

Adventure Probe

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Now in its **SIXTH** Volume

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DISTRIBUTION

Adventure Probe is distributed during the first week of the month. COPY DATE for contributions and ads., 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 (Protext), Amiga (Protext) or Atari ST (First Word). Sorry no printer for the Spectrum. FAXIMILE may be used to send items also (same telephone number. 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, LINDUDNO, GWYNEDD, LL30 2YP. If writing from overseas please add UNITED KINGDOM.

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HALL OF FAME

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

BRIAN BUSBY, PHIL GLOVER, NEIL ASHMORE, JIM DONALDSON, PAUL RIGBY, DOT VAUGHAN, SIMON AVERY, ALLAN PHILLIPS, KEITH BURNARD, CHRIS BURY, IAN OSBORNE, VICKY JACKSON, TONY COLLINS, JAY HONOSUTOMO, PAUL HONOSUTOMO, STEVE CLAY, THE GRUE!, RON KILBRIDE, SHARON HARWOOD, KEN BOND, JILL CARTER, PAT BRADLEY, HUGH FLETCHER, PAUL VINCENT, MARY MCNICOL, BARBARA GIBB, NIC RUMSEY, BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHTE, NEIL SHIPMAN, JUNE ROWE, FRANK FRIDD, MARTIN FREEMANTLE, ALEX McEWAN, JOHN FERRIS and DOROTHY MILLARD.

Special thanks to MARTIN FREEMANTLE for this months cover picture and to MerC for the cover logo.

All contributions will be most gratefully received for the next issue and EVERYONE is cordially invited to send in something for all sections.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to Volume 6, issue 4 of Adventure Probe!

It has been yet another busy month here. I promised in the last issue that I would manage to catch up with all correspondence etc which made me a couple of weeks behind following that bout of flu, but the best laid plans... So if you have (or are still) waiting to hear from me please be patient, I am sorry for the delay but I will get around to answering everyone just as soon as I can. This issue of Probe is quite a "bumper" issue really as there were no advertisements (apart from my own) to put in, so all the pages are crammed full of your favourite sections.

Quite a few of you have written to ask if I am Anastasia. No, I am not. Actually, Anastasia has studied Astrology - which I have not - so there is no wonder that some of you have been writing in to say that the horoscopes have been uncannily correct for them. Many of you do know Anastasia very well indeed but as she wishes to remain anonymous I will respect this and keep "mum" as to who she really is..

I have had a request from Martyn Westwood for playtesters for his new adventure game. So if you have a 1 Meg Amiga, preferably (though not necessarily) with suitable expansions, a working mouse and if possible have a good knowledge of Infocom games and the new Legend games (as comparisons would be useful), then get in touch with Martyn at Interactive Technology, PO Box 146, Sheffield, S13 7TY.

There has been lots of unusual happenings at my end recently. You all know that the family are all extremely musical (apart from myself), well Michelle has taken up bell ringing in the parish church. That's one instrument she can't practice at home!!! But last Sunday she actually managed to get taken up with the rope! I really giggled when she told me what had happened as I only thought that kind of thing happened in cartoons. However, I soon stopped laughing when she showed me her arm! Poor thing, I have never seen a real rope burn like that before. She lost a lot of skin and her forearm almost doubled in size! We have also taken up yet another new hobby - tropical fish! As usual we went right O.T.T. and within a week had set up three aquariums. Thanks to Nic Rumsey for all his advice to help us over the initial problems. Guess what? I only had the fish for two days when I suddenly discovered 11 baby guppy fry in one of the tanks! Bobby wanted his own small tank so in retaliation Michelle went out and got herself a hamster. She has called it "Adam" after our own Bob (Amster) Adams (hi Bob!). My house is fast turning into a Zoo with the dog and bird too! I would like to have told you about an adventure but this month I have just not had any time at all to play as I have been trying very hard to catch up with orders for games and solutions etc. I have just received the new game from Jim MacBrayne so I am looking forward to starting that one as soon as I get some free time.

Well I had better stop before I reach the end of the page and let you get on with Probe. But before I sign off I would like to take this opportunity of wishing each and every one of you a peaceful and happy Easter. I had a lovely visit from Margo Porteous last week and Grue is coming to visit at Easter so I am still managing ultra-mini conventions in Llandudno from time to time and thoroughly enjoying them. Hope you enjoy this issue. See you all again next month.

Mandy

THE ADVENTURE GAME TOOLKIT

Available for Atari ST, PC and Amiga from Softworks, 43064 Via Moraga, Mission San Jose, California 94539, U.S.A.

Reviewed by *The Grue!* on the Amiga

This write-up is an overview of the Adventure Game Toolkit, AGT, a shareware development system. Although AGT has been available for some time on the PC and the Atari ST only now have Softworks done an Amiga conversion and very nice it looks too.

You write your adventure using a word processor and then all the files are compiled using the AGT compile system. This is a distinct advantage as AGT as been available for the PC, ST and MAC for some time, so all you have to do is transfer your adventure files which must be saved in ASCII format to one of the other machines allowing you four versions of your game.

The system can create two distinct levels of adventure games:

STANDARD LEVEL

These are games that require no programming experience, these standard level games only require the game writer to generate the game using a word processor to describe the various locations, objects and results of actions that collectively make up the game.

PROFESSIONAL LEVEL

These are games that also make use of AGT's special metalanguage to create games as complex and rich as the game writers imagination and prose style will allow. These games should be technically comparable with the likes of Infocom.

Metalanguage commands consist of various conditional tests and actions to be executed. These commands are very English-like and easy to understand for example:

NOT atlocation 5 : Tests if player is NOT in room 5
 NOT Present 210 : Tests if noun 210 is NOT currently nearby

There are a total of 84 separate meta-command conditional tests, since each may be prefaced by a NOT, there are actually a total of 168. These tests may be connected by multiple OR's to create compound conditional tests. In addition to conditions, there are 71 metalanguage action codes or tokens, for example:

GOToRoom 23 : Sends the player to room 23
 PutInCurrentRoom 205: Puts noun 205 (object) in the current location.
 SwapLocations 206 207: Swap the locations of nouns 206 and 207

Meta-commands can also be used for random events such as having a dwarf appear in the room and throw an axe at the player or having a creature follow the player around the game. There are even utilities you can obtain such as AGT BIG which allows you to create a larger game with more objects, flags and vocabulary and POPHINT which allows you to create a pop-up hint system for your game.

The only disadvantage with the Amiga version is the time it takes to compile your adventure. Obviously it will take longer to compile a game with 120 locations than one with only 30, but as you need to compile your game before you can test it, you need to take care in writing your adventure to keep those nasty bugs to a minimum. I have compiled three adventures on the Amiga so far using ASCII text files transferred from the PC, one game of 34 locations took 6-7 minutes to compile and the other of over 100 locations took nearly 25 minutes. On the PC it takes 1-2 minutes.

You will have to use the IBM fonts supplied with AGT otherwise you might encounter some unusual characters within your text. Adventures written with AGT are CLI based, that means you will have to boot up with workbench first in order to finally run the game but with a little bit of work you could produce a bootable version. Hardware requirements for AGT Amiga are a minimum of 512K and an external floppy, which shouldn't present much of a problem for most Amiga owners.

AGT comes on one disk with about five disks worth of stuff compressed on it and represents excellent value as a shareware product. Registration costs 20 dollars and includes notice of all future AGT upgrades, new AGT adventures and related products. Latest version of the program, sample adventure and source files and documentation on disk.

The above with a printed AGT manual costs 40 dollars, the printed manual has about double the information contained on the disk documentation. You can now buy the source code for the AGT Compile and Run programs which on the Amiga is in modula-2 and will cost 50 dollars. Note, you must be a registered user to be able to order this source code. Shipping overseas costs 8 dollars.

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USE YOUR LOAF

From Spec-Gac-Ular Vol 1 for the Spectrum. Available from The Guild, 760 Tyburn Rd, Erdington, Birmingham, B24 9NX (cheques payable to Glenda Collins). Priced at £3 and comes complete with three other adventures on one compilation.

Reviewed by *Dot Vaughan* played on Spectrum

This is my very first "attempt" at a review - so I hope Tony Collins will forgive me. Use Your Loaf is an ideal adventure for beginners.

It is a simple and logical puzzle type adventure with most objects having an obvious purpose. I only had to shout for help twice - once when I had to talk to somebody who wasn't there and trying to get the wheat prepared had me running around in circles.

Getting down the cliff and back up again kept me on the edge(!) but all in all it was a very pleasant and relaxing adventure.

=====

(Any other new readers like to try a review?.....Mandy)

JACARANDA JIM

By Graham Cluley for the PC - priced at £5/£6 for 5.25"/3.5" disk.
Cheques etc payable to Graham Cluley, "Malvern", Seaton Road,
Camberley, Surrey GU15 3NG.

Reviewed by Neil Shipman on ST with PC emulator

Ibberspleen IV. What a wacky world to end up on. But that's where you, Jacaranda Jim, find yourself when your space-cruiser is attacked by a squad of homicidal beechwood armchairs and you are forced to make a crash landing. Dragged from the wreckage by one of the planet's strange inhabitants, your adventure begins as you regain consciousness in the dark den of Alan the Gribbley.

Emerging into daylight you find a handy torch powered by Instant Karma batteries of eternal life - "We all shine on" - near your burned-out spacecraft. You are then able to take a look at Alan's den, decorated with invoices and ledgers and with a chain hanging temptingly from the ceiling, as well as at your saviour himself. He is a smug creature with a revolting beard and he will dog your heels throughout your exploration of Ibberspleen IV.

Unusually, Jacaranda Jim is written in the first person:

"I pull the rusty chain.. With a creak it begins to move. From high above one thousand pink rose petals shower down on me. Slowly the petals stop falling and I find myself in the middle of a market. A number of elves shuffle around and laugh occasionally. I am standing by a plinth with a large button. From here I can see the church clock. The hands of the giant clock seem to be stuck."

The buildings which surround the market square include the town hall where a boxing match is taking place, a vegetable shop, the Ibberspleen Police HQ and a zoo whose inmates include Armenian bat-weasels, Venusian buzzards and a poorly wolf called Dodgson. Travelling north past the post office takes you to the beach where, at one end, Ernie the deckchair attendant potters about by a Punch and Judy tent. The other end leads to a series of caves and their pycopathic inhabitant, Grog the gorilla.

How to make use of the various items which can be found scattered around these locations requires some lateral thinking. What would you do with a carnation, a piece of gristle, a crowbar, a beachball and a bottle of champagne? How can you deal with the stripey-jumpered thief who keeps popping up on the beach demanding your valuables? And where does Alan keep disappearing to?

While you are pondering on these problems the Ibberspleen postman continues roller-skating on his rounds. It doesn't take much to stop him dead in his tracks, but successfully disposing of the body before the police collar you is just one of the many frustrating and well thought out problems in the game.

There are 50 locations to the adventure, all described at reasonable length, and the available exits are always shown so it is extremely easy to find your way around. A single verb or verb-noun input is often all that is required but sometimes you will need to "Ask A about B" or "Do X with Y". The parser is flexible and allows recognition of "him", "her" and "it" and, although one or two rather obscure commands are needed, the vocabulary is extensive. Also, the ability to scroll through and edit your last 10 commands with the cursor keys is useful.

The author, Graham Cluley, has an off-beat sense of humour which shines through in Jacaranda Jim and this weird adventure often brought a wry smile to my lips. I found the goings-on on Ibberspleen IV strangely compelling and would certainly recommend the game to anyone looking for something rather out of the ordinary.

If you want to try before you buy then it's available from most PD libraries as shareware. However, you will need to register your copy if you want to finish the adventure. Registration also entitles you to the latest version plus help from the author - you'll need it! - as well as a detailed map.

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INNER LAKES

By Paul Cardin. Tape version available from P.K.Computer Graphics 153 Standhill Cres, New Lodge, Barnsley, S71 1SW priced £2. Disk version from The Guild, 760 Tyburn Rd, Erdington, Birmingham, price £4. (Cheque payable to Glenda Collins please). For Amstrad CPC's.

Reviewed by *Frank Fridd* played on CPC464.

Written for the Spectrum in 1988 this game has been converted by Pegasus Software for the Amstrad CPC using the G.A.C. and is text only. Inner Lakes is a fishing adventure. While most anglers go fishing to wind down and enjoy the tranquil delights of the river bank there are some anglers who don't. You are one of those where the battle between you and the fish is all. You have come to the lakes to catch the Irish Record Tench but before you can do so there are many obstacles and problems to overcome. First of all you need the help of the locals. The snag is that they won't speak to you until you have got rid of the awful small you are carrying.

I'm no fisherman, so I was a bit disadvantaged in not knowing the correct angling terms to be used when fishing and also the responses to my inputs were very slow. One unusual feature was that you can type "C" and you will see who the credits of the game belong to at any time. In common with other games written with G.A.C. single letter inputs for the most used instructions are available. The location descriptions are concise but informative and the whole game very professional looking.

I found this game quite enjoyable and I think that for a person who plays adventure games and does a bit of fishing, or conversely a fisherman who plays adventure games, this is a must. A pity about those responses though.

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The Lost Treasures of Infocom - Activision (import only).

Just before Christmas I heard through colleagues in the US about a compilation that had just been released there. The package contained 20 original Infocom games complete with a new front end menu system, a composite manual, a collection of maps for the games, and a 340 page hint book. As if this wasn't enough, the whole thing was selling for \$60. In case your arithmetic isn't all that it should be, that works out at \$3 dollars per game not allowing for the extras listed above. A colleague from my office was going to the States for a few weeks in January and I asked him to pick up a couple of copies for me while he was there. Although he tried the biggest software stores in Florida and New York he found that everywhere was sold out which is no great surprise.

