

ADVENTURE PROBE

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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

ADVENTURE PROBE

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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.

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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:-

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

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HALL OF FAME

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

Dorothy Millard, Edwina Brown, Barbara Bassingthwaighte, Mary Scott-Parker,
John Schofield, Sue Roseblade, Karen Tyers, David Hebblethwaite,
Dot Vaughan, Harold Dixon, Phil Reynolds, Laurence Creighton,
Steve Clay, Kenneth Pedersen, Phill Ramsay, Ellen Mahon,
Jon Scott, Martin Bela, Wynne Snowdon, Ron Guest
and Peter Clark.

Special thanks to :

Kenneth Pedersen for software, Wendy Down for the cover picture
and Geoff Lynas for his usual excellent printing job.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the November issue of Probe.

I understand The Adventurers' Convention was a small but extremely enjoyable gathering, and a good time was had by all. I've received a number of reports and managed to cram them all into this issue. If anyone else who would like to write their account of the proceedings, please send it in – I will be very happy to publish it in the December issue.

I won't mention anything in particular about the goings-on at the Convention itself, the reports tell (some of) of the true story. What I must do is send my own and the readers congratulations to the award winners – you all deserve them. Also a huge thank you to everyone who voted for me. I'm only doing my "job" but it is nice to receive one more certificate to cover up another bit of wall in my "office".

Peter Clark has reminded me that the biggest round of applause should go to Vicky Jackson and Larry Horsfield for all their hard work in organizing the event. It must have been more of a headache than ever this year, especially when it became apparent that the ticket sales would be much lower than previous years.

I've just received a couple of discs from Zenobi with Spectrum games under emulation for the Apple Mac computer. My records don't show anyone with one of these computers, but of course, if *you* do and would like to look at the discs, please let me know and I will gladly forward them to you for your comments.

Amazingly, I have run out of things to say. Not like me, but true. Oh, I've just received from Special Reserve a copy of "Flight of the Amazon Queen" for the Amiga (the box states "for all Amigas with 870K of FREE memory"), which I ordered months ago and had almost given up hope of ever playing.

The box was full of discs, and two books. The thinner book is the instruction manual, the other is much thicker and turned out to be a few pages of hints followed by a *full solution*. At least they warn you when you get to that part. Needless to say this book was promptly given to a member of my family to hide, and I wouldn't dare to go looking for it in her bedroom – she's cultivating much better mould cultures than Dave Lister!

So far, so good. I then counted the discs – 10 (ten), then I read the label on the disc on top of the pile, it said 10 of 11. A careful check revealed that I didn't have disc 6. A 'phone call to Special Reserve, and a longish conversation with a patient gentleman elicited the promise of disc No.6. I'm still waiting three days later, but then, that is usual for Special Reserve.

I've no time to play it at the moment anyway as I want to get started on the December issue so that most of you stand a chance of receiving your copy before Christmas.

'til next month

Happy adventuring,

Barbara A.F.I.O. Hon. Member

LETTERS

From Laurence Creighton of Cape Town

An open letter to Joan Williams

I have read all your *little forays* (as you put it) of my adventures. I am overwhelmed and deeply moved by your kind words and generous praise of my games. Thank you. That seems such a hopelessly inadequate phrase but it comes from the bottom of my heart. To receive such acclamation only serves to prod me on to give to you good people more of the same.

You know, I think it is important in life to achieve *SOMETHING*. I have achieved, I hesitate to use the term fame (!), perhaps notoriety in our little circle but more important: I have given you people pleasure and that in itself is a great reward. Maybe I won't get knighted and maybe I won't make the hallowed pages of National Geographical, but I have got a lot out of the adventuring scene and I am giving back. The books are balanced, but having said that do not for a moment think I have stopped writing! BEYOND EL DORADO should hit the streets any day now, and that one is for advanced players – something for them to get their teeth (sic) into.

Reading the reviews was quite stimulating for me, as many of the storylines and certainly the puzzles I'd forgotten. If truth be told, if I had to play some of the "older" ones today I too would have to contact John Wilson for some help!

Joan, placing me on the same level as Jack Lockerby, Steve Clay and Martin Freemantle is the highest honour you could bestow upon me, as they are the greats. I am proud to be counted with the likes of them.

For a while ye olde Speccie is going to be out of action as I'm moving home. I have bought a bigger, brighter and sunnier flat but the thought of actually moving gives me an anxiety attack which is off the Richter scale. Barbara will be printing my new address in the "Useful Addresses" column. (If anyone thinks my address is useful)

Watch out for more of the same early in the new year. Once again thanks for the kind words and the glowing reviews.

*

"Beyond El Dorado" will be on general release by the time you read this, and I warn readers, it *is* difficult; you can find lots of objects if you know where to look, but using them is a different matter, I'm not getting anywhere very fast. It will be reviewed in Probe very soon.

Laurence's new address is printed on the inside back cover, but don't worry if you have sent something to his old addresses, it will be forwarded to him if he has already moved. (Barbara)



From Ron Guest from Gunthorpe

I am sorry Steve Clay has discontinued the Amiga Column, although I agree and sympathize with his reasons.

From experience, even allowing for different tastes, I find reviews in the glossy magazines are very often more influenced by the advertising revenue than the merits of the game. We have already had a few Amiga P.D. arcade games reviewed, why not extend this to cover some of the commercial arcade games readers have played and can recommend? I do not mean the frenetic joystick-wagging or boring beat-em-ups and zap-ems, but there are many interesting puzzle-type games and some of the less frenzied arcade-adventures with a high puzzle element to keep the old brain cells ticking over. I find these types of games act as a bit of light relief in between the serious business of text-adventuring.

P.S. I have attached a short review of KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN-HOUSE in case you think readers might think this a good idea.

★

I think it a shame that the commercial software houses are so narrow-minded in their attitude towards anyone with a computer less powerful than a 486 PC, but history tells me that that is how they will always act. They are in it for the money and I suppose they know who is likely to buy their games.

I can't supply review copies of *commercial* games, but I don't mind printing reviews of arcade adventures and puzzle games, if the readers send them in. I will always give priority to the true adventure, RPG, strategy and simulation, but variety is the spice of life and I'm sure I can find an odd corner in the review section, (and the help section if I get anything to publish - I've already published a few tips for a Dizzy game). I also have a large collection of Amiga P.D. arcade games if anyone would like to offer to review a few for Probe.

Ron's review of "Krusty's Super Fun-House" will be in this issue, if not, certainly in December's. (Barbara)

From Martin Bela of Alvaston

First of all, I'd like to say thank you to John Wilson of Zenobi for his help with ZOMBI, which I've now finished. Cheers John.

Thanks to Barbara as well, for the Valhalla tips.

By the way Barbara, could you print the correct title (if you have it, that is) for a game which I've noticed is spelt two ways (on the last word) in your solutions list and in the reviews section. The game in question is : The Gauntlet of Meldir, or : The Gauntlet of Melior. Which is correct? I noticed this one whilst looking for titles for another Probe crossword.

For anyone who wants a little help with the crosswords, all of the adventure titles are taken from Probe's REVIEWS, OBJECTS & THEIR USES, GETTING YOU STARTED, HINTS & TIPS, SOLUTION OF THE MONTH, SERIALIZED SOLUTION, and the SOLUTION SERVICE. In other words, the parts that everyone will have seen, but NOT from the adverts. as not everyone will read all of them (so you can't use the "I've never heard of that game" excuse!).

★

Glad someone could help. In case anyone else is playing Zombi, I have a copy of the help John sent to Martin.

I checked the Probe database and couldn't find *any* reference to The Gauntlet of Meldir (or Melior). The solution on file has the top half of the title missing, but the list I published a few years ago spells it MELDIR, and when I loaded in my own copy of the game, it is also spelt MELDIR. I would say it is The Gauntlet of Meldir, unless, of course, anyone knows differently.

Martin's crossword should be enclosed with this issue, and he has sent me another which I will publish soon. (Barbara)

From Phill Ramsay of Blackley

It was with a great deal of surprise that I heard that my game "THE ASSASSINS' GUILD" had won the award for the best adventure 1995. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who voted for me and my game.

The award means a lot to me.

Incidentally, there have been one or two enquiries about my games, so I'd like to put everyone in the picture, if I may.

The Spectrum version of "The Assassins' Guild" is virtually finished, and should be available from The Adventure Workshop in the very near future. (Thanks to Phil Reynolds for all his hard work on the conversion.)

As regards my earlier games, I plan to convert them myself, pain and illness permitting. "The Eunuch's Ball" has already been converted to Spectrum format, and is merely awaiting a final test prior to being released by The Adventure Workshop.

"City of Shadows", "The Sphere of Q'Li", and "Hades", I hope to manage to get around to converting as and when I am able.

I am currently working on the sequel to "The Assassins' Guild", and hope to have it completed some time in the next few months.

Thanks once again to everyone who voted for me.

*

Congratulations, the award is well deserved. A full list of the awards is given elsewhere in this issue. I'm very pleased to hear that the Spectrum conversions on their way and I've already put my name down for a copy of "The Assassins' Guild". (Barbara)

VIRTUAL REALITY by STEVE CLAY

What if the world we "live" in is actually a virtual game world?

What if our real world is the darkness of our dreams?

What if waking up is actually "logging on"?

What if death is just a lack of credits?

What if you say "I would know if I was living in a game world" and I said "Prove it!"?

REVIEWS

THE EMERALD ELF

Written by George E Hoyle

Reviewed by Steve Clay on an Amiga 600 under Spectrum emulation

The problem with trying to write an adventure based on a funny TV series such as Red Dwarf, apart from the problem of avoiding a lawsuit that is, is pleasing not only fans of the show but also allowing those with no knowledge of the programme to enjoy the game. EMERALD ELF was written by George E. Hoyle, who is a fan of the show and has created this adventure as a tribute. The accompanying storyline sheet makes it quite clear that it is not intended to be a spoof of Red Dwarf. The author has taken several events from the first series of the show and built a game around these. No surprise that the characters have undergone name changes to avoid legal problems although the direct lifting of dialogue from the show would seem to negate this. The cast now has Dave Loster, Arnold Rommer, The Mouse, Wally the computer and Triton the mechanoid!

You play the part of Loster and begin the game in a stasis booth where you have been held in suspended animation for three million years. I am assuming that the reasons for your stay in stasis are the same as in the TV programme, namely that a radiation leak has wiped out the crew and only now is it safe for you to leave. You are free to wander around most of the ship with the various levels being reached via use of a lift. Some levels are still closed to you as the radiation levels are still too high. Early puzzles include finding a pass card and a key. You will also need a trio of items to fix the food dispenser before Mouse will hand over a useful object that will allow you to fly The Elf. Alas before you can do this something/somebody will carry out an attack on the power room console which will then require fixing. So it continues, as one set of puzzles are overcome, a new situation arises.

The game has a graphic for each location. These take up approximately half of the screen and this forces the More... prompt to appear quite frequently when there are a number of objects in one room. The graphics are not very good and I feel they actually detract from the game. Worse than the poor quality of the pictures is the apparent failure of the author to provide an option to turn the things off. I say apparent because I could find no command that worked and there is no mention of how to switch them off in the documentation. Each location uses the same background graphic with the various features added. This game would have been much better as text only as it is easier to portray humorous events in words rather than pictures. That said the text in the game is not too hot. Locations follow the pattern of; where you are, what the room holds and the available exits. Any other objects or characters present are listed below this. Descriptions such as "You are in the drive room. You can see a computer console and a screen. There is an exit port." offer little atmosphere in a game that cries out for it. No attempt has been made to beef the setting up and the blandness of both the text and graphics is very disappointing.

There is a need to search everything including the rooms. Indeed if you don't you won't be going far in this game. The game restricts you to carrying four objects and this becomes a serious pain as the game progresses. The solution I found was to put all your objects into the lift as this location connects the various levels. The game would appear to be aimed at beginners with some knowledge of the early Red Dwarf episodes.

For me the points rattled up very quickly and after just two visits to the game my score was 115 points. I also have points to come when I use a computer disk. It would be beneficial to know what the maximum score is so that you could gauge just how well you are doing.

The character interaction has been handled well although most of the talk is based on finding out where the other characters are in the ship. (A note for Amiga players the quote symbol is obtained by pressing ALT 'P') As a big Red Dwarf fan I thought it would be difficult to create a game based on something as funny and popular with any degree of success, Emerald Elf fails to do that.

There is a need in a game like this for the author to bring his own humour to the 'new' characters. Unfortunately George has decided that taking the funny lines from the show is easier. This gives the impression that he wasn't really trying which is not how it should be at all. It is probable that the Elf would have been a much better game had George opted to create his own storylines and used the richness of the series to back it up. Overall the game is hugely disappointing in all aspects.

Available from Zenobi Software. Price : Spectrum £2.99 (tape and 3.5" +D disc), £3.49 (3" +3 disc), Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e) £2.99

K240

Programming & graphics by George Ing and Pete Daniels

Reviewed by Larry Horsfield on an Amiga A1200

K240 is a bit like "The Settlers" except for the fact that the action takes place on asteroids in deep space rather than on Terra Firma. The workers and knights are replaced by various types of spacecraft ranging from simple scoutships to fleet battleships, and the wood and stone buildings by brightly coloured futurist buildings with names like Environmental Control and Hydration Plant. Like "The Settlers", you have to mine ores, but in K240 they are much more important as you make money from selling ores to the Empire. Expansion is by finding and colonizing other asteroids and the enemy consists of alien races of varying ferocity who colonize other asteroids and attack you with missiles and fleets of spacecraft. The aim is to gain control of the majority of asteroids and destroy all enemy colonies.

The game starts when the transporter ship supplied by Tetracorp places a CPU - Colony Preservation Unit - on the asteroid. Depending on which level you start at, you are given one or more buildings and/or items of equipment, which are normally only available from Sci-Tek (more on that later), to add to the multitude of buildings at your disposal. If you start on level 1 it is a gravity nullifier, which is vital as new asteroids are found around you. If you don't remember to activate it, any nearby asteroids may collide with yours. It is extremely annoying after spending loads of cash and time building up a colony only to find that you forgot to activate the gravity nullifier and another asteroid has collided with it, completely destroying it!

At the lowest level you start with 400,000 credits - 200,000 in higher ones - and this has to be apportioned between 5 different budgets: Money (for buying blueprints from Sci-Tek), Construction, Vehicles, Intelligence and Missiles. You are advised to spend about half on constructing new buildings, including a command centre, power generators, residential blocks, air, water and food plants, mines, storage and a ship construction yard. You should not build too many "resiblocks" (each holds 150 men) as you will need medical and security centres which cater for a certain number of residents each.

When you site buildings or equipment, scaffolding will appear first as each takes a certain number of days to build. I always site my power plants first as these will be needed to power all buildings and equipment. It is better to have too many than too few, as power shortages can result in the destruction of your colony. The same applies if you have too few hydration (water), hydroponics (food) or life support (air), medical or security buildings. The latter are necessary to keep the rowdy mine workers well-behaved.

