

ADVENTURE PROBE

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Birthday Issue

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If you write in it will be assumed that the letter is for publication in Probe unless it is clearly marked NOT FOR PUBLICATION, or obviously just a covering note for your subscription, contribution etc.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.

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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

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DISTRIBUTION

Adventure Probe is distributed during the third week of the month. Copy date for contributions and advertisements is 23rd 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:-

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HALL OF FAME

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

Dorothy Millard, Jenny Perry, Ron Guest, Mary Scott-Parker, Harold Dixon, George Hoyle, Tinkerbelle, Reynir Stefansson, John Schofield, Joan Williams, Jo Wood, Damian Steele, Jon Scott, Ellen Mahon, Terry Taylor, Phill Ramsay, Sharon Harwood, Peter Clark, Larry Horsfield, Steve Clay, Anne Borland, Keith Burnard.

Special thanks to :

Phil Richmond and Zenobi for software, and
Geoff Lynas for his usual excellent printing job.

EDITORIAL

It has been a "funny" month since my last editorial. Bank Holidays, half term, the changeable weather that affects my health, and lots of other little things have contrived to hold up most of the things I'd planned. Perhaps it is old age slowing me up, but the hours in the day also seem shorter. I'm sure I used to cram more into a day!

Well, I'm glad to say one of the "hold ups" was the number of enquiries received from potential subscribers. Not all lead to further contact, but at least there are still some adventurers out there. I just wish they would reply and let me know what they expected, and would like to play and read.

The supply of 8-bit adventures continues to worry. I don't know why authors have given up, but suspect their hardware is wearing out (not as robust as adventurers and writers!), and probably a little disillusioned that sales have dropped to such a poor level. Still there is some good news - Dream World will have a new game soon (see advert in this issue), and The Adventure Workshop and Adventure Probe Software should have some new titles next month.

Phil Richmond has written a new Amiga text adventure (see review section in this issue), and I've got a few more text adventures to look at as soon as time allows. In the meantime PEG IT is still entertaining me for about half an hour at the beginning and end of a long day, and this is being pushed hard by a new one called SPRINGTIME in which you have to get a spring to fall onto a cross on a certain square. To move, you can push or go under a square, but if you push you land on it as one or more squares rotate. A bit difficult to explain at the moment as I am rushing this a bit, but I'll try to review it in the next magazine. Another game I've had a brief go at is FLIGHT OF THE AMAZON QUEEN which must be a different version to the one Steve mentioned in his column in the March '95 magazine because I found it very playable. It is a point and click game which doesn't require 10/10 eyesight or the patience to cover every pixel on the screen. It is very smoothly animated (the main character has a leg action reminiscent of Norman Wisdom), and lovely clear icons and objects. More next month from either me, or Steve if he wishes.

Has anyone tried to load a game called Paul's First Journey? If, like me, you have only one drive, it requires 20 (twenty) disc swaps after the initial Workbench and Game disc before it has all loaded in. Anyway, it does look worthwhile if the bit I've seen is anything to go by. I've given up for the moment as I stupidly stole an idol from a temple and got thrown into a cell. Once again, more next month, if you can't wait until then order it now from Zenobi Software, only £1.49 including postage.

There will be another Prize Competition next month. No more details, just ensure you have ordered your copy.

Well, that should have filled in a few lines, all I have to say now is
HAPPY NINTH BIRTHDAY PROBE!

Barbara

A.F.I.O. Hon. Member



LETTERS

From Damian Steele of Paignton

It is nice to see that Chris Lord's letter has produced such a response in Probe (April '95).

A number of those responses mentioned that a console adventure review would be welcome but not a console RPG review. The difficulty with this is the old question: What makes one an RPG and the other an adventure?

In broad terms an RPG tends to be a group of characters on either a rescue mission or a treasure hunt. This always seems to involve a lot of fight sequences and little else.

An adventure is usually based around a single character and involves much more object manipulation, interaction with other characters and puzzle solving.

However, many of the modern games have elements of both in them and different reviewers may choose to emphasize only those elements they particularly enjoyed. So one reviewer could class the game as an RPG and the other class it as an adventure. Perhaps there should be another classification - ARPG (Adventure Role Play Game).

Whether these games are Adv's, RPG or ARPG, the graphics in them are usually superb. More and more we are seeing characters and backdrops which simply take the breath away. The sound, too, plays an important part. It is rare these days for there to be less than three different tunes - and numerous individual sound effects - in each game, with some pieces making it worth turning the game on just to listen to them.

The point about the cost of the software, although very understandable, should NOT be used as an excuse for not buying the games. Console prices are, in the main, directly comparable to PC software for instance - and the PC itself costs more to begin with! At the end of the day, each person will buy, and/or use, the system they are happy with. I am not trying to say that I wouldn't like to see these games come down in price, only that they are on a realistic level when compared with software of a similar quality on other machines.

The control method and ease of use will vary from game to game. Some are very easy to operate with control being similar to playing a platform-type game. Other games will require more complicated systems, perhaps for accessing different option menus or for varying battle moves. But most, with practice, become almost second nature. It's one of those points which can't really be generalized with any degree of accuracy.

But surely it doesn't actually matter which system the games are played on anyway. It's the GAME we should be concerned with, NOT the machine.

As a minor point of interest, I don't personally own a console system of any description. I have, however, had considerable access to a number of different makes. There wasn't one which came out as the overall best based on those points mentioned above. They each had good and bad points.

I do not recommend that any individual purchase - or not purchase - a console system but merely that they should give them a fair trial before making a judgement.

In the recent debate my vote goes with the "Keep the Personals" campaign.

I always enjoy reading them whether they are addressed to me or not; whether I can understand their significance or not.

There are parts of the magazine which I don't like - Steve's AMOS column holds little interest for me, despite my being a game author - but I realize that there are those who do enjoy it.

What it boils down to is: Probe must remain a democratic magazine. Until the majority of subscribers register their votes to discontinue them - and if YOU don't like them, let Barbara know about it! The Personals should stay.

*

I, personally, don't like anything that has a team of characters and/or fighting in it. I need objects, puzzles and more puzzles to keep me playing anything, not pretty pictures and irritating music. However, I will, of course, publish anything that is sent in providing it has an element of interest to some readers.

The Personal Messages are proving more popular than ever, and I've certainly no plans to axe them. Steve's AMOS articles are of great interest to some readers, and I know of one reader in particular who will be resuming the programming of his own game, using AMOS, as soon as he can drag himself away from playing PEG IT. (Barbara)

From Peter Clark of Ipswich

Well, I never thought that it would happen but it has. I have just finished the first graphic adventure that I have ever played on a PC. Me! I ask you! The one whose first computer was a ZX 81 and who first used that computer to track down a Balrog in a swamp. Yes, I must admit it, after years of text-only adventures I have actually enjoyed a graphical one. Now don't get me wrong, I still love text-only games and will continue to play and write them for as long as they are there, but it seems that the graphical boys have at last got their act together and are producing games with pictures that are worth playing.

You may well wonder what game it was that has altered my opinion in this way. Well, it was "Simon the Sorcerer". This game was kindly lent to me by Jenny Perry and I am very grateful to her for that and for the help that she and Sue Roseblade have given me while I have been playing it. I cannot remember whether this game has been reviewed in Probe before but it is certainly worth a try if you haven't played it. The humour within it is really good and I rolled about laughing at the keyboard towards the end where I had been trapped by the evil wizard and was beginning to think that it was going to be yet another reload of a saved position when a ringing sound came from the screen and a telephone was lowered down. The evil wizard answered it and then said "It's for You". It was a call from some relatives outside that I had saved by destroying the wizard's magic wand and who told me to delay him so that they could effect a rescue. I must admit that, after completing the game soon afterwards, I reloaded that bit to watch again. What with that and the way that Simon got out his walkman and started listening to it whilst tapping his foot if you didn't make an input to the computer for several seconds really made it an amusing game to play. Consider me at least partially converted to graphic adventures!

You said in the last issue of Probe that the 8-bit scene was lacking new games. Well, I can help a little in that respect as I have just completed my latest game. Written with PAW for the Amstrad the game involves matter transference and time travel. Those of you who were at last year's convention may have played a demo of the first part of the game. Part Two is now virtually completed and will soon be on its way to be playtested by Lorna Paterson. When that is done, Lorna may be persuaded to convert it to GAC for the Amstrad tape users. I will also be sending a copy of the game to the Adventure Workshop for conversion to Spectrum.

If all goes well it will be available in time for the convention in October. Those amongst you that have taken exception to mazes in games will be pleased to know that, as far as this game is concerned, there is not a maze in sight.

Just a quick thank you for the three month extension to my subscription as a result of winning the "last line" competition last month. Just think of it, Three Free Probes!

Finally, just a quick comment on the Personal column which seems to be causing so much concern just lately. I, myself, can take it or leave it. Yes, I have put a couple of messages in at various times but do not use it as a matter of habit every month. Perhaps that is where it seems to be going wrong. A little of that sort of thing is very funny but, after a time, it begins to mean less and less until it becomes something that can be ignored. However, everyone is entitled to their opinion and everyone has different tastes so why shouldn't those that like it carry one. There, now I've had my way so I'll shut up!

*

I must be the only player who wasn't impressed by Simon the Sorcerer. I hate being rushed when playing an adventure, so a "time passes" every 5 seconds, or a character indicating I should "get a move on" annoys me. I came to the conclusion I must be missing the point of the game so I've never reviewed it myself, and no one else has submit a review either, although a getting you started and hints have been published in Probe.

It is marvellous news about your new game, Peter, and I'll look forward to playing it on either the Amstrad or Spectrum. The low number of new releases is very worrying, and those who are still writing deserve the full support of players, who, by purchasing their games, can show their appreciation.

As I've said in reply to Damian's letter, the Personals stay. (Barbara)

From Jenny Perry of Hampton

Just thought I'd drop you a line to say how much I'm looking forward to the Convention in October.

I remember travelling up to my first convention with the terror that nobody would talk to me, everybody there would be an expert at either writing, reviewing or playtesting, and that no one there ever got stuck!

I'm glad to say that all these problems existed in my imagination only and I had a wonderful time. Hope this gives a bit of encouragement to those thinking of taking the plunge for the first time this year.

*

A timely reminder from Jenny to keep Saturday, 21st October free. The venue is the same as last year, The Royal Angus Thistle Hotel, Birmingham. Tickets (£5 each) will be available nearer the time.

As Jenny says, there is no need to be nervous about attending the convention. Everyone is very friendly, and if you're not sure how to identify other adventurers attending the meeting you can always walk around waving a copy of Probe - it works, as Wynne found out a few years ago. (Barbara)

From Jo Wood of Rooley Moor

I was just thinking about adventuring and ended up penning the few words included, so if you think others would be interested, feel free in putting them in Probe. I would be interesting to have other people's thoughts on this subject!

By the way, I see no reason why anyone should worry about the Personal Messages, as if someone doesn't want to read them they don't have to, after all! Basically, people write what they want, so presumably the message means something to someone, which is the whole point. Anyway, if someone feels excluded, they should send in a message themselves and get even with them all!

*

Jo's article, "A Theory about Adventuring", will be in a future Probe, probably the July issue. It raises some very valid points, which I hope readers will respond to, it may even take their minds off the Personal Messages for a while. (Barbara)

From Tinkerbell

My last letter seems to have upset one or two people, so I thought I'd try and do a better job this time and, simultaneously, answer a few specific points. Of COURSE I believe that all Probers should have the right to write in and present their points of view. In fact, I would fight to the death to protect that right - even if the points of view presented are utter rubbish!

Anne states that the magazine should be democratic; she then says that the Personals should be limited to "Meaningful things". But what is meaningful to one person is trivial to another. No doubt what Anne means here is that the Personals should be "Meaningful" by her definition of the word. No doubt she could furnish us with a suitably warped definition of "Democracy", too.

She suggests that the Personals could be shorter. Why doesn't she just come out with it and tell everyone that she is advocating censorship of the Personal section of the magazine? No doubt, what she actually means is that the Personals should be "Democratically" censored! Anne, why not simply put in for Barbara's job, and then you can hack away at the magazine to your heart's content: democratically, of course!

Needless to say, I don't agree with Anne's comments regarding the unwelcoming or excluding nature of the Personals. No one is excluded from it, everyone is welcome to contribute. I do, too, contribute to other parts of Probe. I do not do so because I contribute to the Personals, but because I enjoy so doing, and take pleasure from feeling that other Adventurers may enjoy what I have to say. Yet Anne seems of the opinion that it is unfortunate that Barbara is kept snowed under with contributions of mine, and of others like me.

Perhaps she would prefer it if the people who contribute to the Personals section desisted from contributing to the rest of the magazine? Or perhaps she would merely like us to be "excluded" from so doing in the future - democratically, of course.

*

I think this has got slightly out of hand. I'm sure Anne didn't envisage all the fuss her original letter would cause, and I'm democratically calling a halt to the discussion. (Barbara)

From Keith Burnard of Hounslow

Many thanks for the Classic Lamp (batteries not included) as a prize for winning the Cover Caption Competition. It is now sitting on my computer table awaiting a long overdue power cut!

I remembered that I had put some batteries in a safe place for future use. The only problem is that I can never remember where that safe place was. Being a true adventurer, I searched and searched and searched. I found items that I had previously been searching for (and failed).

After many hours I found them in a tin marked "SEWING MACHINE NEEDLES". That only leaves one problem - where are the needles?

My wife can sort that one out.

*

Glad you liked it. The Caption Competition was very popular and everyone came up with good ideas. I wish I could have sent a lamp to them all. When I find a suitable prize, I'll run another competition. Mary Scott-Parker has sent me a picture which just cries out for a caption or speech bubbles. (Barbara)

From George Hoyle of Doncaster

I would like to add some comments to the debate regarding Mazes and Carry Limits.

I think the carry limits of an adventure game should be flexible for the game player. The only limitations should be the individual objects that can not be carried if you were in the real world, like horses and boulders, for example.

The maze should be part of the adventure game and not something that has been added to pad it out. I would personally have extra puzzles in the game rather than an exotically designed maze. The mazes I dislike the most are those which are not logical. I am talking about the ones which do not obey compass rules. If you go North you end up going East, for example.

*

Even when playing in a fantasy world, I think there should be a reasonable limit to what and how much can be carried, although I personally HATE games that only allow you three or four items at a time, no matter how big or small they are. (Barbara)

ADDITIONAL SOLUTIONS

The following solutions have been added to the files recently. Subscribers may purchase a solution (providing the adventure has been released for at least 6 months) at a cost of one 29p stamp each, plus one 1st or 2nd class stamp for return postage, regardless of number of solutions.

CATACOMBS (B & M Clark), LASKAR'S CRYSTALS, LETHAL FORMULA, FISTFUL OF NECRONOMICONS, FLAMEOUT, HAZARDOUS HOLIDAY, SHADOWS IN THE NIGHT.

REVIEWS

CONSOLE ADVENTURE GAMES

Reviewed by Chris Lord

Recently I have been taking a look at console adventure games and RPGs and here are a few things I discovered.

It seems both the Sega and Nintendo systems have a large number of software houses producing almost exclusively adv/rpg games. Most of these titles originate in Japan and are then translated into English for the American and U.K. markets. Recently more of this type of game have been released to satisfy the hunger of the more family-orientated Japanese buyer and many are now finding their way here. My local software shop has a good range of the new carts in stock both on import and U.K. release, some of which were very impressive.

On U.S. import for Megadrive is **PHANTASY 4**, a game of Japanese origin in the usual manga style. The action takes place in both overhead and 3D screens and allow you to control a party of characters on your quest. The game also allows you to make use of vehicles you discover and drive them in arcade type sequences, the usual system of hit points and magic is used. The graphics like all the Phantasy Star games are great, very cartoony and atmospheric. With luck this game will receive official release soon.

