

ADVENTURE PROBE

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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

ADVENTURE PROBE

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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 -

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HALL OF FAME

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

Jonathan Scott, Edwina Brown, Dorothy Millard, Lee Morrall, Phil Richmond,
John Schofield, Peter Brown, Ray Clayton, Laurence Creighton,
Bev Truter, John Ferris, Terry Taylor and Doreen Bardon

Special thanks to :

Geoff Lynas for his usual excellent printing job for this
and the previous 63 issues of Probe.



EDITORIAL

Welcome to another issue of Probe. At the beginning of 1998 I thought it would never get published, but things are looking a little better. Long-time subscribers may remember me saying that it is published using a photocopier – I print the pages out as A4 and Geoff (Lynas) works wonders converting them into the A5 magazine that you receive. This arrangement has gone on since September 1992, a total of 64 magazines. However, all good things come to an end, and Geoff no longer has the time to devote to the magazine, and the photocopying machine has become unreliable, so I have to find someone else to publish Probe, starting with the January '98 issue.

Geoff has given me a great deal of support since my third issue, and I relied on him to "fill in the gaps" in the masters I sent to him each month; there would be sheets of coloured paper with instructions such as "use advert. per xxx issue" or "front cover picture of own choice", plus the odd amendment to the useful addresses and help line pages. You will notice the four cover pages are of a better printing quality, this is because Geoff printed the masters using his own printer.

My sincere thanks to Geoff for all the hard work he has put into the magazine, and my best wishes to him and his family for the future.

Some readers, already aware of my future photocopying "problem", have telephone and asked if I have considered going bi-monthly, or even miss out a few issues. Various solutions have been contemplated but I would like to maintain the continuity of one per month (even though distribution is erratic), especially as it has occurred to me that Probe may be eligible for an entry in the Guinness Book of Records – 139 issues and still going! Before I write to them and make a fool of myself, does anyone know of any other magazine with a better record?

Probe *will* continue to be published. I have two possible publishers, one local and one further afield. The local one is my first choice: they have given me an unofficial estimate of the cost, which is within my budget, and their price includes stapling and folding, something which was getting more difficult now that my hands and wrists are not as strong as they were five years ago. If things don't work out, I have the other company to try. The magazine will be late for a while, but matters should improve if everything works out as planned.

I will admit that during the last few months I – fleetingly – thought that the magazine would have to cease, or pass to another editor. However, the many telephone calls and letters from readers suggesting ways of ensuring its survival, have encouraged me to press on. I'm already preparing the January issue, but as usual I'm a little short of contributions. If you can submit anything, please do so NOW. I'm always pleased to receive reviews, articles, letters, etc. I have one reply to the "It's A Mystery" published in the November issue, I had expected more of you clever readers to come up with ingenious ideas. If not, maybe you can pose a new set of circumstances?

Last, but by no means least, a warm welcome back Doreen Bardon. As she said in her letter "The Pheonix has risen again" after more than four years. Her telephone call and letter came at a very opportune moment, and along with all the kind words and the knowledge that there are lots of excellent new adventures due for release soon, helped me to decide to carry on.

All the best for 1998.

Barbara

LETTERS

From John Ferris of Coventry

Having read through September's Probe I was interested in Frank Oliver's letter, not just because my name was mentioned, but vanity did play a bit part.

I shall carefully side-step this curious interest in the English Civil War which has been developing over recent issues to add to my last letter regarding Vulcan Software and CD-ROM games. September's Newsdesk mentions the information, which I received through the post regarding pricing at £25. This I expected due to the increased cost of producing CD-ROM games (plus all the other excuses). What I found interesting and a little annoying was the fact that you need a 4x speed CD-ROM player to play it and the other CD-ROM games. I own a 2x which is obviously not up to the job so I'm now left with a little egg on my face after what I wrote in my last letter (August '97).

I'm all for being dragged into the present, but even I am not going to fork out £149 for another CD-ROM just to play one or two games on a computer which is looking increasingly like it's had it.

To be honest, I have actually bought a new 24 speed* CDRom, which came with a rather nice PC attached to it. There, I've finally done it, another Amiga user jumps ship, but I don't regret it. The Vulcan thing wasn't a major contributing factor, but it did help me to make my decision. However, I still like my A1200 because it's a good computer, perfect for DTP, which is my main use for it apart from games. It's still useful in the same way that the Spectrums and Amstrads that I saw at the Convention are still useful. They still do a job really well. So does my A1200 but it hasn't been developed for about four years. I still intend to use my A1200 and 2x CDRom drive especially for DTP because it's good at it and I don't intend spending money buying (overpriced) PC DTP software when I don't have to.