There are initially two types of mine, a basic one for drilling for the 4 commoner ores, and a deep bore mine for the 4 more valuable ores. There are two very valuable ores, traxium and nexos, which require a seismic penetrator, the blueprint for which you have to buy from Sci-Tek. The mines will require storage towers in which to store the mined ores.

As mentioned, certain equipment, spacecraft, weapons and missiles are only available from Sci-Tek. You "call" Sci-Tek up from the Information Button Panel and order blueprints, which are delivered on the next Imperial Ore Transporter to arrive at your colony. These blueprints can cost quite a lot of credits, e.g. 150,000Cr for the fleet battleship, and you still have to pay to actually construct one, another 60,000Cr plus the cost of arming the ship, anything from 1000Cr for a laser to 12,000Cr for a Chaos Bomb! Added to all this is the cost of an orbital space dock, without which you cannot build any of the large ships - 200,000Cr.

The spacecraft and missiles require various types and quantities of ore, so you cannot sell all of what you mine to Tetracorp. Some of the blueprints are of actual buildable equipment, while others improve existing and future buildings or equipment, for example the power amplifier automatically doubles the power output of all solar panels, generators and matrixs. If you sell too few ores to Tetracorp, they may pay you a bribe to produce more!

You may get sent reinforcements in the form of various kinds of spaceships from time to time, but it is best to build a few scoutships for surveying space and prospecting newly-found asteroids. If you find one that contains traxium and/or nexos ore you should colonise it as soon as possible, as these ores are very valuable and even a small quantity can earn you a small fortune.

Controlling the game is done mostly by mouse and there are quite a lot of icons to learn the use of. A very useful quick-reference chart showing all the icons is provided, and there are various keyboard shortcuts as well. The main cursor has two modes, a hand for most functions including buildings, and an arrow for ship selection mode. I found that selecting one of the smaller ships can be quite tricky, as on my A1200 the game runs quite fast and the smaller ships zip about making impossible 90° turns. You can form your ships into up to 8 fleets which can be dispatched to intercept attacking fleets, attack alien asteroids or guard one of your own asteroids.

You can build missile silos on your asteroid, each holding either a total of 110 missiles (10 of each of the 11 types) or 220 if you have the missile silo extension blueprint. These can be launched against alien asteroids and destruction of an alien colony gives you a cash bonus. You can also build satellite silos where you can construct and subsequently launch spy satellites. These you put into orbit around enemy asteroids. Spying on alien colonies costs money and you will have to fund your intelligence budget to do so.

Apart from attack from aliens, other hazards include meteor showers and comets - the latter can completely destroy an asteroid. You can see a comet on the asteroid field screen and if any of your asteroids in its path are fitted with asteroid engines, you can actually move them out of its way. The alternative is to launch missiles at it. A comet can, however, be extremely useful if an alien colony lies in its path!

If you play a game against the strongest of the alien races, the Swixarans, you are in for one hell of a fight. I am in the middle of such a campaign and have lost two fleets of ships so far. It is an idea, as with "The Settlers", to save your position before launching any attack on the enemy. If you get blasted to bits you can always load back the saved position and try different tactics.

All in all, I find K240 to be a great game to play – no two missions are the same and the graphics are very watchable and the sound FX good.

Available from most software outlets, cheapest price £9.99 from Special Reserve and Software First.

EXORCISM

Written by David Lacey, programmed by Adam Balcomb

Reviewed by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga

This is a text or text/graphic adventure, depending on whether you play using disc one or disc two. It is set in a huge old house that oozes mustiness and mystery. I think it is/was owned by a Dr. Roberts, but it seems that a Dr. Stevens, who had a great interest in demonology, had a secret laboratory in the house, and it is his activities that have attracted your attention. There isn't an introduction to the game, or at least none that I could find, but when you obtain the diary you begin to understand what is required.

It starts with you locked inside the house, with your exorcism equipment in your car outside, so you must find a way of getting to them, then you can concentrate on the task of summoning and exorcising the demon Belial.

The locations are as you would expect, and the graphics looked to me as if they are digitized photographs. I'm sure a great deal of trouble has been taken to find suitable pictures, but I found them such poor quality that I played the game as text-only. The inputs are standard (there is always an exception – LOOKU) i.e. abbreviated compass directions, and either two or three words depending on how specific you have to be. I only had trouble with one input and that was because the plural noun was needed when I thought a singular was called for.

There are 37 locations, of which 24 are important in the puzzle sense. The location text is good, but varied considerably in length. David does not waste words. I thought the puzzles were very good, and was a little disappointed to read in HELP3 the hint that some puzzles have been lifted from Infocom games. Still, they all suited the storyline, so who cares!?

The game is shareware, and if you are honest, like me, and play the game for any length of time, or complete it and enjoy it, you should register for the very low fee of £2. When I did, David sent me a letter which confirmed my suspicions about the graphics. Apparently some of the PD companies wouldn't distribute it "because there were no pictures"! Is it attitudes like this that have discouraged some writers from offering their masterpieces? The good news is that a second game, based on Jack the Ripper, is near completion.

Despite some bugs, which are acknowledged by David and Adam and are due to a lack of experience with the program (CAG – Create Adventure Games), and some typing errors which should have been picked up during playtesting, I think this game shows what can be done on the Amiga.

Let's hope others are encouraged by their example.

KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN-HOUSE (arcade/platform)

Reviewed by Ron Guest on an Amiga

This is a platform-type adventure where you control Krusty the clown who is a large well-detailed sprite whose errand is to clear the Fun-House of mice.

Krusty can jump and build blocks, move barrels and utilize glass mousetraps to steer the mice, lemming-like, towards a fiendish death.

The game has four code-accessed levels, each comprising several rooms infested with appealing little pink mice which you have to guide into a mouse-destruction machine. There are some monsters to get rid of, but these are few and most are fairly easy to eliminate or avoid.

The main part of the gameplay is problem solving. Each room and problem is different and gets progressively harder as you progress, but never too hard.

The graphics are a pleasure to watch and the gameplay is more a matter of using the old brain cells than joystick-wagging. All in all, a great little game to play as light relief between the serious business of text-adventuring.

MARATHON (P.D. arcade)

Reviewed by Barbara Bassingthwaighte on an Amiga A1200

This is definitely a two player game as the computer-controlled man walks into a wall and stays there.

The idea of the game is to roam around the streets and collect twinkling stars which appear at random. These stars can be used as extra lives, you also have to collect them to finish the game. You need 4 stars to make an exit appear in a random place; walk over it and that's it - end of game.

Your play area is a small section of streets, the screen is split so you can see where your enemy is. You can replenish your life force by standing on the word FOOD outside a building over the river.

You don't always have to walk around as you can fly a plane or drive a car; but you cannot get the stars whilst in on board, you have to get out first. You have to keep refuelling them the same way you get food.

As I said above, you patrol the area looking for the stars but beware as you can be shot by your enemy (don't worry, you can shoot him too). It takes a little time to reincarnate your enemy, so it gives you a little free time to roam around.

This is a one level game. I found it a bit slow.

My copy was supplied by Zenobi Software. Price £1.49 (one disc).

[I couldn't get this game to run on my A600 - Barbara]



PERSONAL COMPUTER WHIRLED

Written by Gareth Pitchford

Reviewed by Phill Ramsay on an Amstrad CPC

PERSONAL COMPUTER WHIRLED is another excursion into the Microfair Madness which other adventurers might have experienced if they have played that particular game.

Once more, you intend to attend the microfair – this time with the express intention of delivering your new game to DTHS. Although it was Friday the 13th, there wouldn't be any journeys into space, no encounters with demented time-lords, but an ordinary kind of day.

Unfortunately, from out of nowhere (for, after all, that is the realm in which they exist most naturally, if you stop and think about it) came a Grue. It punched you, pinched your game, and ran off into the building. And you have to catch it to get your game back.

The introduction held out promises of lots of laughs and plenty of humour within the game. Now, sometimes I think that adventures take themselves too seriously, so a game which slaps on the humour is a very welcome diversion from many games which I play. More about that later.

There are lots of quirky problems to be solved – and by that, I don't mean to imply that they have obscure solutions, or cannot be solved with a little thought; no, I use the word quirky because of the context in which they are rendered, which is, I found, quite a surreal one.

Throughout the course of the game, you will meet several characters who bear a striking similarity (no doubt absolutely accidentally) to certain (in)famous figures in the adventuring world. Mangy Rodrigues, for example, is in charge of a demented photocopying machine which is out of control. And Gareth Pitchfork is a rabid Jean Michel Jarre fan. Say no more.

In the course of playing through the game, you will have to contend with a monster defending a bridge, which won't move, no matter what you do to it, and a Black Knight (wonder where he came from?) who isn't much better (and I must confess that I enjoyed the solution to this problem).

Other problems to be solved are how to avoid being arrested by a Star-Fleet officer, how to take part in a virtual reality game, and how to avoid being blown to pieces by a letter-bomb.

The game has been converted to Amstrad format using the Amstrad PAW, which of course, means that it runs under CPM and is disc only. As for difficulty level, I'd put it somewhere between novice and intermediate level.

And at this point, I would commend the game for its humour and attempts at levity and light-heartedness. Unfortunately, as I hinted earlier in the review, I find that I cannot do so. After reading the introduction, and having the prospect of an amusing game held out before me, I was more than disappointed with the content of the game.

We have all played games which have grammatical errors and had a chuckle at them. Unfortunately, "Personal Computer Whirled" is littered with sloppy grammar, one of my pet hates. After half an hours playing the game, I found it was not so much a case of "Spot the response which has a grammatical error", but more a case of "Spot the response which *does not* contain a grammatical error". It really was appalling, and completely ruined the author's efforts in all the other departments. I found no spelling errors, and only one very minor bug, so the grammatical errors seem even more of a shame.

However, the good news is that a list of all the errors has been supplied to The Adventure Workshop, so hopefully subsequent copies of the game will be corrected.

And with the grammar corrected, I would recommend the game as worth playing.

Amstrad version available from The Adventure Workshop. Price: £4 (disc only) – including "Man About The House" also by Gareth Pitchford.

Spectrum version available from Zenobi Software. Price: £2.99 (tape and 3.5" +D disc) £3.49 (+3 disc).

Atari(e), Amiga(e) & PC(e) versions available from Zenobi Software £2.99.

SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT

Written by Dorothy Millard

Reviewed by Wynne Snowdon on a C64

The eccentric owner of a large mansion died recently. After the reading of the will, the new owners of the mansion decide to look around their recently acquired property. At the entrance they hear strange noises. Inside the mansion various other sounds assail their ears including piano music from an instrument no one is playing. Their nerves already stretched taut, it takes only the chimes of the grandfather clock to send them rushing out of the mansion vowing never to return.

Later, while enjoying a brew at the local pub, you meet one of the new owners and, naturally, your conversation touches on the subject of his frightening experiences. I don't know whether you are an intrepid adventurer or just plain drunk but you accept a dare to spend the night in the mansion.

You learn from some of the older locals that the mansion has many hidden passages and other secrets for you to discover. Armed with this information, and your trusty camera, you arrive at the door ready for your latest adventure. You have eight hours to discover and photograph five items of evidence and survive the Shadows of the Night.

Nothing to be found outside the mansion, you summon all your courage and enter through the front door. The door slams behind you cutting off your way of escape. Oh well, there must be another way out – but can you find it in time! Inside the foyer you pick up an umbrella – I suppose lots of people carry umbrella indoors in case it rains! Looking around, you note that there is a choice of three exits leading to various parts of the building. You set off hoping you've chosen wisely, and your nightmare begins.

As you make your way around the house you hear strange, ghostly sounds. Time slips away while you search for the many items needed to find the evidence and escape from the mansion. You must find the secret passages and discover some way to pass through a force field. A robot blocks your way in one room – yet another headache.

As you walk, crawl and climb you no doubt wish you'd kept up the keep fit classes. You visit a secret garden, the music room with the self-playing piano, a chapel, summerhouse and aviary during your search – and many more rooms besides. You even go for a swim to find something you need – boy, this place has everything. Persistence pays off and you eventually find all the evidence needed to prove the house isn't really haunted. Now, where is the way out?

Yet another gem from the imagination of Dorothy Millard. the theme is reminiscent of some other adventures but the problems and solutions were generally new to me. Some, of course, will be familiar but there are only so many ways of doing things.

The program is packed with things to do. The eight hour time limit seems generous but, with so much going on, time passes quickly. There is a carry limit which again seems fairly generous but there are so many things to find you need to drop some to use later. This is often a problem for me because I tend to drop things as far away from where they are needed as is possible – and then forget where they are.

The sound effects of music playing, creaking doors, ghostly footsteps etc. are good for this type of program and, if you turn up the sound, may even make you jump. The location descriptions are good and some should be read more than once because they change as the adventure unravels in other parts of the mansion.

As always, I recommend saving regularly to disc or tape. Ramsave/Ramload is not available but saving and loading is fast so there's no real problem.

The program is written in BASIC and, with a few exceptions, it recognizes only the full word so there's a lot more keyboard work to be done. Thankfully, the most common words, such as the compass directions and examine, can be abbreviated.

I enjoyed playing "Shadows of the Night" and hope that many more will do so. As usual with Dorothy Millard you can move around quite a lot before coming up against the proverbial brick wall. For this reason, I think it's a suitable program for beginners to try but would also recommend it to the more seasoned adventurers who may find it more difficult than it appears at first sight.

Available from The Adventure Workshop. Price : £2 (disc or tape).

THE SNOW QUEEN

Written by St Bride's

Reviewed by Edwina Brown on a Spectrum

THE SNOW QUEEN is a Quilled graphic adventure from St. Bride's. It is their adaption of the Hans Christian Anderson fairy-tale, and if you have read the story you will be off with a head start.

The heroine is Gerda whose best friend Kay has been spirited away by the wicked Snow Queen. Her quest is to rescue him and of course bring him safely home.

The game starts in the parlour of her house. She is a young girl of great integrity as if, when in her grandmother's bedroom, you type OPEN WARDROBE she says "Oh no, that wouldn't be right". She also refuses to leave the house until she feels she has done all she should.

Her journey is long and she must overcome many dangers and strange magic along the way. The puzzles are very good and some locations quite lengthy.

I liked the game very much although I did not manage to complete it without help.

Available from Zenobi Software. Price : Spectrum £2.49 (tape and 3.5" +D disc), £3.49 (+3 disc), Atari(e), Amiga(e) & PC(e) £2.99.