The next game is **STORY OF THOR**, also on the Megadrive. This game is an official U.K. cart so you should be able to find it in your high street. This game looks like Chaos Engine for the Amiga, with an overhead scrolling view of the action. Your character seems to be Aladdin from the Disney film and the God Thor has nothing to do with the game. Apart from these few petty moans this seems a great game with huge weird enemies, helpful fairies and a massive variety of locations. The game even features an impressive CD-ROM style intro off the 24-meg. cart.

The next game I played was a Super Nintendo title called **THE HORDE**. This game is a conversion from the 3DO and is more an action/strategy game than adventure. The game has you controlling a warrior in a forced 3D world like those old Ultimate Spectrum games. You must defend a small village from the horde of red demons who eat everything in their path. To make money for the yearly taxes you must grow trees and farm cows, etc. The best part is killing the demons which spiat like overripe tomatoes.

THE SWORD OF VERMILLION on the Sega Megadrive is now 5 years old but I thought it was worth a review as it can be found very cheaply from many retailers (mine was from Tandy and cost less than a tenner). The plot is the usual fantasy rubbish. The evil Tsaarkon has invaded the land of Excalabria and killed the king (your father) and laid waste etc. All very original stuff but unimportant to the game.

This is an RPG in the classic mould, you start in your home village where your supposed father has told you while on his deathbed that you are the prince of the land, you must find the vermillion sword and rid the land of the evil.

Well the game is a lot better than the feeble storyline (why are game plots always so bad?), the action is viewed from above when in a village and the first thing to do is buy a sword. The usual hit, experience points are used in this game, your level is raised every 90 experience points. You may question the villagers and shopkeepers, sometimes they will offer invaluable advice or a map of the terrain outside the village.

Travelling outside is done in 3D, you follow a path between trees and may enter caves or dungeons in search of treasure or other valuable items. make sure you have plenty of candies when you enter a dungeon as they burn out fast.

Combat takes place outside the villages and is done in either overhead view or side on view for the really big enemies, you can run away from a fight by exiting the left of the screen. Killing the monsters makes you money so you can afford better weapons and magic books in the villages. If you are killed in combat you are transported back to your home village church where the priest resurrects you, this cost half your total funds.

The game has four battery backed-up save positions which are useful, the game is too big to play in one sitting. Graphics and sound are fine, nothing stunning but clear and quite atmospheric as is the sound. For the price, this is a great game and offers hours of play.

The release date has long passed for the new batch of Atari Jaguar software with only **DOOM** being worth a look (acclaimed as the best version available) and the promised **Crusade of Centry** still not seeing the light of day - come on, Atari, release something that isn't a shoot-em-up. With the console now available for about £150 maybe more games will be forthcoming.

THE LAST BELIEVER

Written by Paul Lucas

Reviewed by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum

An evil curse has been cast over the land and your task, as the last believer in magic, to find three magic objects and take them to the Magician's Sanctuary (not easy to find) so that he can cast a special spell. You start the adventure under a statue of the mayor. Note the inscription, there is a clue here, otherwise you won't learn exactly what your mission involves. After exploring the village, the surrounding area where I found an altar in the middle of a circle of stones, and inside the mayor's house, I crossed the lake to discover many more locations.

I did a fair bit of toing and froing across this lake until I had the correct objects for dealing with some obstacles, but this was mainly because I had difficulty finding one vital object - my own fault though, so even fairly experienced adventurers can miss the obvious. You have to be careful to use an object for one action before "converting" it for another use, otherwise you won't find the tunnel leading to a secret garden, and an icy plain.

The location descriptions are basic but adequate. The puzzles can be tricky at times, but most can be solved by a player with a bit of knowledge of adventuring. I have Lilian Brand to thank for drawing my attention to this adventure a few months ago. I couldn't find any reference to it in Probe, and there wasn't a solution on file.

It was originally written for the Amstrad, and then converted to the Spectrum using PAW and although I have had the Spectrum version for a number of years, I'd never played it. That has now been rectified, and I was pleasantly surprised to discover an interesting game that wasn't too difficult to solve, yet held my attention to the end.

Amstrad and Spectrum versions available from The Adventure Workshop

Price : £2 (tape) £4 (disc) Cheque/p.o. payable to P.M.Reynolds. All prices include postage.

CURSE OF THE SERPENT'S EYE

Written by Martin Freemantle

Reviewed by Phill Ramsay on an Amstrad CPC

In this adventure, you play the part of Jenny Peril, up and coming timejumping cadet in the Federation of Peace. Your final exams, taking place in the Corps' simulation unit, consists of the simulation of Curse of the Serpent's Eye. This involves locating the eye and activating the portal in order to obtain a first class pass. As this is a simulation, you can't actually die, but failure to complete it means that you can't obtain your pass.

The game starts in a town square by a monolith. To the east are the (locked) city gates. The first real problem which I encountered was when I tried to enter a house. Not only was the door locked, but there is no key within the game to help you unlock it. Knocking at the door elicited no response, neither did ringing the doorbell. The solution to this problem was, I thought, a little on the oblique and obscure side, but it's not so outrageous that it is insoluble.

There are several things to be discovered within the house, and here a cypher may be presented to you, and this can only be solved when you have found the cypher key and can thus decode it. In the hardware store, you may find that a small hole is too small for you to get through; however, get through it you must. The hole would not respond to my efforts to enlarge it, either.

Later on in the game you will come across such diverse problems as how to get a pitchfork from under a trailer; and how do you possibly manage to climb up a bank when the ground is so muddy that you slip down each time you try to climb it? The solution here is again oblique, but this time I found the logic behind it quite appealing!

There is a beehive to be raided, if, that is, you can manage to think of a way of pacifying the bees, and then a bear to be persuaded to give you a little unconscious aid. At the top of the bank there is an interesting structure, and the cypher which you found earlier may come in useful. Eventually you may manage to find your way into the catacombs, and here various perils await you. Amongst the easiest is the lake of acid. The problems get a little more awkward when various inanimate objects decide to come to life to try to end yours. Having fended them off, your next problem is how to get yourself *out* of the catacombs. This requires a little thought, and perhaps a little help, but overall it's not terribly difficult.

Overall, I didn't really enjoy playing this game. There are several irritating little bugs within it. For example, when I input EXAMINE HOUSE or EXAMINE CEMETERY, I got the response "another dead end". This became quite irritating because it appeared whenever I tried to examine something which hadn't been catered for. Having played the Dragon Slayer trilogy, and found them to be excellent games, I found myself feeling quite disappointed with Serpent's Eye. The bugs apart, the game just didn't appeal to me. I would place the difficulty level at around intermediate. The game has been converted using the Amstrad version of PAW and so runs under CPM and is disc only.

Amstrad version available from The Adventure Workshop. Price: £4 (disc only). cheque/p.o. payable to P.M.Reynolds

Spectrum & Amiga(e) versions available from Dream World Adventures. Price : £2.50 (tape, +D and Amiga disc) £2 (+3 - supply your own blank disc). cheque/p.o.payable to M. Freemantle. All prices include postage.

FLAMEOUT

Written by Laurence Creighton

Reviewed by Joan Williams on an Amiga
under Spectrum emulation

For years now you have planned a trip which would take you half way across the world, thus secure in the knowledge that air travel was the safest way to travel. You settle down to watch the in-flight movie and gradually fall asleep. You awake to find the cabin slowly but surely filling up with smoke and realize that you have very little time in which to get out of the plane before your trip is over before it has even begun.

Thus begins the latest adventure from L.C., and this one is dedicated to the late and very much lamented June Rowe and I'm sure she would have loved it. I know she was a Creighton fan.

You have three locations to explore but not too many moves to do it in before the explosion occurs, so the best thing to do is be prepared to have a few goes at it to find out what you can do and where things are. I managed to escape with the minimum number of seventeen moves (but quite a few dry runs I have to say); it's quite hair-raising, especially if you managed to get out of the plane but didn't move fast enough.

With no hint as to what is ahead you find yourself in a forest with brambles and the like preventing further progress unless you acquired something from the plane, so you may have to start again, but if you are equipped, then the brambles are no problem and you can wander on, but do remember to pay attention to the text as LC just loves to hide hints. There is a tree with an arrow lodged in it but the tree has no footholds, so you will have to work out how to obtain the arrow. A bit of logical thinking is called for, so head north and talk to the man. The man in question will be able to tell you what the ultimate object of this adventure is so make a note of what he says.

A gorge is your next problem, and once you have managed to cross it the whole game begins to open up, problems abound, some familiar and some tricky, and some which are baffling at first, mainly because of the odd assortment of objects that you find but you can be sure that everything has a purpose so don't ignore anything.

Somewhere along the way you may find a parchment which when read will give you a few hints which tease you just enough to make you think rather than give you the direct answer to your particular problem, a nice touch methinks. Progression through the locations is fairly simple until you come to a barrier, but I'm getting ahead of myself, for the time being, search everything and don't forget to look under/behind/in things, you never know what you may find.

One tricky problem is how to get into a shed which has a combination lock; to fans of LC the solution will not be too difficult, but newcomers may have a little trouble, still, at least they'll learn, eh !!!

Likewise, the Golden door problem, although the parchment gives you a hint, that's only half the story and you may find yourself outside the door forever. Of course, you have to reach the door, and before you can do that you have to deal with a wild boar, pacify a guard, open the aforementioned shed, search a shack plus a few other bits and pieces, enough to keep you busy I should think.

Once through the door you have a generous number of moves before the torch disintegrates. (you did find the torch, didn't you?), and your quest is almost ended, for it is here that you find the Scroll of Life that the old man requested. You only have to use your common sense and think about all the objects that you have acquired, in order to get your hand on it. But don't let me mislead you, nothing is that simple so the use of ramsave is recommended at regular intervals, and a more permanent save should be used as well.

I have to say that this is the ONLY game written by LC that I have managed to complete without help, (what about that then Wilson?), so I am tempted to say that it was the easiest one that I have played. However, it may be that I have got used to the way our Laurence thinks rather than me being clever. There are certainly a few times that I was stuck and needed to rethink my tactics, so it's not a pushover. All the niceties are there, gentle hints, ramsave option, choice of fonts, LIND, LUND and LINS (a boon to Amiga users). All in all a nice tidy little game and I can't wait for the next.....buy it and try it....

Available from Zenobi Software - Price : **Spectrum** £2.99 (tape & +D 3.5" disc), £3.49 (+3 disc), **Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)** £2.99. All prices includes postage.

LASKAR'S CRYSTALS

Written by Laurence Creighton

Reviewed by Joan Williams on an Amiga under Spectrum emulation

You are deep in the Amazon Rain Forest, having completed an archaeological survey of an ancient temple site. It is late, and whilst you are writing up your notes, you hear an inhuman gasp from the window. You go outside to investigate and find a strange being near collapse. He tells you that he is Laskar, a traveller across space and time, and that he took ill when exploring the jungle. On his recovery he found that two of his three life support crystals had vanished and without them he could not return home. He begs you to find them, so you make him comfortable and set out.....

You begin this adventure on board a small boat and are invited to disembark. The boatman obligingly gives you a coin (bless him), but true to form, LC has a little trick up his sleeve, so you should expect to do a little work before you leave and you have little time in which to do it, otherwise you will either be accused of dilly dallying and kicked out of the game, or you will disembark without a vital object. There are two objects to discover and you must choose wisely as only one is of use, and you only get one chance...

Once off the boat you find yourself right in the jungle with a tin hat and a long piece of bamboo in sight. Something is moving under the bat and you can be sure it won't be anything nice - not in THIS jungle, so perhaps you should control your natural instincts and leave it alone for the time being, or maybe on the other hand it might be useful to know what goes on under the WW1 hat, it could be something useful !!!!

Further to the west you find a hint sheet which only tells you about key inputs and ram saves, so you're not going to get much help with your mission I'm afraid, clues are not on offer here. The next location shows real promise though; it is a mound of soil, freshly turned, and being as LC rarely allows you to dig with your bare hands you will immediately realize that a spade has to be found so continue along and start looking for it.

A hut is nearby which cannot be entered because the door hinges are rusty, so now you are beginning to string the problems together, however loosely, and further searching around the first half dozen locations should enable you to really make headway.

You do really need to read the text carefully and make a note of all the objects that you find. There is a limited carrying allowance initially, so not everything can be gathered up (BOOO). If all goes well, you end up on a muddy bank, and spanning the river is a rope-bridge. You are very fairly warned that this bridge is VERY old, therefore will not support much weight so be it on your own heads if you ignore the warning and go charging across with too many objects in your possession. Irritating it may be, but you must remember to check your inventory every time you need to cross the bridge and you will find yourself having to do this more than once.

Once across this precarious bridge you are confronted by a crocodile bearing down on you and you have to find a way of dealing with it. The solution will probably not be the first one that springs to mind, (I should never have watched Crocodile Dundee), and when you have sorted that little difficulty you can explore the other side of the river. It might be an idea to have a good look around first, that way you will be able to suss out what you need to do and in which order you need to do it. There are quite a few more objects to find, most of which, if examined, will have an obvious use, and some need to be combined with others in order to achieve the necessary tool/method.

One example of this is a problem involving crossing another little river full of piranhas. By a tortuous route combining the making of an implement to chop a sapling to getting across the river, you might well think that you have done more than enough to earn your reward, but oh no, that's not the half of it. A fierce-looking Indian materializes as soon as you make the tool and demands it back immediately. He doesn't look as if he will be fobbed off either, so you either have to give it back or find something else to pacify him. Even if you choose the latter, you are still in trouble as there is more work to do before you can use it.

When you have negotiated the river full of piranhas, then you need to solve yet another tricky little problem, that of how to obtain a coconut which is out of your reach. However, this shouldn't be too difficult as an object lying around should jog your memory and lead you to the solution.

But what to do with the coconut, although fairly obvious, in practice, becomes quite frustrating yet perfectly obvious when you hit on the solution. Thus it is that if you have done everything right you will be able to move on to another set of locations but don't be too smug, the unfriendly Indian hasn't finished with you yet. Eventually, after a lot of hard work, you find yourself on a ledge and the only way to go is down.

Down you go, only to be stopped in your tracks by another stream but with no handy bridge this time. Reading the text carefully should guide you to the solution and this applies to the next location as well. You will need to explore both the west and the south banks, the west holds an important piece of information and the south contains a wreck and a hut. You should search the wreck and I urge you to ram save first before you tackle the problem of gaining entry for there is a nasty surprise in store for you which may well require a help sheet for you to solve, or at the very least a great deal of head scratching and frustration combined with exasperation as you struggle with the answer, (in other words, one of the trickiest problems in this game methinks).

It was at this point that I decided to see how well I was doing, so I input SCORE and found to my amazement that I hadn't even got half way into this adventure, I was sure that I would soon have Laskar's crystals in my hot little hands, having come so far and done so much but it was not to be.

Inside the wreck is a lamp (hurrah) and as expected it comes without batteries; there is also a useful little item which will aid your progress. Inside the hut sits a squaw, and if you talk to her you will learn something useful and you should also examine her to find out what she requires. By giving her the item, you are allowed access to a chest and a bottle of curare. The curare, however, cannot be removed from the hut so don't even try. To cross a gorge you will need a couple of objects which need to be combined plus a verb which is not often found in adventures these days and once you have overcome that, you meet yet another Indian who cryptically gives you a clue as to how to deal with him. If you bear in mind that what worked last time may well work this time you should be okay!

The inevitable dark cave is just around the corner, and if you have found the batteries you will have found the warning that they will not last long, so once again, it might be a good idea to ram save before you enter the cave, suss it all out, then ram load and tackle the problems. If you do things correctly, then the way east will be open to you. GOOD LUCK.

You may well find that you do not possess all the objects that you need so a word of warning, you should always remember to extinguish the lamp if you don't need it otherwise you end up in the dark forever.

