelf. |
| FELT-TIP PEN | Use it to fill in the crossword. Mark a cross on the bowl with it. |
| HAMMER | To crack the bowl and let some gas out. |
| BOOTS | Glued to the floor. Remove them so you can move. |
| MAIL | Throw it at the bird. |
| MATCH | To light the gas. |
| SCREWDRIVER | To remove the hinges from the door. |
| PUDDLE | Rust remover. |
| NIGHTSHIRT | Pull it down to avoid shocking the neighbours. If at first you don't succeed, keep trying. |



GETTING YOU STARTED

THE TEST

By DAVE EVANS played on Amstrad CPC6128

UNFASTEN PARACHUTE, INVENTORY, READ LETTER (note ref. no.), N, N, E, EXAM DOOR, EXAM BOX, PRESS BUTTON 3, PRESS BUTTON 7, PRESS BUTTON 1, PRESS BUTTON 9, E, SWITCH ON HEATER, N, UP, GET CANE, EXAM CANE, DOWN, S, PUT LETTER IN SLIT, LIGHT LETTER WITH ELEMENT, BURN ROPE WITH LETTER, N, WAIT, S (you see a large plywood box), EXAM BOX, LOOK IN BOX (you pick up an old Thomson Sub Machine gun), EXAM GUN (lever can switch between auto and single), GET BOX, W, W, N, N, READ NOTICE (Danger Mines), FIRE GUN AT HUMP, N, N, E, CLIMB IN CHUTE, DROP BOX, SIT IN BOX, PUSH BAR.....

LIGHTMARE

By ALF BALDWIN played on Spectrum

INVENTORY, W, W, N, GET BOOK (you are told to leave it alone), GET BOOK (you may now have it), EXAM BOOK (item needed as focus for spell), DROP BOOK, U, N (Innkeeper's daughter promises help if you find the ruby. You sleep on the floor for the night), D, S, W, S, READ PARCHMENT (ingredients of potion), N, N (Blacksmith tells you to get out), HIT BLACKSMITH (with bludgeon, he falls unconscious), W, D, GET RUBY, EXAM RUBY, W, W, D, GET ROCK (tunnel revealed, no entry), DROP ROCK, U, GET ROPE, E, E, E, CLIMB GATE, W, S, S, GET SKULL, EXAM SKULL, E, N, CLIMB GATE, E, E, N, U, N (Innkeeper's daughter tells you about the ruby and asks you to meet her in the gully).....

THE THIEF

By GRAHAM WHEELER played on Atari ST

S, S, S, GET NET, WEAR NET (this protects you from Bees), N, N, N, E, N, NE, E, SE, E, E, GET NECKLACE (it breaks and falls to the pool below), E, E, LOOK UNDER BUSH (you find a spade), N, NE, NE, NE (you hear a noise from above), WAIT (you hear someone leave), OPEN TRAPDOOR, UP, GET SHIELD, S, W, EXAMINE DOOR, EXAMINE PLATE, TURN HANDLE RIGHT (this lowers the drawbridge), OUT, N, D, SW, SW, SW, S, W, W, W, W, NW, W, SW, S, DIG, GET BOTTLE, N, E, UP, GET BEES (you put the queen in the bottle), LOOK OUT TO SEA (you see flotsam being washed ashore), D, W, N, RELEASE BEES (the bees chase the bear into the sea), N, EXAMINE FLOTSAM, CLIMB IN CHEST (the chest contains a coin), DROP BOTTLE, DROP SHIELD, N, GET CHEST, S, S, E, N, NE, DROP CHEST, EXAMINE BUMPS, DIG, GET CARROT, SW, EXAMINE HOLE, PUT CARROT IN HOLE (the rabbit puts a sceptre where you can reach it), GET SCEPTRE, NE, CLIMB IN CHEST, DROP SCEPTRE, DROP SPADE, N.....