OH NO! IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN by PETER CLARK

After a long and tedious drive in drizzle and traffic the car finally headed off the Aston Freeway, across the flyover and dropped down to the front of the Royal Angus Thistle Hotel. I swung the wheel over and turned into the NCP car-park only to find that a large brewer's lorry was parked across the entrance. I came to realize later that weekend that the contents of the lorry were more valuable than those of the security van used to collect the car-park takings. (I mean, £1.95 for a pint of bitter!) I switched off the engine and went to see if I could find the driver. A peaked cap with a grinning face under it appeared round the corner of an adjacent office. I requested, most politely, if the whereabouts of the lorry driver were known as I wished to enter the car-park without further delay. "I expect he's gone to get his chitty signed", said the peaked cap. Knowing when I was beaten, I returned to my car and sat..... Some five minutes later the driver returned. I thought it best not to enquire about the state of his chitty but patiently waited until the lorry left the entranceway before making my way into the car-park. The sign said, "PARKING FOR HOTEL RESIDENTS ON ROOF". Last year I dutifully ascended to the roof and parked my car then struggled down three floors of narrow stairs and even narrower inoperative lifts with an assortment of suitcases, monitors, keyboards, etc. This year I pretended not to see the sign and parked on Level 3 next to the walkway into the hotel.

Removing my suitcase from the car boot. I crossed the walkway to the hotel. My finger caressed the button of the hotel intercom and a small voice enquired as to my identification. This was given and the same small voice said, "JUST PUSH THE DOOR DEAR." I had deliberately not mentioned the fact that I was attending the Adventurers' Convention in case they remembered last year. I thought it would be best to gain access to the building before revealing that fact.

Taking the lift to the Ground Floor, I approached the reception desk with an element of confidence. After all, I was the one paying the bill and I had not recognized any of the staff from last year. One girl did look a little apprehensive though and quickly took the lift, I wondered if she had gone to warn her friends that it was "THAT" time again! I explained that I had a reservation and the receptionist immediately produced the correct forms with my name and the right dates entered on it. This encouraged me to think that things would now go like clockwork. It was not to be! "I'll just check to see if your room is ready", she said, and picked up a telephone. There was no answer so she tried again. Still no answer so another number was tried. "Oh drat", she said, "It's engaged." A small, nervous-looking porter walked through the reception area and was soon pounced upon by the receptionist. I did not hear the conversation but it seemed that he was being grilled about the whereabouts of the lady or ladies who were responsible for cleaning rooms. Needless to say he knew nothing! Another series of telephone calls were made and, after several more minutes, she smiled. This seemed like an encouraging sign. "It's OK, your room is ready" she said, handing me the key which was attached to about a pound and a half of plastic. (Sorry I don't know the metric equivalent.) I entered the lift, pressed the No.6 button and headed up to my room.

The next task was to drop my suitcase, retrace my steps to the car and bring in the rest of the computer gear. This done, I put on the kettle, made a cup of tea and collapsed gratefully onto my bed.

The time was now approaching 3.00pm and refreshed I decided to take the lift again to see if there were any other adventurers in the hotel.

I started to walk towards the bedroom door when I heard the ringing tones of a northern accent "It must be along here somewhere!" There could only be one person with an accent like that! I opened the bedroom door and called, "Hello Ellen." The reply came, "Hello Pete!" Struggling along the hotel corridor with a heap of luggage were Ellen Mahon and Wynne Snowdon. I told them that I was about to go down to the lounge, (Birmingham hotels don't have Sitting Rooms). "We'll be with you in a few minutes", they replied. I used the lift to go to the Second Floor and made my way to the Lounge.

Arriving in the Lounge I was immediately aware that it was filled with many people. It seems that one of the larger rooms was occupied by people attending a presentation of an educational kind. The hotel staff had prepared a table laid with cups of tea, cakes and biscuits. I approached the table andTAKE CUP (You cannot do that) ASK MAN WHY NOT ('cos it's not for you) ASK MAN FOR TEA (You'll have to buy it) ASK MAN WHERE (Over there) EXAMINE COUNTER (There is nobody there) TALK TO MAN ABOUT BEING SERVED (I'll see if I can find someone) WAIT (You hang around for a while getting bored) EXAMINE COUNTER (There is a lady there) ASK LADY FOR TEA (I'll see if I can get you some) Lady disappears

After a wait I eventually got a small pot of tea and two biscuits for £1.35 and then waited even longer while the waitress tried to find change of £2.00. As others of our party gradually arrived in the lounge, this process was repeated several times and towards the end the supply of biscuits dried up.

The conversation amongst us took the usual form of comparing how many times and where each of us had got lost on the way. This year there was no mention of Marmite tankers, but it was reliably stated by one of the party that they had seen a rather rare Wine Gum lorry on the A40, an observation that had the rest of us writhing in jealousy. The person who last year had us in stitches with tales of bondage and rubber bands announced that during the year she had progressed to larger and wider bands. Despite repeated requests, the person concerned refused to demonstrate her new found art form. Maybe next year! Most of us had cases to unpack and computers to check so, after a short chat, we departed to our respective rooms having arranged to meet in the early evening and partake of a meal somewhere in the town.

Later in the day I arrived back in the lounge where some of the crowd had already gathered. Reservations had been made at a local Beefeater and taxis ordered so there was just time for a quick drink at the bar before the off. I'm sure that Birmingham taxi drivers are all frustrated formula one racing drivers! The trip from the hotel to the eating house compared favourably with one of the Mega rides on Blackpool Pleasure Beach!

The meal that evening was taken in pleasurable company. Each of us eagerly awaiting the following day's excitement. On our return to the hotel we gathered in the bar for a session of social chat and merriment. Then, as it got later, we headed for our rooms to get our heads down and be fresh and ready for tomorrow..... Convention Day!

Saturday dawned bright and sunny and we soon started gathering in the breakfast room. The cost of lunch in the hotel is beyond belief so it becomes a necessity to have a large breakfast to see one through the day. That is, of course, unless you come prepared as some do, with a picnic basket containing enough sandwiches to see you through the entire weekend. I only had a packet of crisps and one of yesterday's Asda pre-packed sandwiches left which only goes to show that I should have joined the Scouts when I was a child and learned to "Be Prepared".

Luckily the over indulgence of breakfast was soon worked off as many of us made the trip from the second floor to the sixth and back again several times carrying computers, monitors and disk boxes. I had been asked by Joan and Maurice Pancott to represent WoW Software so I had to stick various posters around our corner and get both mine and Ellen's computers up and running. This was completed successfully after only half an hour or so and then, one by one, flickering monitors came to life around the room. Many people had brought software with them for sale and I was reminded of one of our church jumble sales as cardboard boxes changed hands faster than the human eye could follow. This year I actually got a name badge on the day!

It was at this point that a sound that was to resound through the room for the rest of the day started. It seems to emulate from the far corner where a lady from Hampton was hammering wildly at a PC keyboard. "I've got that" "I can't get that" "I've already got that." At least 8 and 16 bit text adventures don't keep talking to you! It was, I suppose, around 10.00am when the Convention proper got under way.

Mega Points was the great challenge of the day and a prison cell the start location of this year's game. The initial object was to escape from the cell and then explore as much as possible in the 30 minutes allotted to you. Whoops of joy came from each contestant as the secret of the brick wall was discovered and the way to freedom found. I thought that I was doing well as I finished up with a huge 26 points until I realized that others were scoring in the 40's.

It seemed only a short while before lunch-time came around but during that time a few more people had arrived. Sadly this year some of the faces that have been part of the Conventions for the six years that it has now been held were not there this time. Whatever happened to The Grue? I mean, what's an adventure without a grue in it? The increasing cost of travel prevented some others from attending this time and I would just like to say to some of those that although you were not there you were in our thoughts. So, Hi Lorna, Danny and all of the Scottish contingent. Of course, we missed Maurice and Joan Pancott who I hope is now out of hospital and on the road to recovery. When I next see Bob Adams in London I will be wanting some answers. Did he stay away deliberately to drop me in it with Vicky? If not, what is your excuse?

Giving some thought to the situation I can only think that the demise of home grown adventure writers could be the death of such gatherings. It seems to me that what has held us adventurers together for so long is the fact that we have created our own games and had a lot of fun pointing out each others mistakes and helping new authors to learn their trade. I know that without such people as Jack Lockerby, Joan Pancott and Ken Bond I would not still be writing adventures.

I love playing graphic adventures on a PC as much as the next fellow but, if I am honest with myself, I get as much, if not more, fun from writing games on my antiquated Amstrad. Now that the PC is poised to take over the world it is up to keen adventurers to develop the means of producing adventure software on the PC. After all, the commercial software producers have proved many times that they are quite prepared to drop production of anything that does not give them the right profit margin and adventuring has never been a major outlet for them.

Anyway, back to the plot. A couple of weeks prior to the convention I arrived home one lunch-time to be given a note from my daughter. I receive quite a number of phone calls from fellow adventurers and a large percentage of these seem to be from the fairer sex. It has long been a joke in our house for my children to answer the phone and then call to me,

"It's one of your ladies Dad". It's a good job that Maureen, my wife, trusts me. At least I think that she does! It's either that or she thinks that I am an idiot! Maybe it's the latter. After all, she came to the convention once! Never again! Anyway, this call was from a Jackie Vixen or someone. I sussed out that what she meant was Vicky Jackson and called her back. As I had not then sent her the money for my ticket, I was quite sure that that was what she wanted to talk to me about. I WAS TOTALLY WRONG!

The conversation started like this :

Vicky - Hello are you coming to the convention?

Me - Yes. I'm sorry that I've not sent the money but I will next week.

Vicky - That's OK but I've just heard that Bob isn't coming.

Me - That's a pity but how does it affect me?

Vicky - I was wondering if you would be Master of Ceremonies

The time is now about 2.30pm on Saturday, 21st October and I find myself with a tie on and holding a sheaf of award certificates for this year's prize winners. I also had a scribbled note of who had won what but I couldn't find it! I would have to ad lib!

Luckily there were not too many certificates to hand out and my opening speech, which was delivered half way through the day, was kept to a minimum. For some reason most of the awards were given to people who were not there! This year for the first time a new award was given. This was the most prolific contributor to the Personal column in Probe. Confusion reigned as a list of names was read out but only one person came forward to receive her award. The award for second place remained unclaimed and will be forwarded to someone with a name like a sweet with a hole in it! The full list of award winners will be published in Adventure Probe.

Awards over, I quickly removed the tie and got back to playing adventure games. All too soon 5.00pm arrived and the convention proper began to wind down. By 6.00pm the room was empty and most people had returned to their rooms to lick their wounds, have a freshen up and get ready to make one final sortie on the centre of Birmingham.

It has always been a problem for adventurers to make a decision. Shall I go East, West, North or South? Shall I pick up the snake or kill it? The last evening of the convention was no better! Shall we go Chinese, Italian or Beefeater?

A list was drawn up of preferences. "Well, six will go to Chinese or Italian but one of those would rather have beefburger." More hurried consultations! "The one who wants to have a beefburger now says that he will go Chinese but not Italian although fish and chips is still a possibility." More consultations! "It's OK, the one who wanted fish and chips now says that she will go to an Italian or Beefeater but definitely not Chinese!"

Eventually it was all sorted out and taxis ordered. The various groups descended on their chosen food outlets. I went with the Italian contingent, more to see if they remembered us from last year and would still serve us. It appears that all had been forgiven and after a very pleasant meal we all returned to the hotel for the statutory game of Trivial Pursuit.

Teams chosen, the game proper got under way. It is, I think, better to draw a veil over the details of the game. Enough to say that after quite a long time an honourable draw was decided upon. This was not an unanimous decision however!

Although some of the more adventurous adventurers stayed up until the very early hours, I eventually turned in around 1.00am having had another enjoyable evening in great company.

Sunday morning dawned yet again bright and clear and the gang gradually assembled at the breakfast table. It seemed a shame that another convention weekend was drawing to a close. Over the last six years some great friendships have been forged. Friendships which last during the rest of the year and not just for that one weekend. I'm not sure whether there are any other regional meetings such as that which meets at Hamilton Halls but these meetings help to keep the enthusiasm going all year round.

I hope that next year another convention can be arranged. It will need the support of all adventurers if it is to continue. Until next year then I will finish as I have done on previous occasions with a few unanswered questions :

- 1) Are there really Win Gum lorries?
- 2) Why do we get such odd looks from the hotel staff?
- 3) Why won't Jenny bring her elastic bands with her?
- 4) Why wasn't Valhalla so popular on the Spectrum?
- 5) Why hasn't that handsome young man who gave out the certificates been asked before?
- 6) Why was the second prize for the most prolific contributor to the Personal column of Probe a small peppermint?
- 7) Who was the phantom whisperer?
- 8) Why do hairy chests turn some people on?
- 9) Will Ellen ever catch up with the Wheelie Bin Man?
- 10) What will she do if she does?
- 11) What was it that Jenny had never done backwards in a taxi?
- 12) Why did everyone hold onto the table cloth when Margo got up?
- 13) Why was Sharon so quiet this year?
- 14) Does anyone know where Grimwold has gone?

Answers please on the back of a used £10 note.

THE ADVENTURERS' CONVENTION '95 by WYNNE SNOWDON

Twelve months ago I wasn't at all sure I'd be going to the 1995 Adventurers' Convention. Even three months ago my mind wasn't really made up. Then the first mention was made in Adventure Probe and I thought back to the other two I'd attended. The memories of fun, laughter, meeting people and generally enjoying myself for one short weekend came flooding back. Unable to stop myself (always was weak-willed) I booked the rooms for Ellen and myself and she ordered the convention tickets.

My little grey coloured Nova went through the car wash and turned out to be silver and rust coloured. The guy in the garage checked the tyres for the first time since the last MOT (well, I've never been technically minded and I found the place to top up the oil – which, I gather, is more than some people knew! Case packed, one portable TV and one Speccy in the boot and I was off to collect Ellen. Using my fools guide map I soon found Stanley and there was the Witch herself, case all packed and Amstrad ready and we were off to Birmingham and the Royal Angus Thistle Hotel.

The journey went uneventfully for a change apart from one or two things Ellen may have described in her report. It was a little like the foxtrot – slow, slow, quick, quick, slow. We arrived in Birmingham in good time and, once again, lost the hotel. This wasn't so bad really – we normally can't find Birmingham. I'm now getting used to the annual tour around the city looking for an NCP car-park with a hotel stuck to it. Finally, we were on a roundabout with not one but two NCP car-parks in sight. I asked Ellen which way she would go and then went in the opposite direction. By this simple method we arrived at the hotel.

Nothing had changed much. In fact Ellen even had the same room as last year. I'd pleaded old age and was given a room nearer the lift. Off down to the lounge to see who'd arrived before us. Even though we'd set off early and made good time there were still some who reached the bar before us – I wondered if they were still there from last year.

The first evening passed reasonably quietly for us. We went for a meal and ordered taxis back to the hotel. Someone, who shall remain nameless to save his blushes, popped back to the bar for a "buddie" and was amazed to find we'd left him behind. I can't imagine where he thought we were hiding but I gather, like a good adventurer, he searched everywhere before finally realizing he was alone in the car-park. Then a few drinks, lots of chat and "catching up" and off to our respective beds to gather strength for Saturday.

Saturday arrived, so it seemed, remarkably quickly. An uneventful breakfast was followed by much toing and froing while the room was decked with monitors, computers and a spaghetti-like jumble of wires. Then we started. New, and old, games to try and buy, a chance to use computers not normally within our reach, much head scratching and, as always, lots of fun. The Megapoints competition was underway – how many times did we hear "there can't be a way out of this – Martin's having us on!". Finally we had the presentations, the funniest of which must have been for prolific personal column writers.