On the appearance of a vulture you must deal with him quickly otherwise you will miss the chance of collecting a vital object and will not be able to complete the game. Further ahead a shrine cannot be entered without the knowledge of a password which you should have learned a little earlier on, and finally when you have entered the shrine, the ending is in sight.

But even the ending is no pushover. However, you do find the means of oiling those hinges that you have been worrying about all this time. If the heart sinks at the thought of having to trundle all the way back to the beginning don't despair because happily there is a quicker way.... all you have to do is find it. Thus, with the crystals finally located, you can return them to Laskar, who shows his gratitude by giving you a disc which will allow you to be a guest of his father - the leader of his people - personally I thought this was scant reward for all my efforts, but there it is...

This review has turned out to be longer than I had anticipated. I first played this in 1992, when it was written, and have to admit that I never managed to complete it. I found it far too difficult for me. Having now played all the rest of LC's games and become a little more proficient at them, I still found this one difficult and had to resort to the help sheet more than once.

It is brilliantly puzzling, beautifully written, and an example of just what an inventive mind can come up with. Although I honestly can't say it is a good one for beginners and less experienced because of the complexities of the puzzles, I wouldn't want to deter ANYONE from trying it, it may be that I just made hard work of it. What one finds hard another finds easy, so it's best left for you to judge for yourselves really.

Locationwise, it isn't huge, it just seems that way because of the hours spent over the problems, verb/noun inputs are generally all that are required and with the use of ram save at certain points, you should be able to avoid getting killed and having to start again. This game is worth far more than the asking price - as are all the home-grown adventures in my opinion, so grab it whilst you can.

Available from Zenobi Software - Price : **Spectrum** £2.99 (tape/+D disc), £3.49 (+3 disc), **Atari(e)**, **Amiga(e)** and **PC(e)** £2.99. All prices include postage.

HAZARDOUS HOLIDAY (Public Domain)

Written by Phil Richmond

Reviewed by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga

In this text-only adventure you play Archibald Blake, a retired bank clerk, fitness fanatic and lepidopterist, none of which are of any particular help in this game unless you count being fit enough to row a boat. Anyway, Blake is on a short vacation in the picturesque village of Butterknowl, situated in the high mountains between England and Wales. It begins quietly, with the boat rocking gently on the beautiful mountain lake and the fish taking the bait. It is only when Blake visits the widow of a friend that he realizes all is not as peaceful as it seems, and a visit to the jeweller's with something he found while fishing reinforces his determination to find out what evil is lurking in the countryside.

An exploration of the village soon tells him that access to some places is barred unless he has the correct authorization. A topical appearance of a lottery ticket is a big clue, so big it took me a while to realize its significance. While thinking about this, I took a ride around the lake on the scenic railway, and had interesting conversations with the railway guard. I could talk to some not-so-dumb animals for amusing responses, but people were more helpful.

I can't say more about the plot and puzzles because that would certainly spoil the game. Suffice to say it involves you saving not only the village, but the whole world.

Although I was informed this was a mini-adventure, there are over 50 locations, and the whole game seems to be at least as big as a standard 48K Spectrum text-adventure.

The text is well written and free of spelling mistakes. The location descriptions bring the scenery to life. Whether the area is based on an actual place or a conglomerate of places, I don't know, but I did feel as if it is real.

You can use verb/noun inputs for most of the game, but longer phrases will be necessary on a few occasions. Ramsave/ramload is supported, as well as saving to a blank disc. The adventure will run on all Amigas with at least 1 meg. of memory, and auto-boots, so no scrambling to find that elusive Workbench disc.

There are only two things I can find to even mildly complain about. The first is the "time passes" message that insisted on reminding me I was slow to think of something to input, and the second was the delay in the appearance of the flashing cursor so that when I DID know what I wanted to type the input was missing the first one or two letters, and I had to retype my request. All very trivial, and no possible reason for not playing this interesting adventure.

I've found so few good text adventures for the Amiga that it is a real treat to find something as playable as those I enjoy on the 8-bit machines.

Phil wrote this game as the new demo. adventure for his own writing system, Creative Adventure Toolkit, and the database can be loaded into CAT so that programmers can see how it was constructed. It is also available as a stand-alone adventure, as is his other text-adventure for the Amiga. Gory Story (see Probe, March '95).

CAT, including the adventure, is available from the Central Licenseware Register (CLU 028). Hazardous Holiday as a stand-alone adventure is available from Zenobi Software and SynTax.

LETHAL FORMULA (Public Domain)

Written by Edmund Clay

Reviewed by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga

I'll just add a few comments to endorse what Steve has said in his Amiga Column in this issue about this point and click adventure.

The graphics are well drawn, and the animation, especially when the character bends down to pick up an object, is very smooth. As far as the icons are concerned, there seems to be one short, namely DROP. Although the window displaying the inventory has plenty of space, it can soon get cluttered with objects you no longer need. One surprise, was towards the end of the game when I discovered I was still carrying an armed and activated bomb. I thought I had automatically dropped it, and I'd like to thank Barbara Bassingthwaighte for pointing out to me that I still had it.

You are allowed up to five saves at any one time, saved onto a blank disc. Pressing F6 to F10 saves, and F1 to F5 reloads them in the same order. To me this seems the wrong way round, but perhaps I'm just being awkward. There are in fact a couple of places where it is prudent to save your position, even in this fairly short adventure, e.g. before you enter the door to the second level of the spaceship. I also found that the message to swap from my save disc to the game disc didn't always appear, but I took a chance after I thought the save was complete, and it always worked. To nit-pick some more, I also had to "operate" an object I was carrying instead of "use" - contrary to on-disc instructions.

I warn you that there are two places where you have to "crack a code". One is easy once you know how (thanks, John Wilson) as the information is there for you to deduce the correct number, but the other is random and involves three coloured buttons. Once again, thanks to John Wilson, I got past this point, and I must say that the programming does seem to prefer one sequence more than others. However, I know someone who has discovered at least 15 so far. Do not be deterred by this, there is a way of checking if you have used the required sequence.

I understand Lethal Formula is from the same stable as Starbase 13 and the Lost Prince, neither of which I have seen yet. I'll make a note and try them in the near future. All in all, this a very playable adventure of its type, with a surprise animated "twist" at the end.

My copy was supplied by Zenobi Software. It is on one disc and is only £1.49 including p&p.

SUPER BLUE KID (P.D.arcade)

Reviewed by Barbara Bassingthwaighte on an Amiga 1200

An amusing platform game with big bold colourful graphics. You climb the blocks to the chests and jump on them to open and out-fly the contents, gaining you points. In later levels you have to jump onto other items like violin cases and egg-type plants. You have three items to help you, but use them wisely as you might need them later. The first is a balloon which allows you to rise where there are no convenient blocks to aid you. The umbrella allows you to drop quickly without dying, and the other thing you can do is blow, so that you can move blocks near other blocks which are too high to jump on. I found it a very playable game.

The review copy was supplied by Zenobi Software, only £1.49 including postage.

ULTIMATE AMOS (book)

Written by Jason Holborn

Reviewed by Harold Dixon

This book has got to be one of the best manuals ever written for potential game-writers! No matter what venue of written you are interested in, be it adventures, maze games, platformers, role-players, the lot! This book covers them all.

First of all there is a good introduction explaining how to use the book. It shows the many icons to demonstrate the print listings, of which there are many. There is then an interesting detailed account of Amos, the Amos family and utilities, and an easy run through of how to get started in Amos.

The second chapter gently explores the Amos editors, and explains how they work in what seems to me an easier way than how things are explained in the Amos manual. It covers them all, Easy Amos, Amos Pro, as well. Illustrations are in profusion to help anyone who is in doubt.

Chapter 3 covers programming principles in an easy descriptive way with a few simple listing included to get you in the mood. After this short chapter, we move on the chapters 4, 5 and 6 which cover all the screen modes. It tells you how to set up the screens in various formats, re-sizing, positioning, and loading and saving screens. Interesting descriptions are given with many example listings and on-page illustrations. The book goes on to explain all modes of screen-scrolling, and mentions the Amos Tome extension. Over a hundred pages cover the various methods of getting those important effects needed for adventures, games, etc. on screen.

Further along there is extensive cover on Sprites and Bobs, how to create them and use them in your games. After looking at some of the chapters covering them in other manuals I think it is quite good. Again, abound with examples, there is an Object Editor and menus, and an Animation Editor. The book explains how to control on-screen objects both in joystick and keyboard mode. The book then goes on to cover the Amal routines, explaining how it works and all the functions needed for various game-writing. This is a subject that I have difficulty in grasping, and I feel the book will help one understand the principles of this venture.

On then to the sound department. This covers sound samplers, the D.Sam extension and all you need to know to get music, noise or whatever you desire into your creations. It really is amazing what even the addition of only a little sound will give to an adventure game. I played a PD one just recently with a little sound in and found it quite interesting.

Then we move on to the really interesting part - the Games Programming principles. This chapter tells you how to set up your game in a way even I can understand! It then goes on to describe the many types of games, and the principles of optimising your gamecode.

The following four chapters help you set up your various games. These chapters cover shoot-em-ups, maze games, platform games, and adventure games. A fully detailed account is given in each area covering most of the many possibilities in each venue. Four actual working game-skeletons are listed.

Even the Appendix at the end of the book is extensive, with illustrations and listings of interesting and useful routines you may wish to use in your creations.

There is also an article on getting your game published and then where to go next, with a detailed account on Amos, magazines and bulletin boards. The illustrations, modules and examples in the book are all first class and easy to understand. The printing is large enough so even the short-sighted need not complain. The book is very well set out and covers so many subjects one is really overwhelmed. What I really liked about it are the illustrations of on-screen graphics, screen set-ups and various game set-ups.

The icons on-page are easy to understand, and all in all it is a very good read! Also for those of us who are lazy, there is a disc included with all the screen listings in the book and the four game-skeletons, so you don't even have to type them out if you don't want to!

Until I discovered this book I thought the Amiga Game Maker's Manual was the best thing on the market, but now I am not so sure, for Ultimate Amos will surely give it a run for its money. I really wouldn't like to say which is the best, so I played it safe and bought them both.

Ultimate Amos is a good thick book with over 400 pages, plus a disc, and it is a bargain at £19.95 - see the special offer in Amiga Format. Any potential games-writer would be a fool not to buy it. If you can't afford it, why not try to see if you can borrow it at the local library? I borrowed the Amiga Games Maker's Manual before I bought it.

X-FILES (Public Domain)

Reviewed by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga

No, one my favourite TV programmes has *not* been made into a computer game, yet! At the moment I'll have to be satisfied with this collection of files offering information about the series, plus a massive article about UFOs. The files seem to have been downloaded from various American on-line networks, and some overlapping is inevitable, but *all* files are worth reading if you are hooked on X-Files. (You may be interested to know that in America you would be called an X-Philer).

There are two files called "frequently asked questions" (FAQ). The longer one also gives more information about the two main characters, Dana Scully and Fox "Spooky" Mulder (played by the actors Gillian Anderson and dishy David Duchovny) plus the supporting characters such as Deep Throat, Smoking Man and Eugene Victor Tooms. I'm pleased to read that some of my suspicions about Deep Throat could be correct, but I may be proved wrong about Tooms (who I dubbed "Plastic Man" because of his ability to squeeze through the smallest of apertures), as it seems he is really dead.

The disc also includes two episode guides, both covering all of the first series, and one has a few details about the early episodes in the second series. Sky One (Tuesdays, 8 pm) is past this point, but at least I now know that in my favourite episode from this series "The Host", Flukeman is played by Darin Morgan. [It always irritates me the way American series don't give a readable cast list at the end.]

A rather difficult to understand yet fascinating to read file is the transcript of a talk Glen Morgan (co-executive director) gave on an American On-line on 22nd June 1994. Another file is the result of a survey which is quite interesting if only to see that some of the people participating are also fans of Star Trek (in all its forms), and some also appreciate UK-made programmes such as Lovejoy and Red Dwarf.

The longest file is the collection of documents about UFOs. I haven't studied this in full, but read sections while it was printing out. It ran to 63 sheets of A4, and contains, it claims, some files classified as TOP SECRET by US intelligence, and reports by US pilots, soldiers, etc.

I printed out all the files with the exception of the survey. It took me a whole Saturday morning, but it was worth it because I can now refer to it whenever I wish.

My copy of X-Files was supplied by Zenobi Software. If you are hooked on the programme, get it. Only £1.49 including p&p.

VALHALLA – BEFORE THE WAR

Reviewed by The Pathfinder on an Amiga

Valhalla – Before the War is the second Amiga speech adventure from Vulcan Software and is the prequel to Valhalla and The Lord of Infinity. It was originally meant to be a small 2-level game to keep your interest alive while waiting for the next major offering from Vulcan, but they decided to expand it into a full size, 4-level game.

The game is very similar to the first one but the puzzles – well, most of them – are much better thought out and there isn't so much of "I wonder how THAT happened?" which you found in the first game. I also thought the graphics were slightly better as well.

This time you play the part of the evil Lord of Infinity and the game chronicles his attempt to kill King Garamond and take control of Valhalla. You control Infinity in exactly the same way as in the original and the game icons are also the same, with the addition of two extras. The first is the "mouth" icon which enables you to switch off all the unessential speech that tended to hold up the first game, and the other is the Map icon by which you can at any time call up a complete map of the level you are playing. It doesn't show that much detail, but does enable you to draw your own map from the start without going over the edge of the sheet!

Unfortunately, you can't turn off the sound of Infinity's footsteps as he walks around the castle, but they aren't as loud as in the first game..... thank the stars! Also, the multitude of holes and traps that the Prince was prone to fall into in the original are thankfully absent from this game. There are still plenty of plants, altars and stools, but these can't kill you!

As mentioned, the puzzles are much better than in the first game and there are more of them. Having said that, there was one puzzle that I had no hope solving by myself whatsoever as it involved a knowledge of chess – something I (and I'm sure a lot of other people) do not possess. This is in level two and occurs in the "board room" which is supposed to represent a chessboard, although it is only 7x7. There are a number of chess pieces here which you cannot move and consist of a King (which is blocking access to an alcove) and 5 other pieces which I assumed were pawns but are actually bishops.

In another part of the game you obtain another bishop and a castle. Not being a chess player, I had trouble identifying what these pieces were – if you look at them you are merely told "It's a chess piece". You obviously had to place your bishop and castle in such a position so as to checkmate the king and get rid of it to gain access to the alcove. Not being a chess player, I could not solve this problem and resorted to telephoning Vulcan for help. You can phone between 7pm and 8pm but the only way I could get through was to phone at 6.55pm! The person at Vulcan was very helpful and quickly gave me the solution, which is as follows: *(I've transferred it to the hints sectionBarbara)*

There was one other puzzle which had me scratching my head for a long time - no wonder I'm going thin on top. It is also in level 2 and involves placing symbols representing planets of the solar system on four out of five altars. the fifth altar represents the Sun, so I naturally placed the symbols in the correct order out from the Sun - nothing happened! I thought that I'd done something wrong elsewhere or that I'd not done something I should have, but nothing seemed to work. Then it dawned on me to try rearranging the symbols - Bingo. Whoever thought up this puzzle either has a warped sense of humour or is a dunce when it comes to basic astronomy! All I'll say is that two of the symbols must be transposed.

One more niggle: When playing level 4 there are two oblong rooms which you can see on the map, one south and east of the laser room, the other due west of the room where you find the king and the baby prince. I spent AGES trying to get into these rooms, only to find that they play no part in the gameplay! Infinity walks through them at the end of the game after he has killed the King. I'm telling you this to save you wasting your time if you're playing level 4.

