

ADVENTURE PROBE

OCTOBER 1997 £2.00

VOLUME 11 ISSUE 10



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

ADVENTURE PROBE

COPYRIGHT

Copyright on anything which does not carry the writer's name belongs to Adventure Probe. Copyright on all other items remains with the writer as Adventure Probe does not pay for contributions.

LETTERS

If you write in it will be assumed that the letter is for publication in Probe unless it is clearly marked NOT FOR PUBLICATION, or obviously just a covering note for your subscription, contribution etc.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

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Copies can be ordered monthly or in multiples up to 12 issues: sorry no discount for quantity. Prices per issue: UK £2.00, Europe & Eire £2.50, Rest of World (Surface) £2.50 (Airmail) £3.00. All payments in pounds sterling please. Cheques/Crossed Postal Orders or International Giro payable to ADVENTURE PROBE. Please do not send cash, but small amounts (i.e. up to £4) may be in the form of 19p, 25p, or 29p stamps to save on poundage/bank charges.

BACK ISSUES

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

ADVERTISING RATES

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

DISTRIBUTION

Adventure Probe is distributed during the 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.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL:	4
LETTERS:	5
REVIEWS: The Islands of Sinbad	9
Ski Adventure	10
Broken Sword 2	11
Backwards (book)	13
The Changeling	14
SPECIALS: Place That Face	8
Ten Sets of Famous Last Words	15
Prize Puzzle	16
Mentor's News 10	17
Convention Time	18
1997 - The Year of the Flagon?	18
Convention Report 1997	21
Convention - Birmingham 1997	23
My First Convention	24
ADVERTISEMENTS:	26
ANSWERS TO QUIZZES :	32
PERSONAL MESSAGES.....	33
AMIGA NEWS:	34
IN TOUCH / ADDITIONAL SOLUTIONS:	35
GETTING YOU STARTED:	36
OBJECTS AND THEIR USES: R.J.'s Ultimatum	38
HINTS AND TIPS:	39
SERIALIZED SOLUTIONS: Dungeon Master 2	47
SOLUTION OF THE MONTH: Caves of Skull	48
E-MAIL ADDRESSES:	50
USEFUL POSTAL ADDRESSES:	51
HELPLINES:	Back

HALL OF FAME

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

Dorothy Millard, Edwina Brown, John Ferris, John Wilson, Terry Taylor,
Ellen Mahon, Jonathan Scott, David Hebbiethwaite, Karen Tyers,
Kieran O'Loughlin, Lynne Clay, Steve Clay
and Phil Glover.

Special thanks to :

Geoff Lynas for his usual excellent printing job.

EDITORIAL

I was just about to sit down to write this editorial when I received a telephone call to tell me about the very sad and sudden death of Ron Guest. Although I never met Ron, I feel I knew him very well. A couple of years ago he sent me some photographs of himself with his dogs and beloved computers, and these have pride of place in my "office". Regular readers will know him from his letters (some signed The Dead Warg) which demonstrated his wonderfully dry sense of humour. I will miss Ron. He may have lost a short but hard-fought battle against the big C, but I have no doubt he is now giving some cryptic advice to other players in the great adventure in the sky!

At the moment my main concern is whether I can get 3, or even 2, magazines out before the middle of December. Some readers helpfully send in contributions on disc, enabling me to put this issue together in 6 days instead of the usual 8 to 10. I am hoping to start the November issue as soon as this one is distributed, so please, please, get *your* contribution(s) in the post to me **TODAY**. As I can't help with PC games, unless they run under emulation on an Amiga, contributions are especially welcome for PC graphic adventures. However, anything that you think will be of the remotest interest to adventurers is gratefully accepted.

As I have said on numerous occasions, if you have one or even a hundred adventures that you have been stuck in for ages, let me know and I will do my best to help, via the magazine. I know I'm not the only player who has a folder (or two) bulging with half-finished maps. The magazine exists to help *you*, so let me know which adventures you would like featured. Several readers responded to my previous plea, and I am working on hints for the games mentioned, but I need more guidance, otherwise you are going to have to put up with my own preferences.

Which reminds me. Can someone help *me*? One game that I have been trying to complete is ONE DARK NIGHT. I have what is supposed to be a hint sheet, but to be honest it hasn't given me any help, I am still no further in the game than I was years ago. I think I will be able to progress if I knew how to find my way through a garden-hedge maze, but anything that hasn't already been published in Probe will be much appreciated. Another is called GENEVA, a PC game which I play (more off than on) on the Amiga under emulation. This game is so user-*un*friendly that I can't even be sure that what I have solved is correct! Once again, any help will be useful.

Here in the U.K. it is getting dark and cold, an ideal excuse for getting out your computer(s) and playing some adventures. Please don't forget to buy the new ones! The way things have been going lately, you don't know how long they will be available!

All the best,

Barbara

LETTERS

From Dorothy Millard of Croydon, Australia

I recently discovered the 1997 Interactive Fiction Competition games on the Internet, so if anyone is browsing they should check them out. They are available from the usual source in Germany. Below is the index of the games.

- comp97.z5 The "front-end" game for the 1997 competition, providing information on all the games and systems used to run them, plus the ability to sort the games you can play into a random list. Written by Lucian Paul Smith. Release 3 / Serial number 971009.
- agt/mailbox E-Mailbox v0.3 (beta), a true story based on actual events that occurred to a real individual, by Jay A. Goemmer.
- alan/leaves Leaves, a Short Interactive Journey by Mikko Vuorinen. Release 3
- hugo/down Down, by Kent Tessman. Release 1, 30sep97
- inform/agb A Good Breakfast, an Interactive Feeding by Stuart Adair. Release 1 / Serial number 970921
- inform/bear A Bear's Night Out, an Interactive Children's Story by David Dyte. Release 2 / Serial number 971011
- inform/cask Cask, my first stab at Interactive Fiction, by Harry M. Hardjono. Release 1 / Serial number 970917
- inform/congrats Congratulations! by Frederick J. Hirsch. Release 1 / Serial number 970929
- inform/edifice The Edifice, an Interactive Allegory by Lucian Smith. Competition Release 1 / Serial number 970930
- inform/erden Travels in the Land of Erden: in Quest of the Adventure by Laura A. Knauth. Release 1 / Serial number 970930
- inform/friday Friday Afternoon or: Escape from MicroSun, by Mischa Schweitzer. Release 1 / Serial number 970927
- inform/home Coming Home, A Simple Home Adventure by Andrew Katz. Release 1 / Serial number 970919
- inform/house Aunt Nancy's House, an Interactive Simulation by Nate Schwartzman. Release 1 / Serial number 970906
- inform/legacy The Family Legacy, an Interactive Ghost (???) Story by The Tame Computer, Marnie Parker (aka Female Deer). Release 1 / Serial number 971011

inform/lest Madame L'Estrange and the Troubled Spirit,
an Interactive Fiction by Ian Ball and Marcus Young
Release 1 / Serial number 970929

inform/lost The Lost Spellmaker, an interactive Mission
by Neil James Brown. Release 1 / Serial number 970927

inform/mimesis Sins Against Mimesis, an Interactive Theosophy
by One of the Bruces. Release 1 / Serial number 970925

inform/newday A New Day, by Jonathan Fry
Release 1 / Serial number 970929

inform/pintown Pintown, by Stefan Blixt
Release 1 / Serial number 970902

inform/pizza Phred Phontious and the Quest for Pizza,
an Interactive Errand by Michael Zey
Release 1 / Serial number 970929

inform/reflect Symmetry, a Matter of Self Trust by Rybread Celsius
Release 1 / Serial number 970925

inform/spring She's Got a Thing for a Spring,
an Interactive Dip in a Hot Spring by Brent VanFossen
Release 1 / Serial number 970926

inform/sylenius Sylenius Mysterium, an Interactive Transcendence
by whomever wrote it. Release 1 / Serial number 970928

inform/dragon The Town Dragon, by David A. Cornelson
Release 2 / Serial number 970929

inform/tempest The Tempest, an Interactive Performance
by William Shakespeare. Release 3 / Serial number 970929

jacl/grail The Unholy Grail, by Stuart Allen. Release 1
NOTE: edit file "config" to point to your game file.

tads/aardvark The Obscene Quest of Dr. Aardvarkbarf, by Garry Roggin

tads/almanac Poor Zefron's Almanac. an interactive cross-genre romp
by Carl W. Klutzke. Version 1.0, 30sep97

tads/babel Babel, by Ian Finley

tads/frenfive The Frenetic Five vs Sturm und Drang
interactive fiction by Anonymous. Competition version.

tads/glow Glowgrass, an Interactive Short Story by Nate Cull
Release 1

tads/savannah Sunset Over Savannah, an Existential Vacation by Ivan Cockrum
Release 1.0. 30sep97

tads/temple	Temple of the Orc Mage (level one), by Garry Roggin
tads/vtech	VirtuaTech, by David Glasser Release 1
tads/zero	Zero Sum Game, an Exercise in Fantastic Futility by Cody Sandifer. Release 1.
tads/zombie	Zombie! The Interactive Creepshow by Scott W. Sharkey

From Lynne Clay (Not a subscriber, just related to one!)

I feel I must write concerning the "Battle of the Bog seat" debate that has stirred up so much interest. I air my views in the defence of all women out there, who from time to time have to put up with their mens little quirks.

The main concern seems to be about the aiming powers of the male of the species. Ron Guest offered his explanation and I was unimpressed at such waffle. If men in their boyhood days have competitions as to whether they can reach the other side of the riverbank then surely it is not expecting too much to require them to hit a target of quite some size that stands virtually beneath them? It doesn't even depend on whether you have an "Estate" version with built in turbo or unfortunate enough to own a rusty "Mini". On reflection it just seems that men were allowed to get away with too much in their earlier years. Have you ever noticed the way they never 'spill' when out visiting family and friends, this fault only seems to rear it's ugly head when on home ground. Could this action derive from some basic instinct similar to many male 'ANIMALS' in the wild - (Some wilder than others) - to mark their territory?

One last piece of advice to any gentlemen out there - (although the toilet habits so far debated tend to hint at a lack of gentlemen in the readership) - the phrase 'Going to splash my boots' is not meant to be taken literally. Woman have no desire to experience your shortfalls. So get your system upgraded to a female-friendly one and then we can put a lid down on this subject once and for all.

From John Scott of Londonderry

Thanks for another exceptional issue of Probe. What a great read! Keep up the good work. I appreciated the compliments in the review of Murder Mystery Weekend. It makes an adventure writer warm inside to receive praise.

I thought, since I had a great time at this year's Convention, it was about time that I wrote a report for Probe. I didn't do one last year, due to amnesia and other things. No giggling out there please. But this year it was fantastic, which is why I don't understand why so many people just don't come. I know money's a problem for some folks. It is for me but I'm a student and yet I can still afford the Convention. There's people from all ends of the country going, so if someone out there is looking for a lift just ask a friendly adventurer. No need to be tentative, because many adventurers have to travel alone and the company would be a great boon. And that means also that someone who's never made it to the Convention before will meet in person all those people they've only ever read about in Probe. I would love to meet a number of people who have not attended the Convention before because it would be interesting to find out what they really like and if their description in No Insults Intended is accurate or not!

Onto other matters. After all, I should try to keep my letter short to make room for other stuff in Probe. I found the various articles on the Internet that have been published most informative. More and more adventurers seem to be going online these days. It's great to send an e-mail miles away and get a quick response from someone you might only see once a year, if at all. For instance, I can send a quick message to Laurence and receive a reply from South Africa minutes later. It is superb. Beats the phone any day and it's a darn sight cheaper. Well, if anyone out there would like to contact me via e-mail then you could try either of these addresses:

jonscott@freeyellow.com

or

scott-jm@ulst.ac.uk

I found Free Yellow to be a great service because they give you a free Web page. It's great. At the moment my home-page is only in utero, but I intend to develop it a lot further and update it as often as possible. I've received a positive response from a number of people, so if you want to have a look at it type the following into the webpage address box:

<http://www.freeyellow.com/members/jonscott/index.html>

(with or without the index.html)

I hope I have used the right / or is it \. Can't remember. I use the internet at Uni. Haven't got it at home, but maybe one day when I get a job I will.

By the way, I wonder if a Christmas special of *Adventure Memories Whirling Around* would be well received? I'm sorry to anyone out there who was enjoying the serialisation, but I didn't really have the time or energy to continue it. I know it was only about 1,000 – 1,500 words long each chapter, but I found the ideas were running dry and it was like writing variations on the same theme month after month. However, I'm sure I could muster up the energy to write such a special. Yeah, I think I'll send it in next month.

Finally, I was devastated about the news that Zenobi wouldn't be publishing any new games. I'm glad that John is still selling the old stuff, but still: it makes you think. What *is* adventuring coming to ?

CAN YOU PLACE THAT FACE?



REVIEWS

THE ISLANDS OF SINBAD

Written by Jack Lockerby

Reviewed by Karen Tyers on a Spectrum

This is the latest gem from Jack and you are told that grief stricken after losing your parents you decide to journey away from your home, and so sign up as a deck-hand on a vessel bound for the eastern seas. Wouldn't you just know that you would be shipwrecked as the only survivor on a strange, deserted island....

I loaded up, anticipating Jack's ubiquitous forest, but was pleasantly surprised to find I had been dumped on a small island with not a lot in sight! Finding a way off the island seemed to be the first order of business, but there didn't appear to be a lot around to help, at first glance that is. I did stumble across a Giant Roc who decided that I would make a good supper, and I fell down a hole through being careless, so start again, and look around properly this time!

Careful use of the few climbable trees enabled me to get a better view of my surroundings, thereby acquiring several objects which proved very useful. This is one of those games where things have to be done in the right order, or no go sunshine!

However, having managed to get down the aforementioned hole safely, I came across a skeleton, but getting hold of what it was carrying gave me a few headaches. Having got that, I just needed to work out how to get things out of the hole again - finally worked it out - just me being careless again and not looking properly!

Getting off the island itself proved to be slightly more of a problem, and I don't think I'm giving anything away by mentioning the fact that a disguise (I use the term loosely) may be of some assistance here.

Having got off the island, I found myself in a small valley, with eagles circling overhead, and some lizard like serpents feeding, they were not too much of a problem until I tried to sneak off with a diamond I found laying on the ground..... However, get hold of a diamond you must somehow, because you'll need it later on.

Getting out of the valley led me to a rocky shore, where I had to find a way of travelling down a river, and thus onto a riverbank, where you will find a native guide. He will help you cross the swamps nearby, if you collect coconuts for him, but watch out, one step in the wrong direction, and you will drown in those selfsame swamps! There were plenty of coconut trees around, but no simple way of getting them, and there were also a pack of irritating little monkeys jumping around in the treetops....