End of the afternoon and off for the evening meal at the all time favourite, Antonio's. Jill found that you don't really need to go to Battersea fun-fair to be thrilled by the rides. You just need to take the back-facing seats in a Birmingham cab. What a disappointment, the cab home was a simple saloon and all the fun of the fare was missing. We did, however, have a driver who thought he may lose his licence because we were trying to beat the record for the most people packed into a moving vehicle. What on earth were those ladies doing hiding on the floor!

Trivial Pursuits, which for me is such an integral part of the weekend, started late and proved to be fairly enjoyable. Unfortunately, no one seemed to be able to finish the last game and we were falling asleep while desperately trying to reach the middle for the final time. Still, we all grasped the thought that there was an extra hour to sleep because the clocks went back that night.

As with last year, and the year before, Sunday morning came very early after Saturday night. Another uneventful breakfast which this time taught us nothing new about clearing and laying tables in record time. Cars packed, a final chat (which lasted about three hours) and it was off home once again. Oh well, here's to next year!!!

MY SECOND CONVENTION by ELLEN MAHON

When Wynne and I started making plans for going down to Birmingham to attend this year's Adventurers' Convention, one of the first things mentioned was the trouble we'd – okay, okay, the trouble I'D – had finding the hotel the last time. Anyone, either attending the Convention last year, or reading the following reports, will know that despite the sign for the hotel being several feet tall, I somehow missed it completely! (My family never cease to be amazed that I can “map” my way around an unknown adventure – providing it DOESN'T have a maze! – with relative ease, and yet be totally lost when trying to follow a street map.)

Last year Larry, very thoughtfully, (thanks Larry) didn't send a map with my ticket, he just sent one to Wynne. As the tickets were sent to my address this year, the dreaded “street map” of Birmingham arrived in the same envelope. After glancing (and frowning) at it for a couple of minutes, it was put into the bottom of my bag – and forgotten about..

Hoping to avoid most of the heavy traffic (which we ALMOST managed to do last year) Wynne and I made an early start, leaving the sights and sounds of Durham behind almost before most folk had their early morning coffee break.

Reaching the outskirts of Birmingham proved to be mostly uneventful, and apart from witnessing a VERY careless (not to mention lucky!) motorist's attempts to unseat a motor cycle policeman, and stopping off for a burger, the journey went smoothly. (For some unknown reason, Wynne said that her car radio wasn't working properly – so a “Singalonga Ellen” never materialized. Same “problem” on the return journey, but funnily enough, just as soon as we pulled up outside my door, on the Sunday evening, it began working perfectly...)

Only when Wynne commented that she thought we'd come too far along the motorway, and how she wished she'd kept hold of the map (showing the turn-offs) that Larry had sent her last year did I remember the one that lay in the bottom of my bag. Stretching over the seat – and nearly choking myself with the seatbelt, I retrieved said “map”. Looking at it I found that Wynne was quite right in her assumption, we had indeed come too far down the motorway – oops!!

Trying to find a place in Birmingham is no easy task – even for an adventurer – especially when the “locals” completely ignore your pleas for help.

Studying the map again, I informed Wynne that if we could find the Dental Hospital (??) then I was sure I'd be able to find the hotel from there. The two places seemed fairly close together on the map. My Irish logic working overtime there, methinks! (As I said earlier, following street maps never was one of my fortes.)

After being greeted in the car-park by a very excited Jenny Perry (who inadvertently, well I think it was inadvertently, blocked an outgoing motorist's means of escape – maybe he'd got wind of our coming?) when she stopped to say “Hi”, and a very desperate Vicky Jackson – who couldn't wait to part with a 1p or two, we dragged our cases down to reception to register.

Someone must have informed management of my navigating skills – or lack of them – as I found I'd been allocated the same room that I'd been given the year before. At least I'd not get lost whilst looking for my bed.

Strangely enough, ALL of the Adventurers were given rooms on the sixth floor. Do you think they were trying to tell us something?

The remainder of the afternoon was spent supping various beverages and sampling such delights as chocolate "cow pats" – yummy.

After a meal we returned to the hotel minus one of our party. When he did finally make it back to the hotel he forgave us for the oversight – at least I THINK he did – although judging by the jokes he insisted on telling us afterwards, maybe I was wrong in my assumption!

After a long night – and a (very) short sleep, a leisurely breakfast was called for. (Leisurely breakfast for some, I hasten to add, as Larry and Co. were moving computers before I'd had my first cup of coffee.)

After setting up my computer I browsed around the room, seeing what "goodies" were on offer. I picked up a load of adventures for my Speccy – and all at bargain prices. (Many thanks to Vicky and Sue for the "freebies" – they're much appreciated!) Wynne did much the same, with neither of us giving any thought as to how we were going to pack the boot of the car for our return journey.

The least said about my feeble score in the Magapoints contest the better. (Brilliant game Martin!) I spent the whole of my time trying (and failing – sheesh – like I said Martin, brilliant game) to get out of the bl*** dungeon, and into double figures. Seems the fellow next to me was finding the game just as easy (!!) 'cos he finished up with a score identical to my own. At least that made me feel a little better.

Sitting listening to the "Awards" I was both surprised and delighted to find that I'd been awarded 1st place in the category of "Most Prolific User Of The Personal Column". M. Polo was awarded 2nd place in this category, but, unlike me, he/she didn't step forward to receive his/her certificate.

After dining at Antonio's – and finding that we were well remembered from our last visit there (12 months ago) we returned to the hotel to play a few games of Trivial Pursuit. (After first giving a game suggested by Jill Nott a go. This game involved the use of a pair of scissors, and after one of our party went up to his room to fetch said scissors, we discovered that Anne Borland already had a pair secreted about her person. They were of the folding variety and Anne's attempts to "unfold" them took nearly as long as playing the game itself! Maybe Wynne's suggestion of lying someone on the table and spinning them round would have been easier?)

Vicky Jackson was nominated for the job of quizmaster for the Trivial Pursuit Contest, and complained to Larry that his set of questions must be faulty – as every time there was a question with a date in it, the years all had five numbers! (Martin Freemantle came up with the solution to the problem that Vicky was having with the questions, The number seven will never be the same for me again!)

Sunday's breakfast was a much more subdued affair – with it came the realization that the weekend was (once again) almost over. Wynne and I finally left the car-park around midday, after being given a lesson in the art of church bell ringing by Sue Roseblade. She was also responsible for a kitchen hand chopping veggies at twice the speed of sound. (Hope he's still got all of his digits, Sue.)

Even though I missed quite a few friends, Damian, Lorna, Danny, Margaret and Mike – read the "Personals", I still had a great weekend. Mind you, it could have been even better than it was had Wynne not exacted revenge for something that I did to her last year, involving a room key! Still, there was at least one gallant adventurer (who shall remain nameless!) amongst our party, who'd not been "got at" by her, so all wasn't lost.

THE ADVENTURERS' CONVENTION 1995 AWARDS

Best Adventure

- 1 The Assassins' Guild
- 2 Civil Service 2
- 2 Four Symbols

Best Author

- 1 Laurence Creighton
- 2 Phill Ramsay
- 2 Jack Lockerby
- 3 Martin Freemantle

Best New Author

- 1 George E Hoyle

Best Software House

- 1 The Adventure Workshop

Best Playtester

- 1 Lorna Paterson
- 2 Phill Ramsay

Most Helpful Adventurer

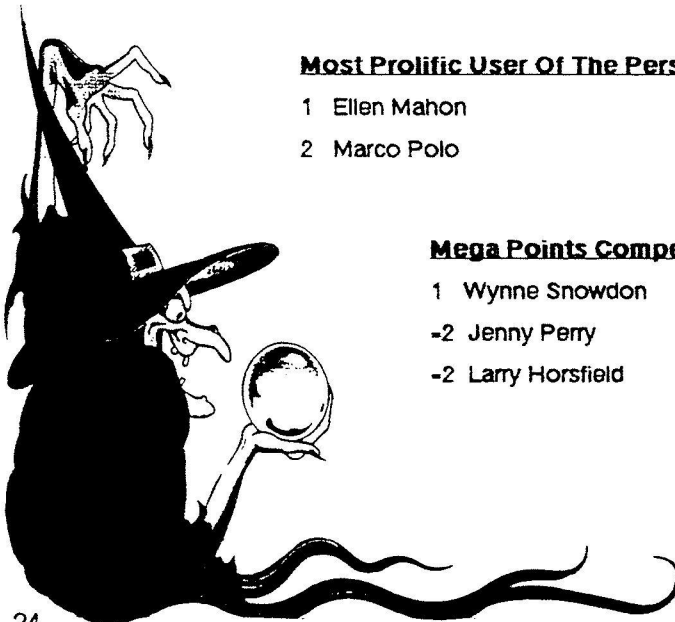
- 1 Barbara Gibb
- 2 Jenny Perry

Most Prolific User Of The Personal Column

- 1 Ellen Mahon
- 2 Marco Polo

Mega Points Competition

- 1 Wynne Snowdon
- 2 Jenny Perry
- 2 Larry Horsfield



Unconventional News!

Another Meeting...

Not learning after last year's debacle, which came close to ruining relations between Elves and Humans, the Adventurers' Convention went ahead. Leaving Draffan behind (for I did not want him to decimate the assembled throng over some real or imagined insult) I made my way again to the Angus Thistle Hotel, and was surprised to see so many familiar faces.

The year had not been kind to many: lines and wrinkles told of many harrowing quests undertaken. However, for the most part, it was merely a sign of advancing age.

Looking around the assembly, I saw many old and dear fiends, or should that be friends?

Peter Stark was there, dreaming meaningless dreams, as we have come to expect from him. Wynne Everest was there, attempting to choke all and sundry into submission by belching forth noxious fumes.

Simon Apiary appeared, demonstrating to everyone that his reasoning process is no longer what it was. If proof were needed, his engagement surely proves that the balance of his mind is disturbed.

Ellen Mightn't was there, peering avidly at every male adventurer who might have dark eyes and a hairy chest. Several eyebrows were raised when she disappeared on the Saturday night in the company of a brown-eyed gorilla...

Larry Shiregreen had very little to say for himself, and spent most of the Convention muttering incoherent phrases when he thought no one was looking.

Barbara Cobb was there, of course, with lots of spare copies of Probe, which she thrust at adventurers with reckless abandon, inserting them into any available orifice.

Anne Boredom sat in the centre of activities, smiling at everyone who pointedly attempted not to notice her.

Daniam Iron, despite fears that he might not attend this year, eventually steeled himself to the effort, bemoaning the fact that he was only a few TADS late...

Saploaf the Elf was missing this

year. He obviously still hasn't forgiven us about his reception last year... And the less said about Sharon Horforest, the better.

Adventuring Awards.

Prat of the year was awarded jointly to Phill Sheepsey and his trusty playtester Tinkerbell. As Wynne Everest was overheard to remark: "Never was an award so richly deserved."

The Mary Virgin-Lady Penelope award for Most Promising New Playtester was awarded to Glennston, and is currently worth a massive 5 gold nuggets (medium size and grade) per year.

(Incidentally, Gillian did intend to flash her drawers at the assembled male adventurers, but found they were too big to get down.)

The coveted title of Most Considerate Adventurer was bestowed this year upon Nemo, for his endeavours in making sure Adventurers who didn't normally receive Personal Messages were not forgotten in the Personal Column.

The Best Programmer award went once again to Slabodan Cracklewush. Several Adventurers showed considerable ill-feeling and bad manners when they booed him for holding a gun at the Judge's head.

Peter Stark suggested a recount of the votes, but as usual, he was outvoted.

Martin Paypiece was devastated when he failed to win an award, and was last seen consoling himself with a tankard of ale.

Lorna Pitterchild was awarded the Oldest and Longest Serving Playtester award. However, she became somewhat petulant when presented with a facsimile of her first ever playtest report, which was written around the turn of the century.

Gossip!

It is reported that Ellen Mightn't is on the lookout for a male adventurer to share some private adventures...

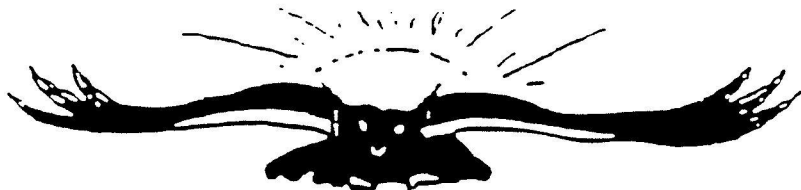
A rumour that Wynne Everest is really Tinkerbell was fiercely denied...

I heard the Viper threaten to crush the Cockroach underfoot if he dared reappear. Quite how a Viper would accomplish this we will have to wait to see...

A whisper circulated claiming that Peter Stark is really Elvis...

SEE YOU ALL NEXT YEAR!!!!





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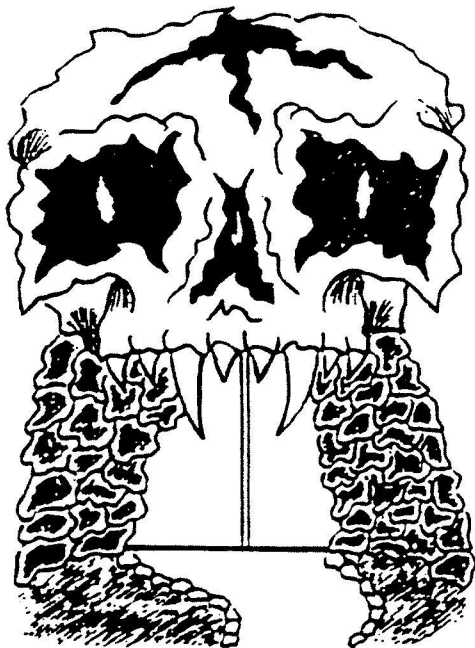
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CIVIL SERVICE - II

Amidst all the various rooms containing the dusty files and aging manuscripts, that such an organisation seems intent on storing until the end of time, there must also be one tiny room where the 'rule-maker' must dwell. And it is in this small isolated space that the clerk bearing this title puts pen to paper and inscribes the rules that govern all who work, or wish to work, for the CIVIL SERVICE and as everybody knows - rules must be obeyed!

True to form, this 'being' has now taken it upon themself .. to 'change' those rules and in effect to 'move the goalposts'.

Such was the success rate of the applicants with the original entrance test that a new test has now been drawn up that is felt will present an even stiffer challenge for anybody daring to gain entrance into the CIVIL SERVICE. Not only that, but the 'powers-that-be' have also insisted that the 'rule-maker' devise a further series of tests for those wishing to reach the higher echelons.