The Amiga users are one of its greatest assets. Never before has a computer had such a following. Never before has such a following been let down so badly. But they keep on believing, except this individual has lost his faith.

In my letter I wasn't directly comparing a 1MB A500 with a 286PC, that indeed would be shameful. The point I was making was that when the A500 came out the majority of PCs were of the 286/386 variety with rather inferior graphics capability. So to insist that all games should play on a 1MB A500 would be like insisting that PC games must also run on whatever PCs were about when the A500 was introduced. I think that clears up any misunderstanding. It also makes me wonder what sort of Amiga we would be using now if the same technology gap still existed between PC and Amiga today. The mind boggles.

The A1200 only argument is somewhat compromised with those survey results from the PD company about how many A500 users are out there (Frank's letter). I'm not sure how Vulcan's policy would work. Assuming that the A500 owners are die-hard Amiga fanatics, might they buy up all those A1200's that are coming up for sale in the classified ads? But that would still mean forking out for a decent CD-ROM.

I have been using a Spectrum emulator quite a bit on the A1200, playing through a number of "golden oldie" adventures (that's being a little flattering to some) and wholeheartedly agree with Frank emulating his A500 on his PC. Emulation speed is always a problem with action/arcade games. I doubt I could stand to play them at half speed. Speed is less of a problem with adventure games although those with graphics can try my patience.

I got to hear about Zenobi's "Long Goodbye" at the Convention. I have often wondered about the financial viability of such an enterprise in today's climate. Barbara hit the right note in her Editorial and I second what she said. If there's anyone out there that thinks they can make money out of adventures then they are sadly mistaken. I suggest that these days you write simply for enjoyment, or perhaps in the hope of glory if you enter the Interactive Fiction contest on the Internet. What do the authors think?

I just want to thank those who sent Email greetings and also to wish everyone a happy New Year.

(New Email address john.ferris@courtaulds.com but the old one still works fine.)

* CD speeds receive a lot of hype. In this case 24 speed means that the CD can vary its rotational speed, you can hear it "change gear." The 24 speed is only available on the data on the edge of the disc where the surface is moving fastest (illustrate this with a turntable and two small objects, one in the centre and one on the edge.)

From Laurence Creighton of Cape Town

Sometimes you find a gem. You are so happy with it that you want to share it with as many persons as possible. This was my feeling when I recently played "King's Quest V". I had been browsing in a second-hand shop, when I found the cd-rom lying on a shelf in nothing more than an old soft plastic envelope. I bought it for next to nothing, but I had heard about this game and I wasn't disappointed. Being cd-rom, it has narration, music, the characters speak and is totally interactive. I don't want this to turn into a review - I'm not eloquent enough for that, but having said that I'd like to relate this story for the benefit of those of you who have not played this game. I won't spoil the story or give out any hints but I can only say: watch the second-hand shops or the games-offered columns and grab it with both hands if you find it. I wish I could write an adventure even half as good.

The central character is King Graham. His wife, daughter and son (and his castle will you believe!) have been swiped by this evil wizard Mordack. Your quest is to find and return them. The story opens - with great fanfare and music - to find our hero outside the friendly wizard Crispin's house. Therein Crispin gives our hero a magic wand which I started to think was just a red herring.... From this point on, you need to solve one puzzle after another - one thing leads to another. You will find an enchanted forest where a witch will zap you, until you can sort her out. You will need a pie, but need a silver coin. You will have to have your fortune told by Marushka but you'll need to have a golden coin. You'll come across a great temple (The Lost Temple? - sorry, couldn't resist that!) but to get in becomes a mission - and when you do the door slams shut, never to reopen, after about ten seconds.

You'll meet some lovely people. There is a well-spoken young tailor who has a beautiful cape on offer (but who refuses the gold coin....); there is a Swiss (German?) toy maker who has a sled for sale and there is a cobbler and his wife who are poverty-stricken. There is a lad whose cart has broken down and is now blocking what seems to be a vital path, and most important of all there is Cedric the owl who becomes your friend and mentor. You will meet a gnome and his grandson who accept nothing (well, almost nothing) you offer them. There is the inn: careful there, you'll always be bound and thrown into the cellar. You will come across puzzles like the anthill and the beehive - and then there is the arid desert where you can easily die of thirst. I never did suss out whether or not this desert can be mapped - I think it's random generated but I could be wrong. There is a talking weeping willow tree, her tears actually form a salty lake! Oh, I almost forgot, there is also a snake on the only path east..... and almost nothing makes it move out of your way.