However, having finally got enough coconuts to placate the guide, he took me safely through the swamps where I boarded another vessel for home. Not so simple though, this vessel got attacked by pirates, and put me ashore, where I was bought!!!! I was soon told that I would have to earn my keep, but if I could find an elephant's tusk, I would be put on board a ship home. Off I went, with instructions to whistle when I'd found one. I soon came across a herd of elephants, but they weren't going anywhere unless I found a way to move them. I did eventually, and after getting squashed several times, finally managed to locate a tusk, whistled and everyone lived happily ever after!

I don't think this is one of Jack's most difficult games, but there are enough problems to keep most of us happy. Definitely one for your "Lockerby Library" so get a copy while you still can.

Spectrum (tape & +D disc), Atari(e), Amiga(e), PC(e) and MAC(e) £2.99, Spectrum +3 (3⁺ disc) £3.99 available from Zenobi Software.

SKI ADVENTURE

Written by John LaBonney

Reviewed by Dorothy Millard on a PC

"Ski Adventure" takes place in an abandoned ski resort, SnoFlake. You play the part of the main character, a lost camper trying to find his way home. You're out camping with a few buddies on a long weekend from the city. What made you come out here in the middle of winter eludes me. Unfortunately, you find the wilderness is just as much a jungle as the city. You're looking for firewood when you become lost. A heavy snowfall covers your footprints and you can't trace them back to the campsite. After hours of walking you see a building in the distance and rush forward, only to realize that you're at the long abandoned SnoFlake Ski Resort. You're cold, hungry and tired and wondering what to do next.

The game commences with you in a parking lot south of the Alpine Base Area. Going north takes you into the lobby of the resort where, after a little investigation, you will easily find the key to the car which was parked outside. However you are unable to drive the car. Once some items have been removed from the car you should move on to discover the chair lift, which needs to be repaired so that you can ride it to the top of the mountain, where you will discover another lodge. From here an east/west walkway will take you to Gravel Hill and eventually your means of returning to the campsite.

Written with TADS I feel "Ski Adventure" has not been implemented very well. The examine command was lacking in many areas, and items such as the mirror in the description couldn't be examined. Also it is possible to complete the game without entering the lodge at the top of the mountain and without turning on the water there (even though this did give me an extra five points). Talking of points, I wonder if this game was actually finished as it was completed with a score of only 30/100. Once the main puzzle of getting the chair lift working has been solved there really isn't much else to do, and I found the game to be disappointing in this regard.

"Ski Adventure" isn't a bad game but it did give me the impression of being unfinished.



Broken Sword 2 – The Smoking Mirror

A PC graphic adventure published by Virgin Interactive Entertainment

Price £39.99 – Double CD needing Windows 95 etc.

Reviewed by Phil Glover using a Pentium 200 MMX PC

Before reviewing the game, I ought to say that if you intend buying it you need to check that your set-up will run it, as it's a bit demanding.

You need Windows 95, 16 meg of RAM, 4 speed CD drive, at least 66 megs of disk space, Pentium processor (recommended) as well as a good Soundblaster card or similar. DirectX 5.0 is on the CD as this will be needed, but read the notes before you install it.

For the best performance, you need even higher specs on your machine. I did a full install and found that the game saved itself onto 280 megs of hard disk!

Even with that loaded, you'll need the CDs close at hand to run the game.

*

The game is set in the present day, with you playing a character called George Stobbard, and he is accompanied during the game by a French journalist called Nico. (I believe that both characters featured in the first Broken Sword game.)

A well-animated introduction sets the scene for you, with a visit to a Professor's house. This seemingly simple event soon takes a mysterious turn. You're shown into the house by a South American servant who proceeds to use a cosh to knock you out and Nico is shot with a poison dart and kidnapped.

For good measure, the "servant" ties you to a chair, unlooses a deadly spider, sets fire to the room and locks the door. You regain consciousness as the spider walks towards you. You automatically back away in the direction of a bookcase. This first scene is detailed in the manual, giving you an idea how to deal with problems. As you move the mouse pointer around the room, various objects are noticed such as "SPIDER", "WINDOW" etc. Right button describes the item, left is the action button. Looking around the room you'll see a wooden block wedged under one corner of the bookcase. Pressing the left mouse button while the block is displayed makes George kick the block away, allowing the bookcase to fall on the poor, unsuspecting spider, so removing one threat. You're still tied to the chair, but you may notice a metal bracket on the wall where the bookcase once was. No prizes for guessing your next action.

Once untied, you need to tackle the fire. In a cupboard near the fire you find a soda syphon, but it's empty. Near it are some small gas cylinders, but they're too hot to hold. Perhaps some fabric would protect your hand....

The problems in the first location are soon overcome, but don't rush off just yet. Have a good look around and examine everything. Even useless items are described well, and often humorously. Try using the wrong item to put out the fire, etc. and see what happens, or rather, LISTEN what happens. Very few words appear in the game, as descriptions and actions are often spoken. You also will be doing a good deal talking aloud. (So that's why the game needs so much disk space and CD access.)

I managed to work out game controls without the aid of the manual. By moving the pointer to the top of the screen you will be shown the save and load options, game preferences (sound, music, graphics, etc.) and quit to Windows 95. The bottom edge of the screen shows the inventory, or what things you are capable of talking about when with other people. No need to work out exact words to utter in the game, thankfully.

Take a good look at the appearance of each location. They're all painted instead of computer generated. The characters move with smooth actions, like high quality cartoons, and they vary in lightness according to the rooms shadows. Voices are clear and natural, as nine actors have been used according to the game credits.

The credits also list the script writers and director, as if the game were a movie. One name in the credits that shone out was Barrington Pheiong, who's responsible for the music. His best known work is the Inspector Morse music. Over two hours of music is used by the game, sometimes for spot effects, sometimes for incidental music and sometimes for more dominant music, such as organ music being played by a priest or folk music by a band of musicians.

Before long, you soon travel easily to a new location or two. You can sometimes move from one place to another at will, but other times you'll need to solve problems or discover things before being taken somewhere. High quality animations are used for some changes of location. These are very impressive, and it seems a shame that you can only view them once, unless you replay that part of the game. Naturally, it's wise to save your position frequently. You have one hundred 'save-slots' to use or re-use.

Although I'm not great problem-solver, most problems are logical and well thought out. Some people could probably race through the game, but it's best to enjoy the visuals and the music at leisure. The humour is very good and there are some nice comic touches within the animations even though the story is serious. Some of the language verges on mild swearing, especially with characters like the security guard by the docks, who also has an insatiable appetite for baked beans, but nothing offended me.

You naturally need to find the kidnappers' lair and release Nico. Soon you find you're on the trail of drugs and Mayan treasures, but there's more to these crimes than just money, and Mayan legends and prophecies will be found linked to a forthcoming solar eclipse.

You'll encounter dozens of characters throughout the game (I've just started using the second CD, so I must be at the halfway stage?) and it offers plenty of traditional-style adventure problems for you to solve.

Whether the 40-ish price tag is a bit high is debatable. It's worth it when you look at the programming that has gone into it, but a good text adventure may be better value with the same number of problems. I enjoyed the problem-solving, but I also enjoy the graphics and music within the game. Being rather new to these graphic adventures, after the text-based type, I can say I'm thoroughly enjoying the game and will be rather sad when I finish it, more than likely.

I'd be interested to see the first Broken Sword adventure, if it's as good as this game, and I'd also want to play a third game on the same condition. Although Broken Sword 2 has loads of sound and flashy graphics, it is a pure adventure in style and atmosphere. You don't need fast reactions or great keyboard skills. I'm sure many people would be hooked on this game within half an hour of playing it.

BACKWARDS by ROB GRANT

A Red Dwarf Novel. 342 pages. Price: £5.99 (paperback)

ISBN 0-14-017150-9

This is the second Red Dwarf novel to appear since Rob Grant and Doug Naylor ended their writing partnership. The first novel was *The Last Human* by Doug Naylor and he included in the foreword the comment that Rob Grant wanted to write a Red Dwarf novel on his own and yet no such novel had appeared. The fact that Naylor had finished his novel first seemed to amuse him. However first isn't always best.

Backwards follows on from the events told in the novel *Better than Life*. Lister has died so his crewmates Kryten, Rimmer and the Cat planted his body on a version of Earth where time is running backwards and they have arranged to meet him at Niagara Falls thirty-six years later. The story begins here and making sense of the action where time is running backwards can be a tad testing. Several times I found myself replaying the action in forward mode just to see if it made sense. Anyway the party finally meet up only to miss their chance to escape the planet. The next flight window is in ten years. This means that Lister and The Cat will be growing younger and will need to pilot Starbug at the age of 15. The pair end up as tetchy, aggressive, childish, sulky teenagers.

Grant has portrayed the time spent on backwards Earth well and the humour is excellent. There is more scope in the books than the TV series for this and reading about the characters is more rewarding. Lister is initially disappointed at not leaving Earth at the first opportunity as he has been waiting thirty-six years for his first truly satisfying bowel movement. (Think about it.) Finally the crew escape in Starbug and attempt a rendezvous with Red Dwarf. Alas the ship isn't where they left it and soon they discover bits of Holly, the computer that runs Red Dwarf, floating in space. Kryten patches up Holly long enough to discover that Red Dwarf has been stolen by Agonoids. These are very similar to the rogue simulants that appear in the TV series in that they hate humans and are almost indestructible. Given that Lister is the last human being alive the Agonoids all want to be the one who deals with him so their oldest and brightest member DJuhn Keep designs the Death Wheel. This is a hub with corridors spreading out from it. The Agonoids will fight their way from the outer rim to the hub with only one remaining at the end. However DJuhn Keep is cleverer than that. The remainder of the book involves our heroes trying to avoid capture, which also involves the arrival of Ace Rimmer. Some of Ace's background is filled in including the discovery of the Reality drive, a nice piece of science fiction on its own. Ace manages to keep the crew alive long enough for them to meet DJuhn Keep. Ace is forced to battle it out with DJuhn Keep and ejects the deadly foe from Starbug. However Ace is lost and the crew are left to face up to the Agonoids leaving present. A virus in the computer which locks out the controls. This is a fuller version of the TV episode *The Gunmen of the Apocalypse*. The poignant ending is a final twist.

I really enjoyed *Backwards*. The traditional Red Dwarf humour is there and Grant deals with the out of this world theories very well. All the characters behave as they should and never knowing if the heroes will actually survive is another good point. Any Red Dwarf fan should love this, but if you are new to the Red Dwarf series then reading *Red Dwarf* and *Better than Life* is advised. The Doug Naylor book *The Last Human* was a little bit disappointing when I first read it but I'll try it again before I judge.

THE CHANGELING

Written by M. J. Gearing

Review by Dorothy Millard on a Spectrum

In the Vale of Neath, which is the centre of faeries fold in Great Britain, long ago your son is very ill and you consult the Local Conjuror (local wise man) who breaks the bad news that your son has been taken by the Tywyth Teg (faeries who have a fatal fascination for children). They have left in his place a Changeling, which is a substitute for a child stolen by faeries. You are told that your only hope is to go to the land of Gwyn-Ap-Nudd (land of the Crystal Isle) and beg the King for the return of your son. The way of the Crystal Isle has been hidden from mortal man for ages and you will not find it easy. Your only chance is to go to the Sorcerers' Tower and trust to your luck. It is well known that many magical things have been left there, including a book of spells which is said to be enchanted.

Plucking up your courage you make your way to the dark tower where the game commences, feeling lost and alone. There is thick dust on everything which has been undisturbed for years. Your first task is to obtain a magic key which is in an unbreakable bottle, in order to unlock a chest and the door into the dense forest. Once in the forest you may have difficulty finding the way out. I discovered some vines but they turned out to be a red herring, and I climbed a tree to discover another massive tree to the northwest. Obviously that was the way I must go, but it was quite some time before I discovered the way out. You must traverse a certain location several times in order to set the flag which enables you to go northwest. This makes this part of the game unnecessarily hard and I wouldn't be at all surprised if many adventurers gave up at this point or resorted to hints.

Once out of the forest the game opens up. It is important to realise that there are many red herrings, not only objects but also actions which aren't really necessary to the completion of the game, and in fact some will prevent you completing it. There are many hints located throughout the game in the form of the book found in the library at the beginning, a piece of paper, a scroll, inscriptions etc. Note what they say and many necessary actions will become clear. There are a number of one way situations and if you go the wrong way you can often finish up back at the clearing where the oak tree is, which can become something of a pain. Thank goodness for the save option!

Next I met the king who asked if I was looking for my son. On replying yes I was told that he would help if I found his ruby rock. I was then transported to a field of yellow flowers with a ring of stones. Entering the ring I found myself in a strange land with exits northeast and northwest. After looking around I went down some steps only to discover that a metal plate had blocked the stairs preventing me from going back up. I found a cave behind the waterfall and was able to squeeze through to return outside but I was unable to carry anything and one item in particular was necessary to complete another puzzle. There is another way to get out of the cave and it took me quite some time to work out this puzzle, but once I had completed it I realised that I had been given a clue all along. I just hadn't recognised it and had dismissed what the dog said as irrelevant. After entering a huge cavern and ringing the appropriate bell I entered a door in the western wall to find myself before a pit. The pit can be jumped but this action only leads to locations unnecessary to the completion of the game. Instead I looked around for a while until the ledge collapsed and I found myself in a pit of snakes. Reading the book here gave a clue as to the actions necessary to deal with the snakes, allowing me to obtain the stick and exit the pit into a tunnel.

Meeting the devil he offered to build a bridge across the river for me if I agreed to give him the first living thing to cross it. Of course I agreed but now I had to work out how to cross the bridge and survive. Once in the Spriggon Valley beyond the bridge I discovered some sand dunes and a buried boat which was my escape route to the completion of the game.

On the whole I enjoyed playing The Changeling, but sloppy programming spoiled this game. The snakes were both dazed and dead at the same time. If you get the empty wine flagon then fill it with water you are unable to drop it again. This makes inventory management extremely difficult as you are only able to carry a limited number of items, especially when first playing the game when you don't know what you will need later on. It is recommended that you leave the flagon as it isn't necessary to complete the game. Nothing happens when you get hot and thirsty anyway! On a number of occasions you can re-get objects many times and actions can be repeated which it shouldn't be possible to do. It is also a pity some of the puzzles aren't necessary to the completion of the game and in fact are red herrings. This makes the game much harder than it would otherwise have been as many actions lead to dead ends or shoot you back to the clearing with the oak tree, from where you have to go through the routine of meeting the king yet again.