Spectrum 48K/128K+2

THE STORY SO FAR

With the above in mind, each applicant will be placed in an 'enclosed-environment' where he or she will be confronted with a series of 'mind-boggling' problems. Some requiring not only a superior intellect but also an ability to 'twist' the obvious to suit the solution. Only those applicants with a good service record, a superior mind and a public school education will be allowed to participate .. unless you can think of some other means of 'qualification' that could gain you the access you desire. YOU, or whoever endeavours to undertake the tasks laid before them, will need to utilise all the mental abilities of a 'Grand Chessmaster' whilst pondering the problems laid before the applicant.

Temper your judgement with some devious thinking and YOU might just get lucky. Though it is advised that a modicum of common-sense will go a long way in helping you through the tests.

NOTES

When you encounter one of the various invigilators just 'SAY HELLO' in order to find out what you have to do and once you have solved that particular problems just repeat this action - if they are still around to be talked to!!!

Some useful abbreviations are as follows ... QUIT for QUIT, HELP for HELP, DROP for DROP and EXAMINE for EXAMINE. Use the usual 'SAVE' and 'LOAD' routines to store a record of your game position, though be warned that it is possible that the likes of 'RAMSAVE' etc may have been dismantled to make your task even harder .. devious sods these 'rule-makers' !!!!!

HINT It may sound the same but it is spelt differently and means TWO separate things.

ADVENTURE

MAN ABOUT THE HOUSE

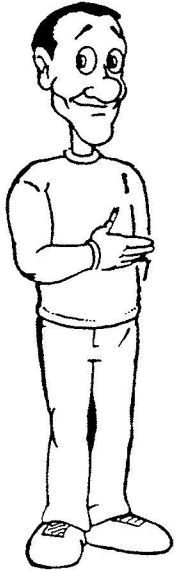
It is time for the return of the 'anti-hero' known as **Ernie Spludge**. The only hero with an 'inferiority complex'. The only hero whose idea of 'braveness' is to take a bath without wearing his water-wings !!!!!

Those of you daft enough to have played their way through **Ernie Spludge's** earlier adventures will recall that poor old **Ernie** had a tendency to cock-up most things and this latest game is the direct result of one such 'cock-up' in more ways than one!!

The more sensible amongst you will be greatly surprised to hear that **Ernie** and **Rosie** are about to become very proud parents .. though at this time the exact number and format of their off-spring is still in doubt. In fact poor old **Ernie** is still a touch vague concerning the actual details of the event leading up to this and whilst he knows 'when', he is not quite sure 'how' it all came about — however he strongly suspects it was all down to a warm summer's night and his decision to take to his bed without wearing his night-cap! Such moments of exuberant rashness have been known to turn even the head of one such as **Rosie Spludge**, let alone women of weaker resolve.

So it was, and so it must be, and **Rosie** blossomed to such an extent that even the skinny frame of **Ernie's** lithe body could no longer fit into the matrimonial bed — and for the past couple of weeks he has found himself consigned to the care of the front-room sofa.

But that was **last week** and for the past seven days **Ernie** has had the entire house to himself whilst **Rosie** performed her duties in the labour-ward of the local hospital. But all good things must come to an end and today is the day that **Rosie** is due to return to the family home — the one she left so neat and tidy only seven short days ago !!!!!

NOTES

The object of the game is — to return the family home to the pristine condition it was in prior to **Rosie's** entry into hospital — **Ernie** never was that 'house-proud' and it took him all his time just to remember that the Hoover only did its job when plugged in and switched on!

Your task is to return the house to its original tidy condition and at the same time to ensure that **Ernie** carries out all the other little tasks that **Rosie** asked him to do ... if only **YOU** and **ERNIE** can remember what exactly they were.

This game will accept the use of such commands as **PRESS**, **PLAY**, **ENTER**, **REDIAL** and **RECHARGE** as well as the normal ones such as **EXAMINE**, **GET** and **READ**. It will also accept the use of **RAMSAVE** and **RAMLOAD** in order to stor/recall a game 'position' in **MEMORY** however always use the standard **SAVE** and **LOAD** to make a more permanent record on to **TAPE** and **DISK**.

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The day is sunny and warm and hoping that an idea for another game will spring into your mind, you decide to take a walk in the peace and quiet of the local countryside.

After an hour of walking in the sunshine you arrive at the edge of Rabbit Warren Wood. Feeling hot and tired you rest for a while on a nearby grassy bank. You lean back into the grass - your eyes begin to close then.....!

Available Now on Disc Priced £5.50 and on Tape Priced £4.00. 128K ONLY.

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A 48K ADVENTURE by PHILLIP RAMSAY

WARNING THIS GAME IS FOR ADULTS ONLY AND SHOULD NOT BE BOUGHT BY ANYONE WHO IS EASILY OFFENED.

One fine, summer's morning, you wake up to find a letter from your Uncle Edan. Opening it, you quickly read the contents:

Dear Jasper,

I'm writing because I need your help. The thing dearest to me in the world has been stolen. I dare not even identify the object by name; but you will know it when you recover it. Alas, there is little more which I can add. Please hurry. Time is not on our side.

Your affectionate Uncle,
Edan.

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NEW RELEASES

RAIDERS OF THE LOST TOMB

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Your name is Jack Williams and you are the Chief Crime Reporter on the Daily News. After your recent brush with the occult on Dartmoor and your rescue of the local actress, Denise Barley, things really took off. A raise in salary and a change of name for Denise who is now Denise Williams.... Yes, you mad thing! You Married the woman! You are now in great demand by your editor and today is no exception. When he called you into his office you suspected that something was up and his expression was grim.

Your suspicions were proved to be well-founded as the story he told made you shiver. It appears that ancient Egyptian artefacts have been found in antique shops in London which far from being sold to the highest bidder should be preserved in museums. High level investigations by Interpol point to the fact that a previously undiscovered tomb may have been opened in the Valley of the Kings and is being stripped of its valuables.

Interpol are reluctant to barge in just in case they alarm the villains. However there is a convention of archaeologists in the area in the near future and the Daily News has been approached to see if they would be prepared to send someone out there to see what he can find out. That person to meet with an Interpol agent in the Milton Hotel in Cairo.

How can you refuse such a request? (And keep your job!) The editor hands you a letter of identification and a plane ticket for Cairo. Glancing at it you see that it is dated with today's date. There is just time for you to get home, pick up your suitcase, leave a note for Denise and get to the airport for that plane!

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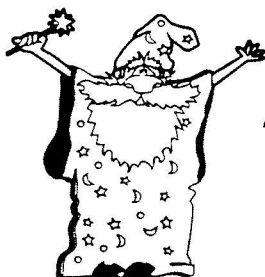
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GETTING TO KNOWMANDY

Q] EVERYONE KNOWS THAT YOU WERE PROBE'S SECOND LADY EDITOR, HOW DID IT COME ABOUT?

A] I was always a regular contributor to Probe and when Sandra was giving up as editor she asked me if I would take over from her, to ensure that Probe kept going and didn't have to fold.

Q] IS THERE LIFE AFTER PROBE!?

A] Yes, there is life after Probe. I didn't think so at the time I stopped being editor, and I was at a loose end for a while. However, I have since taken up a sport and, of course, I have found plenty of time to actually play adventures! I have heaps of adventures that accumulated while editing Probe still waiting to be played - I reckon I will have enough to keep me going until my pension!

Q] HOW DID ADVENTURING BEGIN IN YOUR HOUSE? WERE YOU ALL SMITTEN, OR DO THE REST OF THE FAMILY THINK YOU'RE COMPLETELY MAD?

A] Adventuring began for me when we bought our first computer - a Commodore 64. There was a disk containing ten free games with it and the last game was THE QUEST. At the time I had absolutely no idea what it was supposed to be about or what I should do. I remember reading "You are standing outside the entrance to a dark cave. Heavy rain is falling all about you. What now?". I honestly thought it had crashed as nothing was moving and there seemed to be nothing to shoot at, so I entered the only command I knew at the time - "RUN". Quick as a flash back came the response, "In which direction?" and from that moment I was well and truly hooked! At last I seemed to be able to communicate with my computer. It didn't take me long to figure out how to play the game, and after getting lost a few times I soon figured out that some sort of map would be in order. Strange thing is, I was absolutely sure at the time that it was the only game of its kind ever! It was only while browsing in Boots Chemist about six months later that I came across CLASSIC ADVENTURE and MORDON'S QUEST. I never looked back. The rest of the family think I'm mad as a hatter. It didn't take my husband long to realize that if he wanted any computer time at all he should go out and get himself another computer. Adventuring was bliss after that.

Q] ANY ALL-TIME FAVOURITE ADVENTURES - A TOP 5 THAT YOU WOULD TAKE TO A DESERT ISLAND? [ALL DESERT ISLANDS HAVE MAINS ELECTRIC]

A] After all these years and the advances that have been made in adventure games, this might be a difficult question to answer. After a little thought, I suppose I should nominate the adventures that have given me the most personal pleasure, rather than any other reason. In this case the list would just have to contain: LORDS OF TIME, DUNGEON MASTER, SPELLCASTING 101, LURKING HORROR and SPELLBREAKER.

Q] WOULD YOU LIKE TO NOMINATE A GAME FOR THE ALL-TIME TURKEY AWARD?

A] There have been plenty of adventures that for various reasons have failed to come up to expectations, but I honestly feel that ALL adventures are playable. Authors really put time and effort into producing them, and I like to give them all a fair chance.

If pulled over the coals about this one though, I would be forced to mumble THE LEGEND OF CRALDON'S CREEK as a likely candidate.

Q] ARE YOU A TEXT-ONLY FAN OR DO YOU LIKE OTHER KINDS OF ADVENTURES?

A] Like everyone else that I know, when I only had an 8-bit computer, I scorned anything that had even a tiny graphic attached to it. Having moved to 16-bit, I suddenly discovered, as everyone else does eventually, that graphic adventures can be just as entertaining in their own way. They are just a different type of adventure but no less enjoyable.

Q] WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY PLAYING?

A] As always, I seem to have quite a few different adventures playing at once. Currently I am playing CHAOS STRIKES BACK, after yet another session with DUNGEON MASTER [that must be the tenth time that I have played that one now. I hardly need the maps any more, as I can find my way around quite well now], THE JADE STONE [I know, I know, it's so old it's got whiskers, but I never got round to playing it before], ATLANTIS ADVENTURE by Mieke Van Der Poll and WAR OF THE WORLDS by Tony Hartley.

Q] WHAT'S THE LONGEST YOU'VE EVER BEEN STUCK IN AN ADVENTURE AND THE SILLIEST THING YOU DID?

A] I think the longest time I have been stuck in an adventure must be twelve months in PERSONAL NIGHTMARE. I am persistent if not clever and I am still stuck! I have recently discovered that I neglected to break down a wall when I had the chance, so I had to go back and do it all over again differently. I did that and then discovered that I am stuck in a different place!

I have done a variety of silly/stupid things whilst playing adventures, ranging from entering "Save Thorin" when he was swimming the river and drowning in LORDS OF THE RINGS, getting the message "Press Record And Play On Tape", to confusing the game SHERLOCK [Melbourne House] so much, that when I hailed a cab outside the lodgings in Baker Street, I found to my disgust that it had appeared inside the lobby! I could neither get it out of there again or enter it to go anywhere else. In THE SNOW QUEEN the system locked up completely when I tried to do something rather naughty to a wooden soldier! [I'M INTRIGUED - WHAT NAUGHTY THING COULD YOU POSSIBLY DO TO A WOODEN SOLDIER? DO TELL!!!!] Sorry, but I couldn't tell, it would make me blush! [NOW I'M REALLY INTRIGUED]

Q] I SEE YOU'VE WRITTEN TWO ADVENTURES - DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS TO WRITE ANY MORE?

A] Actually I have written six adventures - I only consider two of them worth publishing though. I am currently fiddling around with TADS and am enjoying programming a new adventure, but whether it eventually sees the light of day remains to be seen.

Q] DO YOU HAVE ANY PET NIGGLES IN ADVENTURES? [MAZES, MAPPING, ETC.]

A] I love mapping and I also love mazes. If I have a pet hate, it is having to go and eat every so often to prevent myself from dying of hunger or thirst, also, dying for no reason and without warning, just for entering a particular location, for example.

Q] DO YOU HAVE TIME FOR "NORMAL" HOBBIES OR PASTIMES? [GOLF, FISHING, COOKING, GARDENING, ETC.]

A] Yes, I have taken up archery and thoroughly enjoy it. The whole family are archers too, so that helps enormously. I have recently switched from a Recurve Bow to a Compound Bow and my shooting has improved even more. I recently won my first gold medal in a North Wales Archery Tournament, so I am feeling rather pleased with myself. I am also still singing and enjoying that, but have had to stop since Christmas, when a chronic bone

infection in my jaws laid me low. I am learning to cope with it, and the pain isn't quite so bad now – I think you get used to anything after a while – and I am waiting to go into hospital to get my teeth removed. I always fancied myself wearing falsies! I love reading, cooking, painting, playing the organ, gardening and all sorts of things. I always seem to be busy anyway.

Q] WHAT WOULD BE A PERFECT EVENING'S TELEVISION VIEWING FOR YOU?

A] An omnibus edition of Neighbours [the old Neighbours currently showing on U.K. Gold], Star Trek, The Next Generation – I find Captain Picard rather sexy for some strange reason. [Yes, Vicky (in case Vicky Jackson is reading this) I DID get converted!] A nice movie such as Sleepless in Seattle, followed by a nice spooky-type film such as Ghost to go to bed on.

Q] DO YOU READ? FAVOURITE AUTHORS/FAVOURITE MUSIC?

A] Yes, I read an awful lot. My tastes run to the rather gory, I'm afraid. I am currently half-way through Burial by Graham Masterton. My favourite authors are Stephen King, Dean Koontz, James Herbert, Terry Brook and David Eddings. I like all kinds of music.

Q] THREE THINGS YOU REALLY HATE OR MAKE YOU MAD?

A] Three things that make me mad. Firstly, it has to be injustice – when someone is accused and condemned for doing something without getting a hearing of any kind, is perhaps the worst, especially when the thing is totally untrue. Another is when someone you have never met in person, decides to pay you a visit, totally unexpected and without any warning whatsoever, especially when you know that that person hates that happening to them too. Lastly, I think it would have to be people who wander homeward at around three in the morning, and stop outside your house to talk as loudly as possible, without any consideration whatsoever for people trying to sleep a few feet away from them.

Q] ARE YOU ADVENTUROUS IN OTHER AREAS – HOLIDAYS [CANAL BARGES, HORSE-DRAWN CARAVANS] COOKING [EXOTIC FOREIGN DISHES] SPORT [ABSEILING, WHITE WATER RAFTING, HAND-GLIDING, PARACHUTE JUMPING]?

A] No, I'm not particularly adventurous, apart from via the computer keyboard. Mind you, I do cook rather a lot of exotic food [much to the disgust of the family at times!]

Q] YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN TO LEAD A SIX-STRONG TEAM OF ADVENTURERS IN THEIR 5-YEAR MISSION TO EXPLORE THE SOLAR SYSTEM. WHO WOULD YOU CHOOSE AS YOUR TRAVELLING COMPANIONS [ANYONE PAST OR PRESENT, REAL OR FICTIONAL]?