When you have aged ninety years and solved all that, the game opens up and rescuing your beloved wife and daughter starts reeking of remote possibility. To say nothing of your castle. You will need to be adept at mountaineering and soon you will meet the mountain Queen, protected by her wolves. A Yeti guarding an ice cave and a hungry bird all pepper the scenario and before too long you will reach Mordack's castle. There you will beset by puzzles galore – I won't spoil it by telling you about them – but I must stress one thing: keep your eyes open for pixel-sized objects that the programmers camouflage subtly. Without them you won't get off home base. The end of the game is difficult and I thank my friend on the other side of e-mail who kept me going with almost immediate replies when I was banging me head against many a brick wall.

Beg, borrow or steal (did I say that?) this game. But if you don't play it you will be the poorer. I for one want to get KQ 1-6, I will be keeping my eyes open. The whole game is mouse-controlled: there is no text input, so I'm afraid it's for PC owners only with Multimedia.

★

Many readers don't like writing reviews of adventures, so a letter (of any length) similar to Laurence's is an alternative way of recommending games you have enjoyed, or otherwise. (Barbara)

From Ray Clayton of Nottingham

I noticed in a recent Probe that the number of subscribers was falling. I am not able to use the Internet but it maybe that some of your readers have this facility. If so, it might be a good idea for them to put the details of Probe on the Net as it could help to introduce the magazine to new readers. Probe covers a wide range of machines and there are regular informative articles of interest to "adventure" enthusiasts.

★

The number of subscribers has fallen a lot compared to two years ago, and the number of contributors even more. I have no illusions about this and I'm sure I will lose more. However, I do get about six new subscribers per year, and a few who regularly buy one or two issues every year. They are usually, but only solely, 8-bit owners.

Some very kind readers who are on the Internet already spread the word about Probe, but I doubt if anyone will both to respond. From what I hear the majority of those who constantly browse the Internet are only interested in what they can download rather than have to send (and pay) for via what I think they refer to as snail-mail. Fortunately there are exceptions and some of them are very loyal supporters of Probe. They keep me informed of what is going on, and occasionally I receive some of the adventures that are available. Don't misunderstand me, I think the Internet is a great way to make the games available, providing they are there legally. I was very interested in Dorothy's letter (October '97), and two of the adventures mentioned are reviewed by John Ferris in this issue – has anyone got any of them to run on an Amiga? (Barbara)



REVIEWS

The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes –

THE CASE OF THE ROSE TATTOO

(Electronic Arts CD-ROM – £12.99)

Reviewed by Mandy Rodrigues on a Pentium 166 MMX PC, 32 Mb RAM

The video-type graphics and sound effects in this adventure are really quite stunning and the opening sequences when the scenario and plot are laid out for you, give you just a small preview of the goodies to come. Mycroft Holmes has summoned his brother, Sherlock and Dr. Watson to a meeting at the Diogenes Club as he has something of vital importance to discuss. However, just as the two famous sleuths arrive at the club there is a massive explosion, (beautifully depicted on screen and enough to knock the unsuspecting player off their chair in fright). Mycroft is left at the point of death in hospital and you as the famous detective must solve the case.

Actually as the plot unfolds you will realize that there isn't just one crime to solve but plenty including kidnapping, murder, attempted murder, and other grizzly crimes with plots and counter plots to add to your initial confusion. To solve the various crimes you are almost entirely on your own as Lestrade of the Yard is less than useless to say the least. More helpful are the folk from all walks of life, from the ladies of the street and the boatman and ordinary folk of the poorer areas of London to the Lords, Ladies and Lawyers of the nobility that you will encounter along the way. One of the most helpful characters is little Wiggins who really proves his worth on many occasions. Having said that, a great many characters are most unhelpful to say the least, one of whom is the Matron of the hospital where Mycroft is being cared for; she seems determined that neither Dr. Watson (whom you play for the first, initial screen of the adventure), or Holmes, shall gain admittance to any part of the hospital. Rather infuriating as you really do need to get into the mortuary to examine various bodies from time to time, as well as getting vital evidence from Mycroft. Getting into the hospital in hindsight is rather amusing (well, not for one of the patients who you have to treat in a rather cavalier manner, but then again, you have to do rather unorthodox things from time to time in adventures).

The adventure itself unfolds piece by piece. For example, once you get a character to give you an address of another individual, during your investigations, yet another set of locations appear on the London map for you to visit and explore, so it is vital that everyone and anyone be questioned at length about everything you see on screen. Sometimes your list of various questions that you can ask will change dramatically when you examine a person or object so it is wise to take a good look at everyone and everything as you go about.