As I just had to have this package I ordered a few copies for myself and some friends direct from a dealer in the US. The parcel arrived last week and the first thing to hit you is the sheer size and weight of the thing. Make no mistake this is a big package. The front cover shows a picture of a treasure chest overflowing with gold coins, jewels, and a selection of the original boxes of some of the games in the collection. The back of the box has a gallery type montage of the original covers of all twenty. Like me I dare say that you are anxious to know what 'treasures' have been included. They are Zork 1, Zork 2, Zork 3, Zork 0, Beyond Zork - Enchanter, Sorcerer, Spellbreaker - Witness, Deadline, Suspect, Moonmist, Ballyhoo - Planetfall, Stationfall, Starcross, Suspended, Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy - Infidel, and The Lurking Horror.

On opening the box you find that in the PC format you get 10 x 5 1/4" , and 5 x 3 1/2" diskettes. The hint book is a large format paperback with a section for each of the games giving clues in the same way that some of the later versions of the Infocom games gave on-line, i.e starting off with a gentle nudge in the right direction and building up until, if required, it gives you the complete answer to a problem. In the grand tradition of Infocom games they also include a few humorous red herrings poking mild fun at you for reading the hint book in the first place.

The manual is in the same size as the hint book but opens lengthways (the format of Andy Capp books) and is 270 pages of material from the packaging of the Infocom originals. What you get is pictures of all the extras included in the original releases which are necessary to complete the game, but it does not include the items that were for decoration only. For example in the section for The Lurking Horror, you get a reproduction of the student ID card, but you don't get the rubber worm. The last thing in the package which you will either love or hate, depending on your views on mapping games as you go along, is a complete map for each game. Personally I don't like the idea, because not only does it show you all the locations, it also gives the layouts of mazes and, worst of all in my view, the maps show items that will be found on entering the locations. Thankfully it stops short of showing the locations of objects or treasures which can only be obtained by solving a puzzle.

Enthusiasts amongst you will have noted that all but two of the games included in this collection are of the standard text type, the exceptions are Beyond Zork and Zork 0. The former differs only in the font that it uses for the screen text while the latter was the first of what Infocom called its graphical adventures. They are both reproduced here exactly as they appeared originally, so Zork 0 has the on screen compass and metal look pillars surrounding a white text area. When installed to a hard disk, Zork 0 is given its own directory while the data files for the rest of the games are stored together. Games can be installed individually or all together to a hard disk. If the latter option is chosen the set takes up 3.3 Mb of disk space. There is also an option to install to a floppy disk where space obviously limits the number of games that can be put onto one diskette.

Apart from my lack of enthusiasm for the maps included in the package my only complaint lay with the new installation routine. This takes the form of a simple question and multiple choice answer session written in adventure speak, where a pirate appears and asks if you want to install to hard disk, which drive and directory you want to use, and which games you want to install. Nothing wrong with that you may say and you're right, the problem is that it had the worst of all horrors in a text adventure, a spelling mistake. The fault in question comes when the pirate opens his chest to *reval* a host of treasures. I thought it was a pity that the good name of Infocom with their reputation for quality should be slightly tarnished by this piece of carelessness on the part of the rework engineers who added the new routine. Anyway, once installed the game is started by typing Infocom, at which point you are presented with a menu of the installed games and you select the number of the one you wish to play. From here on everything is exactly as it was in the good old days.

In reviewing this collection I haven't touched on the games themselves as most adventurers will already be familiar with them, but have concentrated on the compilation aspects of the package. Even allowing for my minor misgivings as mentioned above, I believe this represents the best buy I have ever made in the computer games field. Allowing for the slightly less than favourable exchange rate and the Customs and freight charges I had to pay on my order, the final cost per copy was £50. You may think this is high for one item but bear in mind that this still works out at £2.50 per Infocom game and that includes the hint books which used to sell for around £6-8 each. I have one extra copy available for £50 if anyone is interested and if there is sufficient interest I am willing to approach the US distributor to ask about a quantity discount for a bulk purchase. I can be contacted at the following address or telephone number. All that I would ask is that you must be willing to pay at least the £50 that I paid for my copy (allow for exchange rate fluctuations) and that you be willing to pay in advance, as the US company will not operate on a COD basis.

Alex McEwan
39 Warbleton Rd
Chineham
Hampshire
RG24 0RF

0256-475906

Available from GI Games, 11 West Mayfield, Edinburgh, Scotland, EH9 1TF. For Spectrum 48k. Price £1.99. Cheques to Sandven Ltd.

Reviewed by **Brian Busby**

"Robin stood in the hideout clearing deep in the depths of Sherwood forest.....".

You play the part of Robin in this Fergus McNeill adventure and together with your merry friends Little John, Will Scarlet and a host of characters never before associated with these legendary heroes, your task is to....? Hmm...no introductory screen to set the scene and no information on the cassette inlay...still a wander through the leafy glades should reveal a story line. Ah! here we go - a ransom note - unfortunately the contents of which we are told, can be found on the cassette inlay! Frustrating, as is the seemingly endless forest with it's interminable list of descriptions for yet another woodland location. Forest graphics are also repetitive, although a number of other locations are illustrated with basic but colourful pictures, which can, if preferred, be turned off in order to speed up progress.

The main attraction for me however, is the humorous way in which this adventure has been written. Forget the book, film and TV "Robin Hood and his Merrie Men" and be prepared to meet weird characters such as Little Red Rambohood who beats up the wolf with a crowbar and Friar Gorbachetnik who explodes after popping his 31st venison burger into his huge cavern of a mouth. Dorothy is to be found on the Yellow Brick road complaining about being "taken from behind" and her Toto being dog-napped, but even when you re-unite her with her pooch the ungrateful hussy steals your ticket and catches the next train home. A gang of bearded, cigar-smoking nuns are obviously making a healthy profit from converting the inhabitants of the nearby Smurph village into garden gnomes in the convent workshop. Perhaps dead Watson's newspaper can shed some light on the subject.

This up-to-date Robin is equipped with a cordless radio phone which rings at intervals and further sound effects can be heard as trains rass over the level-crossing. A couple of modern toilet booths on the edges of the forest will accept a 10p piece and with multi-coloured screen effects transport you across Sherwood. Have you ever wondered what you would do with a bucket of Vaseline? Better make sure you have it with you if you intend going anywhere near Nottingham castle!

Your faithful girlfriend Marian likes to go bathing in the river but tends to get uptight if you steal and hide her clothes. She's easily placated, however, and leans back in your arms to enjoy a kiss, though any further advances are frustrated, initially, by a locked chastity belt. Goldilox, of three bears fame, is also partial to a bit of passionate tongue-play, but Dorothy is best left well alone as she brings tears to Robin's eyes with a well-aimed knee!

Robin of Sherlock is a 3-part adventure in which all parts can be travelled freely if the correct procedure is followed. Each part has entry/exit locations at which a "SAVE" is made and then "LOADed" at the entry/exit of the next part. In fact a game can only be "SAVED" at one of these locations - at first I thought my copy was faulty as it would not accept the "SAVE" command. Overall an excellent example of a witty and amusing adventure that would perhaps have benefitted by more imaginative location texts and some indication of your ultimate goal.

Incidentally, if you find an urge to fill a huge plug-hole with a conveniently placed plug - and who would'nt? - RAM SAVE first!

JESTER'S JAUNT

Written by June Rowe and programmed by Paul Cardin

Published by Zenobi Software, 26 Spotland Tops,
Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancs. OL12 7NX

Spectrum 48K/128K - Tape £2.49, +3 disk £3.49

You are the youngest of seven brothers and your sense of humour ensured your employment as Court Jester thereby joining your brothers in their service to the princess, who as in all good fairy-tales is happily married to a prince, or rather she was happy until her wicked step-mother, Witch Vilana, imprisoned him in her castle.

None of your brothers can be spared as they are vital to the smooth running of life in the palace, so it falls to you to embark on an adventurous journey to rescue the prince.

Before you depart, you must say goodbye to all your brothers and the princess by calling them by name, so your initial task is to discover the proper names of your brothers; you have forgotten because you have used their nicknames for so long.

As they're all named after the first seven letters of the Greek alphabet, you, like me, may get stuck after the first three or four, and anyway you can't guess at the name of the princess so you will have to find out - try the library; the one in the adventure not the real one! Your research will be well rewarded, for the parting gifts you receive will help you greatly during the adventure.

The presents are a motley assortment of everyday objects, but as June has a penchant for magic you can be sure the piedish, hanky, box, etc. will be fun to use. There are also other very important items to be found, and I must say I like the way the older brothers keep an eye on young Early (his nickname) when he is exploring the palace grounds.

In the woods beyond the safety of the palace wall, you will find some wonderful characters and a glimpse of what lies ahead, before you save your position for loading into part two, which begins on a grassy plain at the foot of the mountains. Your attention is caught by a sword partially hidden in the long grass, so you dismount to investigate. Just as you are about to grab it, it moves away, and you can continue like this until you realize who is teasing you. Your reward is a hat that will be most useful later, and if you are curious, and careful, you can experiment with it while you walk towards a nearby village.

A lot of tricky puzzles later you may be ready to help a dying creature, for your kindness will bring the great strength needed to see you on your way. This is one of the most poignant moments of the adventure, and here I must say ALL the text is beautifully, nay lovingly, written, and you are even treated to a piece of poetry should you be killed off.

When you encounter the ever-watchful owl as forecast you know your goal is in sight (I wonder what happened to it after the death of its mistress) and should soon be sending the prince back to his princess. Oh dear, in his haste he has left you behind. Never mind, perhaps his parting advice will help. I hope you kept that particular object for it is a long walk home.

What a treat it is to play such an adventure as JESTER'S JAUNT. Lots of objects, characters, creatures, and magic - I think the magic is the icing on the chocolate cake, for this is truly a delicious, scrumptious, very user-friendly, sorry-I-have-finished-it, fairy-tale of an adventure. If you rush through it you may miss some of the deep-felt and humorous text that June and Paul have worked so hard to perfect.

I suppose I must now state the obvious. It is PAWed, has all the usual commands, a clear character set, and a colourful loading screen. I think it is suitable for all ages and ability as it is easy to map, doesn't have a maze, and the puzzles only require clear logical thinking, an eye for detail and a memory of what you have seen earlier in the adventure. Pure text-adventuring - long may it reign!

What more could you wish for? Well, how about a hand-knitted jester doll, crafted by June and her daughter with as much care as the adventure itself?

All you have to do is answer 10 very easy questions, easy because the answers are in the adventure, and send them to Zenobi. The Balrog himself (no doubt ably assisted by Mrs. Balrog) will put all the correct entries into a LARGE cardboard box, and the winner's name will be drawn out.

No excuses for not entering. The prize is suitable for children of ALL ages, and everyone stands a chance of winning - except me. June has already bribed me with the promise of a jester of my own. This is much appreciated, and will be something to counter the gorillas, Gizmos, Garfields, Pudseys, etc. that usually adorn the back of the settee in what is laughingly called our living-room.

Don't forget to play the adventure before attempting to answer the questions. Good luck.

I do hope I haven't giving away any of the answers!

Reviewer - Barbara Gibb

HEART OF CHINA

By Dynamix/Sierra. Shop around for the best price.

Reviewed by *Janice Charnley* played on Amiga

In this adventure set in China, you play the part of Jake "Lucky" Masters. You earn a living flying tourists around China but are deeply in debt to under-handed businessmen E.A.Lomax. In order to clear your debts you have agreed to try to rescue Kate Lomax, his daughter, who was kidnapped by Li Deng while she was working as a nurse. Before you can set out to rescue Kate, you need to persuade Zhao Chi, a ninja, to help you. He will ensure that Master Wu, the herbalist, will give you a medicinal potion and herbs etc. You and Chi will fly to Chengdu and attempt to enter Di Leng's fortress.

For each day's delay in rescuing Kate, you lose \$20,000 of the \$200,000 E.A.Lomax agreed to pay you, so you can't afford to make too many mistakes. If you manage to rescue Kate and get her safely to her father in Paris, E.A.Lomax will give you all of your planes back plus a very large bonus. You interact with other characters by placing the cursor on a person. The cursor then changes to a "talk bubble" and you are given a choice of responses. Your response will, of course, affect other characters' attitudes to you.

The graphics are very good and are animated in places. There is no text to type in - you play the game using a mouse, joystick or the keyboard to control the pointer which changes shape as you move around the screen and indicates what you can do next. All I can say is that this is another good game from Sierra!

=====

THE SPECTRE OF CASTLE CORIS

From F.S.F. Adventures, 40 Harvey Gdns, Charlton, London, SE7 8AJ. For Spectrum 48K version and 128K version both £3.50. +3 Disk £4.50.

Reviewed by *Sharon Harwood*

As a great fan of The Axe of Kolt I was thrilled when Larry announced that he was writing another adventure for Alaric Blackmoon. Following your success in returning the Axe to King Kelson, and subsequently ridding the land of the evil Xixons, you have been titled Duke of High Jamack. It is whilst touring your demesne that your horse is taken lame and you are forced to continue to the next town, Corwyn, on foot. Mentioning your intentions to a local farmer, you are puzzled by his nervous reaction.

The game begins east of the town and on entering it you will meet some of the locals, desperate to leave and in too much of a hurry to tell you anything about the dreaded Spectre that has been terrorizing the neighbourhood. Anyone who entered the Megapoints Competition at the Convention will remember that the spectre will visit you before you have a great deal of time to explore your surroundings. However, any of you expecting to find the book conveniently abandoned near the Cross will be in for a surprise.. it couldn't be that easy in the game proper! You will quickly discover that it is going to be necessary to enter Castle Coris (and subsequently part 2) in order to complete your quest, but there is plenty to do before you will be ready to do so. 48K owners will need to talk to a few people before they find a way to enter the grounds while the 128K game will set you quite a few problems, and more locations to boot. The grounds themselves are quite large, particularly in the 128K version which will provide you

with a portcullis to pass, and I would recommend that you make sure you haven't forgotten anything before you save your position and enter the Castle itself.

Part 2 will have you confronting your enemy and it is this part that the 128K version really comes into its own. Not only will you meet Henry the Butler but you will also have a chance to talk to and assist other members of the Castle staff, all of whom can help you in some way or another, providing, of course, that you help them first! Without giving too much away I will tell you that it is necessary to re-enter part 1 in order to complete the adventure, but be assured that you will not be allowed to leave the Castle until you have done everything necessary within it. Finally, I can definitely recommend the 48K version, but to anyone with a 128K machine... please take advantage of the extra memory and have yourself double the fun!