The story is well written, entertaining and sets the scene well. I noticed no obvious spelling errors and location descriptions were reasonably descriptive, keeping in mind that this is a Quilled adventure on an 8-bit machine.

TEN SETS OF FAMOUS LAST WORDS

compiled by DAVID HEBBLETHWAITE

These "famous last words" could have been said by people just before they met a rather untimely end...though I doubt anyone actually said them!

1. "Don't worry, the bridge is *absolutely* secure."
2. "There are no crocodiles in this stretch of river. Trust me, I know about these things."
3. "I've been doing this knife-throwing act for thirty years, and I've never hit anyone yet."
4. "No, that spider wasn't poisonous. You have nothing to worry about from that bite."
5. *Soldier in a trench.* "We can come up now, I think all the enemy planes have gone."
6. "This tiger wouldn't hurt a fly. Would you, boy? Come here, let me stroke you."
7. "No, of course it isn't loaded. Look, I'll show you."
8. "They'll *never* hit us with that bomb!"
9. "I know exactly what this fungus is, and I'm telling you now that it's completely safe to eat."
10. "Of course the water's safe to drink." [*]

[*] This one was actually said by Arnold Bennett, the English novelist, in Paris in 1931. He then drank a glass of unboiled water, caught typhoid, and died

PRIZE PUZZLE FOR THIS MONTH

A door is closed and refuses all your attempts to open it. You have wiped surface of the door and a message has been revealed:

Zero 4 X Zero A <Cypher 16>

TOLGO ODOOR TUPYR TEOYT

NUSHT SAEHH YWEOI ADUNY

This message must hold the solution to opening the door – can you work it out?

A small prize to the first person out of the hat with the correct solution on how to open the door. Closing date is four weeks after the magazine is sent out. Answers to

Steve Clay, 17 Stanlaw Road, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral, L65 0EY.

The winner of the BASE 2 puzzle featured in the July issue of Probe was Steve Daie from Sheffield.

The base 2 refers to binary and the numbers listed when written in binary notation reveal a grid of ones and zeros, hence the message 'Safe all zeros'. The grid should look like this :-

NUMBER	BINARY
243	1 1 1 1 0 0 1 1
59	0 0 1 1 1 0 1 1
131	1 0 0 0 0 0 1 1
234	1 1 1 0 1 0 1 0
72	0 1 0 0 1 0 0 0
26	0 0 0 1 1 0 1 0
194	1 1 0 0 0 0 1 0
247	1 1 1 1 0 1 1 1

The path follows the zeros from south to north. The gold can be found using the binary values of the zeros in the following. G represents gold, and E the entrance and exit

NUMBER	BINARY
243	1 1 1 1 E 0 1 1
59	G 0 1 1 1 0 1 1
131	1 0 0 0 0 0 1 1
234	1 1 1 0 1 0 1 G
72	G 1 0 0 1 0 0 0
26	0 0 0 1 1 0 1 0
194	1 1 0 0 0 0 1 G
247	1 1 1 1 E 1 1 1

Mentor's News Ten

I glanced along the corridor again. It was deserted and silent. I found it difficult to understand why the Sorcerer/Emperor would not have the section of his palace which led to his concubines guarded. I assumed that he either guarded them by esoteric means - or he was so arrogant that he believed no one would ever dare such a bold attack upon him.

I nodded to Redthorn, who in turn motioned Vana forward. With a casualness which I couldn't help but admire, Vana stepped boldly out and down the corridor. At the end, she paused, looking both ways, and then motioning us to follow.

She nodded to the right. "This passage."

I glanced at floor, walls, ceiling, but could detect nothing amiss. Vana made to take the lead, but I took hold of her arm. A look of irritation crossed her eyes, but then she shrugged and motioned me to precede her.

The passage ended in a double door. There was no lock. I grunted in surprise. "Perhaps it will be best if I go first, Dotran," Vana whispered. "After all, my sister has never met you and might cry out in alarm."

I couldn't argue the point. Vana took my silence for implied consent, and gently opened one of the huge doors a fraction. She slipped inside, and we followed.

As my eyes adjusted to the gloom of the interior, I saw numerous couches, tables bearing strange fruits: but the large room seemed empty. Vana moved forward impatiently, just as the noise of someone humming happily came to our ears. Vana stopped dead, looking intently at the open door ahead of her. The humming grew louder, heralding someone's approach. And then, in walked...Vana.

At least, I would have mistaken her for Vana if I couldn't see Vana before me. The woman stopped abruptly, her humming died away. She stared at us.

"Vana? What are you doing here? I thought you'd escaped with...."

Vana ran forward. "I don't have time to tell you that now, Vanina. We're here to rescue you."

Vanina glanced at us, doubt obvious in her eyes. I could not blame her for her distrust. But when she spoke, I cursed myself inwardly. It seemed this whole quest had been ill-starred from the outset. Nothing had gone to plan.

"But...but Vana," Vanina protested, "what makes you think that I want to be rescued?"

Redthorn glanced at me, her expression for once giving away the extent of her surprise.

"I love it here. The Emperor gives me all I desire, and as much freedom as I want. The things he asks in return are so minor - it is I who benefits most from our arrangement. What life would I look forward to at home? Forced to marry some ugly man and cater to his whims? Not me, sister. I'm staying here."

Vana looked at me despairingly. "Dotran...." she appealed. "I assumed," I explained with a due tone of anger, "that you would not have asked me to undertake such a dangerous quest unless you knew your sister's mind. I cannot rescue someone against their will."

Vana was about to argue the point when Redthorn cut in: "Dotran, beware...."

And then I heard Vanina's voice shrieking: "Guards! guards! Intruders....help....." as she ran back through the door from which she had come. I rushed after her, but the door was now firmly locked.

"Dotran, what...how could I....?" Vana began in a bewildered

tone. I ignored her and looked at Redthorn. "The teleport. Can you get us there?"

Redthorn nodded, "I think so - but it depends on how quickly the guards react."

And then, grabbing Vana's arm, I was hurtling through the Emperor's palace as though all the demons of Hell were at my heels. Even so, I found it difficult to match Redthorn's easy, loping pace.

Without once hesitating, she took this turning and then that passage. I wondered how Redthorn could be so certain of her direction. And then I remembered the ease with which she navigated the Gloomy Forest. If she said something lay in such a direction, I would (and already had) stake my life upon it.

"Dotran...I'm...I'm sorry," Vana panted at my side. I managed a grin at her, whilst wondering which god in particular I had offended for my luck to be so consistently bad.

A guard suddenly appeared before us. He opened his mouth to shout a challenge, but Redthorn swerved to one side, and my dagger then protruded from his throat. I pulled it free of the still-convulsing body as we continued our desperate attempt at escape.

And then, Redthorn darted to the left.....and stopped.

Panting for breath, we found ourselves in a large white room. And there, ahead of us lay the teleport, and safety. We darted forwards.....just as three guards materialised between us and it. Grimly, wondering about my premonition of death the night before, I drew my sword. I pushed Redthorn and Vana away from me, and advanced upon the guards.

I engaged the centre guard, and could hear shouts and confusion around me. The guard fell to the floor, and I turned to one of his companions. From the corner of my eye, I saw the third guard drawing a throw-knife. I saw it flash and fly in my direction.

"NO," someone screamed and I felt myself thrown off balance by a tremendous force which knocked the air from my lungs. Hands robbed me of my weapons and bound my arms. I heard a shout and saw a flash...but my eyes were transfixed by the sight of Vana, the throw-knife protruding grotesquely from her body.

Blood trickled from her mouth. Her eyes met mine. "Dotran," she whispered, "I said I didn't want to die...." she fell to the floor, and was still.

Roughly, I pulled free of my captors, and ran to Vana's body. "VANA!" I screamed, as another figure appeared out of thin air. And then the room was full of guards.

The Emperor of the Southern Lands gazed at me. His thin face and grey eyes betrayed no hint of emotion. His eyes swept over Vana and back to me.

"Death," he said to me, casually, as though talking about the weather, "may take many forms. Your attacks upon our palace and upon our favourite demand a swift yet painful death. But no: your death shall not be swift."

I looked at the Emperor, no longer caring whether I lived or died, or what manner of death he might decree.

"You will be taken to our deepest mines, where you will slowly be worked and beaten to death. None sent there has yet lived for six months. I doubt you will be an exception. Take him away."

The guards dragged me from the Emperor's presence and towards my fate.

End of Mentor's News

CONVENTION TIME by EDWINA BROWN

Oh to be in Birmingham
Now October's there
For whoever wakes in Birmingham
Can't be wholly unaware
There's a large hotel in a certain street
Where a band of mad adventurers meet
And the weekend's sure to be a "wow"
In Birmingham now.

And after assembling the gang start to feel
They should all go out seeking a really nice meal
Hark as they go Jenny, Larry and Bob
With the rest of that crazy but loveable mob.

Convention day dawns in the Ariel Suite
Karen's Megapoints game! Now who will compete?
Will Peter and Margo? Will Martin and Jill?
Ah, Sue over there, I'm sure that she will.
The time goes so fast and as the day ends
You know soon you'll have to say 'bye to your friends
But it's been a weekend you could never forget
And there's always next year, will I be there? YOU BET!!

1997 – THE YEAR OF THE FLAGON? A convention report by Jon Scott

This year we arrived at the Royal Angus on the afternoon of Friday 10th October, much earlier on in the month than usual, due to a medical conference. Last year the hotel was inundated with 'Uncivil Servants' – the last thing we wanted was the presence of many people with the initials M.D. or, even worse, F.R.C.S. appended to their names. I mean, the Uncivil Servants, with their two 'O' levels or whatever, were bad enough, but people with third – or even fourth – level education would have done our heads in. Imagine asking: "So what do you do for a living?"

1) **Uncivil Servant** – "I, er, work in the rubber-stamp section of the, um, Hackney DSS office, gov."

2) **Celebrated surgeon** – "Well proletariat I am an eminent researcher into neurological virology of post-cardiovascular pulmonary oedema."

I think the first reply would be better received by an adventurer who'd had a 'skinful'. And this year, again, not only would we share the hotel with Murder Mystery People, but we were Murder Mystery People too. Obviously, after last year's Convention, one of the organisers muttered the immortal words, "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em." So with all these considerations in mind, I set off on the short journey which would take me all the way from N. Ireland to Birmingham. Last year I travelled to the city by coach – a mistake I will not repeat – so this time round I flew. No, I didn't hang-glide. I took the easier option of travelling with Jersey European . . .

The first person I met in the hotel was Jenny. She was running about looking for 'cotton things'. I didn't dare ask. At about 5.30 p.m., a tall Ulsterman appeared in the lounge of the Royal Angus, visibly unaffected by his brief trip (not LSD: you know, that stuff junkies put on their ice-cream). A tall Londoner did an aeroplane impersonation as his fellow adventurer entered the lounge. Said tall Londoner is known in the past to have impressed all with his versatile luggage trolley. Said tall Ulsterman, the least said about him the better. So I was reunited with many of my pals from the last Convention. Unfortunately, Ellen, Wynne, Anne, Dave, Sharon and Lynne were absent; and John Schofield, the Gruel and a few others didn't make it the next day. They were sorely missed. A few others had yet to arrive, but by later on that night or the following morning they arrived. 'Pigpen' was yet to be seen – maybe she'd got lost following the map I sent here? That turned out not to be the case, fortunately for me.

Viva Via was our first port of call, outside which stood half of Birmingham's police force. I'm sorry to have to say this but, since I'm used to peaked hats on bobbies, these policemen's hats looked ridiculous! No wonder Bertie Wooster used to nick them. Inside **Viva Via** (if, indeed, that is correct, for a while I actually believed that last year's Chinese Dynasty, was called Dallas!), we ordered a sumptuous meal. My Chicken Bijou was a treat, as was the pudding which was passed around the table like a pipe of peace and was tasted by many, but we got the impression that the restaurant staff were endeavouring to use up all the chilli-sauce before its sell-by date. A certain M. Freemantle drank a 'jug' of lager and, when asked how he knew there were two pints in it, he explained that it said on the side. Logical, isn't it? We left the Italian, satisfied with the terrific meal. The Cocktail List – and its "innuendo . . . schoolboy-type humour" (please refer to the December '97 issue of Probe) – proved to be of great amusement, and one member of our party went up to the bar and asked for a mix of vodka, martini and headache tablets, named Pat Fussy, but was embarrassed that he'd had a few and couldn't pronounce it right. And who was accused of being pregnant?

Outside, with the 'Northern lot', the 'Southern lot' and the 'lot who don't know where they're from because the north-south divide isn't clearly defined', I scoured for a cab. One policeman informed us in a broad Brummie accent that, "They won't pick up here cos I won't ***** let them." A drunken lady, unaffiliated with our party, leered at him haggardly and jumped out in front of a Lada. She eventually got bored, and stepped out of its way, or did it break down first?

Back at the hotel was Karen who had spent the previous few weeks editing a naturist video for a satellite TV station. Or was that a nay-tourist video as natives of York would say? Some great conversations ensued, including a discussion about something or other long forgotten. But, whatever it was, it was extremely interesting and absorbing. In fact, the absorption rate was remarkable. A certain individual moved from a table, around which the other occupants were indulging in the annual ritual of "Balrog-bashing." Had the great man himself been there, it would have been another matter no doubt. Gradually, our party dwindled as they all went off to hit the mattress. Just what the poor mattress did to deserve this I'll never know.

The following morning we converged in the restaurant for the "fill your plate" competition. The adventurer who could place as much breakfast onto their plate the greatest number of times won the automatic right to have another helping. All the food went down well, apart from the fried bread which tasted like fillet of sole. Shoe sole, that is. After a hearty, if not healthy, breakfast I went looking for a paper. The hotel had *The Rats*, a backward tabloid, and the *Beer-mingham Post*. So with the respective headlines of, "Rood part nword sllaf namow" by Eim Drarreg and "Guinness a ciue" by Al Coholic I settled for the *Daily Expatiator* instead – do you blame me? The weather forecast said Sunday would have no wind, so I'd have a smooth flight.

At 9.30 I stumbled into the Ariel Suite which was buzzing with activity. Having affixed my name-badge incorrectly, I wandered around. A kind lady advised me on how to fix the badge so, with that sorted, the Convention began for me.

As always, it was exhilarating to meet and chat to the many people that arrived. Martin Beia showed me his terrific *Bomb Room* and I got a long-awaited glimpse of *The Zeta Zone* with its wonderful graphics. Sue and John Roscoe had a point-and-click game running. Phil Reynolds had a range of interesting games and many, many catalogues. I was glad to see that John Ferris and John Nicholis brought their machines. Phil Glover didn't have the SAM this year, but he brought some 'muscle' to carry Karen's computers later on. Hilary was there for her second year, still as keen on C64 adventures as ever. Margo arrived and set about solving Peter's new game, *The Portal*. Edwina and Margo had a go at *Wartorn Land* with its interesting screen colours. It was good to see some new people at the Convention. Phil McGlassup was one of the new Conventioneers.

