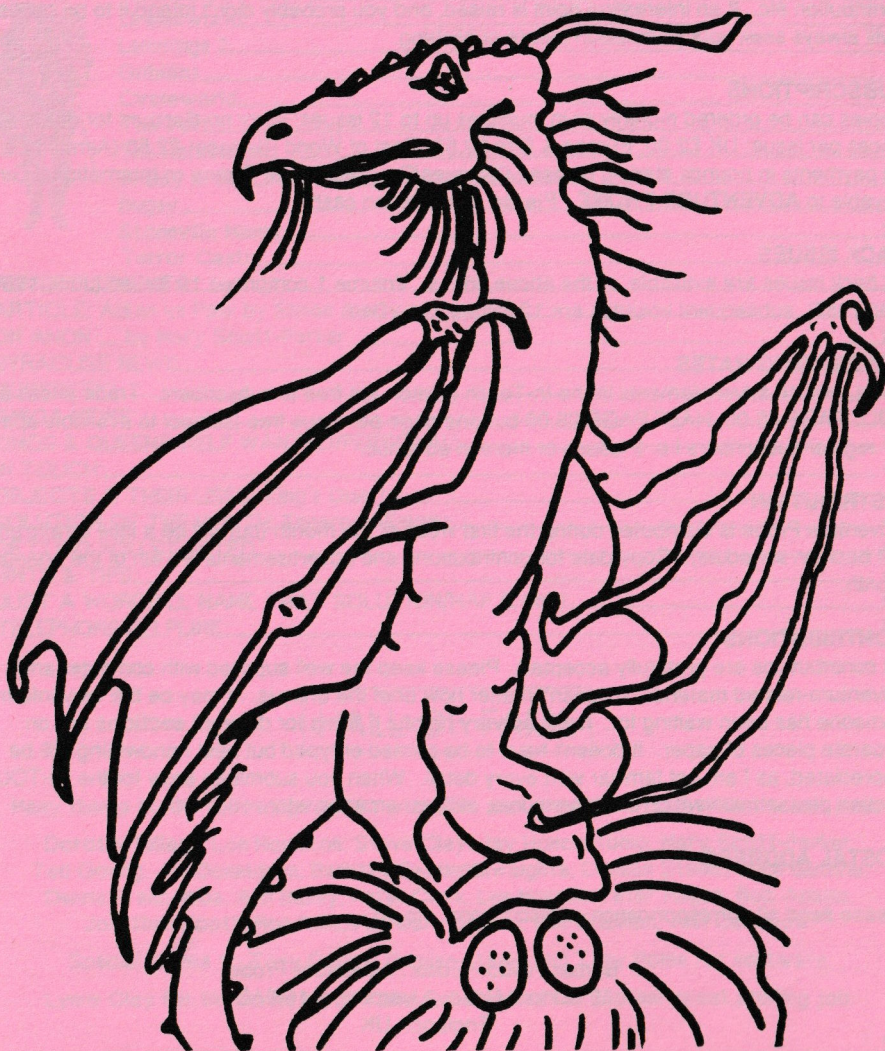


ADVENTURE PROBE

AUGUST 1993 £2.00
VOLUME 7 ISSUE 8



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

ADVENTURE PROBE

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LETTERS

If you write in it will be assumed that the letter is for publication in Probe unless it is clearly marked NOT FOR PUBLICATION, or obviously just a covering note for your subscription, contribution etc. If an interesting point is raised, and you probably didn't intend it to be published, I will always seek your permission before publishing.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Copies can be ordered monthly or in multiples up to 12 issues: sorry no discount for quantity. Prices per issue: UK £2.00, Europe & Eire £2.50, Rest of World (Surface) £2.50 (Airmail) £3.00. All payments in pounds sterling please. Cheques/Crossed Postal Orders or International Giro payable to **ADVENTURE PROBE**. Please do **not** send cash.

BACK ISSUES

All back issues are available, at the above prices. Volume 1 comprises 19 issues (June 1986 - Dec 1987), subsequent volumes are 12 issues Jan - Dec.

ADVERTISING RATES

Short, private advertisements in the In-Touch section are free to subscribers. Trade prices are: FULL PAGE £5.00, HALF PAGE £3.00 but one page per issue free (subject to available space) for regular subscribers i.e. 3 issues or more in advance.

DISTRIBUTION

Adventure Probe is distributed during the first week of the month (but will be a little erratic until I get back on schedule). Copy date for contributions and advertisements is 14th of the previous month.

CONTRIBUTIONS

All contributions are gratefully accepted. Please keep me well supplied with computer and adventure-related material. It doesn't matter how brief the entry is. It may be the very information someone has been waiting for. It will be **very** helpful if items for different **sections** are on separate pieces of paper. It doesn't have to be printed or typed but best handwriting will be appreciated, as I am not familiar with every detail. When you submit an entry for the IN-TOUCH section please mark which are adventures, utilities, arcades, etc.

POSTAL ADDRESS

Please send all correspondence, subscriptions, etc. to:-

Barbara Gibb - Editor, Adventure Probe
52 Burford Road, Liverpool, L16 6AQ
England, UK.

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HALL OF FAME

Many thanks to the following readers who have sent in contributions since the last issue:

Dorothy Millard, Lon Houston, Steve Clay, Jay Honosutomo, Mary Scott-Parker, Ted Goring, Jim Donaldson, Barbara Bassingthwaighe, Damian Steele, John Guthrie, Dennis Francombe, Ann Bailey, Peter Clark, Lee Morrall, Peter Hague, Bob Adams, Jonathan Scott, Ron Rainbird, Hilary Walton, Nell Shipman, Ann Castelow.

Special thanks to Tony Collins, Damian Steele and Tony Rome for software.

Lynne Clay for the cover picture and Geoff Lynas for another great printing job.

EDITORIAL



Dear Readers,

The month of August has been so hectic for me that my intention of getting this issue out by mid August was scuppered. I try to ensure the news, letters and reviews sections of the magazine are as up to date as possible, so I had to make last minute changes to keep up with events.

I know adventuring is considered by some as an eccentric hobby, but have you ever been called Obscure? (Probably only if you are an owner of an 8-bit computer!) Atari owners who have bought Peter Hague's "The Obscure Naturalist" adventure now have a chance to join The Obscure Naturalist Fan Club. A fee of £6 covers twelve monthly newsletter containing hints for this excellent and difficult adventure, a membership card in a neat plastic wallet plus a Certificate of Obscurity entitling you to use the prefix W H I T (meaning "Who the Hell Is That"). A good response will encourage Peter to extend it to more than 12 and also to complete the sequel which will also be covered by the newsletters. I'm still playing T.O.N. and progressing very slowly, but that is how it is intended to be played - to last months rather than days, probably years for me but I'm not complaining. It is very good value for money - see advert. later in the magazine.

Since I wrote my comments to Neil Shipman's letter I have received another postcard from Marin Stanculescu to say my letter arrived weeks after the parcel and again thanks me for the magazine and software. He/she wishes to keep writing and asks for any advice or information about the Spectrum world. I'll reply, requesting more detail of his/her preferences as I don't know much about the technical side of the Spectrum, so can only offer help in my own specialized field - text adventures.

If my outstanding playtesting files are anything to go by plenty of 8-bit owners are writing adventures, but where are all the players? I asked Jack Lockerby if he was planning to convert his latest adventure "Theme Park U.K." to the C64. He said there wasn't much point as sales are very poor for those he has already released! I understand Jon Lemmon has not only ceased writing adventures for the Spectrum but Compass Software has also ceased trading, so anyone wishing to buy his games, IT IS TOO LATE - secondhand copies are your only option.

I've had an excellent response from the readers who were due to renew their subscriptions after the last issue, much better than I dared to hope for, and my gamble to order an extra 10 copies also paid off as already I'm down to 2 unsold copies. Thank you all.

I wish to thank Neil Ashmore for the postcard - four magnificent views of the Statue of Liberty. I'm sure it isn't meant as a comment, I hope I don't come across as someone who looks down on everyone. The magazine is your magazine which is why your support and patience is appreciated. Producing a monthly magazine is hard work, but very rewarding, and I get through a lot of material every month. Please, if you have any hints and tips for any adventures please send them in now, especially if it is a 16-bit game.

Happy adventuring, *Barbara* A.F.I.O. Hon. Member

P.S. If anyone has heard from Dorothy Jones recently could they either let me know her current address or ask her to contact me, as another magazine has been returned "unknown".

LETTERS



From Neil Shipman of Bristol

Out of the blue I recently received a postcard from Romania. This is what it said:

Dear Sir,

Greetings from Romania! You will be surprised to get a letter from a perfect stranger. I am a really Atari enthusiast. I didn't found software, peripherals or magazines for Atari in Ro. I should particularly like to know if you can help me with my Atari.

Yours sincerely,

TATIANA

STR.ALEEA PODUL GIURGIULUI. NR.1.

BL.14. SC.4. AP.103. SECT.5. OP7.

COD 75407. BUCURESTI. ROMANIA.

I don't know where Tatiana got my name and address but it was probably from an old issue of Atari ST User in which I advertised software for sale. I'm now using my PC 99% of the time and have already sold off most of my ST stuff but I have sent her a few ST disks. Some other readers with STs might like to send something too. (Don't Romanians have great postal addresses?!)

★

In late June I received a postcard with an almost identical typed message from a Marin Stanculescu asking for help with software and peripherals for his (her?) ZX Spectrum. I sent a package on 5th July containing a copy of the June issue of Probe, 4 spare adventures, 4 sport/arcade games that I didn't play, plus lists of suppliers of Spectrum software and hardware. Some time later I heard from quite a few readers who have received similar postcards but asking about hardware and software for their particular machines. These seem to have come from various addresses, but at least one had handwriting that matched a second postcard I received from Marin thanking me for the games and asking me to publish his/her address. I don't know how my own name and address was obtained, but I suspect almost everyone whose full address was published in the June issue of Probe has received a similar postcard to Neil's. One such reader, Ann Bailey, has written to her contact asking for further details. To date, several weeks after sending the letter, she hasn't heard anything, but we will, of course, keep you informed.

Probe readers are always very generous, but I think I should advise you not to send anything that you can't afford to part with, bearing in mind that we know nothing about this group. If that is what they are - they could be dealers rather than fellow enthusiasts. As another reader has told me, they are, by nature and necessity, very cunning. I don't wish to deter anyone from sending any software or hardware, for they may indeed be genuine. If you hear from them, please let me know. I am willing to collect together oddments and post them off in a single parcel - the postage on the smallish package I sent cost nearly £5. (Barbara)

From Lee Morrall of Heath Hayes

I had to respond to Damian Steele's letter in issue 7, regarding the time taken to write an adventure. I was pleased to hear from a fellow author who also writes games for Tony at The Guild. However, when he says he can write an adventure in a weekend with "plenty of coffee" I think he means plenty of amphetamine! I'm not saying it's impossible - you can write a game in a day without a utility, but what kind of game would that be I wonder?

I haven't written a game for some time now, but I still get inspiration, and if I thought I could better my last game I'd get straight back to the keyboard. Back in 1987 I wrote five games (in between revising for my 'O' Levels) and I found as I got more used to my own method of programming an adventure, my games got more sophisticated and detailed until they could take several months more to edit, debug and improve. (This applies to any computer.)

I usually get an idea mulling through my head for a few days before I put pen to paper - then I'm writing a simple plot, objective, and inventing puzzles, as well as drawing a map and thinking of characters, locations and things like a scoring system and time factor - If I think the game needs it. Then I start to write the program, whilst making notes in a large notebook that will be filled with the skeleton game plans as I am programming. I prefer to use my own system of BASIC programming, as the game will still run as fast as The Quill because of the way I use logical loops in the program.

After completing the core of the game, I start to playtest, debug and improve the program. I do get totally involved in writing a game and creating a new world in the computer, so I need plenty of spare time to get absorbed in making what I believe to be a quality product, for my own satisfaction, and that of others.

A weekend! Shucks! That reminds me of those guitarist who play a hundred notes in a second, but there's no soul there whatsoever!

★

I have been playing your game, The Menage, for quite a while now, and planned to review it in this issue. However, as my Commodore decided to go on strike due to overwork lately, I haven't had time to finish it. I promise it will be done as soon as the machine is repaired. (Barbara)

From Steve Clay of Ellesmere Port

..... Damian Steele's letter stated that he had written three adventures in what amounts to five weeks and three days. Good luck to him. What annoyed me about his letter was the inference that all writers should be able to achieve the same sort of output. Looking at the databases of my three Taxman games I reckon I could have entered them all in the five weeks but that wouldn't leave much time to actually work out the routines and the puzzles in the first place, let alone have the games playtested and then correct any errors that may be discovered. Damian makes no mention of how he writes his games. Does he sit down in front of a blank screen and program as he goes? Does he work it all out on paper first? Does the first idea for a game end up as a game? Do his games make full use of the available memory? Are graphics used to pad out the database?

I'm not trying to say his games will be poor quality. Damian may well have a talent for putting out top quality adventures in record time. If so, then I take my hat off to him and only wish I could do it. I've written three adventures [The Final Demand is being playtested at the moment] in two years; this doesn't include the four years I spent getting used to the PAW system. I have two games on disk, Trorc and The Adventurers' Guild, that I wouldn't dare inflict on anyone. I looked at these games as a sort of testing phase where I learn about PAW.

I wish Damian all the best with his games, but remind him that everyone does things differently and that's why adventure games vary so much.

★

Great news about a third Taxman adventure, I'm sure it will be every bit as good and successful as Taxman Cometh and Tax Returns.

I thought I would receive a few letters from authors and can only admire all of you for writing marvellous adventures for us to play. If anyone else cares to write in about how they go about writing an adventure game, please do so, we are all very interested.

★

Damian sent me a copy of his latest adventure, Black Mass, and I managed to finish it just before my computer "died". This is a GACed adventure that calls on you to search in and around the mansion seeking certain objects needed to conduct a black mass. A novice adventurer may need a little help but I found it an interesting game with one or two twists at the end.

Please see elsewhere in this magazine for a special offer for all owners of a Commodore 64 with disk drive. (Barbara)

From Ian Brown of Leicester

Today I had a phone call from Dave Ledbury regarding his supposed attempt to replace FROM BEYOND.

It would appear Terry Taylor (The Jester) and I (Storm) have been grossly misinformed by him, so therefore neither Terry nor myself will be contributing to his efforts.

★

For readers who didn't subscribe to From Beyond perhaps I should explain that a flyer was sent out with the final issue advising readers of the plans to launch a magazine called Back From Beyond at the Adventurer's Convention in October.

Dave also telephoned me about various matters, one being that Back From Beyond is likely to be in the form of a Newsletter (as opposed to a 56 pages magazine) and would probably be published less frequently than the bi-monthly schedule of F.B. (Barbara)

From A Picturegoer of a cinema near you

How interesting to see a studio still from the days of silent pictures on the cover of the Birthday Issue.

This famous still is posed by Theda Bara. When the studio was thinking up a name for this actress, whose real name seemed to consist mainly of consonants without vowels between, they came up with anagrams of Death and Arab, which were supposed to create an aura of romance with danger! She was the original vampire, who fed on Men's desire, later shortened to vamp, as a general term for all such females. Thanks for the memory!

★

I left the choice of cover picture to Geoff Lynas and his assistant so it is they who must take the credit. It wasn't quite the birthday cake with candles, streamers and balloons that I expected, but it has certainly made an impression on quite a few readers. Geoff tells me he thinks it looks as if she is looking forward to the future (i.e. Probe's 8th Birthday) but I think she is really looking forward to something else which shouldn't be mentioned in a family magazine.