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BRIAN & THE DISHONEST POLITICIAN

A Spectrum adventure available from Delbert the Hamster Software, 9 Orchard Way, Flitwick, Beds, MK45 1LF. Price £2.49. Cheques payable to S.P.Denyer.

Reviewed by *Steve Clay*

In this two part, text-only adventure you take the role of Brian Ramsbottom in his quest to stop the dastardly Garth Pitchfork from being elected local MP. How? By getting enough votes to get himself elected. In part one the aim is to persuade ten floating voters to put their X next to Brian's name in the polling-booth. To obtain these votes you need to help the various characters that litter the area. What each character needs is pointed out most clearly with blatant messages such as "I need my mail-bag!". I enjoyed the first part and felt a great sense of achievement as my "votes collected" tally rose. There is a very useful FIND character option available in this section of the game.

Part two begins with you having obtained the ten votes. A password is required to enter this part. The game style changes here in that you now have to break into Garth's house and find enough evidence of his corrupt activities to get him arrested. This is a more traditional "open this, push that" type of game and was a little disappointing after the first part. The continuation of the story-line seems to be lost and my interest began to fade. This, perhaps, could have been classed as Brian 2 and advertised as the follow-up. Despite these quibbles there are many good points in the game. The use of adjectives adds a new angle to the game that only sometimes hints at desperation on the authors part. There is a score option and a choice of screen modes. The in-game messages are generally humorous; upon reading the sign in a field you learn it is Larry's Horse field. There are plenty of locations to wander about in and lots to do. The location descriptions are a bit of a let down comprising for the most part lists of which way leads where and could have been improved with more humorous descriptions in line with the messages. There is a small glitch with the parser in that you can EXAMINE BEHIND object but if you LOOK BEHIND object the location is described.

Having said all that the first part has that spark which brings you back again and again to the keyboard. Accepting that part two is a separate game you should find "Brian" excellent value for money and part one in particular a refreshing change.

THE BOYS [AND GIRL!] ARE BACK IN TOWN [Part 2]

by Paul Rigby

This month continues the Infocom re-union and the formal part of the conference (see last issue for details). We join the chaps with Wizzy, the host, about to put forward another question collected from fans, before the conference, who couldn't attend. Take it away Wizzy!

(Wizzy/Host) Okay, next question. To Dave Lebling and Marc Blank: I am pretty familiar with the early genesis of the Great Underground Empire, since Don Woods and his wife Sheryl are good friends of mine. But I don't know much about the transition from the mainframe versions to the commercial Zork. Could Dave Lebling and Marc Blank talk some about who was responsible for what in the additions to the GUE world and the adventure itself, and whether there were any copyright problems starting from a base that already had so many incarnations? GA.

(Wizzy/Host) GA, Marc.

(Marc Blank) Zork, although similar in concept to Adventure, but the game itself was entirely original (i.e. it wasn't built on top of, or in addition to, the earlier game by Woods and Crowther. The original copyright for Zork was owned by MIT, but Infocom was given rights to use the game. ga

(Wizzy/Host) GA, Dave.

(Dave Lebling) I should also point out, since I've seen erroneous statements to the contrary, that Marc and I (and Tim Anderson and Bruce Daniels) were the authors of the MIT-copyrighted Zork, so we licensed a version that we were the authors of. We moved it to the commercial world when it became feasible. This was embarrassingly soon after we had published an article saying it would never happen. GA

(Wizzy/Host) < laughing > GA, Marc.

(Marc Blank) Also, the "Great Underground Empire" was entirely a new creation of ours though, in truth, I can't remember who coined it. Dave? ga

(Dave Lebling) I'm not sure. I think it appeared on the coin? "722 G.U.E" ?
["In Frobs We Trust"]

(Marc Blank) Yes. I have a feeling, actually, that Bruce Daniels invented GUE. He was certainly responsible for "Zorkmids". ga

(Dave Lebling) I'd buy that (for a quarter).

(Wizzy/Host) < g > Whoever coined it, its origins still haunt us all! Next question. To Amy Briggs: I found Plundered Hearts an interesting adventure, but it seemed to be a bit on the short side. I also think it had a different feel to it, having to take on the part of a woman. something that does not happen often (also tried that in Leisure Suit Larry 5). Were you the

only woman writing Adventures for Infocom? If so, I wonder if you could say why you became interested and perhaps suggest why more woman don't get involved in adventures/computers? GA.

(Amy Briggs) Boy, that's a biggie. The game was short because I'm verbose. I don't know why more women don't play computer games. Ahh - Prof points out that the world's most popular game writer is a woman! (GA)

(Professor Moriarty) _Adventure_ game writer. Roberta Williams.

(Wizzy/Host) Okay, next question. To All: Is there a possibility that we might see more ex-Infocom staff appearing in the Legend Entertainment fold or forming their own company? GA.

(Meretzky) I'd never do it.

(Amy Briggs) I'd be interested - in 6 years, after my dissertation!

(Dave Lebling) Well, Bob's company is doing the sort of games that I expect Infocom would be doing if it still existed. On the other hand they have an amazingly corporate looking headquarters! But seriously, "only time will tell." GA

(Wizzy/Host) Marc...GA.

(Professor Moriarty) (Tell 'em about the coffee machines, Bob.)

(Marc Blank) I'm glad that Bob is still working on this type of game. If I were interested in doing more game writing, I would certainly look there first. Actually, the kind of game I would be most interested in would be mainly audio-based. After all these years I'm still not all that graphically oriented. ga

(Wizzy/Host) (Nor am I...) Okay, go, Mike.

(Mike Berlyn) Interesting. I had a pretty frightening experience with the last adventure game I wrote, Altered Destiny or for you Infocommies, Altered Dusty Knees. I think I've sworn off <yay! from the crowds> writing them for at least a century or two. GA

(Wizzy/Host) GA, Steve.

(Meretzky) Ex-Infocommies can only go to work for Legend as long as Legend is thriving. So buy lots and lots of Legend games. Especially Spellcasting games. GA.

(Wizzy/Host) <heheh> Okay, one last comment from Bob, then we'll go on. GA, Bob.

(Bob Bates) All I can say is that my dream has been to build a company that is as wonderful as Infocom was. Legend is a long way from that but when we get closer, I hope we'll be able to attract some of the same people who made Infocom what it was and offer them a secure living. When that day comes, you can bet I'll be on the phone. GA

(Wizzy/Host) Good speed, Bob! Okay, back to the questions. To Anyone:

(Wizzy/Host) Is there any way of obtaining old copies of the New Zork Times or Status Line? GA.

(Mike Berlyn) My phone number is...

(Wizzy/Host) <hehe>

(Wizzy/Host) Guess not, eh?

(Stu Galley) Someone from Activision Studios would have to answer.

(Wizzy/Host) I guess so...okay, we'll try another question. To Anyone:

(Wizzy/Host) There was a rumour that Quarterstaff was converted to the PC and is now sitting on a shelf in a darkened room. Is there any truth in that rumour? GA.

(Wizzy/Host) GA, Steve.

(Meretzky) I don't think so. It certainly never happened before Infocom "moved" to CA. GA.

(Wizzy/Host) GA, Dave.

(Dave Lebling) I can only second Steve's comment. No such thing. GA

(Wizzy/Host) Too bad...I'd have liked to try it. Okay, next question. To anyone!

(Wizzy/Host) Is there anywhere a definitive map and description of the GUE? From playing all 5 Zorks and the Enchanter series it's clear that towards the end of Infocom (<sniff>) someone had at least a mental picture of all the lands, towns etc. mentioned in the games. GA.

(Wizzy/Host) GA, Steve.

(Meretzky) I made such a map when I was working on Sorcerer...and made an even more detailed version when I was working on Zork Zero. But I don't think it ever saw the light of day. I also went through all the games in the Zork universe and made timelines and lists of all the Flatheads and stuff like that. But once again, they never made it into the public eye. GA.

(Mike Berlyn) You also wrote the book(s) on the GUE

(Wizzy/Host) Quite a feat...the GUE is huge! Okay, Brian, GA.

(Professor Moriarty) When I started BEYOND ZORK, I used Steve's SORCERER maps as the basis. The map of the west continent, included in BZ, is fairly complete. But it doesn't show the main continent or islands. ZORK ZERO has some good material too. You could almost piece it together. GA

(Dave Lebling) Steve was the mapmaker, being the only Imp with the patience to gather all

the material. Some thought it to be sacrilegious to do so (leave the mystery mysterious) GA

(Wizzy/Host) I'd still like to see the entire world! <g> Okay, next. To All: Where did all the wonderful names in the Zorks come from? Was it a group effort, or did they spring mainly from one person's <slightly off-centre> brain? GA.

(Marc Blank) I think they came from MSG overdose. ga

(Dave Lebling) Most InfoBrains were as off-centre as a random-orbit sander <g> .

(Mike Berlyn) More Mai-Tais!

(Marc Blank) They don't make 'em like Aku's anymore...

(Professor Moriarty) Mai Tais. NOW I am getting homesick.

(Mike Berlyn) And you guys made me eat with chopsticks.

(Bob Bates) They got frotzed by hanging out too long near the bedister.

(Meretzky) You should see what they made ME do with chopsticks.

(Dave Lebling) MSG overdose -- "House of Roy" was the unsung fifth author of the original Zork!

(Bob Bates) And how 'bout some DOUGHNUTS?

(Professor Moriarty) These Californians think it's uncool to drink. Scowl.

(Wizzy/Host) (I guess that answers THAT question!) <g>

(Marc Blank) Actually, Bruce Daniels is responsible for GUE, Dimwit Flathead, and many others...

(Wizzy/Host) Okay, one last question before we open up the floor. To Stu Galley: Which was the favourite of the games you authored? GA

(Stu Galley) Gee, the favourite of mine or of the public?

(Wizzy/Host) Your favourite.

(Stu Galley) It's a bit like asking which is your favourite child. You like each of them for different things. But I think the technique got better with each one. So, I guess Moonmist is the winner, at least for now! GA

(Professor Moriarty) Ooooh! It's scary, kids!

[to be continued]

COMPETITION RESULTS

Here is the solution to the hidden adventure title competition in last months Probe. The response was very good and most of you seemed to have enjoyed this type of competition.

ALICE, feeling MISERABLE, stood beside her RED DOOR as twilight LOOMed and gazed out at the DUSK OVER ELFINTON. She saw her neighbour ANGELIQUE TAMORET, who was built like an AMAZON, leaning against THE BASE of THE BLACK FOUNTAIN in her garden to WITNESS her husband ESCAPE down the street, driving like a MORON who had SHELLSHOCK down the FAST LANE, on his way to meet his friend MATT LUCAS, and thought to herself, "She's trying to see where ARNOLD GOES". SOMEWHERE ELSE there was an INTRUDER ALERT as the sound of a siren came faintly to her ears. INSPECTOR FLUKEIT, a great DETECTIVE who loved THE CHALLENGE, would soon be on the TRAIL of THE THIEF and would probably solve it as quickly as SHERLOCK, as he had done when the LADY IN GREEN had lost her JADE NECKLACE when leaving the HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES during a JOURNEY ONE SPRING. She said later that if she had read her HORROSCOPE it wouldn't have happened as she believed in the MYSTICAL and didn't think it a MYTH or FLOOK. Although she was a TEACHER, TROUBLE seemed to follow her like a JINX. "TERrible", thought Alice as she went in to make some tea. She took THE CUP and made herself comfortable while she drank it. It was better than the tea in NECRIS DOME where she worked but what could you expect when it only cost a QUARTER. STAFF were the last to be considered in ARTHUR'S place, THE BEAST! Working there was becoming a NIGHTMARE like being in a CIRCUS. She sometimes felt like a PUPPET. "MAN but there should have to be some changes there soon!", she thought, "All that's needed is a little IMAGINATION and a little more gentleness when dealing with THE STAFF." The boss today had shouted TWICE. SHY little KARYSSIA had been frightened out of her wits but didn't know how to HIT back, being as timid as a little PILGRIM and feeling as if she was of NO VALUE. Not the solo MEN though, FLINT STRIKES BACK when he is pulled over the coals. RICK HANSON also knew how to take care of himself. She often threatened to put down her PEN AND THE DARK fear of unemployment was the only thing preventing her so she wouldn't put it to THE TEST. NORD AND BERT COULDN'T MAKE HEAD NOR TAIL OF THIS attitude but they had money and were not concerned about BUREAUCRACY. I do the BEST I CAN. AS TO REBELLION she didn't go too far. She looked up as she heard a knock at the OPEN DOOR and ALI ENTERED the room. "Hey!", he cried "have you seen the boat "The DUTCHMAN'S GOLD" that BRIAN THE BOLD is docking AT A LANDING stage on THE ISLAND after his DAY TRIP? Why don't we go do some INVESTIGATION and see what's in?" Alice agreed. As they stepped outside into the DARK, STORM clouds were massing and she was glad she had grabbed her coat. She didn't want to freeze to DEATH. "BRING ERIC the dog too", suggested Ali and with Eric pulling on the lead they set off, the call of the wild being almost MAGNETIC. MOONlight bathed the INNER LAKES when they arrived at the landing stage. No BREAKERS disturbed the shoreline yet. The SHIP OF DOOM from SKULL ISLAND rode the swell near Brian's SHIP. WRECKED on the shore was some cargo among the FISH. "Had any TOURIST TROUBLE?" enquired Ali. "No but we had some TROUBLE AT BRIDGE TONIGHT when they wouldn't raise it for us," replied Brian, "I'm not worried though as BIG OL'DEN APPLETON was a witness. Hey, Alice!", cried Brian as he saw her at Ali's side, "I spoke to Ron FUSEMAN at the post office today and he asked me to tell you that your copy of ADVENTURE Probe's arrived!". Alice suddenly smiled for the first time that day and grinning happily said "Well, it isn't such a bad day after all!"