The Megapoints had gone quite well – poor Jenny had been stitched up by Karen – no points, would you believe! I got stuck in *A Hole in My Bucket*: and you can read that as you wish. I'm sure the winners have been announced elsewhere, but I honestly can't remember.

Larry announced the winners and, in his characteristic Sweeney-like manner, told everyone to, "Shut it," followed by, "You're nicked." I don't blame him, cos some people just witter on. The hotel staff evicted us at the ridiculously early time of 5.30 p.m. and most computers were packed up hastily. So that was the end of the actual Convention bit. The weekend was still not over; not by a long stretch!

While vodka was swigged liberally on the fourth floor by certain individuals, we awaited for the commencement of the Murder Mystery Evening. A certain bridge on a hen-party night out, unaffiliated with our lot, was a little eager to "get her t**s out" (they looked a bit rubbery to me). One of our fellow adventurers asked her, "Haven't you forgotten something?" So as certain people went about conserving, or rather conversing, with the other Murder Mystery People, myself and others stood dummy-lie. I hadn't eaten since breakfast and I was embarrassed by my character. Len Der Carr, a car hire dealer, while John Roscoe was Ian Oesenthrote. This thoroughly confused everyone, as John was the only person who had a sensible name.

Finally, we went in and had our meal. I ordered a vegetable lasagne which the waiters annoyingly referred to as the 'vegetarian'. The meal was smashing and I particularly enjoyed the mints along with the coffee. Yummy! Two members of our party were mistaken by a waiter as husband and wife. All I will say about the Murder Mystery Evening itself is that the dead body was not only breathing, but giggling. Why did he have a blood-stained towel over his head? What a senseless waste. And, more importantly, why was he serving dinner later on? Was he a sheep-dealer or a drug-dealer?

The remainder of the evening was spent in the lounge or on the dancefloor. Only four of us went out there: why no more? The funniest bit was when the two ladies were seen on the dancefloor drinking water out of teacups! They weren't that dehydrated, surely. So, after many lengthy conversations, I fell into bed in the wee small hours and woke the next morning for another sizeable breakfast. My order of coffee and brown toast became tea and white toast, but never mind. Couldn't drink the tea due to an allergy. Later on I was asked if I was crossing the water, to which I replied that I was flying. Somebody said that I was crossing the water then, but it was too early in the morning and I was too tired to understand this concept.

So after a morning of good crack, I left around lunch-time and got home to Londonderry about six or seven hours later.

In a nutshell, it was a tremendous weekend, one I will never forget, so I urge all of you who've never gone or who haven't gone for a few years to attend next year's Convention. You will have a great time.

To Tinkerbell: I've written this as long as I like, so there!

CONVENTION REPORT by JOHN FERRIS

Having been to four previous conventions but never having taken a computer or stayed later than 5pm on the day, this years was going to be a little different. Larry had managed to convince me that taking my Amiga was a good idea so I had packed it away in an old brown suitcase on the Thursday.

Saturday morning arrived rather suddenly as an attack of insomnia had reduced me to about two hours sleep. Unbeknown to me, a certain lady adventurer staying at the hotel had been entertained half the night by the air conditioning concerto and was also suffering sleep deprivation.

I'd never driven to the convention before, living in Coventry meant a good train connection, but I didn't fancy lugging the suitcase, monitor and hand luggage around. It took me twenty minutes to get to Junction six of the M6 and then the same to actually find the hotel via large areas of inner Birmingham. I'll have to remember that it is the second island on the A38M, not the first. Aston University is a fine academic establishment I'm sure, but it was severely lacking in adventurers. I don't know why people moan about the Coventry ring road, at least it has some logic to its design and never has more than two lanes going in one direction.

I arrived to set up the Amiga to be greeted by several people I recognised who managed to see through my disguise. These included John Nicholls with his ST. Talking of computers, I saw two PCs, two STs, one of which was set up. Two Amigas, one C64 which was never used, two Amstrads and three Spectrums (or were they Amstrads?) used for the megapoints competition.

Speaking of the competition, it seems a tradition has sprung up recently in that of the three machines used, one must have a wobbly almost illegible TV picture and I get the option of playing using that machine. However I passed, the picture being particularly wobbly this year. I thought the competition was much harder than last year although I will readily admit that I'm not the brightest adventurer in the world. At least I didn't come last and I did figure out where the delete key on the keyboard was.

Eventually.

Had a go with one of the Valhalla games on the Amiga, the third I think. Twenty minutes of wandering around getting nowhere despite Vicky Jackson and another gentleman whose name escapes me helping out and I realised these games were perhaps not for me. Vicky spent most of the morning on the game, all you could hear was the tap tap sound effect of her footsteps.

Lunch was a cooked breakfast in a cafe in town with Mr Nicholis followed by some bag hunting (you had to be there) in the rain. The afternoon session passed quite quickly. I don't think there were any awards given out this year, but it seems that the award for "Game of the Convention" would have gone to "The Underoos That Ate New York." Innocent bystanders were being dragged over to the PC in question and made to play it. Bob Adams standing over them to ensure they found the game funny. True, the game was really funny, really short and had an interesting bug in which I was able to wear my shoes and walk around in them without the shoes ever leaving the fridge.

The award for the most Tenacious Adventurer would go to Vicky Jackson who had eventually left Valhalla and was most of the way through the megapoints game.

John Nicholis would have won the "Most ST Adventures Bought In One Day" award along with the "Most Cost Effective Way of Carrying Them" award (you had to be there as well.)

All too soon it was time to pack up the computers and vacate the suite. A big thank you to those who helped me setting up and to carry my stuff back to the hotel room. You know who you are. Nice hotel room, nice deep bath and a very interesting bath tap. This took me a few minutes to figure out (as I said, I'm not the sharpest tool in the box) how to get hot water out of it.

Next came the Murder Mystery event. I think the best way to describe it was organised chaos, if that were possible. Take about a hundred people, give each a character to "play" then get them to talk to everyone else and gather information. I've had experience of this form of mass entertainment before, having attended several medieval banquets which are run on the same principle and they all have the same drawbacks. However, I did enjoy it for what it was, somewhat chaotic and confusing. Or was that just the half bottle of wine? Was it my imagination but was the corpse still breathing? Why couldn't we kick it to check for signs of life? Did Vicky really see it giggling? That would be a great title for a book or game - "And the Corpse Giggled." I did find that I was doing a lot of running about, examining murder weapons, briefcases, bills and generally being at the beck and call of a certain lady who will remain anonymous. Almost gave me indigestion.

To my surprise I was briefly one of the suspects in the finale. You really know who your friends are when the chips are down. When asked if I was guilty, the majority of the crowd shouted "no" with the notable (and loud) exception of at least one of my supposedly fellow adventurers.

To sum up, I enjoyed my first "stop-over" convention, got to know some of the people behind the names a bit better and gained a few behind the scenes insights. See you next year.



CONVENTION – BIRMINGHAM 1997 by KAREN TYERS

Well it was that time of year again, and for the first time ever I was going to stay in Birmingham for the whole weekend – if I managed to get there without mishap and getting lost!!!

I set off on the Friday afternoon with some trepidation, as some people will remember me getting hopelessly lost last year and that was with somebody navigating! This year I was travelling alone (somebody get the violins out) with only a car full of Speccys, Ataris, TVs and monitors for company. Stopping once on the motorway for a quick meal and a much needed coffee, I arrived in Birmingham, remembered where I went wrong last year, and found the hotel straight away! I believe Pippen deserves a medal folks – any offers....

By the time I arrived and conned a porter into helping me get things in from the car to my room (I was on the 6th floor I might say), it was mid-evening, so I had a quick shower and wandered down to the bar to meet everyone else. It was great to see everyone (except Martin, who had disappeared – I'll let someone else tell that story!) and we had a great time generally chatting and catching up on everything that had happened over the previous 12 months. I finally toddled off to bed around midnight....

Down for breakfast Saturday morning, bright with anticipation of a great day – well I was anyway. Martin finally showed his face and confessed to having fallen asleep in his room the night before – I didn't realise that we had bored him that much!! However, he did us all a great favour since his room was on the second floor, just along from the convention room, and said we could all leave our equipment there, instead of having to lug everything back upstairs again. Poor lad, at the end of Saturday when we cleared away, I think he might have regretted it.... There was just about enough space left for a mouse to sleep in....

However, back to Saturday. Set up all the gear, and set things in motion for the Megapoints competition, the game this year being written by yours truly. Even if I say so myself, everyone seemed to enjoy the game, even Jenny, who I stitched up well and truly. I, (along with my playtester), had programmed the game so that you had to type your name in at the beginning, and if the name Jenny was put in, the score flag was disabled, so poor Jenny was unable to score any points. I think (hope) she has forgiven me but I did enjoy watching her face as she played – aren't I cruel? I did let her have a second try later on, but shortened the time so that there was no unfair advantage. Eventual winners were Sue Roseblade and Jenny Perry (joint first), Phil Reynolds (second) and Hilary O'Connor (third). Everyone should have received their certificates now, and a big thank you to Sue for them – they're great.

After the Megapoints was finished, I was able to spend the rest of Saturday just chatting with people and looking at the various machines and software that had been brought. Spent a hilarious half hour with Peter who had brought a 5 minute PC adventure with him – something about trying to find your clothes to go on a date. Had several of us almost crying with laughter, it was so silly. If you want further details about where to get this, contact Peter Clark. I believe it was shareware, but worth it just for the giggle.

Saturday evening several people were staying at the hotel for the Murder Mystery evening. I will leave them to comment on that, as I personally didn't take part. The rest of us found a wonderful Italian restaurant no-one had tried before, and we had a great meal, besides making fun of the Italian waiters while the England/Italy match was taking place.

On the whole they seemed to take it in good part. Having said that, all of a sudden some musicians (and I use the term very loosely) suddenly appeared in the middle of the restaurant and started to entertain?? us, then proceeded round each table with a hat demanding money with menaces – certainly seems an easy way to make a living. Never mind, the food and the company certainly made up for that, and I still think it was the Italians' way of getting their own back....

Back to the hotel and the bar, where we enjoyed more socialising (doesn't that sound better than drinking?) while we waiting for the Murder Mystery lot. Every now and then one of them would pop out, mutter something incoherent about so and so being the guilty one, and then disappearing again. Eventually it finished and from what people were saying, the general consensus seemed to be that it was okay but they probably wouldn't bother with another one. The disco then started, and some people vanished to bop on the dance floor. Me, being me, decided I would prefer to watch until the music slowed down, but it didn't, so those of us who didn't dance, chatted, drank, and watched the others pretending they were still under 25! It was a really great evening and it was a shame when people started to disappear back to their rooms. I lasted until about 2 and then staggered to bed, but I understand that 6 of them were still down in the bar at 4 o'clock!

Sunday morning, down for breakfast and chat, back to rooms, vacate, pay bill, back to lounge for coffee and more chat, pack car, back to lounge for more coffee and still more chat. Sad goodbyes to those who had to leave fairly early. Some of us were still sitting in the lounge at lunchtime, partly to keep Jon Scott company, as his plane didn't leave until late afternoon, and partly because we didn't really want the weekend to end just yet.

Made it home in record time (and without getting lost), only to find that while I had been away, disaster had struck. Poor Vicki had her car trashed while parked in Tesco's, and number one daughter had been arrested on the Saturday night in a police drugs swoop on a car park in York. Completely innocent, I might add, but the police just rounded up everybody in the vicinity. Wish I hadn't come home.....

Never mind, it's about par for the course for me. I had a great weekend, and to anybody who hasn't been to a convention yet, try and make it next year – you'll have a great time.

MY FIRST CONVENTION by EDWINA BROWN

Thanks to Peter Clark I was able, this year, to attend my first convention. The journey to Birmingham seemed much shorter than I had expected, mainly due, I am sure, to my entertaining companion. When we arrived at the hotel Peter was able to find a parking space quite near to the walkway. We decided to check in before unloading the car, so off we went. On reaching a locked door it needed just a few words addressed to the wall and we were able to enter. I must say that beats the usual problems I have in getting through locked doors!

At the reception desk I was informed that I had cancelled my booking (news to me) but it was soon sorted and I was allocated a room on the fourth floor.

Later, after the cases, monitor, T.V. etc. had been stashed away in our rooms we met up in the lounge to see who else had arrived. There were many faces familiar to me (Hamilton Hall) as well as a few new ones. After a while it was decided where we would go to eat, so off we went for a wash and brush up.

Meeting again we set off in search of taxis. The lifts refused to take us all so most charged down the stairs. Outside the hotel we crammed into three taxis (there were fifteen of us) but no one in my taxi seemed to know where we were going. The name of someone who did was mentioned and Sue said to the driver "follow that cab". The big snag there was that it was following us. It was an hilarious trip and I think the driver enjoyed it as much as we did. Surprisingly enough we all arrived at our destination and the laughter went on all through a really delicious meal.

It's Saturday morning and I decide to go down to see if anyone is about. The place is deserted so to pass the time I go to reception to pay my bill. There is an obliging young man there who tries his hardest to make my weekend a cheap one. I'm afraid I don't help by insisting it should be more. After rustling through books and sheaves of paper he asks if I would mind coming back at seven when the receptionist would be there. I make my apologies and beat a hasty retreat.

Later going back to the dining room I see that Jill has arrived, so join her and we breakfast together. Soon others appear and before long it is time to set up the Convention room. I was not looking forward to the prospect of lumping my monitor and T.V. down from the fourth floor and was grateful when Larry came to my aid with his famous trolley.

When all was ready others started to arrive and soon it was time to play Karen's Megapoints. I noticed Jenny was looking rather puzzled so went over to see why. "I can't understand it" she was saying to Karen, "I have found loads of things but so far have scored no points. I thought perhaps we would not find out until the end but I've just noticed Larry has scored forty." Karen, with a straight face, commiserated with her for a while, then suddenly she burst out laughing. Apparently she has set Jenny up so that when her name was entered to start the game it cancelled the scoring. Jenny saw the joke and was given another turn later. I'm afraid when I tried I failed dismally and could not help from laughing when "Not doing very well, are you" appeared on the screen. I ended up with a measly thirty six points. Maybe I will get a chance to redeem myself next year.

I was introduced to Jon Scott (now there's a nice young man) and he let me play the game he is currently working on. The next hour simply flew by, and I can't wait for the game to be published so that I can get my hands on a copy.