I've only a few cover pictures in stock. If I can persuade Geoff to search his archives, there may be another pleasant surprise for us all; I've always admired Mae West. (Barbara)

From Peter Clark of Ipswich

First of all I would like to thank all those people who rushed to assist me with my plea for help in last month's Probe. To date I have received help from Larry Horsfield, Tom Frost, John Wilson, Stephen Boyd, Steve Clay and Jonathan Scott. Not bad is it when you think that I only received my copy of Probe less than a week ago? It is very encouraging to know that we are so much a caring, sharing group of friends. Thank you each and every one.

Last month Debbie Howard took over the role left by The Balrog and has done a great job for us Amstrad adventurers. If you are involved with the Amstrad Adventure Scene, please write to her with tips, comments and reviews. Remember, she is the only national "glossy" mouthpiece on the Amstrad front. If Amstrad Action drops the adventure column the 8-bit scene will be almost dead, so it's up to us!

★

I am very pleased to hear that you received so many replies. It proves what we all know - that we will help if we can.

I get very few contributions for Amstrad specific adventures. This is very worrying, because I know from the subscription renewal forms that many readers have Amstrads. Please, please support Debby and ensure Amstrad Action doesn't go the same way as Your Sinclair and Sinclair User. Commodore Force is the only other 8-bit glossy that I know of that still has an adventure column, so C64 owners, the above message should also be directed at you - support Bash the Barbarian a.k.a. Mandy. (Barbara)

From Damian Steele of Paignton

Praise to Adventure Probe. I have a friend whose name is Eric. About ten years ago Eric bought a text adventure and was unable to complete it. As usual with a game that can't be completed, it was tucked away in a dark cupboard until, once or twice a year, Eric would make another attempt at solving those dreaded puzzles, but sadly without success.

When I heard of Eric's problem I was able to tell him that although I could not help, I knew a magazine that could. With a quick letter to Barbara I was able to get a complete solution to that game which has caused problems for almost ten years. At last Eric is happy.

The point of the tale is to say a "thank you" to Adventure Probe for being there and providing support for adventurers new and old and to hope that it will be around for at least another ten years - to help Eric with the next one.

★

One adventure every ten years! That won't keep the bells of the tills of the towns ringing very often! Perhaps now that Eric has finished one, he will try another, and not wait ten years before seeking help. It confirms my belief that we must take every opportunity to pass the word around to reach the likes of Eric who may develop into more prolific adventurers if they knew help is readily available.

COMPETITION FOR C64 OWNERS

Win one of three C64 disk copies of Damian Steele's latest game THE BLACK MASS.

All you have to do is finish the following surrealist joke:

Q. What is the difference between a duck?

A. ?

The first three correct entries selected after the closing date of 30th September 1993 will receive a copy by mail.

In the event of there being none or too few correct entries, the most amusing incorrect answers will be selected.

Send your entry, enclosing your name and address (block capitals please) to:

Damian Steele,
Flat 2 4b FENTON
Southfield Rise,
Paignton, Devon,
TQ3 2NE

The winners names and home towns will be available after the closing date to those sending an SSAE. The judges decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into.

REVIEWS

THE BLACK TOWER

Written by Diane Rice

Reviewed by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum



This is a stylish two-part text adventure in which your task is to find and destroy the powerful Morjan Crystal hidden in the Black Tower of the title.

Part one involves quite a lot of walking around, and at one point, hanging around, but the map is fairly compact with two points of no return. As in all the best adventures most objects are hidden from view and involve solving one or more puzzles before you can get your hands on them. These are the sort of puzzles that keep your interest and I like the way they are strung together.

At the end of part one you will be given one of two code words depending on what you are carrying. Needless to say only one is correct. However, the author has been kind and before you have progressed too far the familiar figure of a friendly gnome appears and suggests you should have brought something else.

The gnome is familiar because you met him earlier when he wasn't quite so friendly if he caught you inspecting his possessions. He makes a couple more appearances, so remember that he knows what you look like, and note how you pleased him on your first encounter. I think he is a delightful character with a keen sense of humour, and hope I'm not writing/talking out of place if I hint that he makes at least one appearance in Diane's next adventure. After all your legwork in the first part, it is a pleasant change to find that after a bit of exploring on foot you can hitch a lift on the fabulous Roc, a creature that has always fascinated me ever since I saw an illustration of one in my Arthur Mee's Childrens' Encyclopaedia many years ago - how I wish I still had them! This flying taxi service is the only way you will reach some of the locations so you will have to learn how it operates, and it will be a feather in your cap if you can direct it to where you wish to go.

Be warned. If something seems easy in this game, then it might have been too easy. Traps have been set throughout, especially in the second part, and I got in a tangle on several occasions.

Although Black Tower is a Quilled game, every effort has been made to make it unique. The loading screen sets the mood (by J.W. himself maybe?), and the unusual green screen with thick black print makes it very easy on the eyes throughout the game.

An excellent first adventure by an experience player who has now turned her hand to writing. Very well presented with really tricky puzzles that will keep the Probe helpline running hot.

Available from: Zenobi Software, 26 Spotland Tops,
Cutgate, Lancs. OL12 7NX. Spectrum: Tape £2.49, 3.5"
Plus D disk £2.49, +3 disk £3.49 Amiga (with Spectrum
emulator included) : £2.49



THE SPANISH TREASURE

Written by Tony Rome

Reviewed by Barbara Gibb on a C64



There I was, enjoying the scenery from a few thousand feet up when suddenly a blip appeared on the radar screen and the pilot slumped over the controls, shot dead. After several failed attempts to survive the inevitable plane crash, I managed to land safely. Now, with my feet firmly on terra firma, I had to be very quick witted and nimble for the pilot of the attacking plane had landed nearby.

I think I am playing an agent, sent in to snatch the treasure of the title from under the nose of the "enemy", Drago and his henchmen. Using his money to hire a launch is a nice twist, and it got me on my way. I had a few hiccups when I had to deal with a couple of guards but that was because I was trying to use the wrong weapon on the first, and was giving the wrong password to the second. I struggled for hours, then asked for help.

It was never plain sailing (to coin a phrase) from thereon either, but I enjoyed the underwater trip in the bathyscope, and was so engrossed in the adventure I hadn't realized the clock had ticked along to well past 2am before I had completed it.

Although The Spanish Treasure is written using the GAC you wouldn't be aware of the fact if it wasn't for the sluggish response time. As you move between locations the screen clears to be replaced, amazingly quickly, by new text and often by an illustration. The text is as descriptive as memory allows and the graphics are of a quality rarely seen on an 8-bit machine. I particularly appreciated the fact that they varied in size and shape to suit the occasion, i.e. a wide oblong view for an office scene and a smaller squarish one for a seascape.

Apart from the aforementioned problems, I also had a little trouble "boarding" the launch. I don't think I am giving too much away when I tell you that to travel on water you have to have the launch in your inventory and then move in a compass direction.

Tony says he is constantly updating his adventures and as this is the first one I have played to the finish, I must say I am impressed and wish other users of the GAC could come close to his presentation.

It definitely helps if you are familiar with an author's style of writing and programming, so flush with success I had another go at Tony's ARGON FACTOR. I bought this some years ago and I'm delighted to report that I have made much better progress, and wait to return to it, as soon as my computer is mended.

In conclusion, a well-presented adventure that should leave you wanting to play more - so see the advertisement elsewhere in this magazine. One last point - it won't load using an Action Replay cartridge.

Available from: Logyk Software, 391 Gillott Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B16 9LL Price: £3.50 on disk, £3 on tape.



THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

Reviewed by Lon Houlston on an Atari STE

I had been looking forward to trying MONKEY ISLAND for some time and then the opportunity arose to buy a secondhand copy at a very reasonable price - no more excuses, I had to set sail forthwith with sword in one hand and grog bottle in the other.

Basically, Guybush Threewood is a rather naive young man who sets out to fulfil a lifelong ambition to become a working pirate in the Caribbean. Events commence in the Scumm Bar on Melee Island - an inn of low repute - where he seeks counsel from senior pirates as to the correct way of becoming a fully fledged member of the brotherhood.

He is informed that he must undergo three trials :

- (1) The sword, to defeat the sword master
- (2) Thievery, steal the Idol Of Many Hands
- (3) The quest, retrieve the legendary treasure of Melee Island.

Then follows a series of adventures as Guybush endeavours to serve his apprenticeship ranging from being fired from a cannon in a circus tent to becoming an expert in throwing fencing insults.

Guybush is besotted by the lady governor (who is a bit of a dolly) and when she is kidnapped by Lechuck, the dead and ghostly pirate leader, he is driven to secure a ship and head for Monkey Island. The bonnie lad loses a lot of weight shuttling back and forward between the many superb locations where he finally brings about the comeuppance of Lechuck.

There is no keyboard input beyond clicking on a set of number of options but as you can use one option with another and as you can ring the changes with lots of additional speeches I was quite content to use what I had been provided with. I was most impressed with the colours and the graphics generally but what I really liked were the numerous instances of short animated sequences sparked off by my input. It would, in my opinion, be worth buying the game just for these alone!

I liked the style of humour used and had difficulty in stopping my laughter, for example, when Guybush and the governor express their feelings for one another. It is a very user friendly adventure with none of the silly time wasting sudden deaths I abhor.

The only downside was being continually thrown out onto the desktop when only a few moves from the end. U.S.Gold helpline was very helpful, however, and advised me that the early versions were bugged as far as the STE was concerned. They replaced my disks within a week which solved the problem. It was also, perhaps, a little fiddly using 5 disks (including a data disk) but all in all I enjoyed it enormously. Let us hope that U.S.Gold can be persuaded to convert Monkey Island 2!

It is best to shop around for a bargain, but if that fails Special Reserve have it in their catalogue for £13.99 for Amiga (1 meg) and Atari (1 meg), and £15.99 for PC version. (Barbara)



ANOTHER BLOODY ADVENTURE

Written by John Broad

Reviewed by Damian Steele on a C64

The "adventure" of the title was written using the Quill and accepts the usual verb-noun commands as well as compass directions. Other outputs, like "Hit Thorin with a weighted sweaty sock" - as the author says - are not recommended. For optimum enjoyment of the game, the author recommends that you connect two T.V.s in series around three feet apart, wear ear-muffs, soak your feet and whistle in Hebrew whilst playing.

The point of the game is to find and defeat the evil Sir Sly Eclair using many varied and unusual items along the way. These wacky objects include a portable steamroller, some wood chisels, never-ready batteries and a lethal series one 48K Spectrum.

The locations are described using the same humour which runs throughout the game. At various points in the game you'll find yourself in the XYZ cinema, Dildo's house and W.H.Smiggy's - the infamous bookshop. The humour isn't merely confined to object and location descriptions, the author has included many such witticisms. For example - when in the cinema you hear a voice from the darkness behind you which asks "Have you got a light, mac?" to which you reply "No, I've got a dark brown overcoat." Other things to look for in the game are Jeff "animal" Minter's Llamas and the "mensa trained staff" in Daxons electrical stores who won't let you leave until you've bought their new triple-sided floppy disk! The puzzles range from easy to merely ridiculous and many are solved more from luck than logical thought.

On the down side, Mr. Broad seemed unaware of the existence of flags throughout the game, particularly when objects are discovered. For instance if you were to examine the seat of the cinema, you would find the usherette's torch. Having taken this from the seat you can re-examine the seat and voila! It has magically returned. Another point to look for due to this lack of flags is a one-way situation where you need a specific input like "smash window" or "press button" to access an area. Each time you wish to return you will have to go through the entire sequence again. This means that you will also need the same objects as were first required. The tool shed caused me some annoyance as I needed a key to unlock the door and having done so was transported inside. Having dropped the key inside so that I could collect another object, I left still leaving a number of other items behind. Unfortunately without the key I was unable to return.

If, however, you are anything like me and can put up with the flag setting bug and the ever present misspelling of words and poor punctuation, you will find yourself laughing constantly whilst wracking your brain for the solution.

The one area which, for me, was the funniest was whilst standing behind Ronnie Biggs in the bank queue and seeing

Gandalf enters!

Sod off.

Gandalf leaves!

- a testament to those "delightful" hours spent by the author playing The Hobbit.

Available from: Binary Zone PD, 34 Portland Road, Droitwich, Worcs. WR9 7QW Price: £1.00

ABANDONED PLACES 2

Published by International Computers Entertainment Ltd.

Reviewed by Ron Rainbird on an Amiga (1 meg)



During the present prolonged dearth of RPGs for the Amiga, the issue of "Abandoned Places 2" seemed like manna from the Computer Software Gods and, after quite a bit of deliberation, I bought it. I was hesitant because I had seen no reputable reviews of the game and I now know that my doubts were justified. It has so many flaws that I scarcely know where to start.

Let me begin with one of the most serious faults; the method of saving the game. This should only be done on one disk which will hold just one save at a time, therefore you must only save to the disk from which you load. To use more than one disk for this purpose can lead to serious trouble. For example, I first began with two "save" disks and, as a result, a door which I unlocked with a special key was locked again when I tried to retrace my steps and I no longer had a key to re-open it. Therefore, I could not continue the game. I telephoned I.C.E. upon this point and was told that, unfortunately, this would happen if I tried to use more than one save disk. I was really amazed at such an unsatisfactory method and cannot recall any other game which imposes such a restriction which precludes the player loading from an earlier save.

My next grumble is the copy protection method. This is in the form of a grid which requires the player to fill in certain squares by referring to a given page in the instruction manual. This is an annoyance in itself, but when you are required to give this information several moves after entering the game it is frustrating, especially when it comes just as you are attacked by monsters, which is what has happened to me. The attack does not stop whilst you enter the code by which time your party have been depleted. I wonder at the diabolical mind which thought that one up.

Graphics are adequate, nothing more. The monsters in some instances are ill-defined and I felt as though I wanted to "sharpen" the picture, whilst the dungeons which I have seen so far are so drab that it was a relief to come across an underground river which gave a splash (no pun intended) of colour to an otherwise drear outlook. Maybe later dungeons in the game will improve upon this. I have only completed seven levels and I understand that there are more than twenty in the whole game. Responses to direction commands, whether by Mouse or by Keyboard, is erratic, prompt, slow and, at time, ignoring a command.

As for the story, well, this is always a weak point in most RPGs, but I'll just outline what I have learnt so far. You start in a 2-level dungeon where "a Master" is dying for want of an Elixir which is hidden somewhere in the lower level. In order to escape into the outside World, you have to find this potion and give it to the dying man.

Once outside, your first main quest begins, which is to recover a Shield from the Dwarven Mines. This location took me ages to find (more by luck than anything else) and I have completed six levels, at which point, having collected oodles of boodle, I decided to retrace my steps and go back to the outer world, find a shop in a city - of which I believe there are four - and purchase some really good armour, weapons, etc. However, when I got back to the 2nd level, I found a repetition of my initial problem even though I had stuck to the advice of I.C.E. and used only one save disk, i.e. a locked door which I had unlocked earlier in the game.

This effectively stops me from carrying on because I know that when completing the final level of the Shield Quest, I have to retrace my steps through all nine levels to leave the Dwarven Mines; there is no short cut or an exit direct to the outer world from the last level of the Mines (as there would be in most normal RPGs). This means that I must start the game again from "scratch" with a fresh "save" disk and no guarantee that the same thing will not recur. I just cannot face that prospect at present. Maybe some time in the distant future!

There are some minor niggles in respect of this game, such as having to stop far too often to feed members of your party. Once you have the requisite "Create Food" spell you do not have to search for sustenance, but it still takes quite a while because some of the food created contains little nourishment.