Many of the entries contained titles that were not supposed to be in the original competition so I considered it only fair to stick rigidly to only those that were INTENDED to be included - otherwise a couple of people would have had titles of over 100!

I thought you would have found this quite an easy competition but not so! Only one person managed to find all 80 hidden titles. Actually you did well if you found fifty or more. Those that did were as follows:

Jonathan Scott found 50. Keith Green found 54. Mark Howlett found 60. Simon Avery found 63, Peter Bergmann found 65 and Lorna Paterson found 79.

The winner and the only person to find all 80 titles was:

MARGARET ABBIE

Congratulations to Margaret who wins a SIX MONTHS SUBSCRIPTION VOUCHER FOR PROBE!

PUZZLE SECTION

This little brain teaser was sent in by Keith Burnard who assures me that it is not too difficult especially if you are moderately mature! Meaning that a knowledge of the old money and a bit of slang terms will help you a lot. If you are too young to remember the old money then why not ask your parents to help you. All you have to do is to answer the following questions, convert your answers appropriately and make sure that your total answers add up to £18.2s.9d!

It isn't adventure related but I think it will give you some fun in trying to work it all out. Here are the nine questions:

- (1) A boy's name?
- (2) A girl's name?
- (3) Pluto, Mars, Venus?
- (4) Ill sea creature?
- (5) A pig?
- (6) A weight?
- (7) A form of transport?
- (8) A singer?
- (9) A leather worker?

Okay! Let's make this into a competition also! Send me your answers to each question, the amount that you figured each answer to be and your total sum and all correct entries will be put in a hat and a winner drawn out to win a prize! Closing date will be 20th April and the results (and the solution) will be published in the May issue of Probe.

Next month we will feature a word-search sent in by Paul Cardin so get your thinking caps on ready for that one too. Also if anyone would like to think up a suitable puzzle for the Grand Birthday Competition for the June issue, when Probe will be SIX years old, then I would be extremely grateful. My brain cells have to work overtime to come up with suitable ideas. If it is adventure related then please try to think of ALL computer owners so that everyone can join in.

UNUSUAL GIFTS FOR THE ADVENTURER

By *Steve Clay*

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- "Barbarians do it with clubs"

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COOKERY A' LA ADVENTURER

By *Simon Avery*

Let me welcome you to the delights of cooking within the realm of adventuring. Below are some delicious recipes, simply follow the instructions to create a culinary feast of unsurpassed taste.

Appetisers...

DWARF ON A STICK - simply skewer one of these "little people" on a cocktail stick, marinade for several days in warm mead to make it tender. Then roast over an open fire.

NB. Remove all weapons and armour first, to avoid broken teeth. (Unless you are a Grue!).

ADVENTURER SOUP. Lead your merry little hero into a pool of sulphuric acid and wait for two to three seconds before removing from acid with a long stick.

CRISPY FRIED ADVENTURER. These tasty little morsels can be found ready-cooked by the mouths of certain caves rumoured to be home to Dragons.

Main Course....

GRUEL. First, catch your Grue! These strange creatures can be found in many dark tunnels, in particular, those of massive text only adventures. Walk down one such tunnel, without a lamp or torch, whistling loudly to show you're not scared. Presently, one or more Grues will announce their presence by the harsh rasping of their breath. A strong and unpleasant odour may also be noticed at this point. Trip up the Grue and tickle its feet - this renders the monster incapable of anything other than giggling. Truss him up with your truss-ty rope and escort him back to the kitchen. Mash the Grue up with a touch of salt and some warm milk. Serve garnished with a sprig of parsley.

And for dessert....

ADVENTURER PANCAKE. Lead your adventurer over a rickety bridge suspended over a deep chasm (with a flat bottom). If your future meal seems reluctant to cross said bridge, positive results can often be obtained by placing a chest full of gold on the other side. After you hear a long, blood-curdling yell, descend carefully to the bottom of the chasm and retrieve your tasty dessert.

NB. Cooked Adventurer pancakes can be quickly made by following the above recipe, but place a large pan of boiling oil at the base of the chasm.

ORC SURPRISE. Serve this only to people you do not like! First make a large pastry pie case, fill it with a number of live Orcs. The number is optional, as is the choice of weapons given to the Orcs. Cover the pie and serve it to your enemy.

NB. It would be a wise move to stand well back when your guest commences to eat his or her pie.

All meals can be served with a choice of potions, pills etc. Cutlery should be arranged as follows:

Trident, Shield(for use as platter), magic knife (or sword) and spoon.
Bon Appetite!

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ATLAS ADVENTURE SOFTWARE

67 LLOYD ST, LLANDUDNO, GWYNEDD, LL30 2YP

Dear Mandy

You may like a bit of an up-date on the SAM ADVENTURE CLUB which was started late last year. Well, we're now compiling our third club disk, having notched up a circulation of nearly 60 with issue two. A couple more adventures are currently being written for Sam, and the big news is that a SAM ADVENTURE SYSTEM utility is being written by Colin Jordan (writer of Inspector Flukeit, Great Peepingham Train Robbery and Five on a Treasure Island). The utility promises to exploit many of Sam's features, so producing games in 32 or 64 column text, "drawn" graphics similar to P.A.W. or high-res full screens with full colours. The utility promises to be BIG, possibly needing a 512K Sam to run it, so some large adventures can be expected. We've discovered a way of converting many Spectrum PAW games to run on the Sam Coupe with 100% disk compatibility, so avoiding cassette data storage, by using a Plus D version of PAW in conjunction with Sam BASIC. A new utility entitled PRO-DOS now allows Sam to run CP/M 2.2 programs on 3.5" disks, which has opened up the machine to a large number of games for adventurers, such as COLOSSAL CAVE and ISLAND. Sam is proving a wonderful machine for BASIC and machine code programmers, as it's been designed for ease of access, and software is being produced at a price near to that of the Spectrum, and it's possible to see games of 16-bit quality, such as PRINCE OF PERSIA, for half the price of the 8-bit versions. Sam is proving that 8-bit computers can still have a lot to offer people, and keep prices down at the same time. If any PROBE readers would like more information about Sam, I'd be glad to give them all the help I can. Although Sam has no great financial backing, it is generating great enthusiasm and support amongst owners, and they're helping Sam to succeed by producing software and disk magazines in increasing quantities. Despite a lack of coverage in the glossy magazines, Sam seems to have a good future in store.

Phil Glover,

43 FERNDALE ROAD, HALL GREEN, BIRMINGHAM, W MIDLANDS, B28 9AU

I am delighted to hear how well your club is doing, Phil, and that the Sam Coupe seems to be taking off well. I hope that there will be plenty of adventures produced for it soon and I would be delighted to publish reviews in Probe when I get them.....Mandy

Dear Mandy

Just a quick note to say thanks for printing my For Sale ad recently - I managed to line-up 10 or thereabouts games with good homes, which financed - you guessed it - another couple of adventure-type purchases. These were HEIMDALL and ABANDONED PLACES, both of which are highly recommendable (though having finished HEIMDALL - without any help - I must say I think it was a little too easy, and rather undernourished in terms of the number of actual puzzles to be solved. Still, it was good fun while it lasted). Actually, I intended to write you reviews of both of these games, but I've become so seriously addicted to ABANDONED PLACES, that it was all I could do to tear myself away from the game long enough to review it. If anyone wants any advice on HEIMDALL or the first eight dungeons of ABANDONED PLACES, feel free to pass them on to me. It's good to see Probe going from strength to strength; I particularly like the introduction of the new RPG and Strategy sections, they make the 'zine feel even more well-rounded than ever - though I'll be interested to see whether you print my ABANDONED PLACES review in the main Adventure section or the RPG section, since its puzzle element is so strong that each dungeon

could justifiably be termed an adventure in its own right, though the game as a whole is definitely an RPG! Who would be an editor, eh?

Paul Vincent, Walsall, W. Midlands

Dear Mandy

I'm sorry I haven't written for Probe for so long but with having a problem with my arms I can just about get through the day at work, let alone start bashing on a keyboard or using a mouse at night as well. One point I would like to make on what has been written about more space for 16 bit adventures/RPG style games and less for 8 bit. Well, all you 16 bitters, don't just sneer at the 8 bitters and start shouting, why don't you get your fingers out and write something of use to BE PRINTED in PROBE then you will see more for yourselves. If you all just sit in the background, as it seems, and wait for someone else to do the reviews, comments etc, well, Mandy, Dave Barker, Hugh Walker, Grue and other worthwhile 16 bitters have tried to get things going but it seems the majority of you just want to read the magazine with no input from yourselves. WELL NO INPUT = NO MAGAZINE, so get your fingers working and come out of the games closet once in a while with your view... 'nough said so I'm signing off for now, hope to see a lot more people doing more in the adventure sphere for the coming year and maybe I'll see you at the convention of 1992.

Allan Phillips, Peterborough, Cambs

Dear Mandy

I would like to take the opportunity to thank both you and Neil Shipman for the help and advice given to me on the subject of emulation. Having explored the Atari to PC Emulation and the cost of updating my Atari to 1MB (min) plus adding "A7 SPEED", I have decided to add an Amiga Plus to my collection and approach emulation from Amiga to Atari and CBM64, which brings me back to my plea for help; can you or other Probe readers use the magazine to list the equipment required to enable not only the Amiga to emulate the Atari and CBM64, how to fit it, and the cost involved, but also discuss emulation in general so that other Probe readers can benefit and act accordingly? I must add that I welcome the RPG/D&D section and find it strange that Jack Lockerby wants Probe to hog the 8 bit machines, when the trend is towards the 16 bit market, which I must admit is sad, because I started on, and still have my CBM64; but I'm afraid the world is moving on and Probe has to expand to accommodate 16 bit owners like myself or run the risk of losing members, not that I intend to bow out from Probe, but we do have to be catered for. As for Larry Horsfield, and his comments on 16 bit emulating, the reason I want to emulate is because I have a considerable library of text adventures and have no intention of giving them up, many of which have still to be played. So be fair all of you 8 bit readers, there is plenty of room in Probe for all of us.

Hugh Fletcher, Ellon, Aberdeenshire

I think the suggestion of a column or two on emulation is excellent. Can I ask readers who are familiar with emulation or various machines to write in with their experiences in this field to help everyone know how to go about things? At this point I would also like to express my thanks to Margaret Griffiths for all her advice to me about CBM64 emulation on the Amiga. Margaret told me that with the emulator you need a lead from Trilogic (or other reputable firm) which costs around £10. This lead adapts a 1541 disk drive (or other 64 drive) to the Amiga. You then refer to that drive as device 9 and you can load and run your Commodore games into the Amiga and then save them out to 3.5" disk if you wish.....Mandy

Dear Probers

I can appreciate Ron Giest's frustration at the lack of Commodore 64 adventures, though his call to abandon the machine in favour of the Speccy is a little premature. At long last, the C64 scene seems to be picking up. Since publishing NYTHYHEL on the ZZAP! 64 covertape we have received over a hundred enquiries, requests for solutions etc - hardly the death throes of a dying scene! As I'm sure you are all aware, CRASH magazine is no more - many thanks to all the authors and proprietors who supported the adventure column. Still, it'll now be moving to Zzap!, and we'll be featuring loads of adventures on the covertape too! (Look out for Mandy's BLACK KNIGHT, coming soon). With the glossies at last taking an interest in adventures, and software houses such as The Guild converting games across formats, the Commodore adventure scene is looking healthier than it has in a long time.

Ian Osborne,
2 Mill Street, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1AZ

I must say that I agree with Ian. Since the magazines he writes for featured Atlas adventures last month I have had loads of enquiries and orders are starting to come in for C64 games (I was beginning to despair about them until now). Of course everyone unknown to me has been provided with a Probe leaflet (I keep plugging away as hard as I can), so hopefully we will have a lot of new C64 readers coming along soon.....Mandy

Dear Mandy

A thumb's up to Paul Rigby for the Infocom reunion article. It's a pity that somebody won't get hold of the rights to CP/M so that Speccy owners can enjoy the games too! Good thing to hear some of the Infocommers are still working on adventures. Wow! What a spiffing competition in the last issue! Well done, as well as being a jolly good read it is also one prime brain-teaser. I spent a good evening searching for the hidden titles which were well hidden. Keep up the good work, Mandy, Probe's still as brilliant as ever! I dug the cool March cover, we can always rely on our Kez!

Jonathan Scott, Londonderry, N Ireland

Dear Mandy

You certainly gave the Grue a rave review of his FOUR SYMBOLS adventure and, when I rang him last night, I was expecting him to be really pleased. Instead he told me all about the last minute bug which diligent playtesters had reported and which he'd tracked down to a fault with the Hatrack utility itself. Poor old Grue was a might pissed off to say the least, having spent so long on getting his magnum opus to the release stage with an excellent review, advertising going out and orders already coming in. Poor devil didn't really know now what to do for the best - which is all a very great shame. Paul Rigby's transcript of the recent on-line get together of the ex-infocom team was fascinating. The sense of fun which went hand in hand with working at Infocom and which shone through in nearly all of their great adventures was something which seems to be lacking from the big business productions now on the market. Makes you wish you could put the clock back 7 or 8 years and go through all those great times again, doesn't it? Can't wait for the continuation in the next issue - great!