RICK HANSON

By JIM STRUTHERS played on Amstrad

EXAM SUIT, (you will find a handkerchief), N, GET FLOOR POLISH, EXAM POLISH (wax), S, W, IN (to phone booth), GET TAPE RECORDER (don't play it yet!), OUT, W, N, GET PORK PIE (it is mouldy), S, W, UP, N, N, D, N, E (workman's hut), GET SPANNER, W, S, U, S, WAIT.....

A HARVESTING MOON

By JIM DONALDSON played on Spectrum

N, GET SKIN, E, DROP SKIN, CLIMB MOUND, GET SUNHAT, WEAR SUNHAT, D, S, S, D, PULL SOP (three times), W, E, E, S, E, BANG BUS (three times), SW, PRESS BUTTON, GET & WEAR SANDALS, OUT, W, W, W, N, BUY TICKET, N, W, U, W.....

HINTS AND TIPS



CHAOS STRIKES BACK

By SANDRA SHARKEY played on Atari ST

The most useful spells are longer lasting light, open doors, fireball, poison cloud, undead beings, look through walls, group shield and fire shield. The most useful potions are healing and stamina. Any door that has a button can be opened by using the open doors spell, this is useful for opening doors that you can't get at because of pits and other obstacles, of while on a ZOOM!

DRAKKHEN

By SANDRA SHARKEY played on Atari ST
To rest in safety stand outside a building.

Wait until the shark is just to the right of the drawbridge before entering the castle.

The spell symbols can be worked out - by starting with the CURE spell (key C), LOCK (Key V), UNLOCK (Key U) and LIGHT (Key L) to work out the alphabet.

At the Minaret click on the right side of the door to enter safely. Keep the fight icon OFF to wander around without being attacked.

Cast the UNLOCK spell to enter the castle with the drawbridge that splats you.

To build up your magic users early in the game press key 2 in the fighters' spells and they will not fight.

To remove the forcefield in the first castle press the second symbol from the left.

Keep the shield spell set for the magic users to protect them before they start fighting.

MAJIK

By AMANDA OLIVER played on Commodore 64

In the Tavern: Buy ale and give it to the drunkard for some info!

Search Tavern, search table, get Tomb, read Tomb.

Show the crystal to the Innkeeper and then ask him to give you his eye glass.

In the Shoemakers: Search boots, admire boots.

To get rid of Boldok the dwarf without the aid of magic, give the Magical Sphere then kill him.

KING SOLOMON'S MINES

By DOROTHY MILLARD played on Commodore 64

(SOFTGOLD version) In part 2 you won't be able to find the mound in the desert until you drink from the canteen. There is, however, a 'bug' in the program, do not try to fill or drink from the canteen in part one, otherwise when you arrive in part two and the desert it will be empty. Just leave it alone!

ROBOTS OF DAWN

By DOROTHY MILLARD played on Commodore 64

Many of the objects are red-herrings and not all objects are present in every game and vary depending on who the guilty party is. Contact Vasilia on the viewer before you meet with Daneel who then follows you, as Vasilia will not talk to you when Daneel is present.

PYRAMID OF DOOM

By GEORGE KERSEY played on Spectrum

To get into the Pyramid, get rock and unlock Tiny Door and Enter Pyramid. Carry a gun to stop any trouble with the Nomad. Douse leaves if you cannot get by the Mummy. Forget about the Purple Worm. Wash the coal then throw the ruby into the Pool of liquid acid in the Pyramid.

To get past bricked doorway, hit the door with the Iron Glove on.

If the light is too bright, feel around on the floor for a coin.

Feed the Jerky to the Oyster.

Take the rock to the hieroglyphics Room and read them.

INSPECTOR FLUKE IT

By JIM DONALDSON played on Spectrum

Use the car to store things.

Get the Policeman to get the money from the chest then get him to give you some.

Get the Gardener to examine the tapestry.