Also, saving the game takes quite a while which adds to the feeling of tedium. Combat is basic with no hit points being shown, so that you do not know how much damage you are doing to your opponent. Travelling through the dungeons seems to be one long trek searching for keys to open many doors, interspersed with encounters, but little in the way of logical problems. All in all, when remembering games such as "Dungeon Master" and "Eye of the Beholder" with their sharply defined graphics with smooth and inventive game play, "Abandoned Places 2" goes to the bottom of the list in comparison with those and most other "dungeon" RPGs.

So my advice to all RPGers who may be considering buying this game is, in the words of the Prophet, "Hold on", "Desist", "Whoa", "Stop" and "Forget It". You have been warned.

DREAMWORLD

Written by Heath Kirby Miller

Reviewed by Hilary Walton and Barbara Gibb on a C64

First, I will state that my own words will be in italics, and Hilary's in standard type.

This adventure was sent to me for reviewing, and although I took an instant dislike to it, and not just because I couldn't get out of the first five locations, I persisted, hoping to get further into the game and find something of value. After about 4 hours I gave up, broke into the database and read the messages. What I saw only confirmed my original impression, that the author seems to have no morals.

When Hilary innocently volunteered his services as a reviewer, I first asked if he could look at The Hermitage, and as I received the review by return of post, I'm almost ashamed to say I jumped at the chance to ask him if he would like to look at Dreamworld, (a title I found rather misleading, suggesting surrealism rather than blatant violence).

I endorse everything that Hilary has to say in the following extracts from his letters, the first of which was sent because he also got stuck in the first 5 locations, the second dated the same day as he made a breakthrough minutes after posting the first, and the third was after he had seen the database which I sent to him.

He expresses his and my own feels to perfection.

I've got an unsettling feeling about this program. This might be something to do with the fact that there's more than a hint of latent racism: certainly there's a rather unpleasant simile (black as a grandmother's lip?) - not that that's racist, just rather nasty).

It might equally be the fact that I'm stopped dead in the water after having covered only 5 locations and with the only response to every command I hurl at it "What?" Not exactly loquacious.

DREAMWORLD is one of those programs which goes against my ideas of decency and moral responsibility. Had Tony sent it to me for playtesting I would have refused to do it, and strongly recommend that the program not be given commercial release. The idea that one has to kill a youth in order to obtain 15 dollars is quite repugnant, irrespective of his colour. Why couldn't the boy simply drop the money as he ran away? The fact that the author has chosen to target black people as his villains is equally unacceptable, whether or not this is part of the fantasy world the program purports to represent.

The reason neither of us gained access to more than the first few locations is because you have to ATTACK BOY three times with a dagger in order to get 15 dollars to buy a room at the nearby hotel, and this didn't occur to either of us, particularly as the youth seemed to be chatty and, I think, warns you about a gang leader. After a certain number of moves you were killed off if you hadn't gained safety(?) in the hotel. As far as I can remember these messages concerned your demise at the hands of a gang, but I'm glad to say the exact details have been erased from my mind, but I seem to remember they were in a tone of language not usually found in computer adventures. Maybe I'm too sensitive.

Available from: Binary Zone PD, 34 Portland Road, Droitwich, Worcs. WR9 7QW Price: Could be £3 but not sure (see below for reason).

★

I contacted Tony who sent me the adventure for reviewing. He received it at the time he was very busy passing on his PD library to Binary Zone and so hasn't seen it for himself and knows nothing about the game.

I don't know anything about the author except he is Australian. He wrote to Mandy at the end of last year. The letter was forwarded to me and in response I sent lists of C64 suppliers (as requested) and a complimentary copy of Probe. I received a very prompt reply from him, but admit I didn't respond as the letter seemed to promise a subscription to Probe only if I responded favourably i.e. gave publicity to a Newsletter called "Venturing In", a copy of which ~~wasn't~~ enclosed, plus some rather vague information about "adult" adventures H.K.M. has or will be writing, which he stated "will definitely sell copies".

★

You don't of course, have to take any notice of what we say. Check it out for yourself. If anyone has ANY comments to make about this adventure I will be pleased to print them in a future issue of the magazine. (Barbara)

TIP OF THE MONTH

Sent in by Steve Clay

If you use a lot of typing paper or do a lot of writing for fanzines or whatever, you can save a small fortune by buying the packs of copier paper rather than typing paper. It does the job just as well! (I pay between £2.79 and £2.99 per reamBarbara)

LEMMINGS 2 - THE TRIBES

Written by DMA Designs/ Published by Psygnosis



Reviewed by Jonathan Scott on an Amiga

As with the previous game, your mission is to save the suicidal little creatures from extinction by giving certain lemmings tasks which will overcome the various pitfalls in their path. The original game (and subsequent "Oh No! Not More Lemmings", which was not a sequel, just extra levels) achieved high chart positions. It has appeared on 8-bit machines, Amiga, PC, Atari ST - even the Super NES! (*My daughter is still waiting for it on the Lynx as promised over TWO years ago?...Ed*)

In the original Lemmings there were only eight abilities available. However, in the sequel you can carry out any one of at least forty different tasks! These aren't all available at once, of course, a certain number (usually no more than eight) are preset for each level. These abilities are as diverse as a kayaker, bazooker, ice-skater, glue-pourer and balloonier; not to mention my favourite, "Icarus wings" where the lemming sprouts a set of wings and flutters along until he comes into contact with a wall!

As well as the usual eight boxes at the bottom of the screen which indicate the tasks, number remaining and which one is selected, there are an additional four boxes. These are: pause game (represented by a set of paws!), nuke level, "wind" and fast-forward.

"Wind" is used with certain tasks, i.e. the one which gives the selected lemming a jetpack. By clicking on "wind", the cursor changes to something which looks like sails of a windmill. Hold down the left mouse button and the sails spin: they can then be used to manoeuvre the jetpack (or whatever). This is great fun, especially when the lemming keeps banging into the ceiling or walls!

Fast-forward, a very useful option, speeds up the progress of the game. How many times, while playing Lemmings, have you had to wait ages, only for the lemmings to fall down an unseen hole at the end? Also, you don't have to wait five seconds to nuke the lemmings. Just double-click on the relevant icon and then on fast-forward! This option is a must for the impatient.

In the original game, if you got stuck at a level you could advance in difficulty e.g. "Tricky" to "Taxing" and get stuck on that too! In Lemming 2, you have a choice of twelve different worlds: polar, highland, circus, outdoor, sports, space, shadow, classic and more. I loved the highland world because of the marvellous rendition of "I'll take the high road ...". I must mention that the classic world will bring back a whiff of nostalgia: a homage to the original game with the same abilities, a familiar tune, etc. The other worlds offer enough variety to make this game playable, addictive and, at times, it will have you tearing your hair out in clumps.

It comes with a neat novella setting the scene. It is a worthy follow-up to a classic in its own right.

Available for the Amiga (1 meg), PC (286 or higher recommended, plus quite a bit of memory) and Atari (1 meg). The console version is due out around Yuletide. The full price is £29.95, although Jonathan picked up his copy for £19.95 at Virgin Megastore in Glasgow. Special Reserve's Aug/Sept catalogue is quoting £16.99 on the Amiga and Atari, and £25.99 on the PC.

GOBLIINS

Reviewed by Neil Shipman on a PC

I thoroughly enjoyed GOBLIINS2 (reviewed in the May issue of Probe) and, as I had not then looked at its predecessor, GOBLIINS, I reckoned it was worth doing so. I couldn't find it on sale from over a dozen mail order firms so I used the £5 discount voucher that I had been given for registering my copy of GOBLIINS2 and bought the game direct from the distributors.

This time you get to control three goblins rather than two - as should be apparent from the number of "I"s in the title. Briefly, the storyline is this: King Angoulafre has gone bonkers and it's the task of Asgard, Ignatius and Oups to find a remedy for his illness. The only person who can help is the wizard Niak and you have to direct these little chaps on their journey to find him.

This involves travelling beyond the comforting security of the kingdom which they have never left before. But they have heard various terrifying tales about the characters and animals that live outside. Consequently they stick together and use their different abilities to help overcome the problems they face.

Asgard is the 'heavy' of the group and uses his fists to hit everything in sight. He is also strong enough to pull himself up ropes. Ignatius is a somewhat inept magician. He can cast spells at a distance but isn't always able to control their effects. Oups is a technician who manipulates the various objects found on the journey. Unfortunately he is a bit of a weed and can only carry one item at a time.

The adventure takes place across 22 separate screens, each one containing a series of puzzles to be solved before progressing to the next. When you have done everything correctly a flashing GO sign lights up and you are given a 7 letter code for the next scene.

The goblins are the same size as their kin in the later game and you change which one you're controlling either by clicking on it, pressing the space bar or clicking on a crystal ball at the bottom of the screen. However, they don't act simultaneously and one must finish its action before another can begin.

Clicking with the right mouse button changes the cursor between an arrow for moving around, a fist for starting an action - casting a spell, hitting or climbing, or using an object - and, for Oups, a hand for picking up and dropping things.

Wrong actions, falls, frights and the like use up energy which is shown on a bar under the main screen. When this gets to zero you have to quit or restart with the help of the screen code. The codes differ according to the amount of energy used, so once you have determined the right strategy for a scene it's worth replaying it. That way you will have all the energy you need as you approach the latter stages of the adventure.

Also shown at the bottom of the screen is the name of the object currently held by Oups, four magic items which you have to find on your quest (underlined once you've done so), and a skull for quitting or reloading.

The game is depicted in richly-coloured cartoon-like graphics and the animation of the goblins and other characters is excellent. These guys just can't keep still for long and repeatedly flip coins, turn somersaults and pull faces. Sound effects are limited though effective but there is no music.

Gameplay tends to consist of identifying interesting points, objects and characters on the screen then casting a spell on them to see what effect this has, hitting or climbing things and using the various objects in different ways. Your overall strategy should then become apparent fairly quickly. There are a few points where actions are timed but you certainly don't need very quick reactions to cope with these.

GOBLIINS is more a series of puzzle screens held together by a fairly tenuous storyline rather than an adventure. It is easy to complete using trial and error but still provides a few hours of humorous entertainment. And it serves as a great way to introduce the player to the much more demanding sequel.

GOBLIINS is distributed by Digital Integration Ltd, Watchmoor Trade Centre, Watchmoor Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 3AJ.

PC £34.99, Amiga, Atari ST/STE £29.99



CIRCLEWORLD

Reviewed by Dorothy Millard on a C64

Circlegworld is a public domain adventure and the object is to restore power in order to stop the decaying orbit.

On loading, the first thing I noticed was that the layout is nothing special, and there is no opening screen or credits. The typical Commodore C64 screen colours of blue on blue greet you. Directions are stated but the location descriptions consist mainly of just a couple of words, i.e. "Open Plain". It is necessary to type commands in full i.e. GO NORTH, although in fact this can be abbreviated to GO NO as the parser only understands the first two letters of any command.

Regularly throughout the game a Cat-like Kzin will wander through, take anything you are carrying, and scatter the objects. I found this to be a real pain and eventually got fed up with it. The game is written in BASIC and simple to list, so I did and changed line 6005 from *10 to *10000 and deleted line 503. This had the effect of disabling the Kzin after the first time. The game is much more playable after making this slight change to the program.

Despite the above the puzzles are there and the gameplay good. I really enjoyed solving the puzzles and for the small price I had several enjoyable hours playing Circlegworld. I would recommend it if you are looking for puzzles to solve, but not if you are looking for flash layout or long descriptive text.

Available from: Binary Zone PD, 84 Portland Road, Droitwich, Worcs. WR9 7QW

Price: £1.50 with a choice of 3 other titles from the Pic'n'Mix catalogue, state tape or disk.

(Dorothy's map of Circlegworld will be published in a future issue of ProbeBarbara)

THE TEST

Written by Ken Bond

Reviewed by Barbara Gibb on an Atari



No, nothing to do with cricket! This is the 16-bit expanded version of the well-established 8-bit adventure by a much respected author.

You play an adventurous type who wishes to join the Elite Fighting Force. You submit your application and eventually receive a reply to say that you will be considered if you can pass an aptitude test. This involves you being parachuted into a carefully prepared environment and using your wits to overcome the traps, your journey across country to report to Elite House on the date stated in the letter.

Once you have shed the parachute you can move around the forest. With only regulation overalls, stout boots and nothing in your possession except the letter from E.F.F. you must look around for something of significance. The minefield will be a problem if you can't first gain entry to a nearby building. I liked the method of travelling down into the quarry, the mode of transport being very aptly described. As you expect, obstructions are constantly blocking your progress, be they doors, bogs, bulls, fences, cliffs, you name it, it is here. The puzzles range from simple to fairly complex, but all require you to be very observant and visualize the scene as described. Some puzzles are made easier than they should because necessary objects are in close proximity, one of the exceptions being something I found in a cottage and which I began to think may be a red herring, then suddenly I needed it.

The first half of the adventure closely follows the 8-bit version, albeit in a slightly different order, but the two major additions which come towards the latter half of the game are worth mentioning.

A hedge-maze has been added. This took me an afternoon and evening to map (I hate mazes) but once I found an easy way of recording the locations, I found it a more enjoyable exercise.

The second puzzle was much more interesting and complex. My family had to look after themselves (not so unusual) while I messed around with little circles of paper trying to solve the button/revolving rooms puzzle that wouldn't have been out of place in one of Steve Clay's Taxman adventures.

This version has been written using the BIGAGT. The screen presentation is very neat, but I would advise the use of a monitor not a television. The location descriptions are good, and as already stated sometimes have to be read very carefully to picture the scene. The text updates almost imperceptibly, and together with your inputs and the responses scroll of the top of the screen as it fills up. An information bar remains at the bottom of the screen displaying the title of the current location, the score, and the number of moves taken. I've never understood why the latter is considered important - it can be a bit disconcerting when it reaches the eight and nine hundreds and your score is only 50%, but as I check all compass directions I must notch up a huge amount of moves that only get a response such as "You can't go in that direction." I for inventory calls up what you are carrying and wearing, and I must say I appreciated the way it is displayed with each object on a separate line.

The game disk is accessed after almost every input, so ensure you only use a working copy. As I didn't have my second drive set up I soon ran out of space for saving my position. After only 6 saves (of nearly 23K each) I was out of space and soon discovered it didn't like me changing the disk whilst playing the game. With my heart in my mouth I attempted, for the first time, to delete some earlier positions - I don't usually mess around with deletions on any disks as I seem accident prone and could very easily erase something important. I'm glad to say it worked, but saving frequently would require a second drive - I think!

The gameplay is straightforward. Once I knew what I wanted to do I didn't have any trouble finding the correct input. One point that will please most players is that a simple UNLOCK DOOR will work provided you are carrying the correct key. I finished with 97% which was a little irritating, and puzzling, as I thought I had done everything necessary. I also hadn't visited all the 230 locations, but that was because I made good use of one of my few saved positions after mapping the house and maze, so only visited the important locations.

If you haven't played THE TEST before, it is very good value for money, and if you have played the 8-bit version (2 x 128K parts) the additional puzzles and slight variations, plus excellent scene presentation, will, I think, make it worth your attention.

PC (3.5" disk only), Atari and Amiga versions available from: Amster Software, 81 Uplands, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL8 7EH Price: £3, cheque/postal order payable to Bob Adams (see advert elsewhere in this magazine).

Amstrad (CPM) version available from: The Adventure Workshop, 36 Grasmere Road, Oldham, Lancs. OL2 6SR Price: £5 cheque/postal order payable to P.M.Reynolds

Spectrum version - please contact the Adventure Probe office. Price: £3.50 on tape, sorry no +3 disk.



THE HERMITAGE

Written by Tony Collins

Reviewed by Hilary Walton on a C128D

Who's been reading Umberto Eco and Graham Greene, then? Well, if the atmosphere and central character of THE HERMITAGE are anything to go by, Tony Collins has. He's created a guilt-ridden, manic-depressive monk who's doomed to wander round a medieval-Gothic landscape in search of a way to relieve the world of the curse that's fallen on it.