Much too soon it was time to pack everything away again and get ready for the Murder Mystery evening. This turned out to be quite fun but we agreed it would have been better with a smaller crowd. After the meal any chair which was not occupied was purloined to make an ever increasing circle for the "Probers" to sit, sup and talk the night away. It was well after midnight when the first of our number retired for the night and about 1.30pm when I too decided to call it a day. This left quite a few still quaffing and enjoying themselves.

Sunday morning dawned, a lovely day after Saturday's rain. I packed everything up and wandered down to the dining room. After a chat with the friendly manageress I positioned myself on a couch where the lift was in view and waited for someone to show up. At first there were just members of a Scottish party, but eventually the list doors opened and Larry strolled out. We made our way to the dining room and it was not long before we were joined by others.

After a hearty breakfast it was time for Peter and I to load up the car and take our leave. After having had such an enjoyable time it was quite sad to have to say goodbye. I hope however to make it again next year, that is if Peter will put up with me and my navigational skills. Well, whoever would have thought of returning to Newmarket via Bury St. Edmunds. I've heard of the "scenic route" but Peter was hoping to get home in time for lunch. Sorry Peter!

The Adventure Workshop

Adventures for the Amstrad

NEW RELEASES

The Caves of Skull

by Martin Freemantle

Once upon a time in a land sick at heart and mean of soul a young Elf discovered a box from another world.

This is his adventure...

You found the strange looking box on one of your expeditions into the talking forest. What do the unfamiliar carvings upon its five sides mean, and why does it not open, this curious box. You take it to the oldest and wisest Elf of your band. The old Elf looks concerned as he studies the box, which he turns over in his long wrinkled fingers. The old Elf looks up at you and at long last speaks. "Gem I must now ask you to make a long and perilous journey and to take this box with you. This is the cause of all the hate and disease that now plagues and infests our lands. This box was sent by our oldest enemies, the Troggs, who now live underground in another world. You must go to the forbidden place at the eastern side of the talking forest. Learn how to open the box and use its contents to destroy our enemies."

Available Now on Disc only for CP/M+ or CPM2.2 Priced £4.00

The Adventure Workshop, 36 Grasmere Road, Royton, Oldham, Lancashire, OL2 6SR
Prices include p&p. Please make Cheques/Postal orders payable to P.M. Reynolds.

The Adventure Workshop

Adventures for the Spectrum

NEW RELEASES

The Lost Children

By Larry Horsfield

The disappearance of children from farms and villages surrounding a vast desolate moor in the far north of your demesne, prompted you, Duke Alaric Blackmoon, to investigate. You discovered that all the abductions took place at night, often from behind locked doors and barred windows, and despite villagers mounting guard at night. In all cases the parents and guards fell asleep and they woke next morning to find the children gone, but the doors and windows were still locked or barred!

Then, a man arrived bearing news, the villagers told you to take no notice of his ramblings as he was a mad hermit who lived in a cave and had always told wild tales of strange creatures that he said inhabited the moorland. You, however, decided to give the man a chance to tell his story. The man told you that in the middle of the moor there was an ancient dolmen, known as "The Devil's Gateway" which everyone kept well clear of as legend said it was used by the devil to visit the mortal world. He told you that it was once more being used by Satan and it was he who was sending his minions to take the children.

Deciding to take his words seriously, you rode up onto the moor and travelled to the centre where stood the dolmen. The dolmen, two massive upright oblong stones surmounted by a third, stood in a shallow hollow which was surrounded by a nimbus of blue energy and in between the uprights of the dolmen you saw a silvery curtain of light. Realising straight away that powerful magical forces were present, you sent a homing pigeon to summon the only person who could now help - your old friend Magor the Sorcerer. He arrived suddenly, by arcane means some hours later and he told you to stand well back while he investigated.

He said that the gateway was closed from this side but he could open it briefly to allow one person to pass through, but only one as it would take all his power to do so. Magor at last said that he was ready and you stood in front of the dolmen. He then cast a spell at the gateway which flickered and disappeared - instead of the other side of the hollow you saw a different landscape. You took a deep breathe and stepped through the gateway. There was a moment of disorientation then you looked around at your new surroundings.....

Available Now on Disc Priced £4.00 and Tape Priced £2.00

The Adventure Workshop, 36 Grasmere Road, Royton, Oldham, Lancashire, OL2 6SR
Prices include p&p. Please make Cheques/Postal orders payable to P.M. Reynolds

ADVENTURES for the ATARI ST/STE

THE ADVENTURER by D Gray
BORDER WARFARE by Neil Clark/Gerry Tonner
CORTIZONE (2 disks) by High Voltage
THE DARKEST ROAD by Clive Wilson
WHIPLASH & WAGONWHEEL (2 disks) by Clive Wilson
END-DAY 2240 by Dave Blower
SOULDRINKER by Tower Software
THE JADE STONE by Linda Wright
THE MAGIC SHOP by Jason Taylor
NEW ARRIVAL by Jason Taylor

The following adventures are all written and/or programmed by Jack Lockerby

THE DARK TOWER
DAVY JONES' LOCKER
Dr. JEKYLL & Mr. HYDE
THE ELLISNORE DIAMOND
THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE
INTO THE MYSTIC
THE LIFEBOAT
THE MINES OF LITHIAD
TREASURE ISLAND
HAMMER OF GRIMMOLD, THE MUTANT, THE DOMES OF SHA (3 on 1 disk)
THE THIEF and THE CHALLENGE (2 on 1 disk)

PRICE : single disk £2.49 double disk £2.99 including postage in U.K.
(please add £1 per item if overseas)

Available from

Adventure Probe Software, 52 Burford Road, Liverpool L16 6AQ
or
Zenobi Software, 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancs. OL12 7NX

THE LEGENDS OF JERRICK BONESNAPPER

#1 : THE DUNGEON OF DOOM

You are Jerrick Bonesnapper, infamous warrior of Zorn. For the past decade you have travelled the lands in search of fame and fortune, and now you have the chance to gain both in *THE DUNGEON OF DOOM!*

The Legends of Jerrick Bonesnapper I: The Dungeon of Doom is a two-part text adventure on Amiga A500 disk for £3.50.

Join Jerrick on his travels through a vast dungeon network filled with tricks, traps and puzzles to waylay the unwary. Only the strong and intelligent will survive - are you, as Jerrick Bonesnapper, up to the challenge?

As well as the game disk you will receive a free Playguide and a Character Reference Sheet so you may incorporate Jerrick Bonesnapper into your own tabletop AD&D games! And further chapters in this warrior's heroic life will soon follow.

To order *The Legends of Jerrick Bonesnapper I: The Dungeon of Doom*, please send a £3.50 cheque, made payable to Paul A. Hardy, to the following address:

PAUL A HARDY
33 FIR TREE DRIVE
WALES
SHEFFIELD
S26 5LZ

THE DUNGEON OF DOOM awaits you.....

Please note: **A500** recommended.
Although this game will run on an A600 and an A1200, some players may find text justification is sometimes misaligned.

ADVENTURE PROBE SOFTWARE

presents

EXPLORING ITMUS

A text adventure for the Amiga

Written by Harold Dixon

You have been commissioned by the Universal Adventurer's Club to go to the planet ITMUS to see if it is suitable for the members to explore.

Unfortunately, you crash-land and lose most of your equipment. However, you don't want to give up and like a true adventurer you set out to explore this strange land.



You will meet many citizens who will offer help at a price, encounter such creatures as the almost obligatory dragon, the most unusual kangasaurus, an unhappy spirit and the strange-talking Guardian, and lots more.

The landscape may seem fairly familiar but it holds a lot of surprises, some pleasant, some not so welcome.

Are you ready to rescue the knight's brother, ride the cloud-boat or walk along the rainbow to retrieve the pot of gold? If so, buy a copy of EXPLORING ITMUS and see how much treasure you can find and how many points you can amass.



Price : £2.50

Available under licence from :

Adventure Probe

52 Burford Road

Liverpool

L16 6AQ

U.K.

BORPHEE COMPUTERS
Presents

TRINITY

A text only adventure for the PC

At last! It's time for your well earned vacation, Venice, Rome, The Vatican, it just has to be better than last years in Arizona.

Lets see now, suncream, travellers cheques, hat.....**HAT!!!**

Panic sets in, your plane leaves in three hours and you can't find your hat! You shudder as you recall last years vacation when you had to walk around wearing a purple sombrero with gaudy orange tassles, not to mention all those yanks saying "Have a nice day, GRINGO!". You've promised yourself nothing can wrong this year and now you can't find that HAT!

This HUGE adventure (fairly big) features DOZENS of characters to interact with (probably more than ten) and lots of exciting places to visit, including the soon to be famous Fidgets Fettucine Feastarama!

Send a cheque/PO for £6.50p to...

Borphee Computers
64 County Rd
Ormskirk
West Lancs
L39 1QH



This bargain includes P+P and a tatty home produced manual, **OR** really treat yourself and buy Trinity plus The Four Symbols for only £10

ANSWERS TO QUIZZES IN AUGUST'S ISSUE

A "LIGHT" PUZZLE (Page 23)

Put one light on, then quickly switch it off. Put another on, run into the other room and the one that's on is the one you have just pressed, and the one that is still warm is the first one you switched on. The remaining one is simply the other!

SQUARES QUIZ (page 24)

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. THREE POINT TURN | 7. WELL INFORMED |
| 2. FURLONG | 8. EXAMPLE |
| 3. A PIG IN A POKE | 9. MIDDLE ENGLISH |
| 4. SPOTTED DICK | 10. CORNER SHOP |
| 5. ON THE TOP | 11. FALL BACK (*) |
| 6. SLEEP LIKE A LOG | 12. SKIN DEEP |

(*) I don't understand this one – if this is the correct answer I would have expected the question to have read NMUTUA. Can someone explain it to me? (Barbara)

A QUESTION OF INTERPRETATION (page 25)

1. Of course they have a November 5th! Didn't ask if they celebrated Guy Fawkes Night!
2. 12 – every month contains 28 days.
3. The match.
4. Official answer is 2 o'clock – but you aren't told to take the first pill at midday, so the answer could be 2.30.
5. 9.
6. 2 apples.
7. Moses didn't take any animals on the Ark – it was Noah. (*)
8. Your own name. It says "If you drove a bus"
9. They played different teams, not each other.
10. You don't bury survivors!
11. White. To have all 4 walls facing South, the house must be right at the North Pole, hence it must be a polar bear.
12. 60.
13. 1 hour. A clockwork alarm cannot differentiate between a.m. and p.m., and so would go off one hour after setting it.
14. Friday is the name of his horse.
15. He's playing Monopoly.
16. Two possible answers – if he killed them, there would be the 2 dead birds left; if he didn't kill them, there would be none. In both cases, they would all fly away.

(*) Sorry about the mistyping of Moses last month due to my keyboard problem.

PERSONAL MESSAGES

To Mary S-P - Hmm. All this fuss over a little toilet-seat. Obviously you don't like a certain "Harlequin P***" statue in Holland? (The Trainspotter)

To Barbara - Thanks for your good wishes. they're most appreciated. Think I'm almost "back to normal now" - makes a nice change really. I've never been "normal" before! (Ellen)

To Mary S-P - Hmm. I suppose I *could have* been MR-staken. (Sorry Ron) (Ellen)

To Jon - Ohh, I could think of a few things I'd like to "post" n one of those. (Ellen)

To Pig Pen - How did your journey go? Was it as much "fun" as last time? (Ellen)

To All - Have a wonderful Christmas. (Ellen)

To The Whinger - Happy Christmas. (Snow White)

To The Old Zetonian - Never you mind "Bill", he's already paid me another visit. I've only got two things to say to you - "SUGAR CUBES!!!" - Sheesh! (Snow White)

To Jon - Ah, but then I won't know if I'm being "talked about", will I? (Gilly)

To Jon - Yup, mucker, I a soya I most certainly have. Yummy too. (Dusty)

To Jon - Tee hee, not much I can add to that, is there? (Fudge)

To Bosi and Belladonna - Happy Christmas. (Love Dusty, Fudge and Buttons)

To Wynne - We're all (pea) "nuts" about you. (Love Dusty, Fudge and Buttons)

To Mad Cat - Hope your Christmas is just *perfect*. (Fluffy and Sherry)

To Petra - I'm coming over shortly - complete with mistletoe. Have the door on the latch. (Kevin)

To Ellen - Yeah, kick some orcs' butts! (M.Polo)

To Barbara - Glad to hear the fighting talk. (M.Polo)

To Mary S-P - And you're at war too. Doing battle with **both** the roundheads and cavaliers. (M.Polo)

To Jon - You're one of the final few contributors to the personal messages. Keep it up. (M.Polo)

To Snow White - Are you still feeling Happy? (M.Polo)

To The Old Zetonian - No, he was Bili. The Old Bili. A copper. Whatever. (M.Polo)

AMIGA NEWS by STEVE CLAY

Reading the Amiga glossies – (two left by the way, Amiga Computing and Amiga Review have gone now) – would have you believe that the Amiga is on the up and up. While there does seem to be a lot of activity compared to 12 months ago, I still feel the Amiga is far from out of the woods yet. However the slight improvement is enough for a round-up of Amiga news.

Vulcan recently had demos of two of their games Final Odyssey and Uropa 2 on the cover CD of Amiga Format. As we know by now all future Vulcan releases will be CD only also Weird Science will be handling the distribution side of things from now on.

Final Odyssey was originally billed as 1200 only but reading the promotional blurb reveals that the game can be played on any Amiga with the relevant hardware namely a hard drive, 2 meg and a 2 speed CD ROM drive. Extra system enhancements will be exploited by the program. Final Odyssey is based in Greek mythology with the player taking on the roll of Theseus and attempting to conquer the five levels of the labyrinth and defeat the Minotaur. Each level has puzzles, hoards of intelligent monsters, mini-quests and character interaction. The blurb also reveals you have a selection of weapons to find and use, some of which I am unable to recall from Greek mythology, namely a plasma rifle, a chain gun and a NUKIE! Even a crossbow seems a little dubious to me. The only thing the blurb doesn't reveal is the price, although £19-95 would seem a fair guess. [£29.99 plus £1.00 p&p according to the leaflet I've just received...Barbara]

Uropa 2 has similar system requirements with the added bonus that you will require a 4-speed CD ROM drive. Your quest is to overcome the Kapone droids and save Uropa 2 from destruction. The game has ten missions all displayed in an 3D isometric format and all the missions are linked via a spacecraft simulator. The screen shots look good but again the price is a secret. [£29.99 plus £1.00 p&p, as above.....Barbara]

Further to the recent mention I gave to Reality. The author of the product, in an interview with PC Mart, said that he has stopped selling the product and has put it on the public domain. The idea being that you purchase the skeleton disks from the company which seems a much fairer way of selling the product.