A] Ooooh, that is rather tricky. I think I would have to choose Captain Picard, as he always seems to know exactly where he is going; Bob Adams and the Grue, for light relief, as they always seem to make me laugh; Belgarath the Sorcerer, from the Belgariad, as a bit of magic might come in useful; Mr. Spock from the old Star Trek, as he seems to be capable of solving almost any problem logically and finally, Sylvester Stallone – well, why not? He is rather dishy!

Q] YOU BUMP INTO AN OLD SCHOOL FRIEND WHO TELLS YOU SHE/HE IS GOING OFF UP THE AMAZON FOR SIX MONTHS. DO YOU "DROP EVERYTHING" AND GO ALONG? [TAKE IT THAT THE FAMILY IS IN FAVOUR]

A] No, I would just ask them to send me a postcard from time to time. I saw Disappearing World about the Criana Crori Indians in the Amazon, and I think I would rather stay home thanks!

Q] THINGS YOU LIKE?

A] Things I like are: good food, pub quizzes, building and sailing model boats, jigsaw puzzles, painting, reading, writing, good congenial company, babies, good jokes and all sorts of things.

MANY THANKS MANDY FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS [EVEN IF YOU DID EVADE ONE!] AND GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR HOSPITAL STAY.

MY TOP TEN ADVENTURES by RON GUEST

My favourite literature has always been magical-fantasy, science fiction and exploration adventures, so it follows my preference in adventure games will be the same.

I find R.P.G.s too involved and time-consuming and the constant punch-ups get a bit tedious. Detective stories have never interested me and the murder-mystery games with their specific time-related actions are too frustrating.

Having finished about 300 adventures, selecting the 10 best is really an impossibility but the games selected all have the following in common :

- 1) A certain atmosphere similar to a book, where you can lose yourself in the gameplay with almost a feeling of being in another world.
- 2) Plenty of imaginatively described locations where your finished map really looks like a different and more magical place.
- 3) Puzzles that are on the whole fairly logical, even if only in hindsight, and
- 4) A feeling almost of sorrow when you realize you have finally reached the end.

I have not chosen from the big names - Level 9, Infocom, etc. although some home-grown adventures are easily in the same class, but I must mention Bug Bytes "Twin Kingdom Valley" which for atmosphere and storyline is out of this world.

The home-grows that spring to mind are in no real order of preference but Aura-scope stand out in my mind on a par with Twin Kingdom Valley. The others are all outstanding in their own way.

Bounty Hunter	Krazy Kartoontist Kaper
Domes of Sha	Lost Twilight
Four Symbols	Pendant of Logryn
Fisher King	Run, Bronwynn, Run
Khangrin Plans	Tears of the Moon

I have not mentioned "The Hobbit" for fear of upsetting Dead Warg and would not want to be the target for one of Mad Maisies odes.

[Readers are invited to submit their list of favourite adventures, with reasons if possible. You don't have to limit yourself to 10 - maybe you have a top 12, 16 or 20. Barbara]

PERSONAL MESSAGES

To Jenny Peril – Let's see how long we can keep them guessing. (Pigpen)

To Harold Dixon – I have lost your address. Did you have any luck with the Post Office? Or is there still some software floating about in the dark nether regions in some obscure Post Office? (Dot Vaughan)

To Vicky – From the alternative hymn book. We plough the snow and splatter the wet slush all around. We bury the unwary about five feet from the ground. (Wynne)

To Vicky – Are you sure it wasn't Jaws? (Wynne)

To Ellen – Which direction did you say? (Wynne)

To Jill – Have you thought of buying a London-style cab? (Wynne)

To the Scottish/Cumbrian crowd – Missed you. How about next year? (Wynne)

To Ellen – Revenge is sweet!! (Wynne)

To Rudi – Bet she only takes you out so you can show her the way. (Wynne)

To all at Birmingham '95 – Great to see you. Let's do it again next year! (Wynne)

To Crazy Maisie – No, my name's Marco, not Thomas; and I heard about your pet name from a small chap called "Thawing" or something. (M.Polo)

To Jon – Very well. (M.Polo)

To the Nighthawk – I don't think so. It's actually Marco Polo-Mint, but I prefer to omit the last bit! (M.Polo)

To Mad Cat – Maybe, maybe. Is he a pussy (cat) as well? (M.Polo)

To the Glumwynd – "One of them" is an insurance salesperson. A friendship with such a person could lead to full comprehensive life + death insurance before you know what! (M.Polo)

To The Viper – No, I don't over-exercise it. Are you part of a Czech's Skoda by any chance? You know, a window-viper. (M.Polo)

To Ellen – I think that would be an excellent idea. (M.Polo)

To Snowy – Perhaps you should leave your door open too, allow the likes of me to come and go. (M.Polo)

To Snow White – I'm sure they do, but do I? (M.Polo)

To Snowy "Blanc" – I have a distinct suspicion it was, but then you never *SNOW*. (Marco)

To All – Thanks for the award. (Uncle Horace)

To M.Polo – Don't pull it. Push it, then it won't. (Uncle Horace)

To Damian – Hang onto yer hat, shooting starts soon. (Uncle Horace)

To Damian – Only passed the hotel ONCE on the return journey this year! (Ellen)

To Margaret and Mike – My navigating skills must be improving with age. We arrived home a day sooner than last year. (Ellen)

To Gail – Don't worry too much, I'll be bringing the headache tablets, and ear-plugs down with me, OK? (Ellen)

To Phill – Ooooooh! And I thought you were my friend. (Ellen)

To M.Polo – Perish the thought! (Ellen)

To Jon – Definitely not. I'm told I look MUCH better behind the camera!! (Ellen)

To Reynir – I don't mind the hisses, besides it's the only way I'll get the pronunciation right. (Ellen)

To Vicky – In future every time I see a snow plough, I'll think of you. (Ellen)

To Jill – Did you see Sue and Martin on "Crimestoppers" the other night, by any chance? (Ellen)

To Marco (the friendly plumber) – My leaky sprocket and I can hardly wait. (Snow White)

To The Whinger – MY dwarves get 24 hour service (365 days a year). (Snow White)

To M.Polo – You sure 'bout being a dictator? What about your message to poor Jon last month? (Snow White)

To Jon – My turf's MUCH nicer than M.Polo's. Feel free to stand on it anytime, OK? (Snow White)

To Pogkin the Dwarf – *Which* "end" are we talking about? (Snow White)

To Mad Cat – One of these days Ro might plan to add Catnip to his pot. Wonder where he'll get it from??? (The Witch of Stanley)

To Squiggle – You're now on your LAST warning. (The Witch of Stanley)

To Fry-Them-With-One-Puff – Please yourself. I was only trying to add a bit of variety to your diet, after all, too many fry-ups aren't good for you. (The Witch of Stanley)

To Mad Cat – We stay trim by giving Rudi a hard time. (Sherry and Lucky)

To Bosi – Fancy a holiday down here? I need some help (see above) (Rudi)

To M.Polo – Gotcha!! (Dopey)

To Pete – Ellen says she and D. O'D. are singing on "Top Of The Pops" next week. PLEASE tell me it ain't true. (Dopey)

To Peter – Better luck next year, eh? (H.R. Puff n' stuff)

To Laurence – How much do you pay your horse man? Is he moving at a gallop or a slow trot? ((IM)patience)

To The Whinger – Cheer up, it could have been worse. Your chopper could have frozen off and ruined your assets. You obviously attach undue importance to your meaty balls. Have they shrivelled up? (The Glimwynd)

To Gillian – Sorry, my mistake. When your bra came off, everyone thought that there'd been TWO total eclipses of the sun. (The Viper)

To Damian – That last got a little scrambled in translation. It should have been "Still keeping it up". (Kasar)

To All – When I found out who was giving out the awards, I decided to give the convention a miss. (Twiddly-Dee-Dee)

NEWSDESK

Latest Release from Zenobi

BEYOND EL DORADO by Laurence Creighton is now on general release. When you buy a copy read the accompanying leaflet – you may know the answers to the competition and win a **£10 note**. Price : Spectrum tape and +D £2.99, Spectrum +3 disc £3.49, Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e) £2.99.

More about Arthur : Quest for Excalibur

It seems that several reputable monthly magazines have reviewed this game as Public Domain software. I've been advised that one such magazine is THE ONE for December '94 who seem to have obtained their review copy from the Cygnostic PD library. It now seems likely that Infocom themselves considered it a bit below their usual standard (matter of opinion) and released it as PD, so I think you can now buy and play it with a clear conscience.

New Release from The Adventure Workshop

DIE FEUERFAUST by Larry Horsfield is now available. This is a 4-part text adventure and I understand the final part is virtually a game within a game. The tape version is £3 and the +3 disc version £5.

The Amiga (under Spectrum emulation) version is available from Adventure Probe, price £3.

More Amiga(e) Adventures from Adventure Probe Software

In addition to DIE FEUERFAUST, I can offer a few other titles. Black Knight, Castle Warlock, The Base (48K version), Shimmerkin, Case of the Mixed-Up Shymer and Magician's Apprentice. Same prices as tape – see advertisement. I may also be able to arrange to supply some of The Adventure Workshop's Spectrum titles (48K versions only) for the Amiga under emulation if readers show enough interest.

HELP OFFERED

In the disc-based version of DISCWORLD, when you join the ceremony in Act II it crashes. A saved-game position to play past this bug is obtainable by "means of many threatening phone calls to Psygnosis – alternatively, Sue ROSEblade has offered to supply players with a copy. Contact her on 01480 380608 any day 10.00am to 10.00pm.

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 a 1st or 2nd class stamp for return postage, regardless of the number of solutions ordered.

DISCWORLD, EMERALD ELF, GOLDEN FLEECE, KING'S QUEST 3 (PC), LOST IN TIME (Coktel).

IN TOUCH

WANTED FOR C64 : A copy of PROJECT X – MICROMAN and any other ex-Compass Software adventure except "Demon From the Darkside". Please contact Barbara at the Probe office.

FOR SALE : Commodore 64 128 Keyboard, Dataset, Disk drive 1541, M.P.S. 1200 Printer, various software including word processor, various games including adventures etc. with lockable storage box. £250.00 ono. Please phone Dot on 01703 736939.

WANTED : Any software for the Commodore 64 that is mind-stretching or bending. Please phone Dot on 01703 736939.

AMIGA GAMES FOR SALE : £7 Each or 3 for £18. Tank Platoon (Tank simulator); Dune 2 (Strategy/RPG); Cannon Fodder (Arcade); A-Train (Railway sim); F1 Gran Prix (Microprose racing sim); The Greatest compilation (includes: Lure of the Temptress, Jimmy White Snooker and Dune); Abandoned Places (RPG); Chaos Engine (Shoot 'em up)

£5 each or 3 for £12.50. Perfect General (War game); Streetfighter 2 (Beat 'em up); EPIC (Space strategy); Powermonger World War 1 edition (Includes Powermonger, wargame); Goal (Football); Mad compilation (3 platform games: James Pond 2, ?, ?); Midwinter (Strategy/RPG NOT 1200!!); Harpoon (Naval strategy); Premiere (Good platform game); Keef the thief (Adventure/RPG)

£3.50 each or 4 for £10. Stormlord (Platform); Kampfgruppe (Tank battle); R-Type (Shoot 'em up); Full metal planete (Strategy); Carrier command (Strategy); Joan of Arc (Strategy/RPG); Armourgeddon (Space battle); Count Duckula (Kids platform game)

AMIGA GAMES WANTED: Jewels of Darkness Trilogy and Loom. Will swap one for one any £7 game or any 2 £3.50 games. Otherwise state full amount required.

All prices include P&P. If possible state alternatives. Contact Steve Clay, 17 Stanlaw Road, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral, L65 OEY (Cheques payable to S.J Clay)

SPECTRUM MAGAZINES FOR SALE : 50p each (to cover the cost of postage and packing) unless otherwise stated. Note : **NO** cover tapes available.

ACE : 1987 issue 1 – offers please. The winner is highest offer received by 1st February '96.

CRASH : 1987 issue 45 – 1989 issues 60, 63, 65 and 67 – 1990 issue 82.

SINCLAIR USER : issues 47, 58, 64, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 98, 99, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 109, 120.

YOUR SINCLAIR : 1986 issues Jan, Feb, March, April, June, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec.– 1987 issues Jan, Feb, March, April, May, June, July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov. – 1988 issues Jan, Feb, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec. – 1989 issues Jan, Feb, March, April, May, July, Aug, Sept, Nov, Dec. – 1990 issues Jan, Feb, March, April, May, June, July, Sept, Oct, Nov. – 1991 issues Jan, Feb, April, May, June, July, Aug, Oct.

Apply by post to Pauline Bryant (Mrs.) 50 Mayenne Place, Devizes, Wilts. SN10 1QW

GETTING YOU STARTED

CROWN OF RAMHOTEP played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum

Start in your hotel bedroom. I (nothing), TAKE SCROLL, EXAM SCROLL, READ SCROLL (you don't understand the strange symbols), TAKE CHOCOLATE bar (to eat when told you are hungry), TAKE BOX, EXAM BOX, W, D W, S W (museum), SHOW SCROLL (to curator who gives you an amulet – note what he says), E, S, W, U (store-room of pottery shop), I (note amulet is on a gold chain), REMOVE CHAIN, TAKE STRING, THREAD AMULET (onto string), WEAR AMULET, D, E, N, N, N, W (jewellery shop – see a sign informing you that gold is bought here), SELL CHAIN (you now have a bundle of Egyptian money and can buy some vital items needed for your expedition), E, N, E (general stores), BUY ROPE, BUY LAMP, BUY MATCHES (all automatically picked up), I (note lamp is battery operated), W, S, S, E (hotel reception), PAY MANAGER (who puts your case on the desk), TAKE CASE, OPEN CASE, LOOK (see an ignition key), TAKE KEY, DROP CASE, W, S, E (hotel car-park), ENTER CAR, INSERT ignition KEY (you start the engine), W (main street), S, S (junction), W, N, N
.....

THE EMERALD ELF played by Steve Clay on an Amiga(e), also on Spectrum, Atari(e) and PC(e)

Movement is via Forward. Aft. Port. Starboard. Use the lift as a place to dump your objects.

P(ort), P, P, PRESS 9, S(tarboard), S, SEARCH HOLD – find a secret exit – S, S, GET ALL – Food pipe and book – SMELL BOOK – P, P, P, P, PRESS 1, S, S, X CUPBOARD, TAKE KEY FROM CUPBOARD, P, P, PRESS 2, S, S, F(oward), SEARCH BEDS, GET PASS CARD, A(ft), P, P, PRESS 7, S, ASK FOR SOUP...