If you're looking for a laugh a minute, this isn't for you. On the other hand, if what you want is an absorbing adventure that'll keep you going for a few weeks, and you don't mind the reek of death, guilt and being scared half to death, then this one will keep you satisfactorily happy..... er, gloomy.

Our monk begins by finding his monastery desecrated and his abbot foully murdered, from which point things begin to get bad, then worse. Muttering, "Oh, God! what have I done now?" or words to that effect, the hero(?) blunders around leaving a litter of bodies and general doom, pestilence and despair in his wake.

I lost count of the number of bodies, or bits of them, that lie artistically draped around; I was too busy trying to keep track of where I was (be warned: you'll need a large piece of paper!). This is a **big** program, occupying the best part of one side of a disc. The puzzles aren't too difficult, but finding the right bits and pieces in the vast number of locations can be tricky.

Tony has used GAC+ for this offering. Of course, he had to, in order to get the link feature for the four separate sections; but GAC+ has its drawbacks, one of which is the inordinate time it takes in checking the database, another is the fact that there's no "hit any key" function, which means that if you're slow in reading text (and there's a lot of it), it can disappear off-screen before you've finished. Oh, and the space between the quote marks and first letter of any speech isn't bad English on Tony's part: it's simply that GAC+ won't accept contiguous quote and capital letter. *(I wasn't aware of this fault, and it explains why I have seen some untidy text in GAC+ games....Ed)*

These quibbles apart, "The Hermitage" will keep you busy for a good, long time, as long as you're not too squeamish, that is!

Commodore version available from: Binary Zone PD, 34 Portland Road, Droitwich, Worcs. WR9 7QW £4 on disk only. Will work on a C64 with disk drive.

Spectrum version available from: FSF Adventures, 40 Harvey Gardens, Charlton, London, SE7 8AJ Price: £1.99 on 128K tape or 3.5" disk.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A TUPPERWARE SALESMAN

Written by Simon Avery

Reviewed by Jay Honosutomo on an Amstrad CPC



Horace Hugglethwaight, the tupperware salesman of the title, was a strange fellow. Although tupperware selling was his main love in life, he felt he needed something extra, something aside from knocking on doors and offering the latest dining plates to some poor, old, unfortunate soul. One night, he found it.

On this particular night, the skies were a turmoil of rain, wind and thunder, so Horace decided to stay in the town overnight and let the storm pass. He booked into a local inn, "The Long Pockets and Short Arms", and spent the remainder of the night in the bar, enjoying a few drinks. This was when he overheard a nearby conversation concerning hidden treasure far into the greystone hills.

Horace's mouth gawped for a very long time. The thought of gold and sparkling diamonds and glorious rubies and several other riches was simply too much. This was the breakthrough he'd been waiting for all these years. At last he could throw away his plastic containers in search of something better... Unfortunately though, this being an adventure starring Horace, things were never going to be easy.

You start in the aforementioned inn, but your stay is not long due to the anxious landlord. Wandering around the local town, you don't find much in the way of excitement, the most interesting place being the nearby "bits 'n' pieces" shop. After a few thorough explorations, though, you meet your first companion in the game. Going by the name of Tau Lin Chirt, Tau, being some kind of oriental philosopher isn't very useful to you, bar one occasion. All he has to offer are his meaningless words of "wisdom".

Nevertheless, Horace moves on, passing a farmyard and reaching a castle. Now, at this point we come to my favourite puzzle of the game. Horace finds a note at the castle doorstep which asks him to leave a pint of milk, some yoghurt and an egg (assuming of course that he's the milkman!). This needs to be done before the castle gate can be opened. The solutions to the three tasks are brilliant, especially the yoghurt, which I found hilarious!

Inside the castle, Horace overcomes a couple of puzzles before meeting his second companion in the game, the Jester. Just like Tau, I can't recall a point in the game where he is particularly useful, mainly just living up to his reputation by cracking hilariously unfunny jokes! Anyway, one trapdoor and a fire-breathing dragon later, we find our hapless hero in part 2. Now I won't outline what happens much more, since I've spoilt part 1 a little. Suffice to say, the second part is just as funny, challenging and well written as the first.

This game is Simon's first written on ADLAN (the system which Bob Adams originally wrote the CPC version of "Grue-knapped" and "Helvera" with), but there is really no way of telling. The playtesting is uniform with all WoW's games in that it's perfect; yet again reflecting Lorna Paterson's thorough work. The text is a great improvement over Simon's previous games, being verbose and very descriptive. The puzzles are as original as they get and that humour that is continuously raved about is still there in bucketfuls. The game, as I've mentioned, is in two parts and has graphics on disc only. (This is due to them being loaded up individually, and therefore meaning that the tape version will play very much like Simon's other games.)

Simon's also decided to give away a freebie adventure with "Tupperware", called "Grimwold's Big Adventure" and it's much in the vein of Simon's previous Quilled efforts. I won't go too much into this one because I know it'll be a nice surprise when you first play it! It's a lovely piece of adventuring! One more thing to mention is that on completion of the game, Simon is issuing certificates to certify (well, what else do certificates do?!?) your achievement.

As you can tell by now, Simon has put in a mammoth effort into the creation of "Tupperware", certainly his longest game yet in terms of the time it took (over four months). I know the final product is something he is very proud of, and with good reason. My only problem with the game is the graphics (this obviously doesn't apply to the tape versions). Although I agree graphics can be a great asset when developing atmosphere, sometimes it just doesn't quite work. For instance, early in part 1, a hand-drawn, almost cartoon-like picture of a winding path is flashed up on the screen. Later a picture of the castle is loaded up and you see a *digitized* image of a dark and gloomy castle. I think Simon should have stuck to one illustrative style throughout the game, rather than to switch between cartoon images and digitized graphics. It's just one of those flaws in a game which only a perfectionist like me would notice!

Aside from this, "Tupperware" makes an appropriate farewell to Simon Avery in the world of Amstrad adventuring. He will be sorely missed and it really is a shame that he's leaving. Nevertheless, for those of you who haven't yet played one of his games (where have you been?), try this one for starters. It's his best....

Available from: WoW Software, 78 Radipole Lane, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 9RS Price: £3 on CPC tape, £5 on disc. Cheque/postal order payable to J G Pancott.



BUGSY

Written by St. Brides



Reviewed by Barbara Bassingthwaite

Is the boss getting you down? Maybe the children are driving you mad? Get rid of your frustrations and play Bugsy. You can go around extorting money, blowing up hotels, and robbing banks to your heart's content as your aim in the game is to be Public Enemy No1. There is only one problem, you are a 3ft. blue rabbit; if you can get over that embarrassing fact you're well away.

Before you start your life of crime you will need a mask off Louie to enable you to extort money off the Newsboys. You should then have enough money to buy a gun and so go for bigger things. As you grow in confidence, you will need a couple of things to protect you down dark alleys. (You need them more than once.)

Part two is much of the same, but you now have enough money to buy wheels and hire more gang members. You have now entered the big time where blowing up hotels and killing everyone inside moves you up the ladder of being Public Enemy No1. After the explosion the police start to harass you, if you have the money they can be bribed. Even the top cops turn a blind eye for the right price.

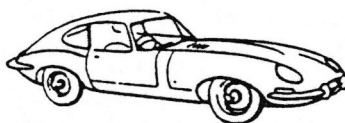
This is not the usual type of adventure where you collect objects and decide what to do with them. The only thing you actually collect is money, the few objects you do need have to be bought.

It made a change deciding who to rob or cheat instead of where to dig or which key fits what door.

Available from: Zenobi Software, 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancs. OL12 7NX
Spectrum version: £2.49 on tape, £2.49 on 3.5" Plus D disk, £3.49 on +3 disk.

Amiga version (with free Spectrum emulator): £2.49

STONEVILLE MANOR



Reviewed by Damian Steele on a C64

The idea of the game is to discover and open the safe belonging to the recently deceased Mr. Stone, an eccentric miser. Inside the safe is the old man's will, declaring all his wealth should go to the one that finds said will.

In general the game is controlled with two-word commands such as ENTER MANOR or BUY AXE with a notable exception being DRIVE. Instead of using EXAMINE, objects can be examined by entering LOOK (OBJECT). This caused me a couple of problems to start with, but I soon became used to the limited parser.

To move you'll need to enter GO NORTH which can be shortened to GO N or similarly for east, west, south, up and down. To move into an area the command is ENTER - for example ENTER LAKE.

The puzzles in the game are logical and well thought out. In one area I found that I was too heavy to enter a vent so the logical answer was to lose weight. Finding the jogging shoes showed me how.

When I began mapping the game I didn't realize how many locations there were. At first glance it is easy to stop at around sixteen or so, but there are quite a few more hidden away which can only be reached after other problems have been solved. For one of them you have to build and fly an air balloon to reach it.

Throughout the game random messages pop up at certain locations which are a nice touch, giving the game a little more realism. Another nice touch came when I was trying to go diving without a mask. Although I could swim, I couldn't see anything - and I needed to.

Although not tremendously difficult, this game is hard enough to require around an hour of your pleasantly spent time. For the price it is certainly worth having.

Available from: Binary Zone PD, 34 Portland Road, Droitwich, Worcs. WR9 7QW Price: £1.50 on tape or disk together with 3 other titles of your choice from the Pick 'n' Mix catalogue.

TERROR CASTLE

Written by W. Sellers



Reviewed by Damian Steele on a C64

This is a public domain adventure dating from 1984 and written in BASIC. The idea is to enter a castle, grab the loot and do away with the bad guy.

There are a number of puzzles in the game that if thought about logically, can be passed quite easily. Regrettably, due to the programming method, this number is low.

At each stage in the game there are only a limited number of responses that are checked for. A wrong input, more often than not, results in death which can be annoying; for instance when in a pit I entered CLIMB ROPE and died - the correct input was GET ROPE, the same action but phrased another way, but it does lengthen the time you take at the keyboard, making the game seem a little more substantial than it really is.

At each death a simple tune is played and I mean simple ("Simon Row Your Boat Ashore" I think) - which soon had me reaching for the volume down switch.

The game is not complex and is an ideal time filler for an experienced player who is waiting for a kettle to boil or something to do for twenty minutes or so for a beginner.

Although there is nothing to tempt you to return and play again once it has been completed, it isn't too bad a game considering how long ago it was written.

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THE OBSCURE NATURALIST

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY PETER HAGUE
FOR THE ATARI ST

This is a massive commercial quality game filled with fantasy. Although the basic idea is simply to photograph a very inaccessible nest of rare baby herons and become famous in the process, there is a lot more to it than first meets the eye.

The game took the best part of three years to write and has been very well received so far. If you already have part one - which was given away on the February cover disk of ST ACTION, please register - you get a good deal including a hints and tips sheet.

If you missed that and would like the full program right now, see the details below.



"Excellent graphics - very well written text."

ATARI ST REVIEW

"Well crafted. The writing is fairly rich too - appealing graphics."

ST FORMAT MAGAZINE

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Zenobi Software

THEME PARK U.K.

Throughout the 1900's the 'Fairground' was the place every child wanted to visit. Just the thought of the various 'rides' and the many different 'prize-stalls' was more than their tiny minds could handle. A visit to such a place meant sticky candy-floss, coconut shies and loud music.

Then in the latter half of the century there was a 'shift' towards more adult-orientated pursuits and the 'Theme Park' was born. This was a place where 'fantasy' intermingled with the 'fairground' to produce an entertainment more suited to all tastes. Such places went under the name of 'GULLIVER's WORLD' and even 'CAMELOT' but they were all essentially the same thing ... somewhere to enjoy yourself!

However now is the 21st century and such places have long since made way for the new 'playgrounds'. These 'THEME PARKS' are loosely based on the old style ones but this time there is a very subtle difference. The emphasis is not so much on good old 'enjoyment' as much as it is on plain old 'survival'. For these are 'THEME PARKS' with a difference

THE STORY SO FAR

It is the year 2050 and you are standing at the entrance to a 'THEME PARK'. This park is **very different** from the ones people used to visit back in the 1990s.



There are no 'tame' rides in this park, instead you are thrown into 'real-life' acts and situations where you have to use your wits and your intelligence to survive the 'day-out'.

The park is divided into sections and in order to visit each section you will need to use the '**token**'. Any items found in one section can be used to solve problems encountered in another. Hidden in each section is a 'special' object. When you have found them all just take them to the main entrance and you will be allowed to go home. Returning to the main entrance for any other reason will terminate your visit to the 'THEME PARK'.

So prepare yourself for the 'day-out' of a lifetime and let's hope you live to tell the tale

NOTES

A useful 'help' routine is built into the game but it will not always be available, to use it just type H or **HELP**. Use the commands **RAMSAVE** and **RAMLOAD** in order to store positions in **MEMORY** but always use **LOAD** and **SAVE** to make a more permanent record on **TAPE**.

Spectrum 48K/128K+2

adventure

AMIGA

With effect from 1st AUGUST 1993 the following 'SPECTRUM' games will be available for the 'AMIGA' range of machines ... albeit in the form of a 'SPECTRUM' game that has to loaded and played through an 'emulator' programme. The 'emulator' will be supplied FREE!

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AUTHOR</u>
Theme Park	J.Lockerby	Elack Tower	Diane Rice
Crystals Of Kings	K.Burnard	Mummy's Crypt	L.Creighton
April 7th	G.Lynes	ARC	S.McClure/I.Smith
*Diablo	M.Cantrell	Hit	S.McClure/I.Smith
Ellisnore Diamond	J.Lockerby	Out Of The Limelight	J.Scott/S.Boyd
Marooned	L.Creighton	Project Nova	M.Cantrell
POW	G.Pitchford	Golden Pyramid	L.Creighton
Quest For The Holy Something	C.Davies	Stranded	D.Hawkins
Legacy For Alaric	Palmer P. Eldritch	Balrog And The Cat	The Balrog
Retarded Creatures & Caverns	The Balrog	Agatha's Folly	Linda Wright
Magic Isle	Palmer P.Eldritch	Kobayashi Naru	C.Wilson
Phoenix	Traveller in Elack	From Out Of A Dark Night Sky	The Balrog
Violator Of Voodoo	Traveller in Elack	*Jekyll And Hyde	Essential Myth
Aztec Assault	Traveller in Elack	Secret of Little Hodgepodge	The Balrog
Celtic Carnage	Traveller in Elack	The Challenge	J.Lockerby
Behind Closed Doors (The Saga)	The Balrog	The Enchanted Cottage	J.Lockerby
The Cup	J.Lockerby	The Hammer Of Grimmold	J.Lockerby
Impact	L.Creighton	Diamond	D.Francombe
Jack And The Beanstalk	J.Lockerby	Lifeboat	J.Lockerby
Davy Jones' Locker	J.Lockerby	The Golden Locket	K.Burnard
Seeker Of Gold	The Balrog	Matchmaker	J.Lockerby
The Mutant	J.Lockerby	Ruddo And Slam	The Balrog
*Bored Of The Rings	Fergus McNeill	Jade Necklace	J.Lockerby
*The Big Sleaf	Fergus McNeill	Realm Of Darkness	J.Lockerby
*The Boggit	Fergus McNeill	The Witch	J.Lockerby
*Robin Of Sherlock	Fergus McNeill	Bulbo And The Lizard-King	The Balrog
Jester's Jaunt	June Rowe/P.Cardin	Jade Stone	L.Wright
Very Big Cave Adventure	St.Brides	Bugsy	St.Brides
The Darkest Road	C.Wilson	Tears Of The Moon	C.Wilson
Cloud 99	L.Wright	Cpl.Stone	J.Taylor
The Escaping Habit	J.Lockerby	Kidnapped	J.Lockerby
Staff Of Power	Sue Madley	*Jack The Ripper	St.Brides

All titles cost £2.49 each, except those marked with a '*' and these cost £2.99 each. Please note that all games come complete with a 'FREE' emulator programme with which to load and play the games on your AMIGA machine ... see notes for further explanation of this.