Trapped 2 is an RPG bolted onto a Doom style 3D game engine. As seems to be the norm now you will need a 1200 and a CD Rom plus expanded memory to play it. The review I have seen however said that the game running on an Amiga with an '060 processor – (the 1200 comes with an '020 as standard) – nips along at a fair pace not dipping below 10 fps (frames per second) quite fast it would seem, but most games aim for 50 fps, so I should think there would be a significant drop in speed on lower spec machines. The story is as original as any adventure story written in the early eighties. You have to find a demon, Tarnak, and kill him. To gain entry to the palace of Tarnak you will need to find his eyes! Right Ho! The puzzle content seems to revolve around scrolls and potions whilst the main meat of the game would appear to be combat and magic which RPG'ers love. The reviewers love the game as well so if you have the high spec Amiga required it might be worth a try at £20.95 inc p&p from Weird Science (0116-246-3800).

In the public domain is the shareware version of SEKA 32 which claims to be an adventure creator. The full version costs approximately £8.00. The utility claims to create simple text adventures with graphics, if you wish them, via a mouse and keyboard controlled menu system.

Data entry is quite fast although the windows scrolling on and off screen are impressive but slow things down. I very quickly found my way around the various windows. The ideas behind this utility are mostly good although I have doubts about the complexity of puzzle that could be created with it. SEKA 32 would have received a big thumbs up if it hadn't been for a massive problem with the save routine. This section of the program is so unstable it is unforgivable in a utility that relies on saving to disk. Should you try to save data and you have any kind of disk problem such as leaving it write-protected, or no disk in the drive, bad filename or any of a dozen possible things you won't receive a nice warning; you receive instead a reset to Workbench! If the author(s) could stabilise the product then they have a potentially useful little program. As it stands it is a no-no.

IN TOUCH

WANTED FOR PC

THE LOST TREASURES OF INFOCOM Vol. 1 and 2.

Please contact Jenny Wheeler, 115 Hythe Crescent, Seaford, Sussex, BN25 3TZ.

*

FOR SALE

AMIGA 1200 accelerator board (Blizzard 1230) complete with 8 meg. of additional RAM - £150.00

AMIGA High-density external drive (reads and writes to 1.44MB disks - PC format) - £60.00

AMIGA A1200/A600 CDROM drive, complete with interface and software - £100.00

AMIGA CDROM/CD32 games - £10.00 each

AMIGA CDs (ex "cover-cds" from various magazines) - £2.00 each

AMIGA GAMES - £10.00

Or the "whole shebang" including an A1200 for **£500.00**

Full lists are available - just ask!!! Please state type of machine when enquiring.

Postage and packing included in prices of all items.

Contact "The Caretaker's Assistant" at Zenobi Software, 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancashire. OL12 7NX.

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 31p stamp each, plus a 1st or 2nd class stamp for return postage, regardless of the number of solutions ordered. AAYELA. CAVES IF DYNATY. CRYPT ADVENTURE. ELF'S CHRISTMAS ADVENTURE. HAUNTED HOUSE. HEATHER'S EASTER EGG HUNT. ISLANDS OF SINBAD. LOST CHILDREN. MYTH (Barry Volain). ODIEUS' QUEST FOR THE MAGIC FLING SHOT. QUEST FOR THE HOLY JOYSTICK. REVENGE OF THE FORTRESS. STARGAZER. THEATRE. TUBE TROUBLE.

GETTING YOU STARTED

DEAD END played on an Amstrad – also available on C64, Spectrum and PC(e)

INVENTORY (you are carrying a watch, gun and photograph), EXAMINE PHOTOGRAPH (some ink comes off the back), EXAMINE BACK PHOTOGRAPH (to get an address), OUT (to your car), 237 BLUEHILLS, EXAMINE PLAQUE, PRESS BUTTON, PHILIP MARLOWE (shown into the living room), SIT ON SOFA, SHOW PHOTOGRAPH to MARCIA, ASK MARCIA about ALVERSON, ASK MARCIA about MILES, ASK MARCIA about Miles' DEATH, ASK MARCIA about DEAL, STAND, W (into the study), EXAMINE SAFE, EXAMINE DESK, EXAMINE FOLDERS, EXAMINE PAD, TURN PAGE of pad, EXAMINE PAD, GET MAT, GET KNIFE, EXAMINE MAT, E, OUT (back to your car) and go to VIEWPOINT

ESCAPE! (Erogenous Zone) played by Barbara Gibb on an Atari

Start in a dark and damp cell. TAKE BOWL, TAKE SPOON, EXAM WALLS (see crumbling mortar around a stone block in the south wall and some lichen), TAKE LICHEN, SCRAPE MORTAR WITH SPOON (fine powder now on floor), PUT POWDER IN BOWL, PUSH BLOCK, CRAWL THROUGH HOLE (into a passage), TAKE ORANGE, EXAM ORANGE (partially eaten), S, E, TAKE PAGE, READ PAGE (recipe for a sleeping draft), S (too late if you didn't note the details on the page). Now at a heavy metal door. EXAM DOOR, OPEN DOOR (it wasn't locked), S (kitchen), TAKE BOTTLE, EXAM BOTTLE (attar of roses), N, N, W (T-junction)

HOTEL HELL played by Dorothy Millard on a C64

Start in the Lounge. EXAMINE COFFEE TABLE, GET CAN, N, E, N (to elevator), U (to first floor), S, W, W (into caretaker's lounge), N (to bedroom), EXAMINE PAPERS (Base 7 flyers), EXAMINE CLOSET, GET PARKA, S, E, E, N (into elevator), D (to ground floor), S, W, N, N (to loading dock), EXAMINE RAMP, GET SNOWSHOES, WEAR SNOWSHOES, WEAR PARKA, N (to garden path), W, S, S, W (to croquet court), GET CROQUET Mallet, E, N, E, S, S (to kitchen), EXAMINE SINK (someone has left it full of oil), FILL CAN (with the oil), S, E, N (into elevator), D (to basement), S, W (to store-room), EXAMINE CRATES, OPEN CRATES, GET WRENCH, E, E (to boiler room)

THEATRE played by Dorothy Millard on a PC – also available on Atari and Amiga

Start in the Theatre Lobby. EXAMINE POSTERS, EXAMINE STAIRCASE, LOOK UP (two stories high), NW (manager's office), D (basement), GET PAGER THEN EXAMINE IT, GET loose PAGE, EXAMINE PANEL, TURN ON SWITCH, EXAMINE BARRELS, GET POPCORN, GET POPCORN, GET POPCORN, GET POPCORN (four lots), U, SE, S (outside theatre where you discover your car has been stolen), N (you start back into the theatre but are confronted by a thug carrying a knife), EXAMINE THUG, WAIT, WAIT (the thug is driving you back into the theatre), N, NW (manager's office), N (cramped hallway), GET loose PAGE, W, W, S, W

KNIGHT LIFE played by John Schofield on a Spectrum 128K – also available on Amiga(e), PC(e) and Amstrad 6128/PCW

Before starting the game, type in INFO, VOCAB, COMMANDS, HELLO and GAMES which will tell you more than is on the Zenobi leaflet. INVENTORY (nothing), X MORDRED, X NELLY, X HAY, X STALL (closed), TALK TO MORDRED, SEARCH HAY (you find the EPONA scroll), READ EPONA (you need two verses – this applies to all the scrolls you find), X ROPE (coiled), UNCOIL ROPE (you find 3 groats), ASK MORDRED "ABILITY" (he can "push" and "whistle"), ASK MORDRED "FEE" (he charges 10 groats), OPEN STALL (you need the shopkeeper's permission), SW, GET BROOCH (you don't want to), SWEEP COURTYARD (you find 5 groats), N, X MERLIN, TALK TO MERLIN, X TABLES, X STOOLS (you find a tray), X TRAY, X BAR (you take a drink), PUT DRINK ON TRAY, X CUSTOMER, TALK TO CUSTOMER, GIVE TRAY (he gives you a silver coin), X GUINEVERE, TALK TO GUINEVERE, GIVE COIN (Guinevere gives you 5 groats), X GIRL, ASK GUINEVERE ABOUT GIRL (Morgana is her aunt – she mustn't know she's down here). A priest enters. X PRIEST (in the service of Taranis), TALK TO PRIEST (he has chosen you for the quest to search for the Holy Socks), TALK TO PRIEST, ASK PRIEST ABOUT QUEST

SCARY MANSION played by John Schofield on a Spectrum

Note:– unfortunately DESC has not been used in the Quill program so every time you find an objects, etc. you have to LOOK to see what it is. Also R(edescribe) is not in the vocabulary.

Part One

INVENTORY (some petty cash), OPEN CABINET (locked), EXAM SINK, LOOK (see a bar of soap), GET SOAP, W, D, OPEN DOOR, OUT (Inspector Retard gives you some train tickets and drives off – only in the first 10 turns – after that he's gone), IN, EXAM TICKETS, EXAM BOOKSHELF (see red and blue buttons), [*], PRESS BLUE (you enter a secret room), EXAM GUARDIAN (dirty), EXAM SOAP (note – GET KEY at this stage is death!), GIVE SOAP (the Guardian races off!), GET KEY, DROP SOAP, OUT, N, EXAM MRS STEBSON, TALK TO MRS STEBSON (if she stays here – "7722 is not a palindrome" she says cryptically), EXAM FRIDGE, OPEN FRIDGE, LOOK (see a meaty bone), GET BONE, EXAM BONE, S, U, E, GET BRUTE, EXAM BRUTE (deodorant), UNLOCK CABINET, LOOK (see a note and pair of sunglasses), GET GLASSES, EXAM GLASSES, GET NOTE, READ NOTE (from Inspector Retard telling you to meet him in 10 turns outside!)

TWILIGHT ZONE played by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga

Start in your bedroom. GET UP, TAKE CLOTHES, WEAR CLOTHES, TAKE WALLET, TAKE MONEY, PUT MONEY IN WALLET, PUT WALLET IN POCKET, E (hallway). There are many photographs on the wall. If you LOOK AT PHOTOGRAPHS you look at one at random. Repeat the input until any that you've never seen before give you two clues for later in the game. D (living room), E, N, N, N, N (station), NE (see a queue at the ticket counter), GET IN LINE (finally arrive at window), BUY TICKET (need money), W, W (onto train), TAKE ALL (pendant, newspaper and business card), EXAMINE NEWSPAPER, READ NEWSPAPER, EXAMINE CARD, READ CARD, EXAMINE PENDANT, PUT CARD IN PENDANT, WAIT (lady rushes off the train, you hear a scream and then the man in the robe laughs), GET OFF TRAIN (man in the robe is revealed as the Grim Reaper – who is now chasing you), E, S (a boy is being threaten by the Grim Reaper), WAVE PENDANT AT REAPER (stops the Reaper advancing), SAVE BOY (the Grim Reaper vanishes and pendant changes into a locket), DROP NEWSPAPER, TAKE LOCKET, S, S, E

OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

R.J.'s **ULTIMATUM** compiled by Steve Fairbrother on a C64 – also available on Spectrum and PC(e)

ITEM	LOCATION	USE
Fifty cents	in rucksack	buy newspaper
Silver coin	look under park bench	buy train ticket
55 dollars	talk to your aunt	boarding house rent
Suit	buy from Daphines	wear to get in Green's consulting
Letter	chat with careers service	give to employment agency
Overalls	opportunity shop	wear to get cleaning job
Comb	examine seat in cinema	comb hair to get job
Application form	from Green's consulting	fill it in for exec. job
Bleached jeans	worn at start	wear for initial decency
Introduction	from employment agency	give to factory manager
Small object	in jacket	give to your aunt
Rucksack	aunt's bedroom	contains pepper and fifty cents
Pepper pot	rucksack	throw at thugs
Pen	buy newspaper	sign book and fill form
Newspaper	buy from stand	read about job and give to derelict
Railway ticket	buy from station	train ride
Plate of etc.	in cafe	eat
Crumbs	in cafe after eating	feed to ducks
Old clothes	in bin	wear
Pay packet	work at cleaning	buy suit
Small paper	dance in disco	examine it
Bus pass	examine small paper	allows unlimited bus use
Disco ticket	from grateful derelict	entry to disco
Disc	feed ducks	entry to skating and arcade
Cinema ticket	examine rubbish in park	entry to cinema
Underwear	worn at start	don't be seen without it!
Large earring	worn at start	dump it
Hair do	worn at start	comb it out
Bike jacket	worn at start	examine then dump it
ID card	play video	get Bozo to fix it
Reference A	woman from band in hotel	need to get exec. job
Tie	talk to lady on bus	wear to get in consultancy
Reference B	talk to late night tennis	need to get exec. job
Whiskey bottle	from hippy at emp. agency	give to hotel clerk



HINTS AND TIPS

AFTER THE PARTY played by Barbara Gibb on a C64

Examine the graffiti for important names.

Stand on the loo to escape from the locked cubicle.

Use the small key to unlock the cupboard in the washroom.

Read the note and magazine.

You need a four digit code to enter and leave the sales office.

Break a pig to find a £1 coin.

Buy some mints to obtain some small change.



ALIEN ABDUCTION? played by Barbara Gibb on an Atari

Library

Examining the desk *twice* makes the library appear as you remember it. A third examination discovers two newspaper articles concerning your father. Show them to him and note his response, they then disappear.

Cylinder in Bedroom

Ask dad about it *after* showing him the newspaper articles, then ask him again so that he goes to look at it, note his attitude changes.

Type 1931 for part of the cylinder to become transparent. Look through the window.

How to get the Axe

Hoe the garden with the real hoe. Put the clod in the cylinder of the contraption then pry the axe with the hoe.

Tree with initials

Give the axe to dad when he is by the tree with the initials. He will try to chop the tree down. Wait until it is definitely revealed as a metal fixture. You should see an alien (with metal pod) approaching. Your only effective weapon is the hoe so ATTACK ALIEN WITH HOE to end up in the same asylum as your dad!

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e), PC(e) and MAC(e)

At Lumberjack's office

Instruct Wauchope to strike the coffee machine.

Debug the telephone *before* using it – now find a way to destroy the bug

Search the documents on the desk. Read the memo for vital information.

Look under the desk, then remove the base of the drawer.

Examine the chair – it will help you open a door.

Give paper and a printer cable to Wauchope then ask her to transcribe the tape.

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e), PC(e) and MAC(e)

General

This one-location game is ideal for broad-minded beginners because it encourages you to read very carefully the messages, and pick up on hints so that you can decide on the next input.