Neil Shipman, Coalpit Heath, Bristol

I am delighted to report that everything is fine with Grue's adventure now. He did go through absolute despair when he discovered the bug but couldn't find out what was wrong. He thought at first that the

mistake was his and almost ripped the game to pieces trying to find the fault - eventually discovering much to his annoyance that the fault was within the Hatrack II system itself!! Any adventure writer will know the sheer frustration bug hunting can cause but when you discover that the system itself is at fault it can be absolutely mind-blowing as you feel so helpless! However, the system has been fixed now and Grue's game is as bug free as you could get! Yes, I did give it a rave review as I feel it deserves it - go on Amiga owners, give yourself a treat! I agree with you Neil, Infocom fans would all like to put the clock back to have all that fun again - I consider myself extremely fortunate as I have six Infocom adventures that I haven't yet played so I've got a lot to look forward to.....Mandy

Dear Mandy

I don't know if your star forecasts were intended to be serious or not, but I must tell you that by peculiar coincidence, they fitted my family very well! Mine said "business affairs will run smoothly" and I have just signed a contract with Zenobi. My daughter Fran's said she might have a clash of opinion with someone in authority, and she is at the moment arguing with her tutor at college. Her husband's horoscope said work pressure will ease in March, and unfortunately he becomes redundant on the 26th! I thought it was really weird! I am delighted to tell you that at long last, JESTER'S JAUNT is about to be released. March 28th probably, if John can get the leaflets done in time. At the moment Peter Townsend and myself are frustrated as we are trying to find some oil for a lamp, in POLEARN. Peter has tried to contact the author (John Darby), without much success, and in desperation I wrote the enclosed lines and sent them off to him care of the firm which published the game. Trouble is, we don't know if the firm still exists, and I'm quite expecting to have my letter returned marked "Not known at this address". So if you could find a bit of space in the next Probe, the SOS might reach him!

"OH MR. DARBY!"

By June Rowe

In Huddersfield and Launceston,
Two folks are going mad -
They cannot find the missing oil
And this is very sad!
'Cos there's a lovely deep dark hole
Where these two want to go,
But he who wrote the game, POLEARN,
Doesn't want to know.
If only I could reach him.
I'd sing my little song -
'Twould drive HIM mad and then he might
Help us both along.

(Altogether, now, to the tune of "Oh Mr Porter")...

Oh, Mr. Darby,
What shall I do?
I must explore this deep dark hole,
So I appeal to you!
Tell me where the oil is -
(I'll pay you for the stamp).
Oh, Mr. Darby,
Let me fill my little lamp!

June Rowe, 46 Hurdon Way, Launceston, Cornwall, PL15 9HX
I hope Mr Darby or someone can come to the rescue.....Mandy

Dear Mandy

I'm starting up a service so people can find old or second hand adventures that are no longer available through software companies. Could you let the readers of Probe know of this service. In particular I would like people to send me a list of any old adventures they wish to sell and the prices they would like (incl. p&p). Then hopefully I can put them in touch with someone who has that game and is willing to sell. This service will operate on both tape and disc for Amstrads primarily, but if there is support for other machines, then I will expand to cover those as well. I must stress that all adventures MUST be original and in good condition. So if any people have old games that they are finished with and would like to sell them on to other adventurers so they can also enjoy the games, could you ask them to let me know, stating the game(s), price(s), name and address as well as the computer. Hopefully I will get the support to make this service worthwhile. If someone wants a game, then also please enclose an SSAE for their reply. Thank you Mandy.

Simon Avery, 71 Fore St, Chudleigh, S Devon, TQ13 0HT

Hello Probers!

Sand Viper rearing its ugly head again. I've been having a bit of a break travelling here, there and everywhere so now it's back to normality, or what can be called normality here. Despite moving around, I've had time to play a few good adventures, and even managed to complete some with only a little outside help. So my thanks to all concerned, even though they didn't know who they were helping! My old printer is still on the blink so all my paper-work has to be done on my great friend Olivetti, what a pal he is, I just wish he wouldn't keep on getting the spelling wrong, he tells me it's because there is no delete button but I reckon he's just a bad speller. We are into the second week of Ramadam, two down and two and a half to go. Bars are closed with the exception of about an hour, just time for the hardened drinkers to get their carry-outs. The trouble with that is that if you aren't there early enough you come away battle scarred, fighting the crush. At my age I can do without that kind of thing so I fill up with coffee and plug away at my games. The weather is hotting up now and very soon we have the humidity hitting us, those are the days when you step out of doors and take a bar of soap with you. Most people retire to their rooms and switch the air conditioning on full. It never fails to amaze me that during the humid period I can drink three pints of water and leak out four! Another thing that has amazed me is Mr Mon Goose, he gave me some help through the pages of Probe, yet aren't we supposed to be deadly enemies? It just goes to show the power of Probe and the friendliness of adventurers. I have to say, though, I am still not sure I'd like to meet him in the dark away from a computer. Anyway, Mr Mon Goose, thanks very much - that's a drink that I owe you. Enough, enough! I have to cry, there's a certain game sitting here just waiting to be solved, and who can sit here when mystery becons so. Bye for now.

Sand Viper, Sultanate of Oman

PERSONAL COLUMN

To SIMON AVERY.

Roses are red,
Violets are blue,
Please write back to me,
Because I
love you!

Love JANE.

HELP WANTED

"I would be grateful if someone could give me some assistance. I need help in transferring a CRL adventure to disc and would prefer to +D or Dicile file. It hasn't responded to regular Dicile with Unidos rom. None of the Spectrum emulators available for the Coupe will transfer the program to disk and neither will the Messenger. The answer must be to modify the program but this isn't something that I can do. Has anyone transferred CRL to disc using a +D or Dicile?"

Norman D Haigh

103 Longfield Ave, Golcar, Nr Huddersfield, W Yorks, HD7 4AZ

"I wonder if someone could give me some help on the adventure THE HOLY GRAIL. I just don't seem to be able to get anywhere on it. I have found the note, missive, putty, horseshoe, guttering, sand, thumb screw, cannon ball, bottle, draught, elixir, but can find no use for them. Also what use are the hooks on the Castle wall. How do you operate the buttons in the Magic Shoppe? I hope someone can help me."

D Quinn 78 Empire Rd, Till Hill North, Coventry, CV4 9LX

The guttering problem could get you hooked then you could perhaps roll a something round and heavy along it. Not so fast though, perhaps the sand could slow you down! The proprietor of the Magick shoppe is extremely shy so perhaps regular trips in and out would help. Don't take the first offering (or even the second) but wait for something blood red to attract your eye! Reading the paperwork you have already found could give you a colourful clue as to how to proceed!.....Mandy

IN-TOUCH

BBC B SOFTWARE FOR SALE: Mostly adventures on disk and tape. Please send SAE for complete list or ring SUE ROSEBLADE on 0480 477151.

SOFTWARE WANTED: The Magnetic Scrolls adventures FISH; GUILD OF THIEVES and JINXTER wanted. Must be in good condition and with full packaging. Please telephone SCOTT DENYER on 0525 713435.

COMMODORE 64 SOFTWARE FOR SALE: Lots of Commodore 64 disk INFOCOM adventures for sale or swap. Please telephone Adrian on 0442 822832.

COMMODORE 64 SOFTWARE WANTED: Information required as to where games can be obtained. Please write or phone to MARTYN LAMMAS, .33 The Rye Lea, Droitwich, Worcs, WR9 8SS. Tel: 0905 778313.

AMSTRAD SOFTWARE WANTED: On tape or disk: SECRET OF ST BRIDES, JACK THE RIPPER, ICE STATION ZERO, BEERHUNTER, BRAINLESS, BUGSY, WINTER WONDERLAND, TWICE SHY, SHADOW OF THE BEAR, SIMPLE CASE OF ESPIONAGE, SNOWBALL, MAGIC COTTAGE and VILLAGE OF LOST SOULS. Please write with price required to SIMON AVERY, 71 Fore St, Chudleigh, S Devon, TQ13 0HT or telephone 0626 854339.

SPECTRUM +3 SOFTWARE WANTED: Adventures on +3 disk wanted, including GUILD OF THIEVES and JINXTER. Anything considered. Must be originals and in original packages. Send your list with price wanted (incl. p&p) to: STEVE CLAY, 17 Stanlaw Rd, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral, L65 0EY.

SPANISH/ENGLISH TRANSLATOR NEEDED: To translate a new adventure from Spanish to English so that it can be sold in Britain. Please contact: CARLOS GARCIA DE PAREDES UCERO, c/ Villa de Marin 22 17B, 28029 Madrid, Spain.

INSTRUCTION BOOK WANTED: Urgently needed, the instruction manual for MINI OFFICE II please as original has gone missing. On loan if preferred. Please help! Contact Mandy at Probe.

AMIGA SOFTWARE FOR SALE: WRATH OF THE DEMON, BARDS TALE 3, MEAN STREETS, THE KILLING CLOUD, MEGA-LO-MANIA, CORPORATION-MISSION DISK, CENTURION DEFENDER OF ROME, SEARCH FOR THE KING, CRUISE FOR A CORPSE, IT CAME FROM THE DESERT, ANTHEADS, HUNTER, HEIMDALL, THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD, LORD OF THE RINGS, OPERATION STEALTH all games £10 each including post and packing. Telephone 0432 274169.

SPECTRUM SOFTWARE WANTED: THE GUILD OF THIEVES, LORD OF THE RINGS, THE PAWN, REBEL PLANET, RIGELS REVENGE, SHADOWS OF MORDOR, TWIN KINGDOM VALLEY, CASTLE BLACKSTAR, KNIGHT ORC, DEFENDER OF THE CROWN also any of Level 9 and Rainbird, Melbourne House and Virgin games wanted. Please write with list and price required to MISS D OBIORAH, 105 Gilmore Rd, Lewisham, London, SE13 5AB.

IBM SOFTWARE FOR SALE: CATACOMBS, CORNUCOPIA at £3 each.

PCW SOFTWARE FOR SALE: ACHETON, AVON, COUNTDOWN TO DOOM, KINGDOM OF HAMIL, PHILOSOPHERS QUEST, RETURN TO DOOM, LAST DAYS OF DOOM, FISH, GUILD OF THIEVES, KNIGHT ORC, SILICON DREAMS, MINDFIGHTER, VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE at £3 each.

COMMODORE 64 SOFTWARE FOR SALE: BLACK KNIGHT, CASTLE OF TERROR, DIARY OF ADRIAN MOLE, FEDERSTION, MINDSHADOW, MORDONS QUEST, MURDER OFF MIAMI, MYSTERY OF THE INDUS VALLEY, MOSFERATU, NOT A PENNY MORE NOT A PENNY LESS, SHADOWS OF MORDOR, SHARD OF INOVAR, SHERLOCK (Melbourne House), COLOUR OF MAGIC, MAGICIANS BALL, TIME THIEF and WIZ-BIZ all at £1 each. Please contact VICKY JACKSON on 801 543 2556.

INFOCOM SWOP'N'BUY: This months we have:

VICKY JACKSON (081) 543 2556, is selling CUTTHROATS (PCW), DEADLINE (C64), HOLLYWOOD HIJINX (IBM), LEATHER GODDESSES (PCW), LURKING HORROR (C64), PLUNDERED HEARTS (C64), SEASTALKER (PCW), SORCEROR (PCW), SPELLBREAKER (PCW), STARCROSS (C64), SUSPECT (IBM), SUSPENDED (C64), WITNESS (IBM), WISHBRINGER (PCW) ZORK 2 AND 3 (C64), also loads of non Infocom adventures (see above).

ADRIAN CODLING, 28 Dunston Hill, Tring, Herts (0442 822832) is looking for Amiga or IBM TRINITY, PLUNDERED HEARTS, CUTTHROATS, SHERLOCK, MOONMIST, STATIONFALL, BUREAUCRACY, BALLYHOO and BORDER ZONE. He has the following C64 versions to swop or sell: ZORK 1, 2, 3, STARCROSS, SUSPENDED, DEADLINE, HITCHHIKERS, ENCHANTER, SORCERER, SPELLBREAKER, HOLLYWOOD HIJINX, BALLYHOO, LURKING HORROR, CUTTHROATS, WISHBRINGER, PLUNDERED HEARTS, INFIDEL, PLANETFALL, STATIONFALL, LEATHER GODDESSES, SEASTALKER and an IBM version of LEATHER GODDESSES.

EMIR MANSOUR, 31 Tenterden Gardens, London NW4 1TG (081 203 3843 evenings) has PCW versions of WISHBRINGER and LEATHER GODDESSES for sale or swap.

SOLUTION SERVICE

The following solutions have been received this month to add to the Probe Solution Archives. Solutions as usual cost 30p each plus SAE. If you would like a complete list of the solutions available please send SAE.

Latest solutions received: THE ANTIDOTE. APRIL 7TH. ATALAN. BLOOD OF BOGMOLE. CAPTAIN KOOK. CASTLE WARLOCK. CORYA 1:DRAGON. CROWN JEWELS (Spec-Gac-Ular). DANCE OF THE VAMPIRES. THE DARK TOWER. THE DOGBOY. DOOMDARKS REVENGE. GREEN SONJA. THE HOPBIT. HOTEL HELL. KING. MANIC BADGER. MICROFAIR MADNESS. MICRO MUTANT. NOT THE LORD OF THE RINGS. SAGA OF A MAD BARBARIAN. THE SEARCH FOR SMOK. SILVERWOLF. STAFF OF POWER. STAR FLAWS. TREASURE ISLAND. URBAN. USE YOUR LOAF (Spec-Gac-Ular). WIZARD QUEST.

NEWS SECTION

NEW ADVENTURES FROM F.S.F

Larry Horsfield will be releasing two brand new adventures for the Spectrum later this year as well as RUN, BRONWYNN, RUN! which should be out by the time you read this. Larry will also be converting STARSHIP QUEST for the Amstrad this year so there will be plenty to look forward to from F.S.F. The two new adventures for the Spectrum will both be third adventures featuring Larry's two heroes, Mike Erlin and Alaric Blackmoon. The sci-fi game will be entitled REVENGE OF THE SPACE PIRATES - THE SEARCH FOR JELAINE and the other will be called DIE FEUERFAUST (The Fist of Fire). If you would like further details then why not write to Larry at 40 Harvey Gardens, Charlton, London, SE7 8AJ. If you haven't played any of Larry's games yet then now is your chance - AXE OF KOLT is highly recommended!

GI GAMES DEAL WITH ZENOBI

Gordon Inglis tells me that due to a recent addition in his business commitments, he is unable to continue with the day to day running of GI Games and that, although he still retains all the rights to those games under his label, Zenobi Software will be distributing them in future. All the games are still available but all cheques sent for these games from now on should be made payable to ZENOBI SOFTWARE.

HAPPY 10TH BIRTHDAY SPECTRUM!