NOTES

Switch on your machine and then insert the 'emulator' programme into the disk drive. When the workbench is displayed just 'double-click' on the ZENOBI icon in order to run the prog and when the 'emulator' is up and running just move the cursor to the 'status' line and hold down the RIGHT MOUSE-BUTTON to access the various menus. Select LOAD SNAPSHOT and then select the file of your choice in order to play the game. Please note that certain games will save BOTH a 'header' file and a 'bytes' file when saving your game position, so just enter your file-name and select as appropriate. Other games will use only a 'bytes' file. This all depends upon whether the game needs a 'filename' for its 'saved' positions or not. The games will all 'save' their position to an AMIGA formatted disk and reload from same.

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ADLAN vs PAW

A short article for Amstrad Adventure authors by Grimwold Enterprises

Which is best, ADLAN or the Professional Adventure Writer?

Well, neither really. They both have their good and bad sides. First off, I'd like to make it clear that I know little of PAW, having only spent a short time programming with it. ADLAN and me, on the other hand, are good friends, having spent almost a year in constant battle!

PAW, to start with, is an excellent piece of work. Very well written and backed up with two very good manuals which give you all the details you need. It is also very versatile and powerful, not to mention that the games written with it are easy to play. (*I think Steve means user-friendly ... Ed*) As far as I can see, there are only two main drawbacks to adventuring with PAW.

The first, and most important, is that it is written to be used with CPM, the disc-based language, hence it is only available to disc users, something that a lot of adventurers have no access to. The second, more minor point, is that it is slow in compiling. I don't mean the actual process itself, I mean the saving of the ASCII file, stopping your word processor, booting CPM, then compiling from there. Another drawback with PAW is that all adventures written on it look identical. Not that this might worry the seasoned adventurer, but there is little variety between games.

Now, ADLAN. Compared to the professional finish to PAW, ADLAN is, at best, an enthusiastic attempt at a comparable product. After using it for a while, the programmer wishes fervently that Graduate Software had had the decency to test it properly before releasing it. Upon reading the manual, you are impressed with the things this marvel of programming can accomplish. Not so. It is, at least in screen presentation of the finished game, infinitely more varied than PAW. You can change screen modes at will through the game, have lots of colours, have any font you like, use windows, etc.

However, the most serious problem with ADLAN is the bugs. It's riddled with them! Not only in the compiler itself, but in the manual too! You get the feeling that the manual was written in a hurry. Not only do mistakes populate the example code, but several commands are omitted, even some compiling and run-time errors are not documented!

The main problem with learning to program is finding out what the bugs are. Once discovered, the versatility of ADLAN makes it possible to work around them quite happily. Finding them is not easy. I have one adventure that I've written which refuses to acknowledge the player's command until it has been typed in two or three times and as such, I can't even think about releasing it. A bit annoying as I spent a good month of work on it before compiling, and about four or five months afterwards trying to de-bug it. Other disadvantages with ADLAN are:

Text compression is not nearly as good as PAW, nor even as good as the QUILL! No "AGAIN" or "IT" commands. The game also RAMSAVES when it SAVES to disc (why I haven't a clue!) not to mention the occasional computer freeze when you try to use a command which is perfectly alright 95% of the time.

Good points: It has the best graphics capability of any creator I've seen, loading in screens in any mode. The best thing about this is it can use screens drawn on any art package, such as Advanced Art Studio. The worst thing about this is it's not available for tape users.

It runs from a ROM chip, so takes no memory for the compiling code allowing for larger games (although not as large as PAW'ed games can be). It also allows for almost unlimited locations, variables, messages, objects, etc. Each can range up to over 35,000. There are also a lot of other commands which aid programming and playing. Compiling is greatly speeded up, especially when using Protext as you can boot ADLAN directly from the command mode and it starts compiling immediately.

Overall, I'd recommend ADLAN over PAW; solely as it can save adventures to tape. ADLAN can produce results that are comparable to PAW in most respects, including versatility. However, I do have some bad news concerning ADLAN. It is no longer being sold. One person rang Graduate Software to see if there was a chance of correcting the numerous bugs to be told that the man responsible now had a "proper job and couldn't be bothered with it any more." This is a great pity as it had the potential to outstrip PAW if only more time had been spent on its development.

Although I've lamented ADLAN's bugs, it should not be said that I don't like using it. If you can get hold of a copy, it is a worthwhile alternative to PAW and vastly superior to GAC and QUILL. If you are having problems with it, drop me a line and I'll try to help. I also have a list of the bugs I have found which could be useful so you can identify the problems you're having.

GRIMWOLD, HAMLYN'S COTTAGE, OLD EXETER RD, CHUDLEIGH, S.DEVON, TQ13 0DX

ON ANONANONANON

I was delighted to see that one of my favourite humourists, the distinguished and much quoted writer A.Non has become a Probe subscriber. I look forward to many more quips in the future along the lines of the following.

- 1) To err is human, but to really foul things up requires a computer. (I note with some satisfaction that he/she is capable of the odd split infinitive like the rest of us).
- 2) A gentleman is someone who never swears at his wife if there are ladies present.
- 3) He was engaged to a contortionist before she broke it off.
- 4) A tribe of cannibals captured a missionary and got their first taste of Christianity.
- 5) Men have faults: Women two; what the say and what they do.
- 6) Shake and shake the ketchup bottle, first none'll come and then a lot'll.
- 7) Your book arrived this morning, I'll waste no time reading it.
- 8) An accountant is a man you pay to tell you why you didn't earn the money you did.
- 9) Abstinence, like all good things, should be practiced in moderation.
- 10) Pay all your bills with a smile. You might get away with it, but usually they want cash.
- 11) The train now approaching platforms 4, 5, 6 and 7 is coming in sideways.
- 12) I know two things about the horse, and one of them is rather coarse.

(written by Mary Scott-Parker)

SYRACUSE NEWS

Last month I mentioned that 'next month' I would be putting together another wordsearch competition. Well I wasn't lying 'next month' I will be! Sorry, I just didn't have enough spare time this month to get one sorted out for this issue. Mind you I was completely snowed under with the entry for the **CD Competition** - Gareth Pitchford was the only entrant, had only one guess and was correct - "*Eric Clapton Unplugged*" was one of my new CDs. Very astute. If you'd like to contact me and let me know which novel you fancy, I'll send it off to you as soon as possible. The full list of available prizes can be found at the end of this article.

Just when you think the Archimedes adventure scene is dead (stillborn?) someone orders another copy of "*The Survivor*"! Actually something else rather odd happened last week. Back in November 1992 I placed an advert in the "*Computer Shopper*" classifieds enquiring as to the existence of anyone playing adventures on the Archimedes. I got my first reply last Thursday!!!

Well last month's article seems to have been a bit of a 'kiss-of-death' in many ways. The chances of "*The Survivor*" ever being converted to the PC have diminished considerably due to my complete lack of organisation. I just can't get the time to print out the data to send to Mark Walker, who must be getting pretty cheesed off waiting for it. Sorry Mark! Just as Tony Collins gets round to converting "*April 7th*" to Commodore 64 format he is compelled to relinquish The Guild Software for 6-8 months. The only good thing that arrived this month was an Amiga/Spectrum emulator version of "*April 7th*" - thanks John, It was very thoughtful of you!

Pretty poor of "*Your Sinclair*" not to gasp out in its dying breath " ... buy Adventure Probe ...".

I took the plunge this month and lashed out the pitiful remnants of Lynsoft's bank account on a Hewlett Packard LaserJet 4L. Its pretty much tailored to the needs of the much larger PC market but is still a doddle to use on my 'Archie'. The results are just so much better than even the inkjet printer that I

have actually managed to sell!!!

Still haven't sold the Amstrad 7286HD40 yet- still a snip at £450 o.n.o.

Talking about 'snips', if you need printer ribbons or 3.5" disks you could do worse than get in touch with "**Snap Computer Supplies**" 0703 457111. E.g. buy 4 Citizen Swift 24 ribbons you get them for £2.55 each!! I bought a load of stuff from them and was very pleased with the service and cost etc. Spotted their ad in Acorn User!

COMPETITION RESULTS

Right, here is a full list of all those who entered the last Wordsearch competition that I ran (Adventures beginning with 'A'):-

Mrs P.A. Leachman, Phil Glover, Andrew Gibson, Jenny Wheeler, David Rawson, Liane Morrison, Margaret Abbie, Isla Donaldson, Steve Clay, Margo J. Porteous, Judy Holland, Mr A. Melville, Jenny Perry, Neil Ashmore, Margaret Tran, Julian Gregory, Diane Rice, Dale Melton, Doreen Bardón, George Kersey, H.E. Walton, Bernard Wood, Mary Scott-Parker, S.W. Dale, Peter Bergmann and David Stocks. If I've missed you out I apologise. And the winners are:- **Mrs P.A. Leachman, David Rawson and Margo J. Porteous** - congratulations!!!

The available novels are listed at the end of the article - please let me know which one you want. List 3 preferences in order and first come, first served!

Don't forget, if you have any desire to commit your epic prose to paper and submit it to me to consider for inclusion in Issue 2 of "*Threads*" (SciFi, Fantasy, Horror short stories) send a S.A.E. to me for guidelines!

Another plug for the **I.E.B.A.** (Independent Eight-Bit Association):- A worthwhile cause if you feel the need to kick against the forces of inertia that seem to be dragging down the 8-bit computer. People are making the effort!! Martin Scholes, 5 Beacon Flats, Kings Haye Rd., Wellington, Telford, Shropshire. TF1 1RG

COMPETITION PRIZES

Tom Sharpe - Porterhouse Blue (2) James Herbert - The Rats. Ruth Rendell - A Judgement in Stone (3) Ted Allbeury - The Judas Factor (4) Jeffrey Archer - Not a Penny etc.... Douglas Reeman - Torpedo run (5) Fay Weldon - Watching me, watching you (3).
Numbers in brackets = number of copies available!!

NEWSDESK

The Guild finds a new (temporary) home

Tony Collins is attending a 6 months computing course followed by 2 months work experience, so he has had to arrange for Jason McKensie of Binary Zone PD to sell, under licence, his Commodore catalogues.

When I asked him about the Spectrum games he said the PD games had already been passed to Venturesoft, and as he received so few orders for the rest he was going to discontinue them. Rather than lose yet one more outlet for Spectrum adventures I offered to take over his present catalogue, providing I have copies, and he said he had no objections. So if you are a Spectrum owner and would like any adventures from his current list, please contact me, however I can only supply them on tape (at the prices shown in his latest list) as I don't have a +3.

Commodore Software still available

THE LOST WORLD by Walter Pooley and Eddy Park is a text adventure based on the Arthur Conan Doyle story - see the review in the March 1993 issue of Probe. Send your order to W. Pooley, Flat 1, 46 Exeter Road, Liverpool, L20 7BL Price £2.50 on tape or disk, cheque/postal order payable to W.Pooley.

New adventure for the Atari

EXCUSE ME - HAVE YOU GOT THE TIME? is a text/graphic adventure written by Jean Childs. It has a time travel storyline in which you and your three friends Tom, Dick and Harry, have to find five items representing beauty, knowledge, bravery, achievement and friendship. I haven't got far enough to write a review (perhaps a clever reader would like to send one in) but I like Jean's sense of humour, the 4-line poems which I take to be clues, and the excellent picture of the south sea island. That's as far as I got. Although I wasn't "up a creek without a paddle" other duties called me away from the computer. Only £3 and available from Jean Childs, 24 Waverley Road, Bagshot, Surrey, GU19 5JL

FROM BEYOND Back Issues

I understand some FROM BEYOND readers were disappointed not to receive a copy of the final issue. It spoils the set, doesn't it! I spoke to Tim, who explained they had subscribed after he had already had the magazine printed, so he sent refunds instead. I asked Tim if he would allow me to act as an agent for back issues, the final one in particular, and he readily agreed, but stated that the masters have been packed away and it would take him a few weeks to unearth them. I'll keep reminding him !!!

In the meantime, I will be pleased to hear from anyone who is interested so that I will have some idea of the demand. Like back issues of Probe, I can't tie up subscribers money in slow-moving stock but if you are willing to wait a while I am sure we can get them printed, minus any extras that Tim managed to enclose with them, of course. The number of pages (and therefore the cost) varies, but I won't charge more than the actual printing cost plus postage.

AMIGA NEWS by star reporter Steve Clay

Good news from Zenobi. They have a Spectrum emulator (V1.6) at £1.49 including postage. Included with this are two of John Wilson's own games, Behind Closed Doors and A Legacy for Alaric. More interesting is that Zenobi are currently converting their Spectrum games to 3.5" disk so that they will run on the emulator. These will be Spectrum games and not enhanced in any way. They will cost the same as the Spectrum (tape) originals, £2.49. Judging by the size of the Zenobi catalogue this means that fairly soon there should be a vast number of adventures available at a budget price. Ironical isn't it that 8-bit games will probably be responsible for the majority available on a 16-bit machine.

The Amiga CD console has arrived. The price of £299 wipes the floor with Sega CD on not only price but also the specifications. The CD32 is 32-bit, with 256,000 colours on screen from a palette of 16.7 million. It will also play normal CDs and has the required bits and bobs to turn it into a multi-media machine. Software producers should jump at the chance to produce CD games as the piracy problem is wiped out! Also the games are expected to retail for £29.99 compared with the console games starting at £45.

DMI who were responsible for Nippon Safes Inc mentioned last month, have gone bust. The game will still hit the shelves via Dynabite.

Commodore, whose recent annual figures almost sank the company and indeed have caused major staff cut-backs worldwide, have pulled out of the PC market. They intend to concentrate solely on the Amiga range!

True to his word Ian Osborne is reviewing text-adventures in the PD column of Amiga Force. The August edition carries reviews of Helvera, Mistress of the Park (£3 Licenceware from Bob Adams, 81 Uplands, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL8 7EH, cheque payable to Bob Adams) and Midnight Thief (PD £1.49 inclusive from Zenobi Software, 26 Spotlabnd Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancs. OL12 7NX)

Bob Adams again! This time he is distributing Ken Bond's game The Test. The Amiga version has been written with AGT by Ken himself. The game has been increased to over 200 locations. The price is a bargain £3 from the address given above.

Currently there are no plans for an Amiga version of Monkey Island 3 which is under construction at the moment. Maybe they will produce a CD version! At least it would stop all the disk swapping!

The Immortal is a single player role playing game that also appears on budget at the moment. Apparently the gameplay is linear and any mistake seems to end up in death. Despite this all the reviews seem to agree that the game has that certain something to keep you playing. £12.99 from the Hit Squad.

I recently came across a PD adventure creator called ADL [or sometimes called Game Construction]. The program is run entirely from shell and is a C-based language. It is for that reason and the fact that the manual on the disk is somewhat complicated that I haven't really delved deeply into it. From the examples of what the in-built parser can achieve it looks on a par with the Infocom system. Anyone with a knowledge of C could find this of value but I think beginners should handle with care.

Special Reserve have started selling books and board games. [We won't mention the cuddly toys!] *(No we won't, my 15 year old daughter already has her eye on one from the catalogue....Ed)* I'm surprised it has taken them so long to start with books as they seem an integral part of computing. As with the software there is a saving to be had, the Amiga 800 and Amiga 1200 insider guides are available at £12.99 each, a saving of £4 on each book. The only real grumble with Special Reserve is the time taken for delivery. I've ordered approximately 12 items this year and I have had to phone the queries line on 8 of these. A little more speed in dispatching the goods would cut BT's profits a touch!