GOLDEN LOCKET played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also on Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

Start in some bushes, a bear is chasing you. RUN N, RUN W, RUN U (bear is still following you), TAKE ROCK, THROW ROCK, X ROCKS, TAKE COMPASS, D, E, TAKE STETSON (wedged in tree), E, X HOLE (in tree – see a snake curled upon an old coat), X TREE, BREAK BRANCH, TAKE BRANCH, W, HIT STETSON (with branch), TAKE STETSON, X STETSON (see an egg inside), TAKE EGG, E, DROP EGG (near hole, snake swallows it and slithers away), TAKE COAT, W, N (open plain – it is raining), WEAR COAT, WEAR STETSON, E (torrential rain but the coat and hat protect you), E (end of plain), N (see a camp fire), CALL OUT (otherwise he shoots you), APPROACH CAMP. The stranger says he is going for some wood; you have 3 moves before he returns. X CAMP (see bottle of oil), TAKE BOTTLE, LEAVE CAMP, W

THE SUITCASE played by Steve Clay on an Amiga

Type V for a list of available verbs and picture to freeze or unfreeze the graphics. Start in your tent. LOOK – reveals a camera and a Walkman, GET ALL, E,S,S – into shower room – EXAMINE MACHINE, GET KRONA, N, W, GET KNIFE, E, E, GET GLASS – be careful to drop this somewhere safe and don't take it onto the dinghy – E, CUT NET – get a piece of rope – DROP GLASS, W, N, N, GET GUN, N, E, N, READ LEAFLET – do not attempt to pick the leaflet up before you have read it as it will fall to pieces, it holds a password for later – S, S, W, S, S, W, N, N, W, GET CHICKEN, E, N, N, CLIMB GATE, GET KRONA

GOLDEN FLEECE played by Dorothy Millard on an Amiga – also on Atari

Start in a dusty room. GET LAMP, LIGHT LAMP, N, N, E, U (top of stairs), NE, N (rocky face), OPEN DOOR, N (cliff edge), NW, E (sandy beach), E (sewage pipe), S (into pipe complex), S, NW, E (central chamber), N (bath chamber), OPEN DOOR, E (n/s corridor), N, E (changing room), GET KNAPSACK, W, E, W, E, W, E (this time you see a potion), GET POTION, EXAMINE POTION, DRINK POTION (a label flutters to the floor), GET LABEL, READ LABEL ("Potion of Comprehension"), DROP LABEL, W, N, N, OPEN DOOR, E (into imp room where the Number Imp asks one of five different mathematical puzzles – see Precision Corner). Input the answer to the appropriate question. GET ROD, EXAMINE ROD, S, U

INNER LAKES played by Frank Fridd on a Amstrad – also available on Spectrum

S, S, EXAMINE WARDROBE, GET BOX, SE, UNDRRESS, EXAMINE SINK, GET SOAP, TURN KNOB, RUB SOAP, TURN KNOB, DRESS, DROP SOAP, NW, N, NW, GIVE BOX TO NOEL, TALK TO CUSTOMER, EXAMINE KEY, READ NOTE, E, EXAMINE SHOP

POWER CURSE Pt.1 played on an Amstrad

Start in Toklot Inn. I (roll of sticky tape, calculator, pen, penknife and 100 silver pieces), DROP TAPE, DROP PEN, DROP PENKNIFE, EXAM MAN (has an almost empty ale mug), SAY HELLO, BUY ALE, GIVE ALE TO MAN (who now becomes friendly), EXAM MAN again, EXAM TATTOO, ASK MAN FOR HELP (note what he says, especially the password), SW (narrow path lined with trees), EXAM TREE, SAY HELLO, SAY XOLZAN, ASK TREE FOR HELP, NW (outside giant tower), EXAM SAGE, SAY HELLO, SAY XOLZAN (he is a friend), ASK SAGE FOR HELP (note details – he gives you a shovel), SE, NE, N (mountain pass), EXAM BOULDER, DIG UNDER BOULDER (need shovel), DROP SHOVEL, N (summit)

RED MOON – available for most computers

Start on a wide, flat grassy plain. I (nothing), DIG (find a crown), TAKE CROWN (if not automatically picked up), W, S (inside stone house), DROP CROWN, N, W, NW (dry plain of volcanic ash), TAKE HORSESHOE, N, E, E, NW, W (edge of sheer cliff), TAKE DAGGER, E, NW, N (volcanic crater), TAKE GLOVES, S, SE, SE, SE, S, E, S (copse of ash trees), E, N (tree clump), N (lakeside folly), EXAM BUSHES, TAKE HANDLE, TAKE KEY, INSERT HANDLE (into hole), TURN HANDLE (to drain lake), N, EXAM FUNGUS, TAKE PEARL, S, S, S, W, W, N, W, W, S (back in stone house), DROP PEARL, DROP DAGGER, TAKE LAMP, EXAM LAMP (note spells and focus needed), N, E, E, N, NE (by locked gate), UNLOCK GATE WITH KEY, NE (entrance to castle), LIGHT LAMP, E (grand entrance hall), E, NE, N, W, W, TAKE DULCIMER

THE SNOW QUEEN played by Edwina Brown on a Spectrum – also available on C64, Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

UP, KISS GRANDMOTHER, E, WASH, GET DOLL, EXAM UNDER BED, GET SHOES, W, D, S, D, E, N, EXAM GROUND, GET PURSE, S, W, S, GIVE PURSE, N, E, E, BUY BREAD, USE COIN, W, S, S, S, GIVE DOLL, S, BOARD BOAT, THROW SHOES, SHOUT

HINTS AND TIPS

ANGELICUS SAGA played by Ellen Mahon on an Amstrad 464

Part One

Search pockets to find the key to the locker.

Examine the linen, then search it to find some cigarettes.

Examine the bar to find the means of striking a light.

The battery for the torch is hidden under the bar.

For a bag of flour, the baker will give you the means of dealing with the rats.

The scroll is hidden in the alcove in the sewer.

BOUNTY HUNTER played on Spectrum, C64, Amstrad, Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

SWANFLEET RUIN – To walk through Whispering Woods you must wear the two sponges that can be found by examining the sea at Sheyel Harbour.

ARRAT SANDS – There is a pool of clear water near the misty area that has a Gillworm in it. Fill the pot that is in Warholm with salt from the Ahn Saltflats. Throw the salt into the pool, then throw the dead Gillworm into the Arrat Sands to kill the sharks.

THE GORSE PITS – In Sedge Hollow there are some Rock Nettles. You must walk through these to numb your legs, then go directly to the Gorse Pits before the numbness wears off.

END IS NIGH played by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga(e) – also available on Amstrad, Spectrum, Atari(e) and PC(e)

Part Two – Interstellar Zone

Play football with the topaz.

Attach the grabarm to the orifice of the pod.

Unscrew the tubing so the pod can be moved.

The grabarm can carry only one item at a time so you can take something into space, use it, get rid of it and bring something back. You will have to locate an ailing alien, a ruby and a screwdriver.

The pod is solar-powered, so you can re-charge the batteries.

Part Three – Subterranean Zone

When Neptune asks how he can help you, remember the historian and the name on the unmoveable anchor.

To pick up the pearl, swap it for something else.

If you need the mermaid again she usually hangs around the MERSEY.

LOBE PRAT CRED at the top of the stairs is an anagram.

BUGSY played by Barbara Gibb on a C64 – also available on Spectrum, Atari(e), Amiga(e), PC(e) and others(?)

Part One

FIGHT HOODS in Deviney's Bar (note the black mask)

TALK to LOUIE then BUY (Y) the MASK.

Talk to each of the three Newsboys and offer them Protection, but wear the mask so that they can't recognize you.

In the Gunsmith's, talk to the Italian and buy the pistol.

You will need to Hire Louie and Muscles before you can safely go to the Pawnshop. You should get \$39 from him.

Part Two

First, buy the sleek, black Cadillac from the car showroom.

Examine the corpses at the Hijacking Black Spot.

Offer to Protect the old man who runs the bookshop!

Ensure you have the business card before entering the Hilton Plaza Hotel. You have *one* move to leave them a "present".

It is extremely profitable to offer to Protect the Casino.

Greet and Bribe Black Shag Joe to learn something very important – armed with this knowledge, return to the Hijacking Black Spot.

DAY OF THE TENTACLE played by John Yates on a PC

Use George's bed to give you time to nick the soap.

Change Ned's hammer from right to left to sort out Bernard's statue.

Hoagie can use the tentacle chart to create a flagging disguise for Lerverne.

Blow Washington's teeth out, and give him the chatterers.

Distract the cat with a squeak.

FABLED TREASURE OF KOOSAR played by Barbara Gibb on a C64 – also available on Amstrad and Spectrum.

Lift a pot to find a key.

Another key is in the safe. The picture is a clue to the combination.

There is a purse containing money to be found in the picnic area.

Buy a spade, rope and torch at the store.

The rubbish is hiding a trapdoor.

In the hut – lever the floorboard with the crowbar.

You have to be carrying the stick in order to TAKE BOTTLE at the rock pool. If you smash it the paper will blow away, so you'll have to find it.

DRUIDS MOON played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Amstrad

When you “recover” from your transportation, go south, down and south to the river where you see a pike. So that it is safe to fill the flask, wedge its jaws with the stick.

Squeeze the mistletoe berries into the flask of water to make a “fine witch’s brew”.

In the Hermit’s hut – say hello, take a drink, and pat the dog when it corners you.

In Celica’s hit – examine the skins, then GIVE HER WATER (actually the witch’s brew).

Find the field with a monument on a mound and go up. If you are wearing the pendant, you will feel a burning sensation around your neck, so DROP PENDANT (you only remove it) to be transported to an area “where reality seems distorted”. This disturbance ceases when you DROP PENDANT (transported back to the mound).

Touch the Celtic Cross to be transported to an underground chamber.

FIRST PAST THE POST played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Amstrad, Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

To find the key to the shed – pull the nose and examine the mouth of the garden gnome.

The golfbag is your carrying container.

Search the sofa to find a handbag.

Search the sink and oven in the kitchen.

Get the dog to chase the plate.

In order to board the bus you need the token and to be wearing wig, hat, dress, tights, shoes and make-up.

Boarding the bus is a point of no return; you should be carrying scissors, string, nailfile, rockcake, match, toilet roll, sticky tape.

FLAMEOUT played by John Schofield on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

Examine the wall and lever to operate the escape chute.

You should find a lifejacket, knife, £5 and some beads on the jet. Don’t forget to search the wreckage after the explosion.

Give the beads to the man and he’ll help with the arrow.

There’s something behind the obelisk to help with the wooden door.

Climb the tree and pick a leaf to deal with the mist.

Wait at the stream for more ammunition.

To open the cabinet, remember how Tom Sawyer’s tooth was extracted! The gardener wants a drink. Search him when he’s asleep and make a lens by dropping the bottle – but be careful how you pick it up.

You’ll need the screwdriver sharpening.

FUDDO AND SLAM played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

From the start, go east along the highway until you reach the east end of the Murky Woods, then go south to the west side of the river.

TALK to SLAM and say GIVE STRING to me.

Slam will come when you call him.

At Ye Olde Shoppe, talk to the Elf and buy the axe.

Use the axe to chop down a tree then call Slam and ask him to help you roll it into the river. It floats away to a very convenient place.

JESTER QUEST played by Edwina Brown on a Spectrum (48K and 128K) – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

Telling jokes will sometimes get results.

Push gnome in pond to get his boots.

Wear boots to climb Grizelda's steps, remove them to get down again.

Give figs to the unicorn. Plant seeds in dung.

Tell priest to follow you.

JUNGLE BUNNY played by Barbara Gibb on a C64

After an input such as SHOOT or EXAM, redescribe the location (LOOK) to see if something has appeared.

An arrow is at the top of one of the trees. Come down the tree the same way you got up.

Shoot the native and gigantic tiger with the bow and arrow.

You need the bronze key to unlock the native hut and the box.

There is something hidden by the sign at the entrance to the maze.

Work your way through the maze of creepy crawly ferns and vines to an eerie room to reclaim the stolen key.

The amber liquid will enable you to enter the crack.

Sharpen the scimitar on the whetstone.

Read the leather-bound book for a good clue.

SCAPEGHOST played by Kenneth Pedersen on a C64

Part Two

By communicating with your ghost-friend, it should be possible to get the piece of paper in the chimney from the outside.

The great grandfather clock should in some way be connected to the body in the tank in the attic. If you are having problems with entering the tank then try some different commands – the parser is quite strange here!

KYRANDIA 3 – MALCOLM'S REVENGE played by Jenny Perry on a PC

Click twice to ride the barrels by the waterfall (thanks to Sue Roseblade)

Wear the shoes, then insert the shoehorn in the machine by the waterfall. You only get to do this once. (thanks to Sue Roseblade)

Put the poster on the magician's cabinet by the voice of Reason when you return to Kyrandia.

If you choose to be guided by your bad conscience, get the crutch from the pawnshop and use it to prop up the fish cream sandwich machine.

When you are in pirate-ridden Kyrandia, you must make cream and obtain sesame seeds before you visit the Isle of Cats, as they will not be available later. You must have these items in your inventory when you leave.

LAND OF THE PURPLE SEA played by the author, Dorothy Millard, on a C64

Jump to a ledge, check behind the bushes and then lower the ladder.

Use magic to leave the squat dwelling. Did you read the parchment? Don't forget the wand.

Fish for a ring in the brook, but watch out for the old boot.

The weird goat-like animal likes fish.

Release the fly in the cobweb room for a ring.

The enormous purple cat wants his socks!

Use magic to enter the crack and find the cape.

The special place high in the mountains is magical.

HELP will tell you where you need to use magic.

MUMMY'S CRYPT played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

To get the honeycomb from the hive – insert the smoking branch *before* your hand.

At the edge of the pit – INSERT SPIKE

Throw the logs into the pit and collect all the other items needed beyond this point, i.e. rope, glass and bandage, cutters, bag, mug and stone, bat, honeycomb, mallet, boots.

You need something to allow you to increase your normal carrying capacity but I'm sure you suspected that when you found the item.

You need to take a lot of items passed the slab so remember that DROP ALL is acceptable.

Stick up the beam/eyes of the statue to raise the portcullis.

To avoid the rolling boulder GRAB BAR and SAY the word overheard when the old man goes for a walk in the woods.

Cross the underground lake after making a raft.

The old hag needs a seeing-aid so give her the glass, but ensure *she* doesn't cut *her* hand.

LORDS OF TIME played by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga – also available for most other computers

Zone 1

Find the rucksack. When WORN this allows you to carry as much as you will need – 15 plus any worn.

Climb over the fence at the end of the garden.

Zone 2

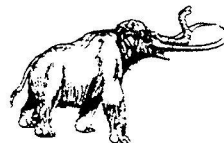
When the woolly mammoth blocks your escape pour the petrol from the can and ignite it to scare off the animal – leaving its skin behind.

Zone 3

Lead the Allosaurus to the Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Wave the leaves for a lift out of the deep pit.

Wave the mirror at the Brontosaurus for a magical result – so be careful where you drop it.



Zone 4

Dig with the shovel in the old musty dry cave.

Go U into the vertical fissure.