The Spectrum will be 10 years old this year and to celebrate there will be a grand birthday party entitled ZX 92. This will be held at Cambridge University Centre, Mill Lane, Cambridge, CB2 1RU on Saturday May 2nd 1992. It will start at 2pm and will continue until 7pm. This event has been organised by an independent group of Spectrum enthusiasts, including designers, writers, programmers and publishers. They have invited the most interesting and imaginative people from the Spectrum scene since 1982, ranging from Uncle Sir Clive Sinclair himself to Automata's cult cartoon creation, The Piman. This is not a commercial venture but is a celebration of the creativity and imagination that has been unleashed by millions of Spectrum users around the world. It is a party, a reunion and is expected to attract keen attention from international and local press, TV and Radio. ZX 92 will feature a fast-moving projected display of animations and other graphic images generated by Spectrum and its siblings, plus a chorus of music and sounds produced in whole or part by Spectrums using MIDI, speech synthesisers and esoteric interfaces. Static and dynamic displays will reflect the variety of applications and creative uses of the Spectrum.

The venue is in the middle of Cambridge, right by the river and close to bus and railway stations. ZX 92 will take place in the top-floor Riverside Suite and South Lounge. Tickets will cost £7.50 each and members are limited to 200 by the venue. Free tickets are not available to please place your order as soon as possible if you wish to attend. There is a maximum of 2 tickets per order; a stamped addressed envelope must be enclosed. Overnight accommodation is available at the Cambridge University Arms Hotel, Regent St, a short distance from the venue. Please call them direct for details (0223 351241), and mention the ZX 92. Bed and breakfast costs £45 (single room) or £65 (twin) per night. For further information call, write or fax. The organisers are Mel Croucher, Simon Goodwin, Sean Sanderson, John Wase and Andy Wright. Media contact: Simon on 021 422 7970. Fax mark F.A.O. John Wase & Simon Goodwin. Post is ZX 92, 24 Wyche Ave, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 6LQ.

MORE NEWS NEXT MONTH!

YOUR STARS FOR APRIL

By *Anastasia*

SIGN OF THE MONTH: ARIES

The Aries adventurer is easily bored by helpful elves and flowery descriptions. Show an Aries an axe-throwing dwarf and they are in their element! These people gleefully attack any character in sight when needing diversion from perplexing problems. They have an irritating habit of breezing through difficult problems then manage to get lost in the most simple maze! Assertive types will find April a harmonious month, with social/romantic aspects highlighted from 7th.

TAURUS

You may feel that people are imposing on you this month - be patient, this will turn out to be surprisingly beneficial. Co-operate with others this month, especially at work. The 17th indicates a change for the better at work. Problems will sort themselves out after the 14th.

GEMINI

April will be a progressive month when any plans you have been making will come together, possibly a promotion at work? The 15th and 16th will be full of minor setbacks. There may also be a romantic crisis around the 20th! Don't take people for granted and you will survive.

CANCER

You feel full of energy this month, physically and mentally. Ideas and opportunities suddenly present themselves. Around the 16th domestic problems may occur, especially connected with children. Business travel is indicated. Watch out for legal or official wrangles on 9th!

LEO

Financial matters are highlighted in April and you may have a windfall, but beware of extravagant behaviour! There could be a mechanical failure, maybe a car breakdown. If you're involved in study or education this is favourably aspected towards the end of the month.

VIRGO

A shaky start to the month with people close to you being particularly argumentative. Beware of other peoples' unreliability. The second half of the month will settle down when it would be a good idea to deal with financial matters and other correspondence.

LIBRA

Single Librans may find the person of their dreams this month, and existing relationships become more fulfilling for attached Librans. Friends will be supportive and intervene on your behalf. You will be emotionally sensitive around 17th. This can only endear people to you!

SCORPIO

Try not to be domineering this month, it could disrupt a valuable friendship. Try to keep away from disputes-you could push somebody too far. An excellent month for affairs of the heart and a new romance or friendship is in the air.

SAGITTARIUS

Mid-April will be a laid back time when problems will sort themselves out as if by magic. Children play a major part in your life and you'll feel quite lucky! Problems may occur over property transactions. Beware of minor injuries at the end of the month.

CAPRICORN

You may feel harassed this month and a minor crisis may occur, possibly regarding relatives. A period of change is forecast where open minded Capricorns will benefit. If you've been experiencing major problems you will find these can be overcome with the right attitude!

AQUARIUS

Make a few small sacrifices this month and watch the results! Career wise, new opportunities present themselves but beware of wasteful spending! Take care of your health between 6th and 11th, try to relax.

PISCES

If you feel strongly about someone, the start of the month is the right time to tell them. Deal with financial hiccups promptly or they could escalate. Partnerships and general co-operation is highlighted on 14th. You'll also receive a boost to your confidence around 14th.

ASK GRUE!

Dear Grue!

It has come to my attention that you have been ridiculing and belittling members of the little people, namely Dwarves. Shame on you! Life for these poor unfortunates is far from easy and they need the occasional shoulder (or foot) to cry on when cruel taunts become all too much to bear. So from the second Monday in April I am proposing a "Be kind to Dwarves week". Your help and any other mythical creatures help would be gratefully received. Faithfully yours,

Munchkin The Magnificent

Chairman of the Dwarves Appreciation Society

PS. Chariot stickers available with the following slogans:

Help a Dwarf across the ravine.

Dwarves do it underground.

A Dwarf in need is a Dwarf indeed!

Dear Brunchkin,

Ok! I'm sorry for taunting all shorties in my previous correspondence with you. How about having an "adopt a Dwarf" campaign? Just think how useful a dwarf would be in your own home. You could use their head as a footstool or feed them to your pet dog instead of that horrible Pedigree Chum stuff. How about sending your Dwarf to answer the door, when you know it's some religious fanatic calling, or plucking their hairs out to use as dental floss. Yes, I must agree, they would have their uses, so count me in for your "Be kind to Dwarves week". Oh! I'm not sure about your stickers though, Dwarves can't do it underground because the Grue's would eat them all!

Signed The Grue!

Send your questions to our very own Agony Uncle.

Grue's address can be found on the back page of this issue.

KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE CASTLE

STEVE McLAREN, 6 Mere Gate, Margate, Kent CT9 5TR offers help on these Amiga adventures: RED MOON, LORDS OF TIME, SCAPEGHOST, INGRIDS BACK, MYTH, ZORK 1 + 2, WISHBRINGER, PLANETFALL, GRUE-KNAPPED, ENCHANTER, MIDNIGHT THIEF, SPIRO LEGACY, KINGS QUEST 1, 2 & 4, SPACE QUEST 1, 2 & 3, POLICE QUEST, LEISURE SUIT LARRY 2 & 3, CONQUEST OF CAMELOT, OPERATION STEALTH, FUTURE WARS, LOOM, SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND.

SHARON HARWOOD 9 Brighton Ave, Southend on Sea, Essex SS1 2QN offers help on these Spectrum adventures: AGATHAS FOLLY, AXE OF KOLT, THE BEAST, BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, BLOOD OF BOGMOLE, CAPTAIN KOOK, SHYMER, THE CHALLENGE, CLOUD 99, CRACK CITY, DAVY JONES LOCKER, DEMON FROM THE DARKSIDE, DESMOND & GERTRUDE, DEVILS HAND, DIABLO, ECLIPSE, ESCAPE/HODGKINS MANOR, FROM OUT/DARK NIGHT SKY, GOLDEN MASK, HOBBIT, HOUSE ON THE TOR, INNER LAKES, INTRUDER ALERT, JACK & THE BEANSTALK, JADE STONE, LAMBERLY MYSTERY, LOST CITY, MAGNETIC MOON, MISER, NUMBER 6 IN THE VILLAGE, ONE OF OUR WOMBATS IS MISSING, OPEN DOOR, O'ZONE, PHOENIX, PROJECT X MICROMAN, PUZZLED, R.C. & C., SILVERWOLF, SPECTRE OF CASTLE CORIS, STARSHIP QUEST, TREASURE ISLAND and WHITE DOOR.

HINTS AND TIPS

THE TIME LORD'S AMULAT

By *Dorothy Millard* played on Commodore

When you RUB AMULAT you're transported randomly to one of 6 locations. Items needed in the desolate area are the jar of peanuts, book and rope. Tipe rope to the jar then tie jar to the tree. Capture the monkey. Attack the beast with the club. At the dead end MOVE ROCK but if at first you don't succeed keep trying. The only item needed in the location by the hill is the key to unlock the chest.

Feed garlic to the Frenchman. Move the straw in the barn.

In the large white dome rub the amulet to be transported to a large square room. You can turn off the robot and will automatically go south. Note however that you can only do this once. Use the monkey to reach the shelf.

THE ARGON FACTOR

By *Dorothy Millard* played on Commodore

In part one you need to wear the glove before getting the stone, which should then be put in the freezer, allowing you to get the canister.

In part two you must play chess and keep playing until you find a brilliant combination and your opponent resigns giving you a gold centon. You can then bribe the guard with it.

ARK OF EXODUS

By *Dorothy Millard* played on Commodore

To get started, go to the locker room, open the locker then get and wear the uniform you find. You hear a clinking sound so SEARCH POCKETS to find your dog tags then search them again to find an infrascan which will enable you to see in the dark.

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER II

By *The Grue!* played on PC

Having difficulty obtaining the skull keys? Pull the lever at the location of the holes with scorch marks, step back and a key will appear in the empty niche.

Room with four levers? Start by pulling the one on the northwest corner, go on to the southwest then the southeast corner. Go through the open door, along the corridor until the next closed door. Near it there is a panel on the wall, press it and double back to the room with the levers. You will now be able to stand in the hole at the northeast corner without falling in and pull the last lever.

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND II

By *The Grue!* played on PC

To solve the Wheel of Fortune game, follow the urchin to see the cheat.

To solve the password, note the number of the fingers shown in each sequence, they will be the answer to the riddle. Example... Ignore the first number you are told and ignore the second set of fingers that you are shown.

MEAN STREETS

By *John Barnsley* played on Atari ST

To get the passcard in Carl Davis' lab, go to Greg Call's cave (8911) and get the ten-foot pole, then use the pole to reach the box in the cage in Cal's lab. The orange passcard is in the box.

Keep track of who knows who and what and be careful when threatening people - bribing is much easier.

Big Jim Slade will be shot so ask your questions quickly, and don't ask Robert Knott about Gideon Enterprises or he too will be shot.

It seems that J. St.Gideon is the brain and Griffith is the brawn.

Frank Schimming is MORE than a "good friend" to Lola.

For amusement, play the video tape from 4670 in the VCR at 4605!

PHOENIX

By *Alf Baldwin* played on Spectrum

Take the Tarot cards to Hubert and say "Hello". He will tell you what to do and interpret your reading of the cards.

Dip the brush in the pot of whitewash and draw a pentagram around the Abomination to restrict its movement.

Get the spade and dig in the graveyard to unearth a coffin. Lift the lid of the coffin and you will see a throbbing heart. Wear the gauntlet which you found at the bottom of the well, before picking up the heart.

Take the heart to the village green and stab it with your knife in the presence of the Abomination.

STAR FLAWS

By *Gareth Pitchford* played on Spectrum

Examine the toilet on level 2 for the coin.

Shoot the General and examine him to find the credit card.

Examine the desk and under the desk.

In the location with the troops, shoot hatch then jump, turn hatch.

Examine sludge and liquid then shoot wall.

GOLDEN PYRAMID

By *Alf Baldwin* played on Spectrum

You must be wearing your hat when you go up the hill and along to the pyramid or you will get sunstroke.

The mechanism which operates the door to the pyramid is so finely balanced that the weight of a feather placed in the correct position will open the door.

Once the pyramid door is open you can give the feather to the witch doctor and get the torch from his hut. Light it in the fire. Don't

forget to search the hut for some fruit in case you should get hungry.

When you get inside the pyramid, you find the air duct is clogged up. Give the duct a good shake to dislodge the dirt.

Sail the raft across the underground lake and wait for a tribesman to appear. He will offer to lend you his lodestone in exchange for your knife. Accept his offer.

The granite slab is much too heavy to move as it is, but if you dismantled the raft, you would have some nice round logs to use as rollers. Insert them in the gap under the slab and you will now be able to push the slab over the floor of the spikes.

THE ELLISNORE DIAMOND

By *Mandy* played on Atari ST

Before you go down the well, if the cap fits then wear it. Stick a candle on it first though.

The boots will help you get up the hill to the ruins.

Examine the grass in the churchyard to find the key to the door. Search the desk in the school to find the Satchel - it will hold most items. Wear it when going down the well.

LEISURE SUIT LARRY II

By *Mandy* played on Atari ST

The KGB agents like their women to be full figured and smooth bodied so fill your bikini top with the soap and visit the barber for a full body wax to remove body hair.

The time to remove the bikini and wear your own clothes is just at the point at the end of the cliff walk before you arrive at the airport.

To get out of the plane you must bore Ken to death with some reading matter picked up at the airport.

The hot ashes you find in the native village will cure an icy situation later on.

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

By *Mandy* played on Amiga

Visit the fort to find the gunpowder, this will take care of the damn.

Use the flint with the cannon ball to light the gunpowder.

Two ropes are needed to get the oars.

If you have given the monkey sufficient bananas he will follow you and take care of the nose on the idol to hold open the gate so you can enter the area of the Monkey head. Just show him what do do first.

Take the wimpy little idol.

Give this to the canibals for an artifact.

Trade the banana picker with Toothrot for the Monkey head key.

If you are lost in the maze under Monkey Island then return to the Cannibal village and give them the Navigation leaflet. They will give you what you need to navigate the maze.

A lengthy bit of persuasion will convince the head to let you wear the necklace to be invisible on board the ghost ship.

The compass will get the keys in Le Chucks cabin.

Pick up a chicken for a ghost feather and tickle the foot of the sleeping crew member a few times to get the bottle.

Give the grog to the rat.

Get your libricant here for the squeaky door.

ECLIPSE

By *Alf Baldwin* played on Spectrum

The £1 note will not buy anything, we use coins nowadays. You can give it to the security officer if you wish but don't expect any favours.