Other than these three niggles, I found Valhalla - Before the War as addictive as the first game and enjoyed playing it immensely. There is one section of the game which might upset those players of a nervous or sensitive disposition, as it involves torturing two prisoners! However, I thought it was in keeping with the evil nature of Infinity and it is only a game after all.

Valhalla - Before the War is at present only available for the Amiga, but Vulcan inform me that PC versions of all their games will be available by Christmas. The next Amiga game from Vulcan will be available in June.

Available from most software outlets - shop around for best price. (Special Reserve have it for £21.49).

PRODUCT REVIEW by STEVE CLAY

This month we take a look at an item aimed at every adventurer likely to go forth into a quest.

The Chasm Crosser!

There are mixed feelings in the office regarding the black staff with the star on the end that is the Chasm Crosser.

From its name you'll gather that it produces a magic bridge over chasms, fissures, rivers, etc. It is powered by a small magically charged cell and each cell has enough power for three bridges depending upon the size of gap. The bridge should last three minutes after creation, but it is here some of our staff feel the staff loses points. There appears to be a bug in the staff and of ten bridges we created four failed within a minute - with serious injury to one reviewer - and one of the bridges is still formed and showing no sign of going. Ambermist say that this fault has been sorted and anybody encountering problems should contact them for advice.

The power level indicator is difficult to read in the dark and finding a wizard willing to charge the power cell is as likely as finding rocking-horse dung.

A try-before-you-buy product!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO PROBE

Nine years old and still going strong,
Calls, I think, for a little song.
I've had a few drinks, so here we go,
Can I sing "Definitely No!"

Congratulations, I send to you,
Including all your members too.
Without you life would be a drag,
And only make me reach for a fag.

When stuck while playing an adventure game,
I've tried this and that but the result's the same.
I know that help is close at hand,
And contact one of the merry band.

I believe that adventurers don't fade away,
But live to play another day.
Well that's my lot. Enough's been said,
Now I'm off to my cozy bed.

I'll think of you all when I'm snoring aloud,
Happy Birthday "Probe", you have done us proud!

Keith Burnard



A MONSTROUS TALE by MARY SCOTT-PARKER

This is a tale about two of the lesser known monsters of the cavern systems. The first is a Torch, a cross between a Troll and an Orc, but capable of greater acceleration and the other is a Bogrol, a bit like a Balrog, only longer, stronger and, I have it on good authority, a touch more absorbent.

The two beasts in question are Tuff and Bronco, and there are no prizes for guessing which is which.... well perhaps I could manage a slim volume of Adventure poetry and a bottle of home made Elderberry wine, circa 1972, I think it's 1972, the label is a bit smudged, it may well be 1973, a superior vintage altogether, but I digress... I have "O" level Digression.....

One day, Tuff and Bronco were sitting indulging in their second favourite pastime, snacking, and Bronco was reading the Gnu's paper. He absent-mindedly insert a long, filthy claw an indiscrete distance into his navel and after a bit of fishing around, retrieved an ancient pork scratchin' which he ate with relish, or it might have been chutney, it's a bit difficult to tell in cave light, suffice it to say, it was green, and not an attractive shade either, somewhere between 'underbelly of frog' and 'regurgitated pond weed' would be my guess, but then I'm not an interior decorator. The word navel usually conjures up something cute, and button-like, concealing nothing more offensive than the odd bit of fluff, but Bogrol navels are... well forget cute, that's my advice, instead think more along the lines of black, odorous, and big enough to house a small family of rodents, if a suitable alternative can't be found.

Bronco gave a sudden shout. "Hey, look at this." He clapped Tuff on the shoulder, or what passes for a shoulder in the Torch species... more of a granite over-hang really. Anyway, rest assured that the hearty slap did very little structural damage, other than to send a Goblin crumb down the wrong way... but nothing that ten minutes back thumping, eye-watering and choking couldn't put right.

"Well?" croaked Tuff, when he had regained the use of the vocal chords. "What have you seen?"

"Auditions," said Bronco. "Talent scouts will be in this area tomorrow looking for local talent to star in a new TV series called 'Beastenders'."

"So?"

"We're going to audition, Tuff. We could be the stars of tomorrow, sex symbols of a whole generation."

Tuff snatched the Gnu's paper from Bronco and began to read aloud, pointing to each word with a grimy claw.

"Auditions are currently being held for parts in a new soap opera 'Beastenders'. Filmed entirely on location in the cave system below Yorkshire it will feature the ups and downs of several beastly families. Central to the story is the pub, The King Dick, run by the Balrog family - Dad, [Lardy Len], Mum [Whingey] and the sex daughter, Manita, who serves behind the bar. Next door are the Grue-ings - ruthless, tycoon R.J., his long-suffering wife, Grue-Ellen, his mother, Miss Hellie and cousin Loose-y, who have all gone up in the world since the discovery of oil under their cave. Tough Troll brothers, Granite and Flint own the local garage and the corner grocery cave is run by two old Orcs, Moana and Greeta. Across the tunnel live the Growlers, Paw-Lean and R-Furr."

"I don't get it," said Tuff, lowering the paper and looking puzzled.

"Don't you?" said Bronco. "Well, never mind, think about auditions instead."

"That's what I don't get," Tuff retorted, a shade huffily. "What could we possibly audition for?"

"Come on now," said Bronco, "aren't there two characters that strike a chord? They're tailor-made for us."

Tuff continued to look blank.

"The Troll brothers.. Granite and Flint," explained Bronco patiently. "We'd be perfect for them."

"But we don't know how to run a garage!"

"You don't have to, stupid. It's all written down in the script. All you do is learn the lines and take the cash at the end of the week. It's money for old rope."

"In that case, I might as well string along."

"Was that a joke?" said Bronco suspiciously.

"Nah, couldn't have been," said Tuff. "I don't know any. Does this mean we'll have to work with actors?"

"Don't you like actors?"

"Yes, but I couldn't eat a whole one."

"Why not?"

"Too many calories. I'm on the F-Plan diet."

"You don't look any thinner to me," said Bronco tactfully.

"Yeah, I've noticed that. What does the F stand for?"

"Fibre."

"Damn!" snorted Tuff. "No wonder I'm not losing any weight!"

"Why do you want to lose weight?"

"I wanna look like 'im wot does the Dick-athlon."

"DEC-athlon, dickhead."

"You sure?"

"Positive."

"Damn, damn! That's another myth exploded. It's just not my day."

★

The rich, theatrical voice from the diminutive, scarlet-clad figure on the stage had a stentorian quality that belied its humble origin. It reverberated like Big Ben through the heads of those in the room, before moving confidently to where Tuff and Bronco stood uncertainly by the door.

"..... and thank you all for coming luvvies... we won't keep you in suspenders too much longer."

Tuff looked sideways at Bronco.

"Do you reckon he's... you know?"

"No.... What?"

"You know..." Tuff fluttered his eyelashes, pursed his lips and tilted his wrist with a downward flick.

Bronco surveyed the colourful, petite character who was standing on the small stage at the far end of an enormous cavern. His receding suspiciously blue/black hair was parted just above his left ear, combed carefully across his shiny dome and slicked down with... well, who knows what with.

"Nah, 'es probably one of them wotsits. Media people all talk like that."

"MEDIA PEOPLE!" Tuff gave Bronco a 'GET YOU' look, you know the kind... similar to the one in the cheese ad, that the girl eating the cracker with Philadelphia on it gives the other girl, the one in the blue sweater or was it purple... no it was definitely blue... except for viewers in black and white of course, in which case it was grey... but then so was the other one... there I go digressing again, see how good I am?

The owner of the voice caught sight of the huge pair, hovering uncertainly near the cave mouth and jumping down from the stage, with an agility that surprised them, minced over, although I've no idea why finely chopped meat came into the picture.

"Come in, darlings. Don't stand in the doorway. What can I do you for?" He winked hugely at Bronco, who took a step back and trod heavily on Tuff's foot.

"We was just wondering if you was one of them... 'erm... you know," began Bronco, his limited vocabulary temporarily deserting him.

The man poked him playfully in the ribs.

"Saucy boy!"

"... casting directors... that's it," finished Bronco triumphantly.

"'Fraid not darling," said the little man reluctantly. "But I sometimes help out if they're busy. The name's Alistair, but friends call me Alice. Are you here to audition? Would you like me to fill you in?"

"No, thank you," said Bronco deepening his voice by several tones. "Actually, we're here about the plumbing."

"Well, you can unblock my drain any day." Alice linked Bronco's arm firmly. "Can't fool me, darlings, I know you're not plumbers, you haven't got the trousers for it. Come along now, don't be shy, I've got the perfect part for you!"

"Yes, I figured you might," muttered Bronco, disengaging his arm.

The left hook caught Alice completely by surprise. His eyes rolled back in his head... well where else would they roll? And he fell like a... well, like a small person who'd been thumped, basically.

A blond wearing black fishnet tights, a micro skirt and a tight pink Cashmere sweater, intimately embracing an upper storey, that would easily have extended across page three and probably pages four and five as well, in clear defiance of the laws of gravity, tottered over on four inch heels.

"Alice, darling," she began, taking care not to bend too far over the prone figure. "isn't it a little early for falling over, even for you?"

Alice's eyelids flickered and opened. Bronco and Tuff began to shuffle unobtrusively towards the cave mouth.

"Manita," croaked Alice, struggling to a sitting position and flashing Bronco an admiring look. "Meet your new co-stars, Granite and Flint"

(More next month)

[The above is a revised version of the story originally published in #15 of *Alternittes*]

HOW I USED *NOT* TO SOLVE ADVENTURES ON MY 64 by RON GUEST

First buy your adventure, insert in tape deck and wait an eternity for it to load. Stare in a trance at the opening location whose only exit is a locked door. Find a simply hidden key then spend a few hours trying to unlock door, insert key-use key-turn key, decide game is bugged then accidentally input "open door" and nearly fall off chair as you find yourself on the other side. A key lesson in adventuring, some you unlock, some you don't.

Experience the heady feeling of freedom and excitement as you move freely through a further three or four locations before hitting another snag.

Solve a few more problems before meeting a sudden death, re-load game and journey quickly back to the sudden death, re-load game the - blow this for a pantomime.

Put first game aside, buy different game and start again - get stuck. Wife says "I want a little dog", buys westie (Rufus).

I discover helplines in glossy mags, spend time in Smiths furtively perusing helplines for hints, mostly for games I haven't got.

Get despondent but doggedly carry one, then eureka, finish *The Hobbit*, surrounded by crowd of cheering hobbits, shouting fulsome praise for my exploits, elation set in, charge into full-time adventuring with no turning back, even though dozens of part-finished adventures build up while I frantically scan the magazines for clues.

Wife acquires second westie (Misty) and gives me a time limit for going to bed (luckily no ultimatum such as me or the computer, as I don't think the computer can cook).

Commodore 64 adventures seem to be drying up and helplines seem to be shrinking, I battle on against overwhelming odds (with two dogs on my lap) typing in desperate inputs.

Buy rubber-key Speccy 48, discover *Spellunker*, *From Beyond*, *Adventure Probe* and *Zenobi*.

Buy Spectrum +3. Vast new horizons open out with a seemingly endless supply of help and new adventures waiting.



"I'm nine months pregnant, Pete." Julia Brief remarked while tucking into a jar of *Chips Ahoy's* celebrated pickled eggs. "and I think the baby's on its way."

"Gordon Bennett! Flaming Nora!" was her husband's reply. "Are you sure?" Julia nodded her head and Pete went into panic-stations mode. "Where's the hot water, Julia?" exclaimed the alarmed Pete.

"What the deuce do you want hot water for, Pete? Surely you're not going to deliver the baby yourself? I think it would be better just going to hospital," said Julia.

"No, I need it to get my car started. It never works with cold water in the engine," answered Pete truthfully. "And I haven't had it out since I got my revenge on that pensioner's husband by hurling a water-melon at the old sod and driving off."

"You haven't had it out since I got pregnant, you mean. Oh, sorry, you're talking about your car. Anyway, I used up *all* the water for my bath this morning. After all, I'm not as slim as I used to be," Julia commented, but Pete was on his way out the door. "Where are you off to, Snookums?"

"Use up all the water, eh? Insult my virility, eh? Call me stupid pet names, eh? Well, as far as I'm concerned, you can go to hospital yourself, 'cos you obviously don't need my help!" yelled the by now enraged Pete. Pete left the room and, unable to find the door (he was blinded with anger), hid under the carpet or 'someplace'.

"I couldn't get along without you," Julia assured the hidden Pete, but it was to no avail. Their marriage, for an eighth time, was doomed. She realized she had no choice but to 'go it alone', only hoping that she wouldn't be overcome by her . . .

LABOUR PAINS

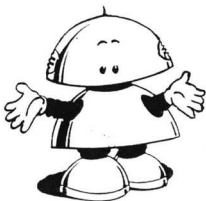
Unfortunately, for Julia, the trauma of these events are so overpowering that she needs your help to guide her on her way to the local hospital. It is important to note that Julia must be prepared for hospital - that is, she should collect the sort of things she would need for a stay in hospital and store them safely in an overnight bag or something of the like. Having never been to this particular hospital, Julia also needs to provide the 'officiating doctor' with details of her medical status and so on. A visit to the surgery of Dr. Thrust, her own GP, would be beneficial.

NOTES:

- The game is in **two** parts, access to the second requiring the input of a password
- The last command can be repeated using the **AGAIN** command
- Details of other available facilities can be found by typing **VOCAB** and **INFO**.

SAM'S

UN-EXCELLENT ADVENTURE



ADVENTURE

The Story So Far ...

Sometimes the day never quite pans out as you intended and today was going to be one of those days for **SAM**. He was a nice enough little robot - as robots go - and he was always full of the best intentions and very eager to please. So when he was told to buy a plug for **Alan Miles'** toaster he was only too keen to get on with the task and obtain the object of his desire. However even such a simple task can take on astronomic proportions when you live in a place like **SKANSZA** — it has been known to close down for the simplest of things and 'early-closing-day' meant just that. So **SAM**, being the enterprising little robot that he was, decided to take the easy way out and 'borrow' a plug from elsewhere - from **Colin Jordan's** office in actual fact! A wise enough decision if only **Colin** had not decided to return to the office to do a spot of programming!

"Oh no" thought **SAM**, leaping thirteen foot into the air as he realised his calamitous cock-up - (having springs for legs proves most interesting in times of woe) - "If I don't get it back before he arrives he'll kill me for sure! What am I to do and just how can I do it ???"

To prevent **Colin Jordan** from subjecting **SAM's** circuits to an extensive re-wire - albeit rather indelicately - you must assist/help to find the way to replace the plug he borrowed. That is if you can recover the bl**dy plug from where **SAM** left it in the first place

NOTES

This game takes place in **SAMCO's** offices, where you may encounter such luminaries as **ALAN MILES**, **COLIN JORDAN** and the likes .. some of the guys responsible for the creation of the infamous and ill-fated **SAM COMPUTER** and such classic games as '**THE FAMOUS FIVE**'.

It will be your task to take on the role of **SAM** and to carry out all the functions that will be necessary in order to complete the task he has been burdened with .. good luck !!!!

HINTS

Legs have more functions than just walking - especially when you are robotic and make sure you start your 'map' at the foot of the page, roughly half-way along the bottom edge.

HOSPITAL

On the other side of the tape (if you are lucky enough to be a **SPECTRUM** owner) you will find a completely **FREE** game written and conceived by the same author - though this is no great recommendation - it is set in a hospital and will require you to perform an 'action' to complete it that may well have the 'cat-lovers' of this world up in arms! However one thing is certain, no other game will ever have expected you to do such a thing before - not even one written by a **Balrog**!!!!

This 'freebie' is only a 'one-location' game but it may well tax more than the cat's good temper and is sure to raise more than one snigger of disgust .. so load it up and give it a try. You never know, you might even find that you enjoyed it ... depends on your mind !!!!