Another Lucasfilms game is available on budget. Loom is now available on the Kbx XL label. Price is either £12.99 or £14.99

KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE CASTLE

Damian Steele, Flat 2, 4b FENTON, Southfield Rise, Paignton, Devon, TQ3 2NE

Please remember to enclose an SSAE when requesting help.

C64 adventures - Corya: The Warrior Sage; Nythyel Pts 1 & 2; Castle Adventure; Pyramid; Mission X; Desert Island; Danger! Adventurer At Work! 1; Danger! Adventurer At Work! 2; Dances With Bunny Rabbits; Magician's Apprentice; Merlin Pts 1 & 2; Case of the Mixed-Up Shymer; Birthday Surprise; Nightmare 1;

HELP WANTED

I have managed to get a total of 480 out of 500 in BLADE OF BLACKPOOLE. Does anyone have any idea where the missing 20 could be?

Please contact: Walter Pooley, Flat 1, 46 Exeter Road, Liverpool L20 7BL.

PERSONAL

To Jack Kelly of Birmingham - Loved your Future Shocks, but still no idea who you are! - Barbara

To all who were at the Blackpool Convention on 7th August 1993 - Cold wasn't it! Those who attended will no doubt be pleased to hear that the young lady who offered one of our company a leaflet on slimming courses was later attacked by an over zealous poodle who mistook her for an old bone. Pleasure to meet you all - Steve

To Grue! - Thanks Grue! I'll let you know what I thought when I've finished it - Damian

To The Rochdale Balrog - Thanks Balrog, no more Green Cheese Sandwich worries now - Damian

IN TOUCH

Wanted - Commodore 64 Adventures

Text/graphic adventures wanted, especially Infocom, Magnetic Scrolls and Level 9 adventures, others considered. Tape or disk. Please write to: Ann Castelow, 27 Costain Grove, Norton, Stockton, Cleveland, TS20 1JW

For Sale - C64 Cassette Adventures

Lancelot (3 parts) and Silicon Dreams Trilogy, both Level 9, as new £5 each. Hampstead and The Nomad of Time - both secondhand and £1 each. All proceeds to go to Barbara to help with Probe magazine. Contact Ann Bailey, 23 Eureka Road, Midway, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE11 7NP, Tel. 0283 211201

(That is very generous, Ann, so many thanks in advance - perhaps you and your namesake can get together!)

For Sale - PC Software

Are We There Yet? (3.5") and Puzzle Gallery (3.5") - puzzle games £10 each or both for £15; Altered Beast (5.25") £10; Fascination (3.5") £10; Heart of China (3.5") £10; Plan 9 From Outer Space (3.5") £10; Leisure Suit Larry 2 (5.25") £4; Prices include postage and packing. Please contact: Nell Shipman, 1 Heath Gardens, Coalpit Heath, Bristol, BS17 2TQ Tel. 0454 773169

For Sale - Amstrad CPC Software

Adventures on Tape - Jewels of Darkness Trilogy £5; All the following £2 each - Apache Gold; Bestiary; Big Sleaze; Black Mountain & Sharpe's Deeds; Boggit; Buggy; Colour of Magic; Crystal Theft; Cursed Be The City; Dracula; Escape from Khoshima; Fourmost adventures (Galaxias, Microman, Mural, Ring of Darkness); Haunted House & Nova; Imagination; Kentilia; Lords of Time; Mandrogore; Monsters of Murdac; Mountains of Ket & Top Secret; Necris Dome; Price of Magic; Quest for Golden Egg Cup; Rebel Planet; Return to Eden; Rigel's Revenge; Robin of Sherwood; Seabase Delta; Snowball; Star Wreck; Terrormolinos; Very Big Cave Adventure; Videoworld; Warlord; Werewolf Simulator; Worm in Paradise.

Adventures on Disc (8128 version) All £5 each - Gnome Ranger; Guild of Thieves; Mindfighter; Scapeghost; The Pawn; Lords of Chaos; Bloodwych; Castle Master. £2.50 each - Case of the Mixed-up Shymer; The Arnold Adventures.

Serious Tape Utilities/Entertainment - Assembly Language Course with book £3; Colossus Chess £3; Cricket Master £2.50; Test Master £2.50.

Serious Tape Utilities/Entertainment - Mini Office II £5; Mastercalc 128 £8; Tasword 8128 £5; Scrabble £3; Graphic Adventure Creator (GAC) £5.

Tape to Disc Converters & Others - Bonzo Super Meddler & Hackpack £3; Bonzo Doo Dah £3; Bonzo's Flash Pack £3; Bonzo Blitz £3; Bankraid 3 £3; Discology £3.

All items are complete with original packaging and are not re-released versions.

Please contact: Bob Adams, 81 Uplands, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL8 7EH

OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

KING'S QUEST 5

Amulet ... protects you from evil spells
Beeswax ... repair boat with it
Cake ... give to the yeti
Cheese ... powers the machine in laboratory
Cloak ... keeps you warm in the mountains
Conch shell ... give to hermit as a hearing-aid
Crispin's wand ... when empowered use to cast spells at Mordrack
Crystal ... reflects the energy of rock dragons
Dead Fish ... give one to the bear, the other to the cat
Diamond-headed staff ... opens the door to the temple
Gems ... give to troll
Gold coin ... give to man to you can get to see fortune teller
Golden heart ... give to weeping willow
Golden locket ... give to Princess Cassima
Golden needle ... exchange for cloak
Hairpin ... open door to supply room
Hammer ... breaks lock on cellar door, also loosen crystal
Harp ... play to wolves and harpies
Honey ... makes gems sticky
Hook ... use to get cheese from mousehole
Jug ... give to the witch
Key ... opens door in weeping willow
Meat ... eat when in mountains then give to eagle
Mermaid ... guides you to Mordrack's castle
Mordrack's wand ... transfer its power to Crispin's wand
Mouse ... bites through ropes when you are tied up in cellar
Nice Boots ... exchange for hammer
Old Boot ... throw at cat to save mouse
Peas ... pour onto floor so servants slips over
Puppet ... exchange for a sledge
Rope ... use to climb up to plateau
Silver coin ... use to buy cake
Sledge ... pursue wolves on it
Spinning-wheel ... exchange for puppet
Stick ... throw to dog
Tambourine ... scares the snake at the pass, & give to monster in labyrinth
Termite king ... finds the needle in the haystack
Wolves ... kidnap Cedric
Wood chisel ... opens door to labyrinth



SOLUTION OF THE MONTH

ENERGEM ENIGMA (C64/Spectrum)

Solution by Barbara Gibb

Note: You have 4 bottles of oxygen, each containing 150 moves, so the adventure has to be completed in 600 moves or less. CHECK AIR to find how many moves you have left in the current bottle, and SWAP AIR to change to a new bottle. Type SPEC MATE for introduction, but ignore address given. You are looking for 4 crystals which have to be collected in a particular order i.e. red, green, blue and pink. You can carry up to 8 items plus any worn.

You start in a clearing. N, W, EXAM LEAVES, TAKE LANTERN, EXAM LANTERN, E, S, S, S, EXAM TRACKS, TAKE KEY, S, EXAM WELL (as seen in illustration), EXAM BUCKET, TAKE FAGS before you TAKE HANDLE, LOOK (note rope for later), S, W, S, E, E, S, U (dark), LANTERN ON, U, S, DIG, TAKE TIN (full of air but not a replacement oxygen bottle!), N, W, EXAM ALTAR, EXAM STATUE, TAKE HELMET, EXAM HELMET (note visor and cable with plug), WEAR HELMET (saves carrying capacity), E, D, D, LANTERN OFF, N, W, W, N, N, W, U, W, S, (small grove), EXAM PORTCULLIS, INSERT HANDLE, TURN HANDLE (portcullis rises), D (cave), UNLOCK CHEST (need key from mud), OPEN CHEST, EXAM CHEST, TAKE CRYSTALOMETER, EXAM CRYSTALOMETER (note socket: in conjunction with the helmet it will detect the crystals), U, TURN HANDLE otherwise you can't TAKE HANDLE (which you need again), N (hide-away), EXAM THINGS, TAKE POLE, E, D, E, S, E, N, N, N, N (clearing), DROP CRYSTALOMETER, DROP KEY, DROP LANTERN (all needed later), N, W, W (north bank of river), VAULT RIVER (need pole), W, U, IN (inside tree), E, EXAM ROOTS, FILL TIN (with tar), D, N, N, N, EXAM BOXES, TAKE MAGNET, S, S, S, U, W, OUT, D, E (south bank), VAULT RIVER (need pole), DROP POLE (needed again later), E, E, S (back at clearing), DROP MAGNET (for later), EXAM PLANTS, TAKE CHEESE PLANT (should have this plus tin of tar, packet of fags, handle and helmet [worn]), S, S, S, W, S, E, E, E, E (small clearing), EXAM FIRE, TAKE PAGE, EXAM PAGE, W, FOLLOW TRACKS (disappear into bushes), EXAM BUSHES (find boat), EXAM BOAT (has a hole), MEND BOAT (need page and tar), PULL BOAT (into water), IN, SAIL N, SAIL N, SAIL N, SAIL N (caught in whirlpool and thrown out of the boat, now knee-deep in water), W (shallow pool), S (crossover), S (short passage), E (far end of passage), EXAM DOOR, UNBOLT DOOR, OPEN DOOR, IN (cave), EXAM MAN (smoking a chain!), GIVE FAGS (he gives you the chain), EXAM TABLE, TAKE BOOTS, WEAR BOOTS, S, W, N, N, N, E (choice of passages), E (see slab of rock and puddle of water), FILL TIN (with water from puddle, can now see a trapdoor), OPEN TRAPDOOR, DROP TIN, D (cellar), DIG (sand becomes a witch [sandwich]), TAKE WITCH, DIG (find lever), PULL LEVER (slab moves away from east exit above), U, E, TAKE BASKET, EXAM BASKET (lid flaps like a trap!), W, W, W, W (small gallery), U (recently excavated tunnel), N (slowly widening tunnel, note odour of cheese), N (animal's lair), SET TRAP (need basket and cheese plant), WAIT, WAIT (mole appears attracted by the smell of the cheese plant), WAIT (mole trapped in basket), TAKE BASKET (or TAKE TRAP), N (maze of tunnels), S, S (to caved-in exit), RELEASE MOLE (digs a way through), DROP BASKET, GO TUNNEL (main road of small village), S, W, W, (bridge is up), EXAM CRANK, INSERT HANDLE (fits), TURN HANDLE (bridge lowers), S, EXAM TOYS, TAKE PIPE, EXAM PIPE, N, E, S, EXAM WEAPONS (ghostly knight appears), GIVE CHAIN (from smoker - given deflated beach ball), N, E (sandy shore - the tide is out).

Note: If you try to go N while the tide is out the sand monster will get you. If you go N while the tide is in but the beach ball is deflated you will drown. WAIT (tide comes in), BLOW BALL (Inflated now), N (to lighthouse), IN, EXAM TABLE (see hungry lighthouse keeper), GIVE WITCH (given paperweight), U, EXAM BEDS, EXAM TOOLBOX, TAKE SCREWDRIVER, D, OUT, EXAM BALL (deflated again), BLOW BALL, S, W, W (east end of bridge), W, W (back at clearing), DROP BALL, DROP PAPERWEIGHT, DROP SCREWDRIVER, TAKE CRYSTALOMETER, PLUG CABLE (of helmet into crystalometer - helmet must be worn first), S, S, S, TAKE ROPE, N, N, N (back at clearing). You now have everything assembled for finding the 4 crystals.

To get the Red Crystal - you should now have oxygen bottles, crystalometer, helmet [worn], rope, pipe, and boots which are already worn and not worth the trouble of removing and dropping.

N, W, W, TAKE POLE, VAULT RIVER, W, U, IN, E, D, N, N (dormitory), PRESS RED (on crystalometer - now in red mode), PRESS BLACK (crystal detected), SLIDE VISOR (on helmet), LIE DOWN (on bed - can now see red crystal hanging from ceiling), TAKE RED CRYSTAL (out of reach), DROP ROPE, PLAY PIPE (rope rises), CLIMB ROPE, TAKE RED CRYSTAL, DROP PIPE, S, S, U, W, OUT, D, E, VAULT RIVER, DROP POLE, E, E, S (back at clearing).

To get the Green Crystal

TAKE BALL, TAKE LANTERN, E, E (over bridge), E, E (sandy shore), WAIT (tide comes in), BLOW BALL, N, IN, U, U (top of lighthouse), PRESS GREEN (crystalometer now in green mode), PRESS BLACK (crystal detected), EXAM CABINET, OPEN CABINET, SLIDE VISOR, EXAM LIGHT (green crystal), TAKE GREEN CRYSTAL, now LANTERN ON and DROP LANTERN to replace light otherwise keeper takes green crystal from you), D, D, OUT, BLOW BALL, S, DROP BALL, W, W, W, W (back at clearing).

To get the Blue Crystal

TAKE PAPERWEIGHT, S, S, S, S (valley), W, S, E (very narrow ledge), EXAM LEDGE (see nest), EXAM NEST (see egg), PRESS BLUE (now in blue mode), PRESS BLACK (crystal detected), SLIDE VISOR, EXAM EGG (actually a blue crystal), DROP PAPERWEIGHT (into nest), TAKE BLUE CRYSTAL (have to input "blue" otherwise you take the paperweight which has to be left in the nest so the bird doesn't snatch back the blue crystal), W, N, E, N, N, N, N (back to clearing).

To get the Pink Crystal

TAKE KEY, TAKE SCREWDRIVER, TAKE MAGNET, E, E, E, N (main road), N (excavated tunnel), E, E (animal's lair), S, S, D (small gallery), E, S (shallow pool), EXAM CLOCK, INSERT KEY (from mud in path), WIND CLOCK (ticking), EXAM FACE, READ INSCRIPTION (17 jewels), UNDO SCREWS (need screwdriver), DROP SCREWDRIVER, REMOVE FACE, EXAM HOLE, EXAM PLATE, REMOVE PLATE (need magnet), DROP MAGNET, PRESS PINK (now in pink mode), PRESS BLACK (crystal detected), SLIDE VISOR, EXAM JEWELS (16 red and 1 pink), TAKE PINK CRYSTAL (now get message to say you have all the crystals. You are to go to the underground transporter tube and prepare for transportation.