The remote control unit operates the elevator. You must wear it to use it but take it off before recharging or you will get a nasty shock. It needs recharging frequently so don't stay too long on the other levels at any one time or you will be stranded with a flat battery.

Wear the ID card to pass the security officer. You will need to examine the card under ultra violet light to make out the number.

The general will brief you on your mission and your blast off code will be telexed. Examine the printer in the communications room. You will need the code book to read the telex.

DANGER! ADVENTURER AT WORK!

By *Simon Avery* played on Amstrad

The short-sighted hedgepig wants someone to love!
The camel may be a seamstress!
Pushing humpty is rocky work!
The witch wants something to talk to.
Be a vandal in the telephone box!

ARNOLD GOES SOMEWHERE ELSE

By *Simon Avery* played on Amstrad

Give Archilles the heel.
Give the goat to the python.
Harness the dragon.
"Dlonra" the door.
Use blowlamp on the icicles.
Pay Charon with the coins to cross the styx.
"Dlonra" the whirlpool.
Open the trapdoor with the crowbar.
Listen to the hippo!

BUGS AND AMUSING RESPONSES

AXE OF KOLT

By *Peter Bergmann* played on Spectrum

At the start of part three I found in my inventory a pair of goggles which I didn't have at the end of part two. Later on in this part I found a second pair but if I dropped the first pair of goggles at the beginning and didn't pick up the second pair and, whilst hanging on the rope in the shaft, I climbed up instead of down and jumped east, I was told that "You can see about 20 yards along the tunnel with the goggles on". Fortunately these strange happenings didn't hamper my progress or enjoyment of the game.

STARCROSS

By *Jeremy Smith* played on Commodore

When you have given your spacesuit to the alien Chief you can still enter your ship. Enter the airlock, put the blue disk outside the airlock and leave the red disk inside. Die in the vacuum of space and stand on the blue disk. You may now leave the airlock and enter the ship. Also if you put all of your objects in the nest in the Zoo and blast it with the gun you are told that it is destroyed together with all the objects, but they are still there!

ZORK III

By *Jeremy Smith* played on Commodore

For an amusing response try burning the rope with the torch!

KNIGHT ORC

By *Jeremy Smith* played on Commodore

When you know the teleport spell later in the game "cast teleport at moon" or any treasure and you may find that you end up in a room called ".!!!"

GETTING YOU STARTED

MARTIAN MEMORANDUM

By *The Grue!* played on PC

TEX'S OFFICE: GET MAIL, OPEN FILE CABINET DRAWERS, GET GUN, GET AMMO, GET LOCKPICK, GET CAMERA, GET LENS, USE CAMERA ON TRIPOD, USE LENS ON CAMERA, GET COMMLINK, USE IT, TRAVEL TO TERRAFORM.
TERRAFORM: TALK TO SECRETARY, GO TO OFFICE, TALK TO MARSHALL, LEAVE OFFICE, GO TO WASHROOM, MOVE SWITCH TO RIGHT OF DOOR, IN THE WASHROOM MOVE TOWEL, GET EARRING, LEAVE WASHROOM, TALK TO SECRETARY, OPEN EARRING, USE COMMLINK TO FIND OUT ABOUT EVERYONE, TRAVEL TO ALEXIS'S HOME.....

THE FOUR SYMBOLS

By *Mandy* played on Amiga

You start outside your home: IN, EXAMINE PEG, GET PEG, WEAR PEG, OUT, NW (to village pond), EXAMINE DUCKING STOOL, SW (outside church), IN, S (beside altar), OPEN CASKET, N, N, NE, NE (in the village, there is a large crowd gathered by a burning hut, ignore them for the moment). GET ROCK, SW, THROW ROCK IN POND (a floating piece of wood now comes within your reach), GET WOOD, NW, W (beside side window of a shop), OPEN WINDOW, WEDGE WINDOW (with piece of wood from the pond), IN, GET CHEESE, PUT CHEESE IN POCKET.....

CAPTAIN KOOK

By *Simon Avery* played on Amstrad

PRESS RED BUTTON, D, X BULKHEAD, GET SPACESUIT, WEAR SPACESUIT, U, W, S, S, SE (spacesuit protects you from the smoke), S, GET PLENCH, N, NW, N, X EQUIPMENT, STOP DISC WITH PLENCH, N, E, E, X HATCH, TOUCH PUTTY, S, S, X CANNISTER, TURN TAP WITH PLENCH, REMOVE SPACESUIT. (wait for approx. 10 turns) SW, PULL LEVER, NW, TOUCH SET, SE, BREAK PANNELLING WITH LEVER.....

LOST IN THE AMAZON

By *Pat Bradley* played on Commodore

EXAM PLANE, GET GUN, GET BULLET, LOAD GUN, GET CANTEEN, EXAMINE POCKETS (you automatically get matches and hanky), SE, W, SE, SHOOT TIGER, DROP GUN, S, CLIMB TREE, GET AXE, DOWN, E, NE, CLIMB TREE, EXAM NEST, GET VIAL, D, SE, FILL CANTEEN, CHOP TREE, DROP AXE, CROSS BRIDGE, W, S, S, E, GET FRUIT, W, W, GET SHOVEL, EXAMINE TABLE, GET KNIFE.....

HARBORO

By *Pat Bradley* played on Commodore

S, W, S, S, E, E, E, E, E, GET HAIRCUT, W, N, W, STEAL PLANK, W, S, W, W, N, SW, NW, W, W, W, W, SW, SW, S, S, SE, E, REPAIR BRIDGE, S, W, S, NW, S, W, GET CREDIT CARD, E, N, NE, E, N, E, NE, NW, NW, N, N, W, N, N, W, W, GIVE LETTER (receive note), E, E, E, S, EXAMINE FLOWERS, GET BADGE, WEAR BADGE, E, E, S, S, NW, SE, S, E, E, E, S, S, W, N, GIVE NOTE (receive £500).....

DUNGEON OF TORGAR

By *Suki's Mum* played on Amstrad

GET LAMP, LIGHT LAMP, N, N, N, HIDE BEHIND IDOL, WAIT UNTIL DISCIPLES LEAVE, CLIMB IDOL, EXAMINE EYES, PRESS EYE, CLIMB OFF IDOL, E, GET FLUTE, EXAMINE FLUTE, W, N, N, W, PLAY FLUTE, DROP FLUTE, NW, N, NW, SEARCH ROOM, GET SALT.....

THE MISER

By *Suki's Mum* played on Amstrad

SLEEP, INV, IN, GET BROOM, OUT, UNLOCK DOOR, OUT, S, D, UNLOCK DOOR, OUT, S, E, E, E, S, IN, TALK TO LANDLORD, SWEEP FLOOR, GET RUG, GET RUM (the Landlord won't let you), OUT, WAIT, HELP DRAYMAN, GET JUG, N, W, W, S, EXAMINE CHAIN, PULL CHAIN, IN.....

IN SEARCH OF ANGELS

By *Jim Donaldson* played on Spectrum

INSERT PASS, S, S, W, D, SEARCH BODY, GET NOTEBOOK, READ NOTEBOOK, U, W, W, SHOW PASS, S, W, S, GIVE NOTEBOOK, N, E, S, N, N, E, E, E, N, ENTER TAXI, RIO, W, ENTER CAR.....

THE INNER LAKES

By *Jim Donaldson* played on Spectrum

S, S, SE, EXAM SINK, GET SOAP, EXAM SHOWER, UNDRRESS, TURN ON KNOB, WASH YOURSELF WITH SOAP, TURN OFF KNOB, DROP SOAP, DRESS, NW, EXAMINE WARDROBE, GET BOX, EXAMINE BOX, N, NW.....

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

By *Jim Donaldson* played on Spectrum

EXAMINE MOTHER, U, N, EXAMINE BED, LOOK UNDER PILLOW, S, S, EXAMINE BED, N, D, GIVE HANKY, E, E, EXAMINE BARN, LOOK UNDER BARN, EXAMINE AXE, UNLOCK DOOR, E, EXAMINE STALL, EXAMINE STRAW, EXAMINE KNAPSACK, WEAR KNAPSACK.....

VIDEOWORLD PART 1

By *Simon Avery* played on Amstrad

GET TAPE, GET BUST, EXIT, COMPOUND, PERIMETER, JOIN GAME, GET BALL, CLIMB POLE, GET POLE, GET BOARD, COMPOUND, GARDEN, GET SWEEP, GET SWEEP, DROP POLE, ENTER, WEAR SWEEP, SWEEP CHIMNEY.....

VIDEOWORLD PART 2

By *Simon Avery* played on Amstrad

SHEPHERDS BUSH, EXIT, EXIT, TALK PHIL (he wants the crook, a dog and some sheep), ENTER, ENTER, BAKER STREET, EXIT, EXIT, GET MAGNIFYING GLASS, ENTER, ENTER, PADDINGTON, EXIT, EXIT, CLIMB TREE, D, GET HAMPER, ENTER, ENTER, BARBICAN, EXIT, EXIT, GET BALLOON, FASTEN CORDS.

.... THE WOODED MAZE, N, E, S, S, N, N, (read graffiti on the trees to map the maze).....

CONTRIBUTIONS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE

OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

ATALAN

By *Pat Bradley* played on Commodore 64

ANCHOR	: Tie rope to it then throw, you can then climb.
ARROW	: Treasure.
AXE	: Used to cut bamboo (1st) and chop tree (2nd).
BAMBOO	: With nails and hammer makes a raft.
BOAR	: The Dwarf is very thin - feed him.
BOW	: Not used.
CHEST	: Use hammer to smash it.
CARVINGS	: Use a bit of force - need a good push.
GOLDEN CROWN	: Treasure.
DAGGER	: Skin the tiger and gut the fish.
DIAMOND	: Receive in exchange for honey at the winged beings place.
EMERALD NECKALCE	: Treasure.
FLUTE	: Overcome the snake problem - needs a bit of puff.
FRUIT	: Try eating it.
GOBLET	: Treasure.
HAMMER	: Makes raft with bamboo and nails - also opens chest.
HONEYCOMB	: Offer this where you see winged beings.
IDOL	: Will reveal something if examined.
IRON KEY	: Feed dwarf to receive this then you can open a door.
LAMP	: When lit is useful for dark places.
LOG	: Bridges the chasm.
MATCHES	: Lights the lamp.
MUSKET	: Treasure. Try firing it for a laugh.
NAILS	: With bamboo and hammer makes a raft.
NUGGET OF GOLD	: Treasure.
PAPER	: You need this map to get the ruby.
PEARL	: Try opening the shell for this.
RAFT	: Sail in right place for a rod and line and a ring.
RING	: Treasure.
ROPE	: Used with Anchor helps you climb.
RUBBLE	: Needs looking at to reveal secret locations.
RUBY	: Need map to get this treasure.
SAPPHIRE	: Only available after catching and examining and gutting the golden fish.
SHELL	: Try opening it.
SKELETON	: Needs to be moved to reveal a secret.
SMOKING BRAND	: Keeps Bees quiet.
SPADE	: Use obvious - don't just use it once though!
SPEAR	: Treasure. Also kills Tiger. Don't forget it is treasure.
SWORD	: Treasure.
TALISMAN	: Treasure.
THRONE	: Examine and it will reveal its treasure.
TIGER SKIN	: Although ordinary it is necessary for a score of 100!
TREE	: Try chopping it down.
TRIDENT	: Treasure.
TUSK	: Treasure.
UGLY MASK	: Wear this to scare the natives.
WORM	: Bait for the line if you want a fish.

SOLUTION OF THE MONTH

ESCAPES FROM HODGKINS MANOR 1- SPECTRUM 48K

Solution - By Alf Baldwin

X CHAUFFEUR - (he is French) - W - X GRAFFITI - (wait here for a surprise, not using INANE will give you a shock, and if a shield you do strike then do it after a lever you do pull) - WAIT - (Axe is thrown over the wall) - GET AXE - E - N - X SALESMAN - (con artist selling disk drives) - X PORCH - X STEP - (welcome mat) - LIFT MAT - X CATCH - (open) - CLOSE CATCH - OPEN DOOR - N - X MRS - (looks like she's seen a ghost) - X STAIRS - (rotten) - N - (not with dirty hands) - E - S - X BASIN - GET SOAP - WASH HANDS - N - N - X COOK - (reading a book) - X SHELVES - X TIN - GET NAILS - X TABLE - GET KNIFE - X KNIFE - (will cut anything) - N - X BUTLER - (absent-minded) - GET CROISSANT - S - S - E - N - X LECTERN - GET BIBLE - S - W - W - N - X MAID - (she needs some carrots) - X PHONE - (dial or call number) - N - X VICAR - (has lost his bible) - GIVE BIBLE - (he unlocks door to vestry) - S - S - E - E - N - OPEN DOOR - E - X ROBES - PULL LEVER - W - S - STRIKE SHIELD - (panel in east wall opens) - E - GET TORCH - W - W - W - S - S - GIVE CROISSANT - (chauffeur leaves) - IN - OPEN GLOVE - X GLOVE - GET SCREWDRIVER - OUT - N - N - E - N - X DOOR - (locked, key on other side) - BREAK PANE - UNLOCK DOOR - OPEN DOOR - NE - X GARDENER - (on guard, blocking exit) - THROW SOAP - (he falls and leaves to get cleaned up) - N - W - X BORDERS - GET CARROTS - W - SMASH DOOR - (with axe, you see planks) - GET PLANKS - W - X TOOLS - GET SAW - X BENCH - GET HAMMER - S - X SACKS - MOVE SACKS - X GRILLE - UNSCREW GRILLE - DROP SCREWDRIVER - OPEN GRILLE - W - X CHEST - CUT MOSS - X CHEST - GET CROWBAR - E - N - E - E - E - S - SW - S - W - REPAIR STAIRS - (planks, nails, saw, hammer) - DROP SAW - U - E - S - X BED - GET SHEET - WEAR SHEET - N - W - D - (you scare Mrs. Hodgkins and she drops key to study) - GET KEY - N - GIVE CARROTS - (maid opens drinks cupboard) - W - GET DECANTER - E - S - UNLOCK DOOR - DROP KEY - OPEN DOOR - W - X MR - (needs a drink) - GIVE DECANTER - (sherry makes him merry and he accidentally drops his wallet) - GET WALLET - X WALLET - (full of money) - X HATSTAND - X COAT - (you find and take a curious token) - X DESK - GET MAP - X MAP - (catacombs of Lfious) - E - E - N - NE - N - W - N - X VINES - CUT VINES - (door revealed) - DROP KNIFE - X DOOR - INSERT TOKEN - (someone unbolts door) - OPEN DOOR - N - X STRAW - OPEN TRAPDOOR - (stuck) - LEVER TRAPDOOR - DROP CROWBAR - TORCH ON - D - GET OIL - U - TORCH OFF - S - S - E - S - SW - S - W - U - E - E - S - OPEN CUPBOARD - (hinges rusty) - OIL HINGES - DROP CAN - OPEN CUPBOARD - S - GET TRAY - N - N - W - N - NE - GET CARTRIDGE - READ LABEL - (electricity switch off programme) - SW - S - W - D - E - N - N - GIVE TRAY - (butler gives you Zikov passcard) - S - S - W - S - BUY DRIVE - X DRIVE - (paper attached) - X PAPER - (Zikov's address and telephone number) - N - N - CALL ZIKOV - (using number on paper - manual will be posted to you immediately) - S - S - (postman hands you a package) - X PACKAGE - OPEN PACKAGE - (manual) - N - W - W - X MANUAL - (simply says plug in) - DROP MANUAL - PLUG DRIVE - INSERT CARTRIDGE - TYPE INANE - (current turned off) - X BOOKCASE - PUSH BOOKCASE - N - X TERMINAL - INSERT PASSCARD - (keys fall out) - X KEYS - (all colours but etched "car") - S - E - E - S - S - IN - INSERT KEY - (in ignition) - TURN KEY - (car careers across drive, ground gives way and you end up in a cave) - TORCH ON - R - OUT - E - E - S - X SKELETON - SMASH SKELETON - GET BONE - N - W - W - U - TORCH OFF - S - GIVE BONE - (fido runs off with it) - OPEN GATE - S.