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REVENGE OF THE SPACE PIRATES

by LARRY HORSFIELD

It is six months since you, Mike Erlin, found the Starship "Galaxis" and opened up the Universe for exploration and colonisation by mankind. Already several sister ships are being constructed in space docks in Earth orbit and you are proud to have been promoted to the rank of Captain, and will be given command of the first of these starships, which will be called the "Christopher Columbus". In the meantime, you have enjoyed some rest and recuperation after your exploits leading up to the discovery of "Galaxis". This R & R came to an abrupt halt when the news came through on emergency communications channels that the "magnetic" moon Psia had been raided by Space Pirates, comrades of those who you gassed in the underground installation, and the High Priestess of the Psian people, Jaelaine, kidnapped!

When you arrived on Psia, the Space Patrol informed you that the raid caught the meagre defenses unawares, as they never dreamt that the Space Pirates would be ruthless enough to mount a revenge raid upon the moon. They have concluded that the raid was carried out for one purpose only - that of kidnapping Jaelaine - as surprisingly little damage was done to the installation or to the underground city where the Psian people live. However a number of Federation personnel and Psians lost their lives, something for which the Space Patrol intended persuading the Space Pirates for, as well as rescuing Jaelaine.

Once again, the Space Pirates managed to elude the two small ships that chased them as they made their getaway from Psia, and it is not known where they took Jaelaine. However, two of the Space Pirates lost their lives during the raid, one of whom took his own life after being wounded and subsequently captured. As a matter of routine the bodies were searched and the only clue the Space Patrol found was a cigarette lighter one of the pirates had in his pocket. This lighter had on it an advertising slogan for a fitness gymnasium in the chief city of the planet Daris, a planet several parsecs from Earth in a sparsely populated section of the galaxy. Other information that a tattoo on the arms of both the pirates revealed was that they were part of a galaxy-wide terrorist organisation known as "The Brotherhood of Space".

A conference was held in which a plan of action was discussed. With so little to go on, the Patrol was reluctant to mount an action against this planet, but you volunteered to go alone to the planet to try and find out where Jaelaine is really being held. The Patrol agreed and provided you with false ID papers - your name is too well-known to risk going yourself. They also announced their intention to send out a small fleet of assault ships to the region of empty space near Daris, supposedly to undertake exercises. The Commander of the fleet tells you to try to contact them - using the codename WOTAN - when (and if) you have located Jaelaine. You were told to use the codename MERLIN with which to identify yourself.

You decided to travel to Daris by regular interstellar passenger ship flights, to avoid any secret agents the pirates might have working for them, and three weeks later, after a pleasant voyage on the Orion Spacelines passenger ship "Valkyrie" you find yourself standing in the arrivals hall of Darisopolis shuttle port, wondering what dangers lie before you.....

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The Adventure Workshop

Adventures for the Amstrad

NEW RELEASES

MAN ABOUT THE HOUSE

by GARETH PITCHFORD

Those of you who have followed the earlier adventures of Ernie Spludge will probably be very surprised to hear that he has managed to do something right without your help. What that 'something' is won't be discussed, as this is a family adventure, but I'll point out that Ernie's wife is expecting a baby.

And yes, it is his.

Indeed Rosie has had their baby and is due out of hospital today. Ernie, of course, in the time-honoured tradition of the male of the species, has coped admirably while she was away... he has turned their sparkling clean home into a total dump with hardly any outside assistance at all.

Your task in this game is simple. Just make sure that Ernie picks up his wife at the proper time and that the house is presentable... or at least, still standing! It should be easy - Providing, of course, that Ernie hasn't initiated any full-scale disasters. And knowing Mr Spludge, I wouldn't plan on things going too smoothly...

PERSONAL COMPUTER WHIRLED

BY GARETH PITCHFORD

It was Friday the 13th of November, and the day of yet another Microfair. The 101st to be exact. You were looking forward to this one. There would be no journeys into outer space, no trips into alternate dimensions, no encounters with demented time-lords like at the last fair. All in all, it would be a peaceful day. Of course, you were going to deliver your new game to DTHS. But there would be no problem with that. After all, their stall was on the first floor.

So you found yourself standing in front of the Sugar exhibition complex for a second time, with your ticket clasped firmly in your hand. It was then that the problems began. Out of nowhere, for that is where these creatures live, came a Grue! It punched you in the stomach, grabbed your game and legged it into the building shouting, "If you want to get your game back, you'll have to catch me!".

Oh well, you thought, at least he hadn't eaten you (Grues usually do this). All you had to do was go in and get your game back. It was then that you noticed that your ticket was missing.

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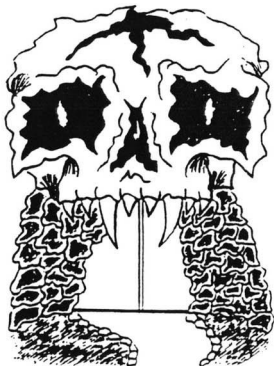
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Convention News 5

Draffan's pace slowed appreciably as the Gloomy Forest came into view. The closer we came to it, the more his pace slowed, until at length, we were moving along at a pace which could easily have been outstripped by an arthritic snail. Had I been with anyone else, I might have doubted their courage: but not Draffan's.

I stopped dead and eyed him with undisguised curiosity. "Is there something you've not bothered telling me about?" I asked cautiously.

Draffan looked eyes with me, then found something about the ground fascinating to look at. Abruptly, he sat. I hunkered down next to him, saying nothing, knowing that my friend would confide in me when he felt able to. Puzzled and concerned, we sat in companionable silence.

At length Draffan spoke to me. "Dotran, my friend, I may not be able to enter the Gloomy Forest with you."

I frowned. "Have you then, in your past adventures, fought so savagely against the Elves that they have marked you out for a dangerous enemy?" I asked. It seemed logical, since I knew Draffan to have a very chequered adventuring background and history.

At my query, he brightened and managed a brusque laugh. "No," he replied. "Although I have fought against the Elves on several occasions. They are my preferred foes, since they fight with a sense of chivalry and honour unknown in other races - except perhaps for the Orcs."

At the expression on my face, Draffan laughed again. "It is a very personal thing I am going to tell you. Orcs are creatures who live in the open, and need to see the sky. They are far from being the most articulate or sensitive of creatures, but they have a deep inbuilt dread of enclosed places, which they feel stifles them. They become psychotic with fear; and although I am only a half-Orc, I, too, suffer from a fear of such places as the Gloomy Forest. Sometimes it is worse than others, so I might not be able to stand by your side inside the Forest, as a friend should do..."

I mastered my sudden feeling of dismay, for who would not want a creature such as Draffan at his

side when danger threatened? However, I didn't want to make my friend feel any more wretched than his confession must have already made him. I clapped him on the shoulder and grinned.

"I wouldn't think of asking you to friend," I muttered. As he looked at my face, attempting to gauge the honesty of my answer, I continued: "I had thought to ask you to camp outside the Forest and patrol the perimeter, lest Sapleaf slip out of the Forest when I enter it. So far, everywhere we have been he's left just ahead of us. If you keep the Forest under surveillance, it at least reduces the possibility of that happening again."

Draffan frowned, trying to see flaws in the logic of my argument. When he could find none, his face lit up in relief. He stood and continued towards the Forest, now marching resolutely. "Come on, then," he urged me over his shoulder. "We'll never get there by sitting passing the time of day. Just like a Human to stop for a tea break when there's work to be done."

Biting down my urge to reply, I hurried after him, amazed at the speed with which his resolution could turn around.

The Gloomy Forest grew larger and larger in front of us: indeed, I soon understood why it was referred to as the Capital Forest of the Elven Nation. It was massive, and covered the horizon before us as far as the eye could see.

Draffan observed my awe, and nodded. "Aye, it's a big place, right enough. It was once reckoned that a thousand cavalry units could get lost in that Forest and die of hunger and thirst before any one unit caught sight of another. Ever been here before?"

"No," I replied. "I had no idea that it was so immense, so vast."

Draffan turned his eyes back to the Forest. "There are other words that I can think of to describe it. None of them complimentary."

Not long afterwards we stood before the Forest, yet of Elves we had seen no sign.

I turned to Draffan. "Wait for me here - but remember to patrol the perimeter."

Draffan gave me a sidelong glance just as an arrow arced from the Forest and buried itself in the grass at my feet.

To be continued...



PRIZE'S NINTH BIRTHDAY RHYME

(But is anyone out there clever enough to decipher it?)

Q WUUNUUU UUUR'U X+UUU UU+ UU+ UU,
UU +UU=U U =UU XUUWUUN UUUNUUUU UU,
X+U+UUUWU+ UUWUU+U UUUU-
UU'W UUUNUUWUU+ UU+U UUUU!
UUUUUUUU+U+U+U+UUUUUU UU=XXUUUU UU?

X+U+UU+U UU UU UU+UU-UUUUU UU UUUUU!
UUUUUUUU=UUU'W UUWUU+XUU+UU UU +UUW!
UU+XUUUU+ UU+U UUUU-
XU UU+U =UUU, UU+U UU UUUUUU
UUUUUUW UU +UUUUUUUU - X.U.U.U+. UU+ UUWU!

PROGRAMMING WITH AMOS by STEVE CLAY

Another use for icons could be to give the player a picture of the objects/characters they encounter in the game. What you need to do when the player 'Examines' an object is to clear the screen or window, paste the icon(s) that is used to represent the object and then print the message giving further information. You will need to move the text cursor below the bottom of the pasted icon otherwise nasty things will happen.

Example:

```
If VE=15 and N1=40: Rem *** X LAMP (Where lamp has the value of 40)
```

```
Rem *** Check lamp is present
```

```
If COBL(1)=254 or COBL(1)=LOC
```

```
Clw: Rem *** Cls if not using a window
```

```
Paste Icon 144,40,1: Rem *** Where icon 1 is a 32 x 32 icon.
```

```
Te$=M$(1): Rem M$(1) describes lamp
```

```
Locate 2,7: Rem *** Moves cursor
```

```
Gosub PRM
```

```
End If
```

```
Te$="I can't see a lamp!": Gosub PRM: End If
```

Location graphics:

Icons could be used to create graphics for locations but they would consume lots of memory. The best way to present location graphics is by the following long-winded, yet beneficial, way. Firstly create your location pictures using DPaint or whatever you use. The best thing to do is to label these screens LOC1; LOC2 etc. Because naming them Tower or Forest or whatever could lead to problems when you duplicate or accidentally overwrite graphics.

Anyway, having created your graphic screens you need a small AMOS program to load them in and then pack them into a memory bank, then save the packed bank to disk.

Example:

```
Load If "LOC1"
```

```
Spack 0 to 4 : Rem *** 0 = the screen number and 4 is the destination bank
```

```
Save "LOC1.Abk",4
```

To use a packed screen in a game you would have some code in your Process 1 table along the lines of:

```

If LOC=1
Load "LOC1.Abk",4
Unpack 4 to 0
End If

```

To do this for every location with a graphic could prove tedious but there are ways around it. You could have a set of data called PIX then for each location you could have either an empty string or the filename of the graphic. In the following example there are five locations. Locations 2, 4 & 5 have graphics;

```

Dim PIX$(5)
Restore PicDats
For N=1 to 5
Read PDS
PIX$(N)=PDS
Next N
PicDats:
Data "", "LOC2", "", "LOC4", "LOC5"

```

A simple For/Next loop can be used to check if there is a graphic for this location.

```

Process 1:
FS=PIX$(LOC)
If FS>""
FS=FS+".Abk"
Load FS,4
Unpack 4 to 0
End If

```

You could use a flag to test if the player has requested that graphics be turned off. A simple IF F(11)=0 above the FS=PIX\$(LOC) and a second End If at the end will stop the picture being printed if flag (11)>0.

Two things to remember about location graphics. First the palette, if you change the colours that the text and paper uses then you'll get some strange effects it is best to reserve 3 or 4 colours for text and not use these or at least not change them when creating your graphics. Secondly ensure the screen you are trying to unpack is the same size and mode as that you have set up in your program. Trying to unpack an 8 colour Hires into a 32 colour lowres will pass a few minutes but is likely to produce an accusing error message!

BEGINNERS CORNER

HOW TO SOLVE A MAZE - AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD By Larry Horsfield

I was most interested to read Laurence Creighton's article about solving mazes in the April issue of Probe. I have always enjoyed solving mazes, the one I got most enjoyment from was the Witherton Village maze in one of the Rick Hanson adventures on the old Electron. There were 12 locations, each with 12 exits (the usual 8 compass ones, plus Up and Down AND In and Out!) but there weren't enough objects to drop in ALL the locations. It took me 5 hours of solid mapping to solve it!

Laurence's method might be O.K. for a small maze, but anything bigger might lead to the adventurer getting confused with all the boxes and lines twisting all over the page. The way I would tackle a maze is to number each location and then list the exits leading from it. If it is one of those mazes where no exits are listed, just write them ALL down. You need a pen and (lined) paper. Having saved your position before entering the maze and having gathered as many objects as possible, you venture forth...

In the first location, drop an object, say a sword, and write down this:

Maze 1 (Sword):	Obviously, if there are more exits listed you
N:	write these down as well. First go North and
S:	if it is an empty location you call it Maze 2
E:	and you drop another object (a book). Against
W:	N: in the first entry you just write 2. You
	now write an entry for location 2 similar to
	the first:

Maze 2 (Book):	Going North from here might take you back to
N:	location 1 where you dropped the sword, so
S:	write 1 against N: in this entry. Now you are
E:	back at 1 you can try the next exit, South.
W:	If this is a new location, drop an object and
	call it No. 3 and write a new entry. If any
	exit leads to the same location, you either

write that number down or, as I do to avoid confusion, cross out the exit altogether. If any of the exits takes you out of the maze to the location from where you entered it, write START against that exit, and write OUT against that exit that leads you out of the maze to a new part of the adventure.

If there are 4 locations and you dropped a key in location 3 and a shoe in 4, your list of entries might look like this:

Maze 1 (Sword):	Maze 2 (Book):	Maze 3 (Key):	Maze 4 (Shoe):
N: 2	N: 1	N: 2	N: 3
S: 3	S: 2	S: 1	S: 1
E: 1	E: 1	E: 4	E: 4
W: START	W: 3	W: 3	W: OUT

By this method you can see that there are a couple of ways through the maze, the quickest being S - E - W. In some large mazes you might find there are two or more exits to new parts of the adventure. In this case, write down a word that is in the location text, i.e. PATH or HUT, etc, to differentiate between the exits.

AMIGA COLUMN by STEVE CLAY

As promised I have had look and a tinker with GRAC. This F1 2 disk set allows the user to create graphic adventures of the point and click variety. The author is Edmund Clay (no relation) who produced the popular Starbase 13. GRAC has been written with AMOS and the craft extension. There are plenty of Doc. files to read as well as a tutorial. The tutorial is vital and the early lessons show you how to switch between the tutorial doc and the creator itself. It is fairly easy to get a rudimentary location up and running and I should think a game, while not a five minute job, could be created quite quickly. Having only tinkered and not pushed the utility to any of its limits, I can't say whether there are any serious restrictions or not. The initial impression is one of a job well done. There are numerous authors crying out for a utility such as this and this deserves to be a success.

There are two examples supplied with the utility. The first is a simple adventure about your kid brother and his escapades. This is easy to play without being taxing and shows how games can be created that may be of use in an educational capacity.

The second game is Lethal Formula, available on PD by itself. This bears a passing resemblance to Beneath a Steel Sky. The location graphics are very good for PD although the animation on the main sprite is a bit shaky.

The story behind the game is a traditional science fiction theme based around Professor Endsworth who has created a wonder drug, only to find out that his employers are also producing a highly addictive version. Endsworth decides to steal the product from the spaceship that is due to carry it to an unknown destination.