Run for Home

N, W, U, N, N (lair), N, S, S (excavated tunnel), GO TUNNEL (main road of small village), S, W, W, W (clearing), S, S, S (well), D (must be wearing boots - to bottom of well), PRESS BUTTON (if all is correct you are transported home) 98% THE END

GETTING YOU STARTED

AZTEC ASSAULT played by Alf Baldwin on a Spectrum

S, X PRIEST (note black face), SAY "HELLO", S, X TREES (see bird), X FOLIAGE (see hole), INSERT HAND (furry creature), INSERT HAND (you now have an opossum's tail), SE, SE, SAY "HELLO", X TEMPLE, E, E, NE, X REDOUBT, GET TUBE, X TUBE (blowpipe), N, X CAUSEWAY, U, N (see disturbance in lake), S, D, S, SW, W, W, NW, NW, N (you drown but are resurrected at water's edge), X CORPSE, GET CORPSE, W, S, SE, SE, BURY CORPSE (Aztec family thank you note what they say), E, E, NE, N, U, N, D, W, SAY "HELLO", GIVE TAIL (midwife sews shapes onto your robe), E, S, SAY "HELLO", GET JUG, THROW WATER, DROP JUG, MASSAGE, N, SE, X FIRE (see pool of oil), DIP HANDS IN POOL, WIPE FACE (face now black and with the shapes on your robe you are now disguised as a priest)

CURSE OF CALUTHA Pt1 played by Keith Burnard on a Spectrum

INV, N, GET ROCK, S, DROP ROCK, E, X BOAT, S, S, SE (village), W, BUY ALE, E, SW, TALK BOY, NE, GET SANDWICH, N, NE (note ladder), W, TALK TRAMP, SHARE SANDWICH, EAT SANDWICH (your half will prevent the hunger syndrome later), GET RING, W, W, SW

CURSE OF CALUTHA Pt2 played by Keith Burnard on a Spectrum

N, X ASHES, GET TINDERBOX, READ WRITING, N, N, (eventually you will be kicked out of the cave system into a secret garden. SAVE your position as you can't return here) X TREE, SEARCH GRASS (see chest), GET CHEST, X GARDEN, PICK LEAF, WAIT, PICK LEAF, W, N, GET SPADE, S, E, U, N, DROP CHEST, STAND CHEST, SEARCH CAN, GET TIN, JUMP (off chest), EMPTY TIN

KIDNAPPED played by Jonathan Scott on a Spectrum

OPEN DOOR, IN, EXAMINE EAST RECESS (you see a large mattress), EXAMINE MATTRESS (you find some cotton), TAKE COTTON, LIFT MATTRESS (a large key is tucked away inside it), EXAMINE WEST RECESS (you find a piece of paper), EXAMINE PAPER (its writing has faded), OUT, CLOSE DOOR, WEST, TAKE HAY, EXAMINE BARN (bullt of the ground!), FEEL UNDER BARN (you find a coin), EXAMINE HAYSTACK (the proverbial one), LOOK FOR NEEDLE (now have it), UNLOCK DOOR (need large key), IN, EXAMINE BARN (you spot a small spade), TAKE SPADE, OUT, EAST, EAST (the minister is here), SAY HELLO (he walks you to the ford and gives you a small bible and a letter), EXAMINE LETTER (it is addressed to your uncle)

SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND 2 played(?) by Steve Clay on an Amiga

POINT, CLICK, CLICK-CLICK, wait for disk access, POINT, CLICK, POINT, CLICK-CLICK, disk access

(It is so frustrating when all you want to do is get stuck into the adventure....Barbara)

LA ADVENTURE Pt1 played by Barbara Gibb on a C64

Start at your desk in front of your computer. TAKE CAN (of Hydro-soda). OPEN CAN (which fizzes over you and your computer). You are drawn into the TV set. You notice a pulse. CATCH PULSE (to be transported to a backstreet, inside your own creation, LA Adventure). EXAM RUBBISH, TAKE PIPE and EXAM PIPE, E and READ NOTICE (note number), W, W (note taxi rank for later), D (into subway), JUMP ACROSS TRACK (need pipe as vaulting-pole). You are now at the entrance to the shopping mall. Go D to the tracks again and TAKE COIN before returning Up. Go S (into shopping mall), E (to Cafe Central), GO ESCALATOR (to another entrance to mall where you see a telephone), INSERT COIN and DIAL 555371 (from notice) to make an appointment with Cyberdump Surgery. Go S (automatically have facial surgery if made the appointment - you won't be mistaken for a thief now you have a new appearance), W, N, GO ESCALATOR, N, E (into hairdresser's salon), EXAM HAIR and TALK WOMAN (who rewards you with some money - she will shoot you if you haven't changed your appearance), TAKE MONEY then SIT SEATS (to have your hair done and find a tin of hairspray)

LABARINTH played by Doreen Bardon on a Spectrum

Start outside main gates leading into the labarinth. I (nothing), E (by small pond). EXAM POND, LOOK and TAKE FAIRY, DIG GROUND (see a large Iron key), TAKE KEY, W, UNLOCK GATE (key jams in lock), OPEN GATE, N, N, W (see moss), EXAM MOSS (see eyes blinking at you), TALK MOSS (given advice and something appears), LOOK and TAKE GLOWORM, E, E, E (strange northern wall), EXAM WALL, GO WALL (go through wall to another passage), E, TAKE KNIFE, W, W (see small door)

SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND 1 played by Lon Houlston on an Atari STE

Walk right to Scumm Bar. Open door and walk in. Walk right to red curtain, talk to important-looking pirates when you will be told details of your trials. Ask for further details of the individual tests. Wait for cook to leave the kitchen and disappear off screen left. Open kitchen door and walk in. Pick up hunk of meat and use it with the pot of stew. Pick up stewed meat, pick up pot, open east door to jetty and walk through door to southeast corner of jetty. Jump on loose board FOUR times to scare away bird. Pick up fish before bird returns. Go back through bar speaking to dog on way to enliven walk. Walk out of bar. Walk west to cliff side. Walk east to path.

THE PILGRIM played by Walter Pooley on a C64

You return to consciousness in your own wrecked room. LOOK AROUND (see a chair leg), GET LEG, BREAK WINDOW, E (through broken window, unfortunately you break an arm so you must make a splint), N, N, E, E (carpenter's shop), GET HEMP, MEND ARM (using chair leg and hemp), W, W, W (into crofter's cottage), EXAMINE HEARTH (made of flagstones), LIFT FLAGSTONE (see fragment of parchment), GET PARCHMENT, READ PARCHMENT (says: "And the key is forged from a word not . . . al. Who says the word aloud. . . Icon, will gain access to the guardian." The missing words are "usual" and "silicon", E, S, S, E (apothecary's house), LOOK AROUND (see shelves hanging from a panelled wall), HIT PANEL (small door will open and you see a pot of balm), GET BALM (at some time in the adventure your feet will get sore, when they do USE BALM). You will also encounter the warrior from Syvian, when he appears HIDE until he goes away.

PRE-HISTORY played by Lorna Paterson on an Amstrad

Start in a village. E, EXAMINE GRASS, GET GRASS, E, EXAMINE WOOD, EXAMINE TREE, LOOK, GET KINDLING, EXAMINE TREE, LOOK, GET STICK, CLIMB TREE, EXAMINE TRUNK, PEEL BARK, D, E, WALK AROUND PIT, E, S, EXAMINE CHAMOIS, CALL CHAMOIS, N, CALL CHAMOIS, W, CALL CHAMOIS, WALK AROUND PIT

QUEST OF KRON played by Dorothy Millard on a C64

Start at the Lagoon of Stars. INV (have a magic ring), EXAM ROCKS (uncover your boat), GET BOAT, EXAM BOAT (sails need attention), SET SAILS, E (must be carrying boat - now on Sea of Storms), E, E, E (to northeast coast of Sark). The moon moves behind dark clouds, WAIT (moon appears again, its light revealing steps cut out of the cliff), U (an old Boran Monastery), EXAM RUINS, GET SCROLL, READ SCROLL (it's in old Boran script and you can't read it), D, GET BOAT, W (don't go south as the rising water is a whirlpool), W, W, S, S (to Refuge Rock), IN (to cave), GET ROPE, GET TWIGS, W, S (you see a lone figure on the clifftop), N, N, W, W (to northwest coast of Sark), GET IRON BAR (you hear a cry), THROW ROPE (it winds around tree), DROP BOAT (otherwise you slip and fall)

RETURN TO DOOM played by Lorna Paterson on an Amstrad

Start in control room. N, GET EXTINGUISHER, NE, E, E, GET TECTONOMETER, W, GET TANK, W, S, E, KNOCK, N, OPEN TANK, D, N, GET PILL, S, U, S, W, N, W, SHOUT, now move either NW or SW towards the closed set of teeth, GET ROD, NE/SE, E, E, SE, GET ROCK, NW, E, GET ROCK, W, THROW ROCK

TOOT 'A' COME-IN played by Dennis Francombe on a Spectrum

This adventure is on the B-side of PENELESS (which offers a prize for completion) is very idiosyncratic. There is no RAM SAVE/LOAD, so frequent SAVES are advisable as sudden death lurks everywhere. In every location objects are not revealed unless LOOK is entered. There is also an aggressive character that attacks you in various areas and appears to do little more than hold up the game for a fight sequence that you cannot win. With these warnings in mind on with the adventure:-LOOK, EXAM HAND, GET RING, S, EXAM WALL, W, SEARCH PASSAGE, W, LOOK, GET IDOL, E, E, E, WAIT, E, DOWN, W, N, E, E, E, S, E, LOOK, GET KEY, N, N, GET RAT, PUT IDOL IN HOLE, S, W, N, W, W, W, S, E, S, E, E, S, S, LOOK, PUT KEY IN DOOR, UNLOCK DOOR, OPEN DOOR, S, S, S, W, LOOK, GET DIAMONDS, EXAM DIAMONDS, E, N, N, N, N, W, W, N, UP, S, S, LOOK, EXAM SPUR, N, EXAM CASE, OPEN CASE, GET BANDAGES, MAKE ROPE, LOOK, W, W, S, S, E, LOOK, GET BOTTLE, EXAM BOTTLE, W, W, LOOK, EXAM HATCH, HELP, N, N, W, N, E, DRINK LEMONADE, DROP BOTTLE, N, WE, LOOK, GET WOOD, MAKE TORCH, E, E, CUT STING, SUCK POISON, SQUASH SCORPION, W, S, W, S, E, S, S, DROP WOOD, LIGHT WOOD, DOWN Note: To redescribe a location press ENTER key.

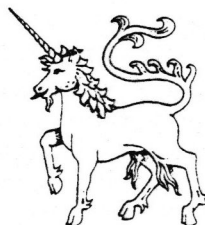
MIDNIGHT THIEF as played on an Amiga

GET ALL (stool and silver tankard), OPEN DOOR, W, N, N (blacksmith's forge), EXAMINE WALL (find dagger) It can't be taken but as a thief you can STEAL DAGGER, BURN STOOL (to get charcoal), S, E, N (to temple antechamber), E (temple garden). You see a stone lion with a bowl of water on its head, EMPTY TANKARD and FILL TANKARD WITH WATER, W, N (see priest praying at altar), THREATEN PRIEST WITH DAGGER

HINTS AND TIPS

ADVENTURE QUEST played by Ron Rainbird on an Atari 800XL
(similar on many other computers)

Want an orchid - use a table.
 Dracula doesn't fancy people who eat onions.
 Follow the unicorn, but first give it a floral tribute.
 Throw the stick to deter the wolves.
 A silver ball is up a tree.
 Take plenty of thirst quencher when crossing the desert.
 When you hear silthering in the desert - LOOK.
 Can't get past the Sphinx? - Lead the giant worm to it.
 A tune on the pipes will deal with the snakes.
 To reveal a sundial, remember All Baba's magic words.



LOST IN THE AMAZON from Dorothy Millard's own solution

Do not remove your clothes or you will die from exposure.
 When you become thirsty DRINK WATER from the canteen which can be refilled at the river.
 When you get hungry EAT FOOD from the Store Hut - do not eat the fruit.
 The natives will chase you if you are carrying the shining stone in the village.
 Do not walk through the mud too often or you will sink.
 Do not attack the Native Guards or you will be put in jail and there is no way out.

ARNOLD THE ADVENTURER 2 played by Jim Donaldson on a Spectrum

Blow sawdust to get rid of attendant in the kennels.
 Pick the lock with the wire.
 Tie the chain to the handle to avoid being killed by the boulder.
 Oil the handle in the bookcase.



SPECTRE OF CASTLE CORIS (48K) played by Alf Baldwin on a Spectrum

Question everyone you meet for information on the Spectre. Some characters will not know who you are so you must tell them you are Duke Alaric.
 Search the pulpit in the church.
 The Bakery is boarded up but the boards are loose so you can move them and climb in.
 Buy ale in the tavern and question the landlord.
 Ask Will to lend you his tools.
 You will need to examine the castle wall closely to see the bricked up entrance.
 Buy a lantern in Bran's shop which opens at noon.
 Return the tools to Will after you have chipped away the mortar and uncovered the entrance in the castle wall.
 Put some wood on the fire for Agnes and get a second load to stack by the fireplace.



COMPLEX played by Dorothy Millard on a C64

Lift the mattress to find a key. JUMP on the rotting wood to find a rope.

Feed the snake with the maggots.

Don't bother with the toolbox as it will explode if you try to take it.

When in the rowboat LASSOO LOG using the rope then CLIMB ROPE to find yourself staddling the log. You can now go north to the cliff edge.

CORYA THE WARRIOR SAGE: DRAGON played by Damian Steele on a C64

Part 1 - Cast cherish to make friends. Rescue the blacksmith to fix your sword.

To move logs get some equine help. Don't sleep in the dark - make a fire.

Part 2 - If you keep getting lost, input WHERE to get the location number.

Listen to hear how to open the door.

If bitten, cast heal or you'll bleed to death.

Cast fire to get rid of the beast.

Cast shield for protection from natives.

Feel wall and floor when in darkness.

Two of the magic words on the scroll open doors.

Part 3 - Sit and rock chair to find something secret.

Examine the lock before the penny will fall. Feel lippy to find a key.

Icy steps cause terminal illness. Cast shield and fire at the well.

The three handles are rouge kippers. Drop crystal ball in acid to unlock a solution.

If moving floors give you that sinking feeling, try new tapestry for guaranteed results.



DARKEST ROAD played by Jim Donaldson on a Spectrum

(also applies to other versions)

Kiss the mermaid to get past the guardian.

Wear the shoes when entering the forest.

You must be carrying both parts of the map and wearing the mask to enter the swamp.



DIARMID Pt1 played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum

The bees won't let you cross the stepping-stones after you have taken the honey.

Help the salmon, ram and eagle and discover their names and you will be rewarded in the second part.

Make a careful note of the word carved on the tree.

Save the mermaid from the serpent and she will repay you almost immediately.

The shield has quite a few uses so carry it with you at all times.

Hungry - spread the cloth and enjoy the picnic.

Appearances can be deceptive so don't believe all you see, so restrain your natural urges.

You need a three-pronged weapon to get rid of the three-headed dog.

You'll need the rock again, and tread lightly when on the mountain.



TREASURE ISLAND DIZZY played by A. Pense-Hill on an Amiga

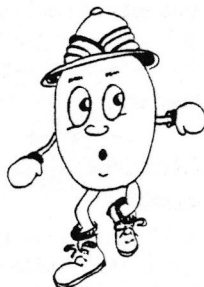
Give the following items to the shopkeeper and he will give you a boat and the various things you need to make it work so that you can get off the island.

- 1) Hookjaw's treasure (you need the bible to get this)
- 2) A bag of gold coins
- 3) Vintage brandy
- 4) A gold egg

At the beginning of the game if you type in ICANFLY (no spaces)
Dizzy will be able to fly off the island.
Type in EGGSONLEGS for infinite lives.

MAGICLAND DIZZY played by A. Pense-Hill on an Amiga

To get into the castle - use the key at the bottom of monolith
To get rid of troll - use stick on goat



EYE OF THE INCA played by Dorothy Millard on a C64

In the temple MOVE STATUE so that the axe falls the other way allowing you to move safely through the doorway.

The ancient jaguar tooth is a red herring.

A golden tablet is hidden behind one of the statues which will translate Incan for you; this will allow you to read the signs and progress further into the game.

Prick your finger with the needle for some blood to drop onto the sacrificial stone, which will then slide aside to reveal an opening to the south.

Don't go west into the quicksand burial chamber until you have the ladder and you will need the scuba gear too.

Use the coffin to float across the bubbling pool and get the Eye of the Inca.