CLOUD 99

By KEITH BURNARD played on Spectrum 48k

To stop time during play when you need to think or mark your map. Just press any letter and don't press ENTER. This will give you all the time you need. When ready to resume play just delete the letter, if you don't need it and continue as usual.

LIGHTMARE

By ALF BALDWIN played on Spectrum

First thing to do is visit your contact, the Innkeeper's daughter.

Reading the book and the parchment will give you useful information.

Don't let the Blacksmith throw you out. Hit him with your bludgeon.

Unblock the tunnel in the dry cave by picking up the rock and dropping it to one side. The tunnel is one way only and this is the exit!

Gates in the courtyard locked? Just climb over!

Return to the Inn with the ruby. The Innkeeper's daughter will ask you to meet her in the Gully.

Don't enter the small room where the chest is, until you have positioned the bucket of water just outside the Inn, ready to put the fire out.

When the door to the store room is locked behind you, you will just have to climb out of the window. Make sure that you take the talisman and that you are carrying the skull, this room and the next set of locations can be reached only once!

SPACE QUEST II

By PAUL BRUNYEE played on PC

The small pink creatures need to be treated as your friends as you need their help later on. Untie the one snared in the trap to gain the friendship, and watch everything that he does in later scenes - these are clues for overcoming other obstacles, the first of which will be the swamp. The root monster is more of an arcade sequence where you have to walk in between the "roots" to get to the bushes at the far side. Slow mode may help.

The order form can be posted in the mail box to receive the whistle which summons the Labion Terror Beast which will provide an exit from

a seemingly enclosed area later on. A light source can be found in a grotto under the swamp - don't forget to hold your breath before diving into it, though. Capture by the hunter is unavoidable, but you have only limited time before becoming his lunch. Attract his attention so he approaches the cage and then throw the spore to poison him. The rope can be used to climb down the nearby fissure.

FAERIE

By GEORGE KERSEY played on Spectrum

Pick the rose on the board to reveal Titannia - give her the ice-heart before it melts. Do not take the heart into the Underworld. You will need Titannia's Talisman to enter the Southeast cavern where Rhianon and Oberon are. One of the magic words will kill Rhianon and send you to the first treasure of Isi-Tunn ("Follow The Wind").

Give the powder nuff to the Buggon before taking the object present. When leaving the boat on the Mossy Quay of Buggon Island you will need to be wearing the boots.

PHANTASIE I

By RON RAINBIRD played on Atari 800XL

To find the four Runes, go to the dungeon near Pelnor, (Air Rune), the Gelnor Priests' Temple near Pineville for the Earth Rune, the Lizard Men's Caves near Greenville for the Fire Rune. Then go through the three Pools to enter Lord Wood's Castle for the Water Rune.

To enter the Black Knight's Fortress, teleport to Olympia - Town No 99 - and go to the Temple. On passing the tests and speaking with Zeus, you will be given a God Rune, which will enable you to enter.

To kill the Dark Lord, first only destroy the gems in the Throne Room. Follow and fight the Dark Lord and pick up the Wand he drops. Wave the wand and attack him. This should defeat him.

MAGNETIC MOON PART 1

By ALF BALDWIN played on Spectrum

In the Communications Room, you must first score the glass in the port with the laser cutter to weaken it, then smash it with the space axe. Hook the grapnel on the edge of the port and climb down the rope. When you are down, jerk the rope to free the grapnel, you will need it several times in parts 2 and 3.

Follow the tracks to reach the sheer cliff.

Examine the cliff and the niche to find a knob. Push the knob then turn it to open the door to the tunnel.

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS III

By VICKY JACKSON played on Spectrum

THE COMPLETE SCORE

- 20 points for finishing the crossword.
- 20 points for getting the hammer.
- 20 points for removing the boots.
- 15 points for getting the match from the bird.
- 15 points for marking the bowl with an X.
- 25 points for releasing the green gas.
- 30 points for lighting the green gas.
- 15 points for finding the screwdriver.
- 20 points for dipping the screwdriver in the puddle.
- 45 points for opening the door.