The puzzles are fairly straightforward, although if you take a hint from me you would be best advised not to worry about the combination lock for too long, brute force should suffice. Things are, as always in point and click games, restricted by the shortage of commands. You are limited to Examine, Take, Operate, Use, Shoot and Talk. The examine command illicit some information but can't be considered comprehensive. The interface is easy to use and is an improvement on some full price releases. You select the command by clicking with the left button on the menu and then point at the object you wish to work with and then click on the right button. Any object that can be examined or used will be highlighted when the cursor passes over it. Well worth a look although not too taxing.

As it is a special issue in Probe's history I thought I would run a one-off competition. The prize is a copy of Lethal Formula, a copy of the book The Lost City of Zork and a copy of SpaceJest. All three to the one reader who can answer the following:

1. Name one of the games in the Jewels of Darkness trilogy?
2. In what series of games do toilets play an integral part?
3. Name the hero in the Monkey Island games?

Answers to: STEVE CLAY 17 STANLAW ROAD ELLESMERE PORT SOUTH WIRRAL L65 OEY

NEWSDESK

New/forthcoming releases

THE LOST WORLD by Walter Pooley and Eddy Park is now available for the Amiga under Commodore emulation. It works on the Amiga 500, 500+ and 600 machines. Only £2, including emulator, from Adventure Probe Software.

SHADOWS IN THE NIGHT by Dorothy Millard will soon be available on the C64 from The Adventure Workshop. More details next month.

The End of Amstrad Action

Brian Watson, editor of 8BIT, says that issue 118 of Amstrad Action will be the last. What can I say?

HELP WANTED/IN TOUCH

HELP - I am a frustrated adventurer with nowhere to go. I bought a copy of USING THE QUILL - A Beginner's Guide so that I could write adventure games, now all I need is a copy of the Quill. Does anyone have or know where I can obtain a copy of this utility, on TAPE, for the AMSTRAD? Please contact Gerald Smith, 135 Hall Lane, Whitwick, Nr. Coalville, Leics. LE67 5PD. Tel. 01530 839687

WANTED : A manual for the Amiga 1200. If you have one for sale, or know where I can obtain one, please contact Barbara Bassingthwaighte, 70 Coronation Avenue, Yeovil, Somerset, BA21 3DZ, Tel. 01935 26174.

FOR SALE : Unbranded, unformatted 3.5" discs DSDD. 37p each + SAE or return postage, or ten for £3.50 + return postage, i.e. for ten discs add 57p for return 1st class postage. Contact Phill on 0161 720 9565.

PERSONAL MESSAGES

To Snow White - Thanks for your offer. You have made me feel Happy - or is it Bashful? (The Whinger)

To Miss Demeanor - I'll try not to whinge any more, in case you think I'm a bore! Next month I'll send a message to end my whinging, to be sure, to be sure. (The Whinger)

To Ellen - Just because I'm not writing doesn't mean I'm not thinking of you! (Jo)

To Ellen - Thanks for the compliment! (Jon S)

To Sue - Mmmmm! You sure taste nice! (Boris the Spider)

To Martian - Altogether now, eyebrows together, curl that lip. Breath out through flaring nostrils ... (Anon)

To Ellen - Watch the step, I can't afford the repairs. (Love Celia)

To K Burnard - Be rude and butt in! It's a party line, y'know! (Mad Cat)

To M.Polo - Did you do all your exploring in the bazaars? (Mad Cat)

To Ellen - I'll try and snap up a tender lamb chop somewhere (Mad Cat)

To Witch - My, it's nice to hear that somebody likes Ro's potions (Mad Cat)

To Kasar - I've already had my tankful. ta the same (Mad Cat)

To Dopey – Mum's gonna direct, shoot and cut it. She has 'er sweet eye on Trashy, though. (Mad Cat)

To Snow White – Fret not! Help is coming – I think! (Mad Cat)

To Sherry & Lucky – Watcher dawdling? Thursa mouse needs nabbing! (Mad Cat)

To Ellen – Young lady, you may rest easily in the knowledge that your concerns and worries regarding Mad Cat are quite unnecessary, even though I understand them well, bearing in mind that I was the only "third party" present when he sliced the tip off Darth Vader's light sabre, which caused DV's immediate strategic withdrawal and rearrangement of his forces, as well as what I believe is the only time Vader's helmet has ever changed its facial expression by itself. (Ro-wan)

To Rudi – Yap! Yap! (Bosi)

To Ellen – A suit? Not my style. I prefer T-shirts and bare feet. (Reynir)

To Martian – I'm having that dog put down if it barks at me again. (Sharon)

To Sue – If I get mine out everyone will laugh. (Sharon)

To Martin – For har hars, two's company, three would finish you off (Lynne)

To all readers – Oh well, if you can't beat 'em, join 'em! Therefore..... (Larry)

To Babe – Thanks a million for the loan of the +3 – You've save my sanity! (Larry)

To Martin – What have you got under YOUR loincloth? (Larry)

To Anne – CLUMP! CLUMP! CLUMP! Incredible! (Larry)

To Sharon – Anyone wanna horse? (Larry)

To David – Have you ever had YOUR "genes" under the microscope? (Larry)

To Bob – BTW, AFAICR, IMHO.... What was the question again? (Larry)

To Martin – Are there REALLY g.....a in your new adventure? Cheeky! (Larry)

To Jenny – Keep swotting – you know you can do it again...easy! (Larry)

To Sue – How's Horace? (Larry)

To Bob – Come back Probe BBS – All is forgiven! (Larry)

To Sue – Alternative "input" please! (Larry)

To Pauline (via Jenny) – Looking forward to meeting you in person – how about a foursome? (Larry)

To Jenny, Sharon & Sue – Many thanks for doing a great job playtesting DFF! (Larry)

To Dylan – No, I usually wear heavy boots so being barefoot makes me LIGHT, not heavy! (M.Polo)

To Ellen – I don't know if it matters which side is up when I run. (M.Polo)

To Snowy – A beck's not a beck without a call, but that doesn't explain what it is. (M.Polo)

To Dopey – I didn't know dwarves had brains. Obviously not. (M.Polo)

To Uncle Horace – Both Conan and I look forward to seeing the movie. When's it out on video? (Damian)

To Ellen – Hmmm! That spider was tasty. (Damian)

To Ellen – Sorry for what camel? (Damian)

To Kasar – All's fine now. Just rushed off 'em. Cheers. (Damian)

To Socrates – Conan's taking a sabbatical (sort of). (Damian)

To Miss Peril – Custard sends his regards. (Damian)

To Lynne and Paul – Happy 1st birthday to Robyn, youngest ever at the Meet last year. (Anne)

To Sharon – One more, just one more, and I would have levelled out without bending me fag. (Anne)

To Martin – Roger More, Roger More, staggering through the day. (Anne)

To Jenny – With thanks for such a clear, painstaking and humorous solution to Gobiilins. It was invaluable. (Anne)

To Martin – How do you think my nose got to be this fiat? It's been protecting my glasses for a long time. (Cosmo Borland. nee Smallpiece)

To Larry and Martin – With thanks for all the support and advice during Valhallas 1 and 2. (Anne)

To W.S. – Now that you've got a PC, won't you have to learn how to cheat all over again? (Nemo)

To W.O.S. – 'Tis just like you to get your messages garbled up. Story of your life, eh? (The Spiral Enchanter)

To Mad Cat – If I tell you a tall story, does that mean that I'm pulling your tail? (Kasar)

To Wynne – Really, at your advanced age, you should think of taking things easy. (Nemo)

To Martin B – Just so you don't feel left out, welcome: be you friend or foe. Tell me a little about your game. (Xion)

To Keith B – Contribute to our column, then. We're all friendly adventurers here – apart from the Witch of Stanley, Glumwynd, Acidspit, and Fry-Them-With-One-Puff, that is. (Squiggle)

To Conan – I'm still gunning for you, quirtface. (Socrates)

To Damian – You wouldn't believe how many people want to know my identity! (Kasar)

To M.Polo – I know Snow Blanc must be having an orgy with all those Dwarves... Where did you say she lives again? (Pogkin the Dwarf)

To The Viper – Leave Mr. M.Polo alone. He has my protection from the miserable likes of you. Show off or I'll take appropriate measures. (The Glumwynd)

To M.Polo – Could this be the start of a beautiful friendship/alliance? (The Glumwynd)

To Dylan – The Personals have been a poorer place without you, man. Minority groups like us always get persecuted, man. (The Glumwynd)

To Dylan – Like, no way, man. I may be bent, but I'm not gay. (Squiggle)

To Polo – Don't even think of it. I'd chew you up and spit you out! (The Viper)

To Miss Dem. – Oh, ho, ho. Feeling brave this month, are we? I'll just put it down to P.M.T. (The Viper)

To All – The messages are an important section of Probe! Keep them coming everyone! (W.S.)

To Grimwold – Started coughing again yet? (Uncle Horace)

To Damian – OK then, I'll settle for a bike. (Uncle Horace)

To Dylan – Thanks for the warning, man. But, like hey, it came (much) too late. Still, no worries, man, it's cool – 4,998 to go!!! (Uncle Horace)

To Damian – Eileen swam more than she sank last week, good job really – she was in at the deep end. (Ellen)

To Phill – OK then, I (and Cyrus 11) accept your challenge. But remember NO cheating (on your part anyway...) (Ellen)

To M.Polo – Nope – I'LL be the one doing all of the singing, 'cos after all I've got the best voice. (Ellen)

To Pete – Take not notice of Dopey – he just doesn't know good music when he hears it. (Ellen)

To The Old Zetonian – You're half right. He's gagged but not bound – I ran out of those ages ago! (Snow White)

To M.Polo – How'd you guess? I love 7 UP, whether any chance is by me or not. (Snow White)

To M.Polo – S****? I don't know, is it? And you'll have to promise not to deny it – before I reveal it! (Snow White)

To Dylan – Hi, man – did you enjoy your hibernation? (Snow White)

SOLUTION OF THE MONTH



BIRTHDAY SURPRISE

Written by Doreen Bardon

Solution by Dorothy Millard on a C64

UPSTAIRS - Start in your bedroom. EXAMINE BED (don't wake the wife yet), S to landing, EXAMINE PORTRAITS, E to bathroom, GET ROBE, WEAR ROBE, EXAMINE ROBE (has a pocket), EXAMINE POCKET (you find a safety pin), EXAMINE BATH, EXAMINE TOILET, EXAMINE BASIN, EXAMINE CABINET, EXAMINE MIRROR, OPEN CABINET, OPEN DOOR, E into airing cupboard, EXAMINE LINEN, SEARCH LINEN, GET SERVIETTE, W, W (not until you've washed your hands), WASH HANDS, W, W to spare bedroom, EXAMINE SUITCASE, EXAMINE BOXES, OPEN BOX, GET TRAY, E.

DOWNSTAIRS - D to hall, W into study, GET VASE, EXAMINE DESK, GET TEAPOT, OPEN DRAWER, GET piece of STRING, EXAMINE STRING, E, E to lounge, EXAMINE MONSTER (TV), EXAMINE SETTEE, MOVE CUSHIONS, GET birthday CARD, EXAMINE CARD, S into dining-room, EXAMINE DRESSER, OPEN DRAWER, GET CRUET set, EXAMINE SHELVES, SEARCH SHELVES, GET EGGTIMER, E into kitchen, GET KETTLE, OPEN CUPBOARD, GET CROCKERY, EXAMINE WORKTOP, EXAMINE SINK, GET SPOON, OPEN FRIDGE, GET EGG, OPEN OVEN, EXAMINE OVEN, S into pantry, EXAMINE SLAB, GET milk JUG, EXAMINE SHELVES, GET TEABAGS, N back to kitchen, FILL VASE, W, N.

GOOSE/POOL - W to hall, OPEN DOOR, S to stone path, EXAMINE GARDEN, S to mailbox, EXAMINE MAILBOX, EXAMINE GRAFFITI, W (a goose her prevents further progress), EXAMINE GOOSE, SAY BOO (it hisses off!), W into garage, EXAMINE BENCH, GET PRESENT, EXAMINE PRESENT, LOOK UNDER bench, GET GLOVES, EXAMINE GLOVES, E, N to pool, EXAMINE POOL, OPEN safety pin, TIE STRING (you now have a thing for getting saucepans from piranha-infested pools), THROW CATCHER (the pin catches in the handle), PULL CATCHER, GET SAUCEPAN.

ROSE GARDEN - W, N into rose garden, EXAMINE BUSHES (a white rose - not good enough), W, EXAMINE BUSHES (a yellow rose), E, EXAMINE BUSHES (a pink rose), S, EXAMINE BUSHES (a blue rose), E, EXAMINE BUSHES (a red rose - this is the one), WEAR GLOVES, PICK RED rose (note if you don't have the vase full of water the rose will wilt before you can return with it), E back to path.

BREAKFAST IN BED - E, S, E, N, N, E, S, E to kitchen, FILL KETTLE, BOIL KETTLE, MAKE TEA, FILL SAUCEPAN, BOIL EGG (you assemble all the things you need to make a breakfast tray.... clever you! A proper little house-wife in the making!), GET TRAY, W, N, W, U, N to bedroom, WAKE WIFE, GIVE TRAY, GIVE PRESENT, GIVE CARD, GIVE RED rose, KISS WIFE (for once it looks like you've done something right for a change....)

CONGRATULATIONS

The wife thinks that you were so kind and thoughtful in remembering her birthday and getting a present, that she is going to invite the mother-in-law around for tea.... ain't you lucky guy?

GETTING YOU STARTED

ANGLELIQUE – A GRIEF ENCOUNTER played by Ellen Mahon on an Amstrad CPC464 (tape)

GET HOLDALL, REMOVE SHOES, REMOVE STOCKINGS, GET STOCKINGS, EXAMINE STOCKINGS (you see a ladder, which you climb up), GET SHOES, WEAR STOCKINGS, WEAR SHOES, UP, WEST, GET CANOE, EAST, EAST, GET MACHETE, NORTH, DOWN, SOUTH, GET OPENER, SOUTH, GET ROPE, NORTH, NORTH, UP, SOUTH, WEST, WEST, DOWN, WEST, GET GAMP

CIVIL SERVICE 2 played on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) & PC(e)

SAY HELLO, ENTER, READ NOTICE, EXAM DOOR, CHILLI, CHILE, NORTH, EXAM DOOR, ROAM, ROME, NE, EXAMINE DOOR, 15, SE, EXAM DOOR, GREASE, GREECE, SOUTH, EXAM DOOR, STERLING

DARKEST ROAD played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on C64, Amstrad, PC, Atari(e), Amiga(e) & PC(e)

Start outside a homestead, E, E (inside barn), X HAY (find needle), X HAY again (find a book), TAKE NEEDLE, X NEEDLE (hint for later), TAKE BOOK, READ BOOK, DROP BOOK, X MANGER, X MANGER again (find map), TAKE MAP, X MAP (half of a map), W, W, W (inside farmstead), OPEN DESK, X DESK, TAKE PAPER, X PAPER (hint), DROP PAPER, X CHAIR (find something), LOOK, TAKE MAP, X MAP (the two pieces make a route through the swamp), W (bedroom), X TABLE, TAKE ORB, X ORB, E, E, N (lush grassland), W, N, N (see dead elf), X ELF, TAKE SHOES, S, E, X LEAVES, TAKE CARD, X CARD (advertisement for another of Clive Wilson's adventures), DROP CARD, WEAR SHOES *before* you go N (clearing). You meet a Shade who gives you a password for a secret way – this word is also the title of another Clive Wilson adventure), S, W, N, N, N, W (in lake), D (below surface where you see a mermaid), X MERMAID, KISS MERMAID (a kindness that will allow you to pass the Guardian), U, E, S, W, S

LOST PHIRIOUS Pt.1 (The Cassiopia) played by Ellen Mahon on an Amstrad CPC 464 (tape)

EAST, GET PASTIE, EAT PASTIE, LOOK, GET KEY, NORTH, EAST, GET FIG, WEAR FIG LEAF (now you can get past the droid), NORTH, NORTH, NORTH, GET MAP, EXAM MAP, EAST, SOUTH, GET SUIT, WEAR SUIT, NORTH, NORTH, NORTH, TOUCH PANEL, GET PASS CARD, SOUTH, SOUTH, WEST

UNDERWORLD – THE VILLAGE played by Karen Tyers on a Spectrum

Start outside hall with torch. SW. GET MATCHES. GET SNOWSHOES. WEAR SNOWSHOES. NE, E, N, N, N, E, E, GET DYNAMITE. GET FUSE (they become one item when you pick them up). W, W. DROP DYNAMITE. STRIKE MATCH (there is an explosion). DROP MATCHES. S, S, S, E. READ SIGN, TORCH ON, E, N, U, GET SUIT. WEAR SUIT, D, N. MOVE RUG. OPEN TRAPDOOR

NOVA played by Terry Taylor on an Amiga

[I'm pleased to say that although I was correct in suspecting there was only 1 level/screen to this puzzle game, Terry has proved that it can be completed, albeit in a great number of moves ... Barbara]

U(2) R(2) D R(3) D L U L(2) U L(2) U L U L(2) D(2) R D(2) L(3) U(7) R(7) D R U D(3) R D U L(2) U(2) R U L(9) U L D(5) First one in place.