Always check your inventory at the start of a game.

The Game

Stand up, pull up your pants, pull the chain.

You know the door has been locked from the outside, so EXAMINE DOOR and note the description, especially the keyhole. Checking the keyhole by looking through it tells you that the key is still in the lock.

EXAMINE the RIGHT WALL to see something useful, and something that is just fun to examine. Pull the nail and straighten it and you hold all that is needed to escape from the little wooden hut.

DRAGON QUEST played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e), PC(e) and MAC(e)

When you first enter the desert, go N, W then S. You don't have any moves to spare, so just MOVE the SKELETON and pick up the bag before returning S, E, W and S.

Look in the pool.

Move the beds in the huts.

You can TRANSLATE MAP and NOTICE if you have the book from the chief.

Drop the dormouse when the owl is present. Look behind his perch.

Pushing a sword more than once is rewarding.

Wander around the village until you are arrested by the lawman.

Lie down on the mattress to find something to buy your way out of jail.

The bank will exchange your money into 5 silver coins.

Spend some of your money on a shave, and give another to the innkeeper who will leave the bar unattended, but for only a few moves.

Look under the bed in the innkeeper's bedroom.

Translate the writing on the chest.

You won't get the innkeeper's property past him, so throw them out of the window and retrieve them later.

You can carry only one item when riding the horse.



DUKE BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE played by Richard Batey on a Spectrum

Help to find the keys

Mauve key : in the nursery – examine the doll then open the catch.

Gold key : wear the mask in the beehive room, then pull the tray.

Green key : cut the rose with the scissors.

Silver key : examine the dressing table then pull open the drawer.

White key : lift the rug in the mirror room.

Blue key : after visiting the catacombs, search clothes in the closet.

Red key : pull the fungoid in the damp cell.

Black key : in the crypt.....if you can get there!

ELVEN CRYSTALS 1 played by Barbara Gibb on an Atari

There is a spade in the quagmire – use this to dig a hole were you see the tracks of a wild beast.

Before leaving the moor, find a blue crystal. The words on it are clues.

Sell the ring at the pawn shop.

Buy the coif – need one gold coin.

You must reach the inn before it gets dark so don't waste your moves.

Examine the man in the inn to be told 20 gold coins will be paid to anyone who brings back the head of the evil hobgoblin.

If you have bought the coif you will be safe when you awake the next morning.

The crystal will freeze the lake, enabling you to reach the island. Leave before the ice melts.

HAMPTON MANOR played by Dorothy Millard on a PC

Use the lawn chair to climb the tree.

Move the family painting.

Enter the mural.

Hit the mortar wall with the sledgehammer.

In the catacombs follow the map to find the shovel.

Drop the jar of honey to deal with the bear.

Turn the valve in the basement with the wrench to get the fountain working.

In the crypt – move the slab.

Pull the lever in the chamber across the chasm to clear the mud.

Drop the necklace to placate the corpse and obtain the board.

Drop the board to cross the chasm.

Tie the rope to the ice block.

HIDE AND SEEK played by Bev Truter on a PC(e) – also available on Spectrum, Atari(e), Amiga(e) and MAC(e)

Note that SEARCH, MOVE and EXAMINE are all different actions.

In your house – you need to find an apple, some money, a torch and a sandwich.

At the well – turn the windlass to lower the bucket, then climb rope. Paddock – examine the pony, give it the apple.

Shop – buy the hook with the money you found in your bureau.

Crossroads – examine the statue carefully.

Glade – you'll need the brick from the well to deal with the elves, and talk to the pixie to find out her name.

Large field – looks an appealing place to linger, so WAIT.

Hut at Beach – search shelf, then search the object you find there.

At tractor – talk to the farmer, examine his toolbox.

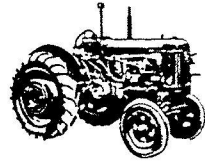
Hayloft – search/move the sacks.

Barn – search barn (pan); examine the ladder (bolted in place).

In Cave – examine the wall while carrying the lit torch.

On island – FILL PAN several times until you find something.

At Haystack – examine the hay on the ground until you find a hen.



LIFE OF A LONE ELECTRON played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e), PC(e), MAC(e) and Amstrad

Entering the portal at Infinity will return you to the clearing.

Search the benches in the Lab. complex.

Insert the chip in the slot found in the equipment at the west end of the lab. It creates a black hole which you can enter.

It is dark in the other dimension, so you need a light source. (ELTTOB LLIP EHT NI KRAUQ)

Suck up the antimatter using the hoover with nozzle attached.

Fill the pill bottle with petrol at The Last Stop Petrol Station.

To get through that "locked, bolted, reinforced, chained, etc." black door – eject the antimatter from the hoover, then eat a black pill.

To shatter the glass window – use the pebble and trumpet.

To land on the roof of the proton – spray the floor and eat a pill (correct colours, of course).

FLY ORBITAL to finish the adventure.



HILLSFAR

Cleric's Quest – Mission One

- A) Find the temple of Tempus and talk to the Master; he will inform you of your task and give you your first lead.
- B) Leave the town and head for the Trading Post. Talk to the Trader and he will inform you of the movements of certain characters.
- C) Ride to the Big Tree. Search the maze, opening chests as you go. You should find a dead body in one of the chests.
- D) Return to the Temple of Tempus. Once again, talk to the Master and inform him of your findings.
- E) Head back to the Trading Post and talk to the Trader.
- F) Ride to the Old Hermit's House. There you should search the maze collecting items as you go. Eventually, you will locate the Holy Scriptures.
- G) Return to the Temple of Tempus and talk with the Master. He will take the Scriptures and reward you for your efforts.

LOST CHILDREN played by John Schofield on a Spectrum 128K

Ask Anne many questions about your quest and the surroundings. Her answers should lead to more questions. You should learn about two hidden exits from the area.

Be generous to the boy, then follow him immediately.

Use the crowbar in the woodcutter's hut to prise free a ladder, to climb to an opening, and (if you wish) open the childrens' cell.

In the quarry, make sure you look inside the hut before knocking it down, then search what is left.

Make sure you've found something up the beacon before removing the ladder.

The landlord will point out the pawnbroker.

MANOR OF DOOM played by Edwina Brown on a Spectrum

The long key opens the door where you hear groaning.

Give woman to dying man!

Move the bed to see under it.

Drop the rope through the trapdoor before going down.

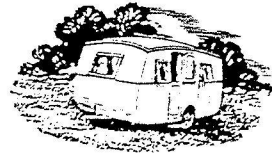
Inflate the dinghy with the footpump.

Give the matches to the woman at the campsite.

In the caravan – sit on the couch and drink a cup of tea.

Open the cupboard and move the coats to find some petrol.

Get on the motorbike, move cap and pour petrol.



MADCAP MANOR played by Barbara Bassingthwaighte on a Spectrum

Don't open the attic door as the madman escapes and kills everyone.

Pot the black ball to reveal a secret passage.

To open the door in wide corridor you need to have been to the madman's attic door (but don't open it). You can now unlock it.

Wear cycle clip in the crypt so the rat can't bite you.

Who needs what object

Mrs. Crumble needs the knife.

Mary need the cue.

Sophie need the billiard rest.

Amazonian Indian needs the axe.

Fleet need the corkscrew.

Old Sparrow needs the tin opener.

Horatio needs the teddy.

Algenon Stingy needs the ruby ring.

MIDNIGHT THIEF played by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga

Examine the walls in the cellar. You need the ring to reveal a secret passage leading east.

To make the half-gold half-lead brooch – go to the lounge, make a fire by putting the coal, then the paper and the wood in the fireplace. Put the gold nugget and lead in the mould, then put the mould onto the fireplace. Now light the fire and wait until the metals have fused.

MISSION X played by Barbara Gibb on a C64 – also available on Spectrum and Amiga(e)

At the start – enter the hatch of the flying saucer to be transported to an alien representation of an Earthly landscape.

Go south from the crossroads to find a farm. Feed the pigs then examine the "empty" bucket and search the sty.

Move the pillow to find a small key.

Vault the chasm to find a hut.

You need the iron bar to open the coffin in the crypt. Wave the cross to ward off the skeleton.

Protect your hands before picking up the alien device.

Throw the lit dynamite to make a hole in a wall.

Spray the eyes of the robot – need the aerosol.

Throw a stone to break the patio door.

Examine the gazebo. and when you hear a certain noise coming from the house. go to the machine and insert the alien device into the slot. You can now activate the gazebo/teleporter. but ensure you are dressed correctly for the journey.

MISER (J.Lockerby) played by Barbara Gibb on a C64 – also available on Spectrum, Amstrad, Atari(e), Amiga(e), PC(e) and MAC(e)

Don't forget to SLEEP at the beginning of the game.

Tobacconist – read the notice outside the shop, then enter and talk to him. Check out your footwear for a ticket. Give it to the tobacconist who will ask you a riddle. Answering it correctly means you win something that will enable you to perform a good deed.

Sweeping a floor can be revealing.

To find a ladder – backwards and behind are the important words.

Fill the coal scuttle with water from the barrel in the barn.

A good deed for the vicar is rewarded with a candle.

MUTINY played by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga(e), also available on Spectrum 128K and PC(e)

Part Two

A grateful peasant will offer you a choice of three items – choose wisely, and note what he does when he goes inside his hovel.

Clean the dagger to avoid being arrested.

A particular item can be thrown onto the promenade.

Note the description of McCleary. You can slip passed him if disguised and not *carrying* certain items. Work out how nature can help you get the stake passed him.

There is a hammer hidden in a dark area.

PROMOTIONAL PROSPECTS played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Amstrad and PC(e)

Read the file from the hospital so that you write some telephone numbers in your notebook. Telephone each one, then follow up one in particular when given extra information.

Cottage

Examine and look through all the windows.

Cutting the ivy with the scalpel reveals another window – you need the scissors to open it.

You need your credit card to open the door into the kitchen.

Visit the front room and study and examine the objects you noticed when you looked through the windows.

Open a drawer to discover a vital clue.

Return to the inn and LOOK AROUND to see if Don is present – he should be if you have read the magazine and visited the cottage.

Talk to Don, and consult your notebook for a telephone number. It will always be engage, so drive to the address.

RED ALERT played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e), PC(e) and Amstrad

At the **start** you should have shears, money, can-opener, salt, diamond, pliers, sneezing powder and hard hat.

There is a tin hidden in the brick wall.

At the **dead-end**, tap the pipe for a hermit to appear. I couldn't get much sense out of the hermit until I went away, then returned. Note what he says.

TODDLER TROUBLE played by Barbara Gibb on an Atari(e), also available on Spectrum, Amiga(e), PC(e) and MAC(e)

Part Two

You can't do much in the **start** location at first – return when you have certain equipment.

Move the thorns and read the placard for vital information.

Talk to Hands to find out what he has lost.

You can't stay in the Botanic Garden until Dr. Webber has cured your hayfever.

VALHALLA 3 played by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga

Level 2

Gambling Device

Collect all 4 pieces of jigsaw and drop them on the correct tables to open the nearby chest. Pick up the playing car (gambling device). The jigsaw pieces are 1) by journalist 2) by Edward Lear's tomb 3) by Wee Willie Winkie's tomb 4) by magpie's nest.

Blood of Fruit

Pick up the orange from the tree by the jigsaw. Put it on the juice squeezer and pick up the juice

Something That Was

Pick up the see found close to the cooking pot. Drop it into the plant pot, pick up the sunflower and put in on Van Gogh's tomb, pick up the shoes, Go to the bush near the jailer/forged and pick up the coat. Collect the hat from the schoolteacher. Go to the man near the bowling table. Talk to him and drop the hat on the table in front of him. Talk to him again and drop the jacket on the table. Talk to him a third time and drop the shoes on the table. Pick up the Guy Fawkes. Pick up the lit match from the extreme east end of the gargoyle path. Go to the pile of wood and put the Guy Fawkes on the top, then use the lit match. Pick up the ashes.

Winning the Bowling Trophy

Go to the cooking pot. Put the ace of diamonds, juice, ashes and book into the pot and pick up the potion. Pick up the bowl from the pill duplicator. Go to the end of the bowling table. Drink the "bowl better" potion and drop the bowl. Pick up the silver trophy.

Third Gargoyle

Put the silver bowling trophy on the Ag symbol stone. Pick up the key and unlock the gargoyle.

SERIALIZED SOLUTION

DUNGEON MASTER 2 – THE LEGEND OF SKULLKEEP

Played by Mary Scott-Parker on a PC

PART THREE

Save the game before entering the Castle. Insert the four Clan Key Pieces to unlock the door and proceed to the first of many tricky puzzles. At the end of the corridor lies a skeleton, and if you're like me, it won't mean a thing – that is, until the giant fireball wipes out the entire party – and then the penny drops...aha, it was meant as a warning. So, step on the plate in front of the eyeball then step back immediately to allow the fireball to pass – which it only does once.

Getting through the gates to the North can only be accomplished in 2 stages and time is of the essence. The eyeball is just a tease. Stand in the button alcove facing the gates. Cast Accelerate [OH IR ROS], quickly press the left button and the right button, then hurtle forward using the forward arrow on the keyboard, bumping into the gates until the first two open to allow passage. At gate 3 turn round and walk back to the eyeball – no further, as stepping into the button alcove closes the first two gates again. Stand beside the eye, facing South this time, cast Accelerate – centre the cursor on the green button ahead [the unpressed one] then quickly step forward, press the button and without turning hit the backward arrow repeatedly and hopefully you will make it past the third gate...repeat as often as necessary.

Beyond the third door is an alcove containing a gold key. Take the key and walk back through the three gates and unlock the Castle door allowing access to the outside world. One of the tall burners can easily be moved into the button alcove to prevent accidents like stepping back by mistake and closing all the gates again.

In the room with the stairs is a false wall concealing a crystal shield. In the room with the down ladder prepare Cure Poison potions, because, as well as 2 FUL Bombs, there are 3 worms in the room below. The sword Tempest can only be taken with the help of the Minion Map, as, when the sword is lifted, a pit opens and escape is impossible. When the map is activated, put a cross on the square where the sword is and then retreat to the door. Then select the picture of the minion leaving the square with the cross and the sword will be brought to you.