I wander south, out through the open gate, free at last! I know what I must do.. As Mr. Hodgkin is planning entire world domination (I read it in the local newspaper) - I have got to stop his evil plans. To do this, your guidance will assist me in stopping his next evil scheme...but what could it be?..I must wait and then at the opportune moment, I will strike.. In time I will know what to do..until then you must wait. Look out for the second part of the Zikov Trilogy - Coming soon.

R.P.G. SECTION

ABANDONED PLACES

By Electronic Zoo priced at £29.99. Amiga version (1 Meg. required).
Reviewed by *Paul Vincent*

An ancient evil threatens the mythical land of Kalynthia. Some 900 years ago a group of twelve heroes successfully freed Kalynthia from the evil grip of terror exercised by the dark immortal, Bronakh, and his monstrous hoards. For this service they reaped the dubious reward of being turned to stone, then stored in suspended animation deep below the land as insurance against the possibility that Bronakh may break free from his imprisonment within the Great Volcano. It now appears that Bronakh's influence is rising again, judging by the number of monsters being sighted near the "abandoned places" - ancient labyrinths created thousands of years ago in Kalynthia's First Age. Thus it is that four of the original twelve rocky heroes find themselves restored to life deep beneath the temple of Heaven's Light. The medium term goal is to find out what in Kalynthia is going on, and just what it is you're supposed to be doing about it. More urgently, however, is the fact that the stairs to the surface appear to be blocked, so how do you even take the first step of reaching the surface?

It is unusual to have to spend the first paragraph of a review setting the scene, but the amount of loving care lavished on the detailed scenario of "Abandoned Places" - a 40 page, very well-written outline history of the land is included in the package, as is a detailed full-colour map - warrants the lengthy introduction in this case.

So down to nuts and bolts: what we have here is an immense fantasy role-playing game (5 disks!) which takes the rich atmosphere and plotlines of an above-average fantasy novel, the classic dungeon exploration first-person 3D view which has been de rigeur since "Dungeon Master", and adds to them an outdoor movement mode in which an icon representing your party moves across a beautiful scrolling aerial view of the land of Kalynthia, via a "point and click" system. When you move onto a city or village location you are able to buy and sell everything from swords to sapphires at the local shops, whilst the training guilds offer level advancement to the experienced and the local sage may have words of wisdom offering clues to the next stage in your quest.

After being pointed towards a general location you have the option of searching there for hidden dungeon entrances in the wilderness. On entering a dungeon you are presented with the familiar Dungeon Master-style viewpoint, which is the cue for several hours of monster-bashing, puzzle-solving, and wandering around searching for that elusive hidden switch which might open up the enigmatic door you found half an hour ago! Nice touches abound: you only get experience for acting a character so a cleric gets no points for bashing a monster, but gains experience for healing wounds (or causing them with a Death Glow Spell, in the case of monsters!). The spell system is refreshingly straightforward: magic users have a scrolling list of known spells (which get longer as they gain experience), together with their cost in spell points. Clicking on the spell casts it, and deducts the appropriate number of spell points which are slowly regained - though sleeping periodically will speed up this process: the game encourages healthy regular habits like sleeping and eating!!

Where Abandoned Places scores highest is in the quality of its puzzles. These are mostly of the "find and use the right keys in the right order" school, but great ingenuity has been exercised in the number of variations the authors have found on this timeworn theme. Doors with switches are usually opened by pressing the switch but sometimes the switch opens another nearby door instead, releasing a bunch of monsters who sneak up behind you and... In addition some large obstacles can be pushed and pulled around to produce puzzles reminiscent of the Socoban-type puzzle games (but it's Socoban with attacking monsters and hidden pressure-pad traps!).

Gripes and complaints are very few and far between. The most niggling to me, is that when a Light spell expires in a subterranean location everything goes dark even if you're currently standing facing a burning torch in a wall-bracket! Mind you, at least if you try to walk into a wall, the game politely points out that you can't walk through walls - which makes better sense than Dungeon Master and Knightmare's silly habit of docking you several points of damage. I mean, I know fighters aren't gifted with immense intellects, but they're not THAT stupid!

To sum it all up, if you've ever enjoyed playing the Dungeons and Dragons type of role-playing games, and wished the computerised versions of RPGs were more like the pencil-and-paper originals then this might be the game for you. If you found Dungeon Master and Eye of the Beholder addictive then hesitate no longer - go out and buy it this moment. Then maybe Electronic Zoo will produce a sequel! I think I am irrevocably hooked on this wonderful game!

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HEIMDALL

Helplines by *Ron Rainbird* played on Amiga

LAND OF MIDGARD

To find Hemlock, go to chest surrounded by pits - cast "Disarm Traps", then open chest.
Use Descension Spell on object blocking your path to pick up Diamond.
Use Revelation Spell to cross chasm.
There are 2 doors in room full of steel traps. Cast "Detect Doors".
Experiment with pressure pads to get across a pit.
Do not waste "Disarm Trap" spells on chests. Just open them for small damage to your leader.
To get Thor's Hammer, cast "Shrinking" Spell when on the Island guarded by reefs.

LAND OF UTGARD

Three Sisters of Fate require Dragon's Eggs (Sight), Apple & Necklace.
To reach Horn, use the "Transportation" Spell. Use mouthpiece to blow Horn. When blown, Horn will transport you to Frey's Spear.

LAND OF ASGARD

Three Silver Rings needed. One is in room with Pressure Pads. By trying each one and stepping on the lower centre pad, arrows will be released. With the right combination one will sever the rope holding a ring. One is beyond a Lake which can only be crossed by using Runestones. The final Ring is obtained by throwing Peppar at a Boat's Masthead. The Peppar is found by using a Bag of Stones in front of an empty recess next to an enchanted niche on the island with a shop.
Use the "Water" Spell to quench a fire, then go to a red carpeted Staircase with three round depressions in the foreground. Drop the three rings into these to get the final Weapon.

STRATEGY SECTION

UMS - The Universal Military Simulator

Played on an Amiga 500 (1 meg.) by John Ferris

The Universal Military Simulator (UMS) is basically a wargame construction kit which enables you to simulate almost any battle you can imagine or reconstruct. I became interested in wargames after playing a simple Public Domain game several years ago and finding that the strategy elements really appealed to me.

UMS is played on a 22x23 3D map, the units being represented as flags as opposed 2D blocks. The effect is quite attractive and realistic.

UMS can be played against the computer or another human and whilst it doesn't require a 1 meg. expansion, the extra memory is used if present. The program is quite easy to use, with commands being issued mainly with the mouse and the battle being split into eight-move turns. The number of turns depend on the set time limit. You issue your commands to your units at the start of each turn. If your opponent is another player, then they issue their orders before starting the turn. If you are playing the computer, you may allow the computer a free choice of tactics or tell it what manoeuvres to perform (ie defend, attack, attack the centre/right/left or pincer. As each move takes place, each side is able to use their ranged weapons (ie arrows, tanks, aircraft etc.) and the results of each combat can be studied if wished. The battle ends when one side ceases to exist or when the battle runs out of time, in which case the program decides the winner.

As far as the wargame creation part of the program goes, all the utilities are found on a second disk, where you can create maps, build armies and put the two together to form a battle scenario. This takes time, but with care you can create some pretty tough battles. It is possible to put armies of different time periods together to "see what would happen." Personally I think that is rather daft and due to the way the program works, it wouldn't be realistic anyway.

Up to a point, UMS is a good program and I would recommend it to anyone who fancies a cheap introduction to wargaming (Special Reserve sell UMS at around six pounds). However, hardened wargamers will find realism suffers a bit, especially when the computer attacks with its units in a tight scrum which is hardly realistic. The computer is really a poor opponent, being understandingly unimaginative (but effective) whilst attacking but sometimes absolutely appalling when defending. The game is best played with a friend where you can lay down some ground rules to add to the realism. I've had UMS for ages and I still play it quite often, which speaks for itself.

UMS II

UMS II is a recent release and promised to be a lot more complex than its predecessor. That it is, with all the problems caused by supplying troops, extended campaigns, weather and an unbelievably slow program. All I can say about this program is that hardened wargamers will love it, as long as they buy an accelerator card for their Amiga, because without one they might not live long enough to finish a game. On a 16MHz PC UMS II probably ticks along nicely, but in my opinion UMS II on a 7MHz Amiga 500 is unplayably slow.

Strategy Section

Laser Squad

By Ken Bond played on Amstrad and Amiga

In this game you control a squad of soldiers varying from 5 upwards and there are various scenarios to attempt. In the first one you have to assassinate an important person in his house who is guarded by armed robots. In another you attempt to rescue comrades in various cells scattered over a mine complex. You can play against the computer with various levels of difficulty or play against a friend.

You first of all have to select what armour to put on each soldier if any. You have a fixed budget and the better the armour the higher the cost. You also have to bear in mind that a soldier with heavy armour is not going to walk as far as one without. You then select a weapon or weapons for each varying from a dagger at little cost to a rocket launcher which is expensive. You then can place your men on certain squares and arm them with their weapons. Each soldier has a certain number of points per turn depending on his strength and what he is carrying and everything costs points even turning round. When you have finished your go the computer or your friend takes over and does his turn. You can get an overhead view of the whole playing area but you cannot see the enemy until they come into the view of one of your men. If an enemy comes into view when it is your turn you can shoot at him if you have sufficient points. Automatic fire is cheap but wildly inaccurate. A snap shot costs more but you have more chance of hitting. An aimed shot is expensive in points but is much more accurate. You can pick up weapons dropped by the enemy or your own dead men. You can open doors, prime grenades or cut open steel doors with a laser cutter.

One very interesting option of this game is called opportunity fire. If when you have finished your turn and you have a certain quite high number of points left you are entitled to this option. If an enemy comes into view of a soldier with opportunity fire although it is not the soldier's turn he can fire at the enemy until he kills him or his points or ammunition runs out. You have to keep an eye on the stamina and morale of your men as if one panics he will drop his weapon and must be made to pick it up. This is altogether a very enjoyable game which is rather under rated.

RED HERRINGS

By *Tony Melville*

GREEN SONJA

GHERKINS, SWORD and CUP

ACORNS QUEST

SEAWEED and KEY

ANAMAGONS TEMPLE

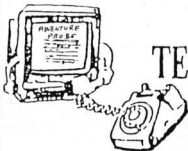
PEN, FOOD, FIGURINE and WINE

BOOZE UP

PLATES, CUP OF TEA, CHASTITY BELT, KNICKERS, CAT SUIT, CHINAMAN'S OUTFIT, PEAR, CABBAGE, CAULIFLOWER, TANK, RIFLE, RAMBO'S STRIP JOINT.

DODO AND DAMN

T.V.(broken), LIGHTER and WATCH



TELEPHONE HELPLINE

ALF BALDWIN	0452 500512	MON TO SAT 10AM TO 5PM	Spectrum
WALTER POOLEY	051 9331342	ANY REASONABLE TIME	Various
DOREEN BARDON	0653 628509	MON TO FRI 6PM TO 10PM WEEKENDS ANY REASONABLE TIME	Spectrum
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	Various
ISLA DONALDSON	041 9540802	SUN TO SAT NOON TO 12PM	Amstrad
NIC RUMSEY	0323 482737	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
VINCE BARKER	0642 780076	ANY REASONABLE TIME	CBM64
STUART WHYTE	061 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 0895 573141 between 7:30pm to 9pm Mon to Fri. Or write to 64 COUNTY ROAD, ORMSKIRK, WEST LANCS, L39 1QH.

*** ADVENTURE PROBE ***

Fax and Phone 0492 877305

Between 10am and 9pm any day apart from Sunday please

If you need to contact Adventure Probe then I will try to be available during these times apart from shopping and the occasional evening meeting. If you are telephoning for help on an adventure then please try to call during daytime hours but please try one of the helpliners for help first, as above.

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU ONLY RING AT THE TIMES SHOWN