ULTIMA IV

By RON RAINBIRD played on Atari 800XL

The RED stone is in the Dungeon "Destard" and is needed to get the third part of a Key in one Altar Room.

The ORANGE stone - search Altar Rooms of Love and Courage.

The GREEN stone is in Dungeon "Wrong".

The BLUE stone of Honesty is on Altar in Dungeon "Deceit".

The YELLOW stone is in Dungeon "Despise".

The PURPLE stone - find the Skeleton and ask. Failing that, try the Dungeon "Shame".

The WHITE stone can only be reached by using a Balloon and flying to Lat. F'A" - Long.E'A".

The BLACK stone: Search the Moongate near Moonglow when the moon is dark.

SCAPEGHOST

By PETE SIMPSON played on Amstrad

Part 1

To enter the shed you need four people to help and don't forget to turn the light on, Colonel Rycroft will be grateful. Enlist the aid of the dog, he is very good at carrying things.

Part 2

Freeze the water to get at the map and breaking mirrors doesn't always mean seven years back luck!

Part 3

Leave your grave immediately and follow the crooks. To enter the house you'll have to get rid of the electricity supply. Those bare connectors look like they could do with something touching them!

AGATHA'S FOLLY

By ALF BALDWIN played on Spectrum 48k

Examining the scribbles and the sampler should give you enough clues to work out the alien alphabet.

Stand on the bed in the large bedroom and examine the beam. Examine the hole in it to find the parchment. If you have worked out the alphabet you will be able to read the symbols on it.

Unlock the boot of your car, inside you will see a flask of coffee and a feather duster.

Unlock the glove compartment in the car and read the house details. They mention that the cottage has its own generator for lighting.

Dust the cobwebs with the feather duster in the pantry to see the light switch.

Take the boat to the lake and inflate it with the bellows.

Bypass the swan by going through the gap in the bushes. Clear the debris in the stream so that it will turn the waterwheel.

Pick the lock in the mill house with the hairgrip and go through to the storeroom. Examine the bench to see a hacksaw and look under the bench to find a trowel.

Examine the bushes in the back garden to see the remains of a gateway. Saw off the gatepost with the hacksaw and put it in the contraption in the mill to act as a lever. Pull the lever to start the generator.

Unlock the cellar door with the large key when the estate agent brings it. It will be dark so return to the pantry and press the switch to turn on the light.

Take the stool you find in the cellar to the landing and stand on it to open the door to the loft.