Climb the stairs and prepare to do battle with the Wizards. First – save the game. Have all party members prepare Guard Minions [ZO EW NETA] and then pull on the rope. The easiest way to dispatch the Wizards, I have found, is to stay outside the room until they are all dead. When one of the Wizards has opened the door enter the room, walk about three paces, leave 2 or 3 Guard Minions and then leave the room again and wait for the fireworks. As soon as the shooting starts the gate will close – so pull again on the bell-rope, while there are still ordinary Wizards alive, because the chief one [who carries the Numen Staff and lasts the longest] cannot open the door. The door will be opened once again and this time it will remain open. Keep out of the way and just enter the room to create more Guard Minions until a bloodcurdling sound tells you that the Chief Wizard has bitten the dust. Claim the Numen Staff and drop it in the cauldron to recharge it. The items in the alcoves can now be collected and changed in the cauldron. With the Numen Staff in the party's hands the next door will now open.

SOLUTION OF THE MONTH

CAVES OF SKULL

Written by Martin Freemantle

Solution by John Schofield on a Spectrum

I (carrying box, wearing sandals, doublet and trousers). X BOX (pictures of merchants), X DOORS (covered in symbols – ONLY THE TRUE DOOR KEEPER CAN RELEASE THE LOCK SPELL), X SYMBOLS (54 letters of dwarvish alphabet), X ROCKS, X BOULDERS, X TREES (blue fruit on higher branches). SEARCH GRAVEL (see a pebble). GET PEBBLE, THROW PEBBLE AT FRUIT, GET FRUIT (don't eat it), SEARCH BUSHES (see an exit south), S, X STONE (smooth and flat). SIT (on stone – you notice a vine). GET VINE. SEARCH GRASS (see a dagger). GET DAGGER. N. CLIMB BOULDERS. X BRANCHES (sturdy to west but out of reach), JUMP WEST, X BIRD. SEARCH NEST (it won't let you), GIVE FRUIT (it flies away). SEARCH NEST (you find a monocle), TIE VINE TO BRANCH, D, X HUT (see door with knocker), X DIRT (compact). DIG (need dagger – see a skeleton key), GET KEY. KNOCK ON DOOR (a dwarf appears for 3 turns). X DWARF, TALK TO DWARF (he's lost his monocle – he goes back inside), KNOCK ON DOOR, GIVE MONOCLE (he tells you to say UNSEAL to open the skull doors), U, UNTIE VINE, JUMP EAST, SEARCH ROCKS (one has an emerald embedded), PRISE EMERALD (need dagger which is then lost – must dig for the skeleton key first – you now have the emerald), D, UNSEAL (the doors open – you could deduce that the 6 symbols spells UNSEAL at this stage – but you get more help later).

RS (you are going into a realtime situation), E (the doors close and you are in darkness), FEEL WALLS (a brick is loose). PULL BRICK (you take the brick and light shines through the gap – end of realtime – S puts you in darkness again), X FLOOR (dusty). CLEAR DUST (see a hole in a circle). X CIRCLE (a graphic spelling EMERALD), INSERT EMERALD (illuminates location to the south). S. X GARGOYLE (its eyes follow you), TALK TO GARGOYLE (“My maidens were fair and had sky in their hair. Her tears are yours to open any frozen doors.”). [You can PULL GENITALIA if you are into that sort of thing!] X ARCH (blocked by a grille). LOOK THROUGH GRILLE (you see a button on the far wall – it can't be reached), TIE VINE TO BRICK, THROW BRICK AT BUTTON (the grille opens, now have an exit south – it actually takes two throws, so if you haven't tied the brick it is lost and you are stuck), S, NE, SMELL (of death), RS (a sudden death situation coming up – try N to find the Basilisk and then ramload). To go forward two locations WALK BACKWARDS (past the Basilisk). X WALLS (for a clue). NE. X WALLS (another [misleading] clue). UNTIE VINE (from the brick), RS (another nasty situation coming up), SE. There is a Trogg here – you only have one turn to THROW BRICK to knock him out. (doesn't work if it is tied to vine). X TROGG, GET AXE. X AXE, X WALLS (“The golden key is in the four dungeons of Hell. Spell the word HELL and that's where you'll go.” Below the writing is a lever). S. X DOOR (no lock, etc. but three curious holes), X HOLES (ring-shaped, tooth-shaped and a long one), X CEILING (“Cast key at golden door.”), N. PULL LEVER (you can go east), E, X CEILING (“Trogg's hair”). E, E, X CEILING (another clue). E, X WALL (“When is a wall not a wall, when it's an illusion.” You have seen the H in Hell). W (you can now go north here. although no exit is shown on the screen), N, X SKULL (keyhole in nose), UNLOCK SKULL (need skeleton key – see a tooth), GET TOOTH, X HAZE (see a passage through it), E (returns you to the lever and Trogg). KILL TROGG (need axe), PLUCK HAIR (he must be dead).

PULL LEVER (to make an exit east into different passages), E, E, S, X WALLS (see symbols), X SYMBOLS (translates two of them), DIG (nothing needed - see a gold rod), GET ROD, W, X WALLS (see symbols), X SYMBOLS (should translate two more but doesn't), X ROCK (tombstones), X STONES (see four symbols), W, X WALLS (more symbols), X SYMBOLS (translates two more), DIG (nothing needed - see a bottle neck with stopper), PULL STOPPER (is the second letter, E from HELL), E (the four symbols here translate to ELAN), ELAN (takes you back to the lever again).

PULL LEVER (to make an exit east to more passages), E, E, N, X CEILING (gives the third letter, L from HELL), E, X WALLS (gives misleading clue already seen), E, GET SNAKE, X WALLS (repeats another clue), W, S, E, X WALLS ("Patience is a virtue."), WAIT (an exit east is revealed), E, GET HAND, X HAND (a gold ring is on the middle finger), REMOVE RING/CUT FINGER (doesn't work), W, W, DIG (nothing needed - see a return spell), GET RETURN, X RETURN, CAST RETURN (back to lever again).

PULL LEVER (exit east to yet more passages), E, E, X WALLS (high up is a hook), LOOP VINE, THROW VINE OVER HOOK (a hanging vine), DROP SNAKE, PULL VINE (a rat emerges but runs off when it sees the snake - no dropped snake means a sudden death). There is an exit down some steps now. GET SNAKE, D, X WALLS ("A trap lies east."), X CEILING (tells you what to do next), RS (E is a sudden death on some spikes), GO ROUND (to avoid the trap location), E (another Trogg is here - you must retreat west), W, GO ROUND (you hear the Trogg blunder into the trap - you can now safely go east), E, GET SPEAR, S SPEAR (bamboo with flint tip), SEARCH TROGG (you take a lever). NOTE: pluck hair from this one scores nothing. E, E, X ALTAR (a heavy slab on top), LOOK BEHIND ALTAR (see a shield), GET SHIELD, X SHIELD (highly polished), X SKELETON (a hand points up), X CEILING (see a small hole), INSERT LEVER (it is out of reach), UNTIE FLINT (from the spear, now have a bamboo, twine and flint), X BAMBOO (hollow), TIE LEVER TO BAMBOO (with the twine - now have a long lever), INSERT LEVER (in hole - it clicks into place), PULL LEVER (the slab rises revealing an exit down), D, RS if you must X STEPS which gives the last letter in HELL and sends you there. SE, SEARCH STONES (see a gold key spell), GET KEY, X KEY, DIG CEILING (see a gilded gauntlet), GET GAUNTLET, WEAR GAUNTLET, NW, U, HIT SKELETON (need axe - see a pelvic bone), GET BONE, SW (to return back at the lever location).

NW, SW, W (you are safe here at the Basilisk when carrying the shield, but do *not* X BASILISK), X TROGG (has one arm behind him), LOOK BEHIND TROGG (now have a crown), X CROWN (silver with sky-blue jewels), X POOLS (the dark wizard uses venom in his magic), DIP HAND (into a pool it shrivels away leaving the ring), GET RING, E, NE, SE, S (back at the golden door), INSERT RING, INSERT TOOTH, INSERT ROD (into the holes), CAST KEY (the door splits revealing an exit south).

S (you are in a mushroom forest maze), X MUSHROOMS, W, X STATUE (of a fair maiden), PUT CROWN ON STATUE (you have freed the maiden). You have 3 turns to X MAIDEN (see tears), TALK TO MAIDEN (she has no reward), WIPE TEARS (she disappears - you now have a maiden's tear), W, X ALTAR (of hate), SEARCH WEEDS (a lizard scurries past), N.

X ALTAR (of love), X MUSHROOMS (you notice a door in one), KNOCK DOOR (it opens to the northeast), NE, X SEER, TALK TO SEER (he makes a message on the wall and tells what to do with the box), X WALL (warns not to touch the silks of the skull), TALK TO SEER (he will swap a vermillion flint for your plain one and the dead snake), SWAP FLINT, X FLINT, SW, E.

X ALTAR (of greed). SEARCH WEEDS (a frog leaps away – nothing comes of this, but if you miss it, a full score is impossible). W (the stream here is one of 3 locations where you can DRINK but the only result is death in 7 turns), N.

X ALTAR (of sin). SEARCH WEEDS (see a rope). GET ROPE. N. X MUSHROOMS (a big red one grows beside the stream). CHOP MUSHROOM (need axe – you cut some notches making an exit up). U. JUMP (to other side of stream). X DOOR (made of ice), X SKULL (one of the eye sockets has a notch in it), THROW TEAR (the door melts revealing an exit east), E. GET MIRROR, X MIRROR (an inscription tells you to look through it), W, TIE ROPE (to make a knot), THROW ROPE AT NOTCH (with a knot it catches making an exit up), U (to inside the skull), X ORB (it spins and puisates). STRIKE ORB (with the flint – it bursts into flames). RS (in case of accidents!), X ORB, THRUST BOX INTO ORB (you must be wearing the gauntlet – you are left with a silk cloth in your hand). X CLOTH (crimson with ivory skulls), X CRACKS (east is a wide one). FEEL CRACK (you press a latch revealing an exit east). E, X FOUNTAIN (the unicorn's head has a horn between its RED eyes). PULL HORN (nothing happens), X WALLS ("Go to another land to gain the unicorn's gate").

LOOK THROUGH MIRROR (this can be done anywhere carrying the mirror). You now *need* a hand mirror to read the screen! Everything has to be typed in backwards. NETSiL ("Follow the whispers"). SREPSiHW WOLLOF (you change location). ROOD ENIMAXE (it is locked inside). EERT OT KLAT ("Trogg Hair"), EERT BMiLC (you are poked back), ROOD KCIK (it crashes open revealing an exit west). TSEW (to inside shack), KNUB ENIMAXE. ROOLF ENIMAXE ("Into the fountain place FRESH BLOOD"), EVOTS ENIMAXE ("Into the fountain place BONE OF DEAD"), EVOTS HCRAES (inside is a lever), REVEL LLUP (the lever clicks and locks), RORRiM HGUORHT KOOL (to return).

X FOUNTAIN (the head has GREEN eyes), DROP MIRROR (to smash it), GET GLASS. CUT HAND (your hand drips blood for 3 turns). DRIP BLOOD (into fountain), PUT BONE (into fountain), PUT HAIR (into fountain), PULL HORN (the east wall opens up), E. Troggs and their leader are below. THROW CLOTH (the cloth destroys the Troggs).

Congratulations.

You have defeated the Trogg leader and his followers.

Your kingdom may now live in peace.

THE END.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

LAURENCE CREIGHTON – Larry@Gem.co.za

JOHN FERRIS – john.m.ferris@corp.courtaulds.co.uk

PHIL GLOVER – pglover43@aol.com

LARRY HORSFIELD – larry.horsfield@explosion.nemesis.co.uk

DOROTHY MILLARD – dddmillard@hotmail.com

PHIL REYNOLDS – phil@darkmoon.force9.net

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Adventure Probe - 52 Burford Road, Liverpool L16 6AQ

Adventure Workshop - 36 Grasmere Road, Royton, Oldham. OL2 6SR

Amster Productions - 81 Uplands, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL8 7EH

Borphee Computers - 64 County Road, Ormskirk. L39 1QH

Dream World Adventures - 10 Medhurst Crescent, Gravesend, Kent. DA12 4HL

Elyzium Software - 50 Chadswell Heights, Lichfield, Staffs. WS13 6BH

Fictitious Frobisher - 1 Heath Gardens, Coalpit Heath, Bristol. BS17 2TQ

First Rung Publications - 32 Irvin Avenue, Saltburn, Cleveland. TS12 1QH

Format Productions - 34 Bourbon Road, Gloucester. GL4 0LE

Jack Lockerby - 44 Hyde Place, Aylesham, Canterbury, Kent. CT3 3AL

Jean Childs - 24 Waverley Road, Bagshot, Surrey. GU19 5JL

Laurence Creighton - 603 Hillside Heights, Wessels road, Green Point, 8001
Cape Town, South Africa

Motivations/SAFE - 16 Montgomery Avenue, Beith, Ayrshire. KA15 1EL

Peter Hague - 32 Chancet Wood Drive, Meadow Head, Sheffield. S8 7TR

Special Reserve - P.O. Box 847, Harlow, Essex, CM21 9PH

Spectrum Software Hire(Softsell) - 32 Dursley Road, Trowbridge, Wilts, BA14 0LQ

SynTax - 9 Warwick Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6JL

Topologika - Islington Wharf, Church Hill Penryn, Falmouth, Cornwall, TR10 8AT

Vulcan Software Ltd. - Vulcan House, 72 Queens Road, Buckland,
Portsmouth, Hants. PO2 7NA

WoW Software - 52 Burford Road, Liverpool L16 6AQ

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

ADVENTURE PROBE HELP LINES



ISLA DONALDSON	.0141 9540602	SUN - SAT Noon - 12pm	Amstrad
BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHT	01935 426174	SUN - SAT 10am-10pm	Spectrum & BBC
BARBARA GIBB	0151 280 5616	Afternoon & Evening	Various
MANDY RODRIGUES	01492 877305	Mon-Fri 10am - 9pm	Various
PHIL GLOVER	0121 777 7324	Mon-Thurs 6pm - 10pm	& Sun 11am - 5pm
JENNY PERRY	0181 9794851	Any evening except Monday before	10pm PC & Spectrum
STEVE CLAY	0151 200 5861	Mon-Fri after 7pm	Sun - any time within reason
			Not Saturday
			PAW & AMOS
KAREN TYERS	01347 838667	Spectrum Golden Oldies	Any day - 10am - 10pm

THE ULTIMATE INFOCOM HELPLINE

If you need help with an Infocom adventure then who better to help you than A GRUE!

Ring GRUE on 01695 573141 between 7.30pm and 9.00pm Monday - Friday
Or write to 64 COUNTY ROAD, ORMSKIRK, WEST LANCs. L39 1QH

ADVENTURE PROBE

Telephone 0151 280 5616 Afternoons and Evenings
or write to: The Editor, 52 Burford Road, Liverpool L16 6AQ

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU ONLY RING AT THE TIMES SHOWN