Carry quite a lot of items (but ~~not~~ the lur) when you enter Pirate Pete's hideout, he is less likely to steal your firefly and you can recover stolen item(s) later.

Pull handle whilst inside the chest to return to the clock.

Zone 5

The milestone is more than just scenery.

You have to TAKE ALE ("buy ale" is not understood) and pay for it with the nugget.

Don't throw the apple at the wretch in the stocks unless you save your position first.

SONG OF TALIESIN played by John Schofield on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

Part Two

Cast a spell to destroy the line and summon Gwydian to help. Cast another spell to help Gwydian.

When you have the cup, cast yet another spell to return to Aranrod.

Check out the cup when she returns it so you can go swimming.

On the way up the tower, you should find some masonry, a rope, a rebec, a bow and a tuning fork.

The fork will deal with the Crystal and a D.I.Y. pendulum with the pentacle (persist!)

The chest lid has what you need.

The fork and bow make a weapon when you're attacked.

When sight doesn't work, use another sense.

VALHALLA 1 (Lord of Infinity) played by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga

Level 4

Use the telephone to open the two nearby chests.

There are two bishop's hands – give the crook to the one in the same room as the four councillors, and a ring to the other.

Place the bell, book and candle on the bishop's shrine.

To forgive the humble slave you need the Drink of Voices and the correct phrase to say.

Shred the phrase book to gain some extra words.

You have to convince the councillor to the right of the locked door that you are the gardener, so you need 2 phrases and a flower.

Put the necklace in the jewellery box to open the nearby chest.

Prevent the key from sliding from pillow to pillow by placing something sticky between them.

The green book gives you a good clue.

Replace the secretary's chess piece with one of a higher value and you will, eventually, be rewarded with a lot of new words.

VALHALLA 2 (Before The War) played by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga

Level 1

Extend the gutter and drop the heavy ball so it rolls down and breaks the glass.

The sapphire is a birthday stone, so put it on the scales – a sign of the zodiac! You can now make the oracle happy.

Put the blue vase opposite its twin to open the nearby door.

Save your position *before* walking past the zappers into the Wizard's Maze because the time lock will be triggered. If you take too long you will be zapped on the way out.

Put the sword on the duellist's altar.

Make and bake a bowl using the soggy clay, potter's wheel and kiln.

Fill the bowl with stew to give to the hungry old man.

Put the fan on the left-hand table to blow the love letter to where you can get it.

To brew up the Banish Spell you have to mix the pearl, love letter, pound note and staff in the cauldron.

Return to the start location and put the Banish Spell in front of the Wizard to open the entrance to the dungeons and level 2.

WITCH HUNT played by Barbara Gibb on a C64 – also available on Spectrum, Atari, Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

What do I do in the tent? – wave the wand to dispel the illusion.

How do I get the nails out of the well? – wave the bar (the nails stick to it), then drop the bar somewhere else to release the nails.

VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE played by Barbara Gibb on a C64 – also available on Spectrum, Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(E) and others(?)

General – This game is full of awful puns, and many objects are not quite what they seem at first glance, e.g. the fence in the wellie-house.

Part One

To leave the small brick building (wellie-house) – examine the spring.

Note the two descriptions of the bull for clues.

Wear the wellies to move along the gully.

To fill the bottle – GET WATER.

As you can't carry the lamp and log at the same time, nor go through more than one dark location without being killed, play "leapfrog" with them until the log is bridging the chasm.

Use canned applause to attract the bird to the right location.

Part Two

At the start there isn't much to do in the first four locations so hang around until Trixie intervenes and restarts you in the large cavern with different locations to the west, and a White Rabbit to follow.

Examine the utility belt and wear it. Work out the four anagrams. DIAL FILE on the belt for a useful tool.

In the Long Low Hall examine the curtains twice and LOOK patiently until a glass table appears which should be examined more than once.

Free and pick up the glass table before you become 12" high and hold on to the decanter – they are both "fenceable".

There isn't much to do in the painted garden except examining and trying to catch the White Rabbit. Trixie will intervene again and return you to the large cavern.

The Mattress Room (a spoof on the Bedquilt in Colossal Adventure) has random exits except for East to the Complex Junction) and West to the French Cheese Room).

Say the "dirty" word found in the dead end passage to be transported to the wellie-house and back again.

PRECISION CORNER

GOLDEN FLEECE played on an Amiga and Atari

The Number Imp asks any one of five different mathematical puzzles set up at the start :

- a) Nuts3120
- b) Man24
- c) Perfect No496
- 6) Grandma73
- e) Most Factors840

SOLUTION OF THE MONTH

THE GOLDEN FIGURES OF DEATH

Written by Martin Freemantle

Played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum, also available on Amiga(e)

Note: TAKE is not accepted, you have to use GET to pick up an object

X COMPUTER, SEARCH UNDER SEAT (find disk), X DISK (see word "pixels"), INSERT DISK (into disk drive), LOGON (invited to input the password), PIXELS, RUN (told teleport locked on to first location and two letters deciphered), LOGOFF, W (into teleporter), TOUCH PANEL (you're teleported to the eastern end of sandy beach).

W (west end of beach), X CLIFF (see symbol - a clue as the route you should take when swimming in the sea), SE (by rocks near sea), SEARCH ROCKS (find net), GET NET, SWIM (now treading water), S, S, E, E, N, N (sandy cove - see two palm trees), X TREES, U (top of tree), X LEAVES, TEAR LEAF (now have piece of tin foil), D, TIE NET (between the trees), SIT ON NET (an opening appears in the north cliff face), UNTIE NET, GET ALL (net and turtle shell), N (small chamber cut into cliff), GET air TANK, X TANK, WEAR ALL (i.e. net and tank), S, SWIM (treading water), S, W, W, N, N, N (back at east end of beach), DIG (need turtle shell - find golden chest), DROP SHELL, OPEN CHEST (can't), SW, SWIM, S, D (to see sea bed - need air tank), W, W, SEARCH CORAL (find tunnel entrance), N (in tunnel), RUB ALGAE (reveals message), X MESSAGE, N, N, N, N (small opening above you), U (through opening to cavern), X BOX (fuse missing), ROLL FOIL (leaf, to make a fuse), INSERT FUSE, FLICK SWITCH, W, W (smugglers' hideout), MOVE CRATES (find nailbar), GET NAILBAR, E, E, D, S, S, S, S, S, S, S (i.e. eight times), E, E, E, S (see wrecked ship), X SHIP (see loose plank), PRISE PLANKS (need nailbar), S (inside hull of ship), X SKELETON, X HAND (points to his own mouth), OPEN MOUTH (something falls out), GET golden KEY, U (through hatch), REMOVE NET (from around your neck), THROW NET (catches on edge of hole), U (to captain's cabin), X TABLE (upside down), TURN TABLE, SEARCH CHARTS (find mirror), GET MIRROR, D, D, N, N, N, N, U, N, N, NE (back at east end of beach), UNLOCK CHEST (need gold key), DROP NAILBAR, DROP KEY, LOOK IN CHEST (see grapnel with rope), GET GRAPNEL FROM CHEST, SW, SWIM, S, D, W, W (tunnel entrance), N, N, N, N, N, N (i.e. six times), U, W, W (smugglers' hideout - see shaft), THROW GRAPNEL, U, E, E (brightly-lit chamber - see golden chariot and laser beams), REFLECT BEAMS (need mirror): It is now safe to GET CHARIOT. You are transported back to teleport chamber.

E, PUT CHARIOT INTO UNIT, LOGON, PIXELS, ANALYSE (see letters MO), RUN (locked on for second figurine), LOGOFF, W, TOUCH PANEL (transported to empty room).

X NOTICE, S (no exit except north - see handle), TURN HANDLE, TURN HANDLE, TURN HANDLE (exit now to the west), W (exit shown as east), TURN HANDLE, TURN HANDLE (exit now shown as west), W, TURN HANDLE, S, TURN HANDLE, TURN HANDLE, TURN HANDLE, W, TURN HANDLE (panel opens to reveal a golden horse), GET HORSE (transported back to teleport chamber)

E, PUT HORSE INTO UNIT, LOGON, PIXELS, ANALYSE (see letters NA), RUN (set for mission 3), LOGOFF, W, TOUCH PANEL (transported to a river bank).

PUSH BARREL (it is washed to the other side of the river), N, X STONE (300 miles to town), SEARCH BRUSH (find twig), GET TWIG, E, U (in chestnut tree), SEARCH LEAVES (see knothole). LOOK IN KNOTHOLE (see lock), PICK LOCK (need twig), D (see opening in tree), E (inside tree), D, GET BLADE, U, W (outside again), X SYCAMORE (see resin oozing from crack in bark), W, CUT BRUSH (need blade), TIE BRUSH TO TWIG (now have torch), E, DIP TORCH IN RESIN, W, SCRAPE BLADE (on milestone - to light torch), E, E (inside chestnut tree), D, S, SEARCH WEBS (find torch clasp), INSERT TORCH (the weight moves the clasp down and reveals an entrance to the east), X BOOT, GET BOOT (can't), WEAR BOOT (you shrink until you are *inside* the boot - see nest in toe), SEARCH NEST (disturb a mouse), GET MOUSE, U (out of boot), W, S (meet a large spider), DROP MOUSE (it eats the spider), CUT WEB (cut hole in web - need blade), CLIMB WEB (now at top of spider's web - see metal grille), SEARCH WEB (now have magnet), D, S (see *fat* mouse), CUT MOSS (need blade - find a hatch), X HATCH (has a keyhole), X MOUSE, ROLL MOUSE, SEARCH MOSS (find key), GET KEY, UNLOCK HATCH, W, X HOLLY, PICK BERRIES, U (now on other side of river where the barrel should be floating - if you pushed it into the river!!), BREAK SAPLING, ENTER BARREL. DISLodge BARREL (need sapling). When you get the message about just missing some jagged rocks GRAB BRANCH. You are now perched on a branch of a tree. W (see nest), GET NEST, E, R (until branch breaks - you land on a pile of rocks in the middle of the river), X ROCKS (some are different), LEVER ROCKS (need sapling - find a set of steps), D (snake appears), THROW BERRIES (snake catches them, eats them and dies), GET SNAKE, X SNAKE, D (cavern with stalagmites and pool), X POOL (see chain at bottom), USE MAGNET ON CHAIN (now have a long chain), THROW SNAKE (its head wedges between the stalagmites), SWING ON SNAKE (now on other side of pool). You now come face to face with a vicious orc, so you have to be *quick* to THROW BLADE to kill the orc. You can see a handle high up on the wall. THROW CHAIN AT HANDLE, PULL CHAIN (reveals opening to the west), FILL NEST (with water from the pool), W (secret chamber - see ring of fire), X FIRE (see golden warrior beyond), THROW WATER AT FIRE, GET WARRIOR (transported back).

E, PUT WARRIOR INTO UNIT, LOGON, PIXELS, ANALYSE (see letters BM), RUN (asked for fail safe code which is an anagram of the eight letters you have), MOON BEAM.

THE END - 200/200

SERIALIZED SOLUTION

GOBLINS 3 played by Jenny Perry on a PC

You find yourself by a chessboard. There's not a lot you can do here until you visit the storybook so go there first. Bounce on the geometry book until the arrows fall out. Read the first page of the book and use the arrows in the hole. Read the sculpture and drawing books. Use the compass on the sheet to obtain a number 8. While Fulbert distracts the scary spider, get the horse and put the coin on the wheel. Use your axe on the wooden ruler. Fulbert flicks the dust while Blount stands underneath. Click on the clouds of dust and Blount sneezes. Pick up the numbers. That naughty spider has taken the 9 so Fulbert obscures the moonlit scenery and Blount turns into a handsome prince and scares him. Put all the numbers except the 0 in the inkpot and dip the pen in. Now draw on the tower and chat to the warrior. Give him the horse. Use the ink again on the house on page 3. This has to be done 2 or 3 times until you get a mandolin. Now use the ink again on the cart to obtain some marble and your coin back. Go to the chessboard.

Use the chalk on the wood and the compass on the marble. Hold the wood chisel with the left hand and the hammer with the right. Use the hammer on chisel, then paint your rough figure and use ink for its mouth. Do the same with the marble. That *sounds* easy but it's quite fiddly. Pop both figures on the chessboard. Juggle the balls with both hands and insert the coin in the slot. Pick up the large mandolin with the right hand and play its soundhole with the left hand. Leave the rat alone until you need him.

Now play chess. The bowman shoots the lancers and stands in the corner green square opposite the King. The killer stands on the square with the lever, which disposes of the hangman. The knight stands on the 2 yellow squares next to the King to eliminate the king's knights. The killer uses the axe on the King. Put the rat on the blue square diagonally adjacent to the Chaperone. Now the Lover stands in the square where the Chaperone was and plays the mandolin to an embarrassed princess. Stand on the square by the tower and enter it to travel to the Hall of Mirrors.

Get the egg and use in the Mirror of Time. Make the chick fatter and pass through the passage. The reflection picks it up and uses it in the access to the big hand. Now make him thin and give him back. Blount uses him on the access to the little hand. The demon wakes up! Visit the brain. Use the growixir on the bud and Fulbert on the plant. Wereblount presses the switch. Turn the pages until you get to Colossus. Wereblount biffs him and you get a grain of sand. Turn the page to the dragon. Now Wereblount turns the railway to face the lake, rides the cart and swims in the lake. Now Blount goes up there and puts the sand in the eye. Return there and pop the tear on your travels.

Now there is a flying fish. Quickly switch the rails to point straight and Wereblount jumps on the cart and rides the fish. He then pulls the decoy and returns. Blount repeats this process to pick up the decoy, then goes to the auditory pavilion and uses the decoy. Use growixir on dragon. Use decoy again on puddle and fence. Now you have the key and can open the box. Get the fattest hen you can and hitch a lift from the dragon to the grain. The hen eats the grain and leaves one grain of folly. Use this on the demon to get lotion which the reflection picks up. Blount uses his ointment on the ugly mirror then the reflection uses his lotion on it and they can both step through to the final level.

This level depends on immaculate timing. Use the axe on the fence and the hammer on the wall. Ring both bells and stand on the chain. Pick up the score. Throw it back into the stream (of course!!). Now repeat the process with the bells and quickly hop into the empty basin. Get 2 scores. Pick up the yarn. Give the yellow score to the angel and the red one to the devil. Bash the cloud with the hammer. Now dash over to the halo and throw the coin in it. Race down and tie the 2 notes together with the yarn then sprint along to those bells and ring both quickly. When the water drains away, providing the notes haven't faded you get a lovely ending. Click on the mouse to get rid of the "music" then watch Blount remembering his adventures. Push the escape key for a lovely-dovey sequence.

THE END

[Unless I receive a request for a specific solution, the next serialized solution will be "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" played by Phil Reynolds on a PC....Barbara]



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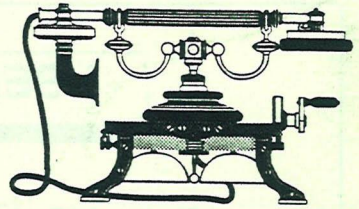
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