GOLDEN OLDIES - GAME HELP

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

By MARGO PORTEOUS played on Spectrum

LOCATION OF THE CLUES

| CLUE | LOCATION | EXACT INPUT |
|------|--|--------------------------------|
| 1 | LODGE (START LOCATION) | GET NOTE |
| 2 | GARAGES | DOOR EDGE |
| 3 | OBSERVATORY | UNDER FLOOR |
| 4 | OBSERVATORY | LOOK UP |
| 5 | STABLE | UNDER TABLE |
| 6 | BANDSTAND | LOOK UP |
| 7 | EAST GREENHOUSE | UNDER LAMP |
| 8 | SUMMER HOUSE | UNDER FLOOR |
| 9 | PORCH OF MANOR | UNDER FLOOR |
| 10 | EAST DINING ROOM | BEHIND PANEL |
| 11 | WEST STORE | SOAP BOX |
| 12 | STUDY 1 | UNDER DESK |
| 13 | WEST KITCHEN | IN DRAWER |
| 14 | MUSIC ROOM | UNDER LID |
| 15 | BILLIARDS ROOM | GET CLUE - UNDER TIP |
| 16 | DAMP CENTRAL TUNNEL | IN DRAIN |
| 17 | BATHROOM | PLUG UP |
| 18 | ART GALLERY | OVER CLOCK |
| 19 | BOX ROOM | ON CEILING |
| 20 | LIBRARY | ON SHELF |
| 21 | NORTHWEST ATTIC | IN CHEST |
| 22 | LARGE HALL | IN CORNER |
| 23 | DAMP MUSTY TUNNEL | ON WALL |
| 24 | SOUTHWEST ATTIC | IN CORNER |
| 25 | EAST STORE | TEA CADDY |
| 26 | WEST DINING ROOM | CHAIR LEG |
| 27 | REST ROOM | BEHIND CURTAIN |
| 28 | BEDROOM NO 2 | IN DRAWER |
| 29 | CONSERVATORY | ON CLOCK |
| 30 | SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR | ON WINDOW |
| 31 | STUDY 5 | IN CHEST |
| 32 | STUDY 2 | IN CHEST - YOUR WILL |
| 33 | WET DRIPPING TUNNEL (with bricked-up entrance) | PICK WALL (pick in study 2) |
| 34 | SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR | ON WINDOW |
| 35 | SOUTHEAST ATTIC | IN BAG |
| 36 | LARDER | ON SHELF |
| 37 | NURSERY | INTO ROOM |
| 38 | WOODMAN'S SHED | IN CORNER |
| 39 | DARK ROOM | UNDER SINK |
| 40 | RECEPTION (get envelope and steam stamp - kettle from conservatory) | INTO BOX |
| 41 | BEDROOM NO 6 | IN POT |
| 42 | EAST KITCHEN | IN PAN |
| 43 | BEDROOM NO 1 | IN BASIN |
| 44 | PANTRY | ON SHELF |
| 45 | LOUNGE | IN CLOCK |
| 46 | STUDY NO 4 | IN CORNER |
| 47 | WINE CELLAR | UNDER SINK |
| 48 | SUB-CELLAR (enter clock in wine cellar) (throw cord get & open box) | SAIL/PADDLE BOAT |
| 49 | LODGE | UNDER FLOOR |
| WILL | BOX ROOM | UNDER SEAT |



HELPLINE

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| ALF BALDWIN | 0452 500512 | MON TO SAT 10AM TO 5PM | Spectrum. |
| JACK HIGHAM | 0925 819631 | FRI TO MON 7PM TO 10PM | Spectrum. |
| WALTER POOLEY | 051 9331342 | ANY REASONABLE TIME | Various. |
| DOREEN BARDON | 065 382 509 | MON TO FRI 6PM TO 10PM | Spectrum. WEEKENDS ANY REASONABLE TIME |
| MIKE BRAILSFORD | 0592 757788 | SUN TO SAT 10AM TO 10PM | Various. |
| MERC | 0424 434214 | ANY REASONABLE TIME | Atari ST. |
| JASON DEANE | 0492 622750 | ANY REASONABLE TIME | Amiga. |
| JOAN PANCOTT | 0305 784155 | SUN TO SAT 1.PM TO 10PM | Amstrad. |
| ISLA DONALDSON | 041 9540602 | SUN TO SAT NOON TO 12PM | Amstrad. |
| NIC RUMSEY | 03212 2737 | MON TO FRI 6PM TO 9PM | Various. |
| BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHTE | 0935 26174 | SUN TO SAT 10AM TO 10PM | BBC. |
| BARBARA GIBB | 051 7226731 | ANY EVENING FROM 7PM | BBC. |
| DAVE BARKER | 071 7321513 | MON TO FRI 7PM TO 10PM | Various. |
| STUART WHYTE | 081 9804645 | ANY REASONABLE TIME | Amstrad. |
| ROBIN MATTHEWS | 0222 569115 OR 0642 781073 | EVENINGS AND WEEKENDS | IBM PC |

• • • THE ULTIMATE INFOCOM HELPLINE • • •

If you need help with an Infocom adventure then who better to help you than A GRUE! Ring GRUE on 0695 573141 between 7:30pm to 9pm Mon to Fri. Or write to 64 COUNTY ROAD, ORMSKIRK, WEST LANCs, L39 1QH.

ADVENTURE PROBE

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