U(4) R(10) D(3) R D R(2) U(7) L(3) D(3) L(8) D(7) R(3) U(2) L U(2) R(2) U D(2) R D L U(3) R D R(2)

These moves open up the board, but be careful because there are some very tricky bits ahead.

SONG OF TALIESIN Pt.1 played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) & PC(e)

You start in Ceridwen's cave. I, X CAULDRON, X ARWAN (trying to say something), LISTEN (told you are in fact a grown man and to return to your true form you must find the Spell Bond), X CAULDRON, N (can't), E (can't), CLIMB TABLE (note footprints in dust), X FOOTPRINTS (confirms your true status), CLEAN TABLE (see word), READ WORD (note response), X BED, TAKE JERKIN, X JERKIN, SAY SENZA (to de-activate the spell so that you can now go north and east), E (Ceridwen's retreat), TAKE CRYSTAL (can't), X WALL (find small door), OPEN DOOR (find lever), SLIDE LEVER (now have a crystal), X CRYSTAL (hint), X RECESS, TAKE BOOK, X BOOK (spell book – note details for use), TAKE BROOM, X CAT, W, N (head of valley), W (beach), N (outside Aranrod's fortress), N, X ARANROD (note lifeless crystal), GREET ARANROD, GIVE CRYSTAL

SPECTRE OF CASTLE CORIS Pt.1 played on a Spectrum 48K & Amiga(e)

Start in main square in Corwyn. I (you have some money), W, W, N, N (nave of church), SEARCH PULPIT (now have a book), READ BOOK (contains a prayer which protects against evil spirits), S, S, E, E, N, X BAKERY, X BOARDS, MOVE BOARDS, CLIMB IN (now inside bakery), SEARCH COUNTER (you now have a sack), X SACK (full of flour), CLIMB OUT, N, W (main room of tavern), BUY ALE, TALK TO LANDLORD, SAY DUKE ALARIC, SAY YES, E.

The spectre is due to make its first appearance soon. R (repeat until "the air goes icy cold", you can X MIST (a sinister apparition manifests itself), READ PRAYER (need prayer book – apparition fades). The spectre will continue to make an appearance, so be alert.

S, S, S, S, E (stonemason's yard), TALK TO WILL, ASK ABOUT SPECTRE

THE CUP played on a C64 – also available on Spectrum, Atari(e), Amiga(e) & PC(e)

NORTH, EAST, UP, EAST, NORTH, EXAM REAPER, NORTH, WEST, SOUTH, IN, EXAM CHIEF, EXAM POT, EXAM FURS, EXAM FUR, WEAR FUR, GET TORCH, OUT, NORTH, NORTH, EAST (keep coming to this location until fighting elephants appear), NORTH, NORTHEAST, NORTHWEST, NORTH, NORTHEAST, NORTH, EAST, SOUTH, EXAM KEEPER, TELL STORY/FIB/LIE (you are given a club), DOWN, WEST, NORTH, WEST, WEST, SOUTH, SOUTH, WEST, EXAM TREE, CLIMB TREE, HIT TREE

HINTS AND TIPS

THE APPRENTICE played by Mystick Maggot on a Spectrum 128K – also available on PC(e)

The locked drawer hides the pink salmon while the pendant is a force for good, so the cracked wall room must be a scotch-mist store.

There is a serious flaw under the junk, so keep your bottle and the seller will produce a key.

You may think you have been framed but don't leave it undone if you want to add another string to your bow.

SHAM-PAIN is the battle cry to cure all, then say hello to another dead end but don't screw up now or you can get wedged in.

Have you left the rope up the flue? It's a hard job to get it back. Have a good look down and around before a sharp rise and a steep fall. Now you're for the high jump.

CIVIL SERVICE 2 played by Jenny Perry on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) & PC(e)

In the 30-roomed building, not all the words given are used in the puzzle. You have to link the words like cat – walk – sight – less – (none of these are in Jack's puzzle). Only 16 words are used.

THE DARE played by the author, Dorothy Millard, on a C64

Don't leave the bloody paper or label where they will be found.

To deal with the headache you will need the glass from the Kitchenware Department, water from the Staff Canteen and headache pills from the Pharmacy.

Hide from the guard. The cassette needs batteries, then rewinding.

Use the fishing rod to get the small key.

Wash using the soap and towel *before* using the makeup.

To find the form check behind the kitchen door.

Don't wear the moustache or makeup until *after* your photo has been taken.

Move the wardrobe for access to the roof. Look under the counter to find the tie.

Don't forget to turn the computer on. To open the glue bottle you need the knife.

Use the spade to get the railway ticket from the Travel Department.

Insert the card to exit.



IMPACT played by Jim Donaldson on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) & PC(e)

Wait for the pot of stew to boil over then get the honey.

FISHER KING Pt.1 played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) & PC(e)

In the divesting chamber, take a chess piece to be transported to glowing gates in the wilderness. You'll need something to wedge the gate open, and you can't go through it carrying or wearing anything metallic.

In the glade, dismount and cut the briars. There is also a very important item here.

Cut the ivy to find a hidden door. In the great hall you'll have to play a game of chess. You'll lose but your actions cause Clarissant to appear.

Garsales, will lead you into part two.



MAGIC TREASURE ADVENTURE played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum

In the control room, insert the coin and then push the switch to turn on the lights upstairs.

Use the wood, nails and hammer to make a ladder, then ERECT LADDER and CLIMB LADDER to reach the Magic Testing Room.

Drink the potion to increase your strength quota.

The answer to the Tommy Cooper puzzle is random – but make a note of the answer as it is needed to access a room.

The Paul Daniel's puzzle seemed impossible, but thanks to Keith Burnard and Tom Frost I now know how to win. I won't publish the answer yet, write to me if/when you get deperate.

OPEN SESAME will transport you between the Magician's Rest Room and the Corridor Outside the Hat Room.

The objects that change when picked up have to be dropped in their appropriate room e.g. DROP EGG (wand) in the Room of Wands. When all five have been dropped, magic takes place. This means that the five objects have now permanently reverted to their original form. Collect them all, wearing the hat and scarf when your inventory becomes full.

Wave the wand to dispel all Black Magic then descend the ladder and go west to be congratulated and told you will be transported to an abandoned castle.



MYSTERY OF ARKHAM MANOR played by John Schofield on a Spectrum – also available on Amstrad

To complete part two you need to carry the cross (found in part one), a statue (found in the master bedroom of the manor), and then go to the same location as Guy Leydan who wanders about randomly in the upstairs locations of the manor. Just say KALKALA and you've completed the game.

[John has a long list of objects not used, actions that are possible but not obviously necessary, and a tentacled monster in the cellar that he can't get past. If anyone can help, please write to the Probe office... Barbara]

RETURN TO ZORK played by Jenny Perry on a PC

Release the bats in the whispering woods; grab some guano then follow the trail.

Don't give your coin to the ferryman; just show it to him.

Remember womens' lib – throw your bra box into the incinerator, then open the drawer to find a hot wire.

Prise the magnet with your sword.

Pay attention to Ben's knot.

You need 4 jokes before you win a prize. That *#@ blacksmith will only tell you half a joke. Never mind – return to Mavis Peepers, show her Rebecca's photograph, then play her comment back to Rebecca before showing her the book.

The forest and the woods are both hard to map. Unless you are going straight ahead, you only turn to face the direction you have clicked on. This took me a long time to work out.

You need 30 items to throw at the bridge leading to your final challenge. Go back and get more hay, carrots, guano and meat. You don't need the sword for the last bit.

Don't give the scroll to Canuk.

Thanks to Sue Medley for the following help –The message on the sliding puzzle should read "water unseen at falls mix with bat droppings yields potion for"

Thanks to Sue Roseblade for the following help –Once you have hitched a ride on the vulture your magnet and whistle disappear. Don't worry – just click on the map where you wish to travel and you'll go there automatically.

SEARCH FOR THE NETHER REGIONS played by Ellen Mahon on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) & PC(e)

Part One

Get the object (and a handful of seed) from the parrot's cage, whilst they are listening to the music in the bar.

Use the chisel to get a brick from the wall.

Open an account in the Building Society by using the brick as a deposit.

Give the object from the parrot's cage to Scott.

Open the case to fool the guard.

Part Two

Examine the dead archer, and get the scarf.

Drop the banana skin beside the sleeping guard.

Examine the cupboard in the kitchen to find a tin of curry.

Use the scarf to polish the tray.

Make the curry and eat it – now you're able to breathe fire.

Use the amulet to hypnotize the genie.



SETTLEMENT XIII Pt.1 played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Amiga(e)

In the Farmhouse

Wear the scarf before opening the fridge.

Move the painting to find the safe. Kick the back door.

Oil the bike to prevent it seizing up when you ride it.



In the Firestation

You can't go up via the stairs because they collapse, so throw the grapnel at the hole and climb up the rope.

Find the penknife and then return to the ground floor. Don't forget to retrieve your grapnel/rope by JERKING ROPE.

SPHERE OF Q'LI played by Ellen Mahon on an Amstrad CPC464 (tape)

The battery in the torch ISN'T a Duracell one, so switch it off whenever you can.

Examine the walls in the vast cavern to find some hidden secrets.

Examine the pile of rubble to find another exit.

Talk to the organist. He wants something more than just the correct answer to his question.

The witch needs what you find on the hill to add to her cauldron.

Don't forget to examine the bones you find in the Revolving Woods.

Zukna will only look kindly upon you if you're bearing a gift!

The witch has a very strange (to say the least!) "familiar".

Make sure you re-activate the Sphere before you summon the Entity.

STAFF OF POWER played by Barbara Gibb on a C64, also available on Spectrum, Atari(e), Amiga(e) & PC(e)

In the dining-room in the knight's castle move the picture to find a doorway.

Use the appropriate spells to disperse the blue and red hazes – the large key unlocks the door now revealed.

You have to leave the knight's castle via the grille.

When you approach the lake carrying the shield and/or wearing the ring and sword, some stepping-stones will appear.

You need the "unlock door" spell to open the door at the north end of the room just inside Zyx's castle.

Examine the picture to find a spike.

Examine the statue – it conceals an exit.

Wedge the door to avoid being gassed.

STAFF OF LAW played by Damian Steele on a C64

To get through the narrow crack – fill the flask with water from the pool. Go to the crack and drink. You will now shrink for a time. Quickly nip through and get the ruby.

To see the inside of the police station – wander around without clothing for a time.

To open the engraved door – re-arrange the letters in CENARTEN to make a way in.

Moving the stove in the woodman's hut will reveal a pouch.

To go north from the mountain-top you will need the iron key.

Feed the bird to make it fly away and leave the ring of white gold. Talk to the Dwarf and he'll run off leaving Elven coins behind.

Examine the river to find the canoe.

VALHALLA 1 played by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga

Level 2

Drop the bottle of blood on the sacrificial tree stump for a lever to appear – otherwise you are locked in!

The Shaman of the Moon does *not* want the Rock of Selene in its raw state – change it into a werewolf at the Tranquillity altar, then at the Silver Light altar.

Make a golden symbol then cross the chasm and drop it on the altar to deactivate the beam so you can get another magic ring.

Put the pound note on the till to get some gold coins. Introduce them to the stone of change to open a door.

There are two swords but only one will be useful as a bridge. You'll need something to disguise yourself as King Arthur.

The green stick goes into the lever to the east of the inky stone.

Level 3

To change the French drama to English drama, put the monocle on Uncle George's feet (in the Musician's Crypt), then the French Drama. He will translate it for you. Now put it on Lord Monty's feet (start location), drink Shakespeare's drink then examine (look at) the drama. Give him the Healing potion to obtain one of the four official plates for the banquet table.

Put the piano on the Musician's tomb then play it (facing the keyboard) for a lever to appear on the wall behind you – it opens the door to the south.

To open the door to the Cook's/Gypsy's crypt put the song sheet on the Singer's tomb, drink the Choral drink and then sing (look at) the song sheet.

VALHALLA 2 played by Pathfinder on an Amiga

Level 2

To solve the chess puzzle – the castle goes three squares north of the king and the bishop in the middle of the bottom line.

BLACK CRYPT played by Mary Scott-Parker on an Amiga

Level 13

02.13 Go down stairs

Level 14 [Soutaker's Domain]

On level 14 there is only one bad guy, the Soutaker and if you don't manage to finish him off at the beginning of the level, he will keep popping up behind the party at awkward moments, with a harsh shriek. As with the Medusa, he will take the Death Gem of anyone he kills [unless protected] but these can be retrieved again on level 15. However, if you are quick and armed with Doomhammers, you can finish him off at the start of the level and save a lot of trouble. Go and stand at 13.16.14 and face south. After a second or two you will hear him approaching. Before he has time to turn and face the party, hit him with both Doomhammers and a couple of Quakes from Horns of Destruction, from the rear ranks. When dead he drops the Soul key. It's well worth saving the game before you start and then re-loading and trying to kill him, as it's the only time you will be able to take him by surprise. The object of the level is to find the three Skull Crowns that fit onto the skull panel at 21.11.14, to get the Darkness key to the door at 09.12, which leads to level 15 and Soulfreezer and the Octa key.

13.16 Face South and kill the Soutaker [if possible]. If dead, he will drop the Soul key [to door at 36.18.15]

17.15 Face South and proceed through false wall

16.11 Chest containing 3 Possessor keys

11.12 Open door with Possessor key

14.09 Open gate

14.02 [Speed of the essence] Reverse into haze, then run forward, open door, run and hit button, reverse at speed [don't turn round] until noise tells you that you've gone through a teleporter, run forward, open door, hit button, reverse at speed until through teleporter, repeat with next door and button and teleporter until you are facing a wall. You should now be at 23.09. If you are too slow you will fall down a pit onto level 15. Just explore the level and then enter haze at 10.36.15 and repeat the above steps [only quicker!]