HAMMER OF GRIMMOLD played by Damian Steele on a C64 (details similar on other computers)

The coded messages on the help screen are:

Drunken traveller : Steady
Sharpening stone : Try the hut
Light : Kick stones
Sunstone : Inn cellar
Troll : Cast light at troll
Hooded men : Wear hood
Wizard : Cast light at rope
Roc's nest : Throw rope

Citadel : Oak tree
Inn door : Need axe
Sleeping orc : Place full flagon
Gigantic orc : Give diamond
Orc captain : Wear uniform
Cheese : Smell rubbish
Flagon : Exam grille
Bridge : Coffin lid



SNOW JOKE played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum

When you X CAR note that it mentions a passenger seat, a back seat a driving seat and a dashboard. one of them has something which will save your life. The boot is under the back seat and has to be accessed from inside the car. X FLOOR to find a container and heat (twice) the full container with the lit blowtorch.

SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND 1 played by Lon Houlston on an Atari STE

Pick up pot in kitchen to use as a hard hat.

Give breath mints to prisoner, he will give you a cake containing a file.

Safe combination in store : there were 2 different combinations in the two sets of disks I used and it may well be that it varies according to the type of computer. Save your position in the storeroom just before the storekeeper opens the safe and replay until you get it.

Push signpost in forest to make bridge appear.



ONE OF OUR WOMBATS IS MISSING played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum

WAIT patiently at the jackdaw's cage. He brings you an assortment of objects, it is the 1p and 5p that you need.

Spend a penny to meet an old friend (that is if you have played Balrog and the Cat etc.) and find one of the many keys.

Use the key to find another key which should enable you to find something that will help you return inside the zoo.

The crane wants a tasty morsel. The egg is needed to catch the mongoose which in turn is needed to obtain the 10p.

Use the large key to get into the children's zoo.

Search the feathers of the owl for yet another key. This one unlocks the bar so that you can draw two pints.

Remember the wombat is Australian, so choose the correct can before you venture into the humming-bird maze. LISTEN when you are at the southernmost part of the maze then go south.

As there are several ways of playing this adventure, you may choose to buy a sticky bun for the elephant. To get the squashed frog you will need the shade. Feed the frog to the snake.



WONDERLAND played by Dorothy Millard on an Amiga

The playing cards can be found in the following locations:-

- Compost heap (eight of diamonds)
- Rabbit's clock (six of diamonds)
- Under Duchess' table (two of diamonds)
- Under Queen's pillow (Queen of diamonds)
- In telescope (four of diamonds)
- In guardroom locker (seven of diamonds)
- Under bridge (Jack of diamonds)
- In teapot (ten of diamonds)
- In tree house (three of diamonds)
- Loose brick (nine of diamonds)
- Duck pond (five of diamonds)
- Behind the throne (King of diamonds)
- Hole by Croquet Lawn (ace of diamonds)



SORCERER OF CLAYMORGUE CASTLE played by Walter Pooley
(this adventure is available for most computers)

There are 13 stars to find in and around the castle:-

- In the ashes of a tree after casting the Fire Spell.
- DIG outside the castle.
- Bottom of moat - SWIM DOWN 5 times, LOOK BOTTOM.
- In the tin can - CAST DIZZY DEAN spell, THROW BRICK.
- On the chandelier.
- In Wizard's workshop (behind the dragon).
- On condemned stairway south of plain room.
- Under stairs - CAST LYCANTHROPE spell to reach it.
- In stone grotto south of the lava stream.
- In the Dragon's lair.
- The Dragon has it - LOOK DRAGON.
- In the fountain.
- In dungeon cell, reached from top of fountain.



There are 12 spells:-

BLISS spell - found in the kitchen cabinet. This is a limited move spell and you need it three times. Once cast it's effective for about 20 moves. The correct sequence to get the star from the moat bottom, the CAST BLISS spell to escape from the moat, then use it to cross the lava, and finally to jump from the loft.

METHUSALAH spell - found in vacant room west of plain room. Used to counteract the effect of the fountain.

UNRAVEL spell - also found in the vacant room. Use to undo the rope holding the chandelier.

SEED spell - Use to open the stone door in the plain room.

DIZZY DEAN spell - In the stone grotto south of lava stream. Use it to improve your aim when throwing brick.

WICKED QUEEN spell - Changes broken glass to a magic mirror.

LIGHT SQUARED spell - When you are on the chandelier casting it will cause the chandelier to rise.

LYCANTHROPE spell - Changes you into a ferret. You can then enter the rat hole to get the star under the stairs.

FIREFLY spells - Found in the Wizard's workshop. It's your source of light.

PERMEABILITY spell - The only way into the location where you store the stars. Cast it in the forest.

FIRE spell - Cast it in the forest to reduce a tree to ash.

YOHO spell - Only effective for two trips; to get out of the hollow tree after you drop the first seven stars, then use to return to the tree when you have the last six stars.

To get into the castle:-

GO MOAT, HOLD BREATH, SWIM DOWN, GET TOWEL, SWIM DOWN, SWIM EAST, then UP gets you into the castle's kitchen.

LEGEND OF KYRANDIA Pt3 played by Ron Rainbird on an Amiga (1 meg)

The Shadowrealms - This is quite a tricky location. The important thing to remember is not to enter any dark section without a light, obtained by collecting Fire Berries. Unfortunately, these will only last for 3 moves, but if one is dropped into each dark cave you enter, it will remain glowing for the remainder of the game. There are several supplies of Fire Berries scattered throughout the caves - it is just a question of finding them without entering a dark cave without light, so save the game often and make a map of your travels. Should you enter a dark cave without a Fire Berry, you will die instantly without a fight. To my knowledge, there are 12 caves containing the Fire Berries so it is not quite as bad as it first appears.

Shortly after entering the Realm, you pass through an iron gate which immediately closes, locking you in. This is operated by a system of counterbalances, so during your travels through the caves, pick up each rock that you come across (5 in all, I believe) By placing these in the counterbalances, the gate is raised. Whilst wandering through the Shadowrealm, you will come across the Cavern of Twilight. Pick up the coin there and return to the outside world and go to the Wishing Well. Throwing the coin into the well will get you a Moonstone.

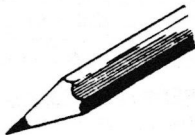
Go back to the Labyrinth, walk to the centre then go North. This should bring you to the Pantheon of Moonlight. Place the Moonstone on the Pedestal and another part of your Amulet will be activated, enabling you to generate your own illumination, thereby dispensing with the need for Fire Berries. (If you do this early on in this location it will make travel so much easier - but I couldn't.) You become a Will o' the Wisp with this activation which enables you to fly, so go to the Volcano River in the South-east corner of the Realm and glide across - but first freeze the river with Darm's Scroll.

In a cave across the river you will find the Castle Key. Now go back across the river and search the Eastern side for an Emerald Cave. Help yourself! Next, travel to the North-west corner of the Labyrinth to the Chasm of Everfall, which you may float across and enter the next stage of this adventure. (more next month)

TAXMAN COMETH played by Peter Clark on an Amstrad (similar on other computers)

To free the lever you will need to cast the Dallas Spell. This is found in the Cellar. Get the Rubber Box, rub the box on the wall and it turns into to Dallas Spell and a Spell Book.

At the moat, cast the HB Spell and you will get a pencil. Draw a bridge (Drawbridge!!!) then go north to the foot of the beanstalk. Stand on the life and tell it to go down. You will go up to the top of the beanstalk. Go north to the door, climb the flower, press the door bell then climb down again. You will soon find yourself in the cellar.



(Here is an extra one from me ---Barbara)

In the Choker Room, PUT SIGN ON LINE for a chest to appear. The sign is the one on the door of the privy.

Don't drop the sign as you will need it again.

Sign here

CURSE OF ENCHANTIA Pt2 played by John Guthrie on an Amiga

THE TOWN - Last month we left Brad ascending in a bucket after putting on his mask of seaweed, mud and twigs, and you undoubtedly are wondering why. Well, at the top of the well is a monster who falls in love with Brad, and grabs him to kiss him. The mask falls off, the monster is alarmed by Brad's real appearance and jumps down the well.

After this incident, move behind the rock in the middle of the screen, so Brad's no longer visible, and pick up the gem. Then move off down the road that goes off into the distance. The scene changes into a country road. A large brigand appears and charges at you with a sword. A rather inept brigand as turns out actually, because he trips over a tree root and drops the sword. Pick up the sword and attack him with it and he will disappear leaving a bag of money. Take the money and carry on down the road.

You are in Dragon's Pass, and you enter the town. Two guards block off your retreat, don't worry about them. You can enter Frank's food shop and buy yourself some food, if you really want to, but you don't actually need it. Next to this is the Red Dragon Inn, which you can enter but you'll only be sent out again.



Carry on down the road and you come to the town centre. Take the left exit and you're in Gypsy Road. There's a derelict shop that you can go in, but there's nothing in there. Carry on and you come to Sally See'all's shop. Sally is a seal, and in exchange for money will give you some useful advice. The advice is "Mage", which means you go and find the Mage. Go back to the town centre and take the road going straight up. This is Socery Street, and you will see the Mage's shop on the left. Go in. You are in the Mage's Shop of Wonders. Give the Mage some money and he will magically transport you to the edge of the world to seek the wise one. This is were I will leave it for another month, dangling on the edge of the world, what a strange feeling. (more next month)

WEEN played by Janice Charnley on an Amiga

At the Revuss, click on the carving and spell out the name DJEL to open the hideaway. Take the knife from the statue inside and use it twice on the bamboo stick lying beside the Revuss. Call Urm with the flute, then pick up the stone which he dislodges. The stone has an "A" carved on it, so insert it into the hole in the carving, and spell out AZEULISSE, and you will find the niche on the right-hand side will open to reveal another statue.

Click on each lever on the Revuss four times, starting with the right-hand lever. Close the lever screen. Take Azeulisse's statue from the right-hand niche and use it on Djel's statue. A fairy appears and says, "I am born of the love between Djel and Azeulisse. Kraal can do nothing against me. Since you are the one who saved me life, I'll help you. I'll bring you the three grains of sand."

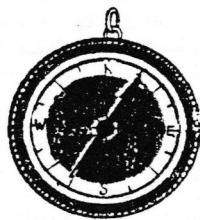
Pick up the grains and put them into the Revuss, and you will be told that Opal is once again Princess of the now luxuriant Volcano Island. Ween has regained the Kingdom of the Blue Rocks, rescued from the threat of Kraal. THE END.

CHAMPIONS OF KRYNN Pt.9 played by Ron Rainbird on an Amiga
CITY OF NERAKA - mapped on a 16x16 grid.

1st.fig. read left to right, 2nd.fig. top to bottom

Outline: Eventually, on returning to the second outpost, you will learn of the kidnapping of Sir Karl. To rescue him, you must go to Neraka in the company of Maya. Try not to go without her because she will lead you to a secret base. She is also a good companion in a fight!

- 0 - 0 Entrance to the city If you arrive without Maya.
- 3 - 0 Madman reveals treasure source.
- 1 - 2 Hidden guard post.
- 13 - 3 Another hidden guard post.
- 7 - 4 Dying knight.
- 13 - 7 Main entrance to secret base.
- 15 - 7 Entrance to City If Maya is with you.
- 1 - 8 Mobats and giant centipedes.
- 13 - 8 Spellcasters - Maya can burn them, so let her at them.
- 5 - 9 Hunters - they will attack If they see you.
- 6 - 9 Possibility of finding prisoners hiding from draconians.
- 11 - 9 Information of a written kind may be found here.
- 15 - 9 A tough fight.
- 9 - 11 Enemy captain and troops.
- 15 - 11 Guard post manned by soldiers and spellcasters.
- 5 - 12 Do not believe the sign here.
- 7 - 12 A safe place for resting - once you have killed the dragon.
- 9 - 13 A well-manned barracks.
- 0 - 13 More prisoners hiding.
- 3 - 13 More hunters, possibly.
- 8 - 14 Stairs to prison. Sir Karl is found on stairs.
Do not leave without going down to rescue the prisoners.
- 12 - 15 Mobats.
- 14 - 15 Giant centipedes.



JUST A WORD

HOODLUMS and HOOLIGANS (sent in by Mary Scott-Parker)

In San Francisco, there was a gang leader by the name of Muldoon. A reporter on a local paper was looking for a word to describe young toughs and he reversed the name to Noodlums, but his writing wasn't too clear and HOODLUMS were born.

HOOLIGANS appeared in London, twenty or so years later, named after a wild family of Houllhans, who became notorious for their riotous living.

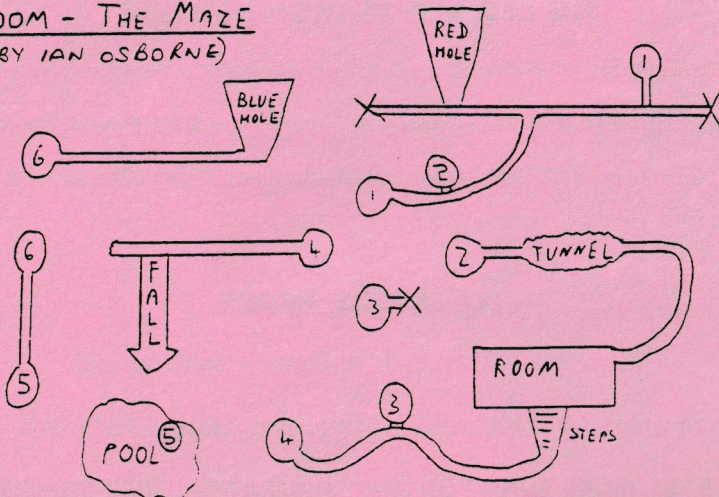
I'LL NAME THAT SOLUTION

Whilst cataloguing the solutions for the 11st last month I came across two I couldn't identify - can you help?

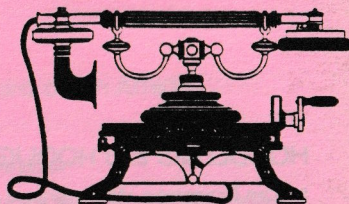
The first was probably in the C folder, the title and the first letter of each line are missing. It begins "You start on the Quay alongside your ship. N. N, N, E, N, take curious bag, S. W, S, S, S, E, S, take gold coin, N, N, give coin to Alchemist, take potion" and finishes "..... place white gem on statue, 5. The Royal Family return to life, your quest is completed!!"

The second is even more intriguing and I would love a copy of the adventure if it is available for any of my computers. I may even have it without knowing it! The first page of four is missing, but according to the rest of the solution you have to collect 10 treasures which to me sound very interesting. They are: Catcher's Mask, Rubber Stamp, Maltese Finch, Stuffed Penguin, Cheese Grater, Parking Meter, Uncle Buddy's Toupee, Hydrant, Film "A Corpse Line" and a Diamond. then you can rescue someone (this may be an Infocom adventure)

LOOM - THE MAZE (BY IAN OSBORNE)



TELEPHONE HELPLINE



DOREEN BARDON

0653 628509 MON - FRI 6pm-10pm Spectrum
Weekends - any reasonable time

JOAN PANCOTT

0305 784155 SUN - SAT 1pm - 10pm Various

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BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHTE

0935 26174 SUN - SAT 10am-10pm Spectrum & BBC

BARBARA GIBB

051 7226731 Afternoon & Evening Various

DAVE BARKER

071 7321513 Mon-Fri 7pm - 10 pm Various

VINCE BARKER

0642 780076 Any reasonable time C64

(In abeyance until further notice)

MANDY RODRIGUES

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SHARON HARWOOD

0702 611321 Any day 10am - 7pm Spectrum

LES MITCHELL

0482 445438 Any reasonable time Amstrad,
Commodore, Spectrum

GRIMWOLD

0626 853254 Any reasonable time but not after 10pm

(Simon Avery)

Amstrad

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