23.09 Face South and follow corridor. Spinner at 24.04 Head South

24.01 1st Skull Crown

23.09 Enter haze [teleports to 14.12]

05.14 Open door with Possessor key

04.09 Face haze and it will disappear

02.09 Press nose and quickly go Ex4 to 06.09

06.09 Quickly press nose and go Wx2, Sx3, Ex2, N

06.07 Quickly to S, Wx2, Sx2, E, S [that's F,R,R,F,F,L,F] and the haze at 05.03 should be gone. If not, repeat faster, then head S

09.07 Level 21 Glyph Scroll + Horn of Destruction

01.02 Enter haze [teleports to 26.14]

27.11 Face N and press little button. Walk round centre column at least 6 times and the wall to the South will open

27.05 Step on this square 7 times and the South wall will open

28.01 2nd Skull crown. Head North to haze at 28.13

28.13 Enter haze [teleports to 09.12]

(more next month)

GUIDE TO GOTHIC HORROR Pt. 4

by JOHN SCHOFIELD

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

Part 1 – Dichotomies

The goal in part is simply to find, prepare and mix the ingredients of a potion which will turn you from Dr. Jekyll into Mr. Hyde.

Reading your diary (found in the Study) tells you that Dr. Lanyon is bringing a rare salt, the final ingredient, to your dinner party. The game is in real-time and after 25 turns you fall asleep and have one of two possible nightmares (at random). You wake up screaming after this and, if your butler, Poole, hears you, he will tell Dr. Lanyon and you won't get the salt. To prevent this, you can simply allow the dream to take place then go to the corridor outside the kitchen where you hear voices. LISTEN to hear Poole telling the footman his intentions. All you need to do then is TELL POOLE (or footman) ABOUT NIGHTMARE to explain your screams.

A second way is to EXAMINE SIDEBOARD in the dining-room and get the cup, EXAMINE SHELVES in the pantry to find a tea caddy. In the kitchen is a kettle and spoon – simply PUT TEA IN CUP, PUT TEA IN CUP (you like it strong!), POUR WATER IN CUP from the kettle, STIR TEA and DRINK TEA. This delays you falling asleep for a further 11 turns. If you go to your bedroom and wait for this to happen Poole will have retired to his room before your dream and will not hear your screams.

Before the dinner party, you have another problem to solve. If you go to the Maid's bedroom and EXAMINE BED you will find her diary. READ DIARY reveals that she likes the odd drink and has decided to sample your bottle of gin (another of your ingredients) during the forthcoming dinner party. If you allow this to happen, she will water down the alcohol and your potion won't work. To prevent this, either find the maid and ASK MAID ABOUT GIN and she will leave in disgrace, or EXAMINE CABINETS in the entrance hall to find a bunch of keys. Now go to your "cabinet" where you conduct your experiments and lock *both* doors into it. This latter method allow you a chance to READ NOTEBOOK which says "Dry P before alc." EXAMINE PRESS to see it contains a glass vessel, conical flask and bottle of alcohol. GET ALL FROM PRESS, EXAMINE VESSEL to see it contains a lump of phosphorus. GET PHOSPHORUS FROM VESSEL, PUT PHOSPHORUS IN JAR (it takes 25 turns for it to dry in the jar – it evaporates in 5 turns in open air), DROP ALL and return to the entrance hall before your dinner guests arrive. You must be here when they arrive for you to ASK LANYON FOR SALT. If you are elsewhere when they arrive, all is lost because Lanyon uses the salt during dinner.

After dinner, simply return to the "cabinet", wait for the phosphorus to dry and then GET PHOSPHORUS FROM JAR, PUT PHOSPHORUS IN FLASK, PUT SALT IN FLASK, POUR ALCOHOL IN FLASK. The game is in real-time again as the potion changes colour. DRINK POTION when it changes to *green* to complete part one.

Notes:

You can ask Poole about the dinner, the maid, the weather and footman.

The reason the phosphorus needs drying is that it is stored in oil in the vessel. The tongs are not needed.

Examine the bottle to check if the maid has tampered with it.

Before your dream, you cannot go up to the servant's quarters or to the laboratory area.

Objects only need to be *present* not *carried* to use them - e.g. kettle, spoon, flask, etc.

Type in X to show location exits. Memsave - ramsave, memload - ramload.

Part 2 - Duplicity/Duality

The last word in the text of part one was EVIL which is the password for part two.

You start in your study. Poole asks if you will see Mr. Utterson of Gaunt Street. YES. Utterson does not approve of the changes in your will and asks you to call when you've thought it over. READ DIARY - you are intending putting Hyde in you will. INVENTORY - back door key and some money.

Go south from the hall into a cab; Utterson is not at Gaunt Street so wait until the cabby drives around. LEAVE CAB and go west into an estate agents. READ BOARD to see a flat in Soho advertised. ASK ABOUT FLAT - the clerk asks if you are interested. SAY YES - the number is 54 Stoker Passage, call tomorrow morning. W, ENTER CAB, SAY HOME to return to your hall.

Go to your "cabinet" which contains a sack of crystals, an empty flask and bottle of red liquid. POUR SALT IN FLASK, POUR LIQUID IN FLASK - you drink and become Hyde. Go to the cellar and wear the hat (the rats won't let Jekyll get it!). As Hyde you can now go out of the back door (carrying the key). INVENTORY - you have 13 shillings. Lock the door when outside to prevent a tramp entering and killing himself with your liquid. E, E, N, N to Surrey Row where an urchin is playing marbles. TALK TO URCHIN, EXAMINE WALL then leave and return (go say W, E, E, N) and the urchin is now bored. If the constables are not here CHASE or SCARE URCHIN away and EXAMINE WALL again to find the marbles. Now go to the cab on Trinity Street and ENTER CAB to go to Soho (Frith Street). Go S, W to Lewis Alley and DROP MARBLES then E to Edgar Place where a figure emerges from the club. THREATEN MAN and follow him S where he has fallen on the marbles. REDESCRIBE to see his card and get it. EXAMINE CARD, E back to Edgar Place and the MEMSAVE before entering the club N - carrying the card gets you admitted to the club and you can play pontoon provided you are wearing the hat. The game is random, but you must win 50 shillings when the club closes and you leave. Return on foot all the way south down Waterloo Road. At Ravenshill Road you trample on a young girl and only having the 50 shillings will get you free and able to return to the "cabinet". You become Jekyll again and the game moves on a day.

Go out of the front door to the cab and SAY GAUNT STREET to visit Utterson. SAY HELLO or similar to his first statement and then NO to his question about Hyde. You return to the cab and SAY STOKER PASSAGE. You find number 54 and an old woman invites you in and asks if you want to take it. YES, you pay her and return to the cab. SAY HOME to return to your hall. Return to the "cabinet" again and POUR SALT IN FLASK. POUR LIQUID IN FLASK. You become Hyde again and get drunk in Soho and are half way down Waterloo Road.

If you are unsure of the route back home keep typing in X to check exits because if you type in an incorrect one you fall in the gutter and get arrested. Outside your door you meet Utterson again. Answer NO to his question about blackmail and WE ARE RELATED to his question about Jekyll's will. Return to the "cabinet" once more. POUR SALT IN FLASK. POUR LIQUID IN FLASK – the drink fails. POUR SALT IN FLASK. POUR LIQUID IN FLASK – the transformation occurs. You return to your true form. "So far I have been successful."

Notes:

If you have not rented the Soho flat, the last word will be **fortunate** and you won't be able to enter it in part 3. **Successful** and **fortunate** are the two possible passwords for part 3.

The club pontoon game must be won so use Memload until you do.

If you find the marbles with the urchin present he tells the police.

If you answer YES to Utterson at Gaunt Street, no matter what you answer later, he will tell the authorities about you.

Part 3 – Denouement

Use SUCCESSFUL for the password.

Note the word "TIMOR". INVENTORY – a pair of spectacles. GET BALL, N, S, E or W takes you to another Empty Street. EXAMINE PAPER – note the word "MORTIS". DROP BALL makes a crater and you fall to a moor. EXAMINE BOX – note the word "CONTURBAT". DROP SPECTACLES, OPEN BOX – flying creatures blind you. FEEL to find the spectacles. WEAR SPECTACLES (sight restored), ENTER BOX to a cliff top. EXAMINE STATUE, EXAMINE CLIFF, EXAMINE FLOWERS, PICK FLOWER or POPPY – a voice says "ME". TIMOR MORIS CONTURBAT ME – you leap over the cliff and open your eyes in a room of mirrors. EXAMINE MIRRORS to see Hyde and wake transformed into Hyde.

You are now at Marshall Street on 24th December. INVENTORY – a sturdy cane. EXAMINE CANE – has a hook. MEMSAVE then go S and S where you kill an old man in a rage and the game is in real time. E, S, then E or W will lose your pursuers. Go W and E to Stoker Passage and then W into your flat. EXAMINE CANE, DROP CANE, now go E, N, N, E, S, E, E (policeman and if you are carrying the cane the game ends here), E – you return home, take the potion and become Jekyll.

The game moves on to the 28th December and Poole announces Inspector Newcomer who asks if you'll accompany him to help with the murder of Sir Danvers Carew. YES or NO means you still go with him to the police station, collecting your hat and cane. Answer YES, that you know Hyde. There is nothing in the vocabulary to answer when you last say him – yes or no will do. Answer 54 STOKER PASSAGE to where he may be found.

The game is now unfair because outside where you now find yourself, you cannot see a manhole until you change into Hyde but, to escape capture, you haven't time to wait for this – must OPEN MANHOLE (need the cane), D. CLOSE MANHOLE. MEMSAVE before going down into the sewers.

The locations here are random but at each you are given exits and usually directions from which sounds of splashing come. These must be avoided and also avoid going up until you have passed at one possible exit up (apart from the first one). Going up after this should allow you to escape and return home, change into Jekyll in the driver's cab of a steam locomotive.

Basically what you have here is a steam pressure gauge, a brake, steam release valve, and throttle (steam) control. The idea is to start the locomotive and gain sufficient speed to jump over an incomplete bridge! Too much steam pressure blows it up and the release valve must be closed to set the engine moving.

MEMSAVE again before starting. This is how I did it.

EXAMINE GAUGE (pressure 000), EXAMINE BRAKE (full on), BRAKE OFF, CLOSE VALVE (pressure 500), WAIT (pressure 1000), OPEN STEAM (the pistons move), CLOSE STEAM (pressure 1600), OPEN VALVE (pressure 000), CLOSE VALVE (pressure 500), WAIT (pressure 1000), OPEN STEAM (pressure 1100 - gathering speed), CLOSE STEAM (pressure 1600), OPEN VALVE (pressure 000), CLOSE VALVE (pressure 500), WAIT (pressure 1000 - you pass warning sign about the bridge), CLOSE STEAM (pressure 1600), OPEN VALVE (pressure 000), CLOSE VALVE (pressure 500), WAIT (pressure 1000), WAIT (pressure 1200), WAIT (pressure 1300), WAIT (pressure 1400 - gaping chasm ahead), WAIT (pressure 1500), WAIT (pressure 1600 - chasm only second away), WAIT (pressure 1700). The train arcs over the gap and lands on the other side.

You awake, leave the cab and enter St. Thomas' Church. The priest, Walpole, is here. INVENTORY - flask of pale green liquid. SAY HELLO. CONFESS. You tell him the whole story. He can't help you. You kneel and pray. DRINK LIQUID. It does not work, and Jekyll is rid of Hyde.

Notes:

The use of the password FORTUNATE means the flat at Stoker Passage cannot be entered and the bloody cane left there. You cannot return with it, and dropping it anywhere else means you won't take it when you go to the police station. Without it, you can't open the manhole and so can't avoid capture.

The game is in real-time in the sewers, and you haven't much time to choose your exit.

Much less pressure than the 1700 in the solution above and the train doesn't make it across the gap!

(Next month - Jack the Ripper)

SERIALIZED SOLUTION

GOBLINS 2 played by Jenny Perry on a PC

The goblins find themselves in a strange kitchen with a green cook and a swordfish on the wall. Flick the swordfish to knock down some salt. Fingus lifts the lid and Winkle uses the salt on the fellow in there who is having a bath. You will now find a file in the pots. Fingus holds the rope on the right whilst Winkle pulls the left hand rope. Use the file on the chain to free the bird and grab the thumb tacks. Naughty Winkle salts the meatballs. When the man grabs the cook, he then uses the tacks on the case. Fingus puts some kindelixer on the meatball when it is thrown in the air. You may have to try this a large number of times.

Go next door to the throne room. Winkle uses his stool on the cornice and Fingus jumps on his hands. Winkle picks up the pepper. Fingus presses the switch and Winkle pops through the door to join him. Fingus pulls the tongue and Winkle enters the right ear. If you time this nicely, Winkle will steal the crown.

Reverse the goblins and repeat. This produces a cockroach. Fingus dashes down and uses the glove in the hole whilst Winkle puts his head in the orifice (don't ask !!) and Fingus ends up with the cockroach. Pop it back in the hole with a dollop of kindelbir. Get another cockroach.

Go to the armour location. Pop the crown on the helmet. Get the feather and use it in the can. Place the cockroach by the hole. coat him with kindelbir, paint and pepper. Now he resembles a ladybird and we all know who eat those. Go back to the throne room and get the buffoon, who will follow you around. The goblins stand underneath the machine in the armour room and the buffoon switches it on. You are transported to the next level.

The goblins pick up the knife together twice. Winkle pokes the eye out with his match and the buffoon kicks it to break the specs and give you a sliver of glass. The buffoon looks through the keyhole and a cockroach appears. Winkle goes through the hole while Fingus pulls the bookmark. You now have a wick for your candle. Light it with the glass and the ray. Use the wax in the seal and the imprint on the keyhole. There's a seed in the box, which you use on the village on the map to grow a beanstalk to climb down....

Here you encounter Kael the friendly tree. Winkle chats to him then enters hole to dislodge a bean. Winkle opens the stone and uses the bean on the mole whilst Fingus quickly snatches her cap. Winkle hits the apple with his match and Fingus catches it in his cap. Winkle uses it in the hole to tempt the buffoon down. All 3 eat mushrooms to be transported to a groovy spaced - out location.

Fingus plays with the skittles and Winkle jumps on the star, catches the ball and takes it. Winkle uses the ball on the lid and stands next to it while Fingus jumps on the flagstone. This dislodges the safety pin. Get another ball. Fingus stands on the seesaw, Winkle pops the ball on the lid then jumps on the flag. Fingus lands on the rainbow and can get to the upper level. Fingus presses the switch and rides the bubble. As soon as it lands on the lid Winkle jumps on the flag and propels the bubble to the safety pin, which Fingus can now get. Fingus goes back to the upper level. While Winkle stands on the unmarked flag, Fingus jumps on the upper flag, bouncing Winkle up to join him.

This next bit needs practice. One goblin presses the switch and the other feels the feeler. If this is done correctly, the buffoon will come out in a bubble. Pop it with the safety pin to return to Kael.

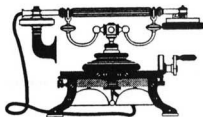
This bit took me forever. The buffoon stands on the catapult, one goblin presses the switch and the other works the catapult. Eventually a bird grabs the buffoon and flies away with him. You can now visit the next location.

There is an incredibly patient lion here who won't eat you no matter how many stones you throw at him. One goblin picks up the stone while the other one stands above him and takes it. Repeat to get the stone to the highest level. Now one goblin stands on the lion's head and the other throws the stone. Go through the hole to dislodge the head. Repeat the action with the stones but this time throw the stone from the middle level. Winkle stands on the lion's head. Now Winkle is by the head. Fingus stands on the poor old lion and Winkle throws the head. Yippee! Fingus is on the floating rock marked !!! This is really tricky. Click on Fingus and the !!! He jumps 3 times and lowers the rock. If you're really lucky Winkle can jump on and join him. Now Winkle holds the small rock by the cage to make a bridge. Fingus crosses it quickly and uses his file on the birdcage. Now he can get the key. Fingus and the buffoon are free to jump down and go back to Kael, where Fingus unlocks the gate to the Wizard's cottage. (final part next month)

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- Adventure Probe** - 52 Burford Road, Liverpool L16 6AQ
- Adventure Coder** - 17 Hill Foot, Shipley, West Yorkshire. BD18 4EP
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