Collect as many items as you can as you go about as they will all come in very useful. I found I needed a hatpin and a jar of smelling salts, half a button and a bit of sealing wax at various times so hang on to everything as you never know which item, when shown to the proper person, will bring about the results you want to see.

I haven't enjoyed an adventure like this for quite some time. Hearing your character speak, seeing them move about just like a video film, is quite incredible.

It isn't often that you get a computer to play two different pieces of music at the same time either. If you don't believe me then get Holmes to wind up his gramophone and put on one of his music cylinders and then get him to play his violin at the same time and see for yourself! It is quite incredible.

Along with the single CD you get a Cluebook (which really should be avoided as it does give quite a lot away), a comprehensive players manual and a reference card. All in all, very good value for money considering the hours of enjoyment you will get out of the adventure.

Minimum system requirements:- 486DX2/66 MHz processor with 8 Mb RAM for DOS, 16 Mb RAM for playing under Windows '95, MS-DOS 5.0 or higher. Double-speed or faster CD-ROM drive 256 colour SVGA local bus VESA 1.2 compliant video card. 30 Mb hard disk space.

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON

Reviewed by Ray Clayton on a C64

You have been turned into a toad by the evil witch, Hazel, and imprisoned in her home. You must find the objects and spells to make potions which will cause various changes until you resume human form again. Then you must escape from Hazel's house to regain your freedom.

The game begins in the parlour of Hazel's house and you must search the room to find clues and useful objects. Remember if you restart the game that the first location is randomly selected and objects may be hidden in different places. Not all you find is useful and one spell turns you into a bat and ends your hopes, so save regularly. A mouse is very helpful in an awkward situation and some actions are only possible as you change form.

Help and hints are provided from time to time so look for these clues to progress and to get glimpses of your future through a magic mirror, etc.

The witch's mischievous assistant interferes occasionally by whisking you off to other locations and stealing objects you have found. Fortunately, these can be recovered by searching around and even he provides an important word towards the end of the game, although only if you give him a reward.

There are many riddles and puzzles to be solved as you change from one state to another and the sequence of moves can be important. As the number of items carried is limited it is necessary to journey back and forth to Hazel's Lair where the cauldron is located. This is made easier by teleporting, after you have discovered the magic word. Not all exits are revealed in the text so check before moving on. Mapping is essential as there are quite a lot of movements to carry out the various tasks as new exits and items become available.

I found this an enjoyable game with plenty of challenges and generous help to keep me going.



ZERO SUM GAME

Cody Sandifer – TADS, FREeware

Reviewed by John Ferris on a PC

To start with, I have to admit to being one of the play-testers for this game, although my input was fairly limited (a subtle disclaimer) but I'll try for a subjective review.

"Zero" is set in the traditional fantasy pseudo-medieval world we all know and love and begins at the end with a full 75 points in 5000 turns. However, Mother isn't having any "rare, mystical, hard-won treasures" in her house so the aim of the game is for the conquering hero or heroine to undo every action that scored points.

This is a great idea for a game and like most great ideas is a simple and fairly obvious one in hindsight. The "full score" command lists the actions that scored as well as the overall score and in this game acts as your guide. For example, you had scored five points for stealing hard candy (American for boiled sweets, seaside rock etc.) and you find a baby, fast asleep. Taking sweets from a baby might be easy, but the reverse isn't.

There are several characters around including your faithful chipmunk called Chippy. Maurice the Follower, a sorcerer/sorceress tied to a bed (ahem, yes) and an Adventurer. Chippy is cute and useful and Maurice is just cute and both contribute to the humour in the game.

Puzzles range from the fairly obvious to difficult and a good sense of timing is required at two points in the game, so regular saving is required although once you find out how events run their course you won't need to worry. I had to play guess the verb in just one situation. There are a few red herrings in there as well.

The atmosphere of the game changes as you progress and becomes somewhat darker and colder than the rather cheery beginning. It's a case of the end justifying the means and some players might not like the means. The ending is rather unexpected as well.

There are a few bugs (so much for my play-testing) the most noticeable is the handling of the numerous acorns in your inventory. When I tried to throw one of the four acorns in my possession I got something like:

Which acorn should I throw? The acorn, the acorn, the acorn or the acorn?

Acorn

Let's try that again. Which acorn should I throw? The acorn, the acorn, the acorn or the acorn?

Any (TADS should do this sort of thing including either, both and all)

I can't use more than one object with this verb.

This required a restart and a little careful thought to get around. The other noticeable bug is that the "warning on" command which is supposed to tell if you are about to put the game into an unwinnable state doesn't appear to work.

Overall I enjoyed playing the game. The bugs can be worked around and once the game is solved the author provides a list of commands to try.

"Zero Sum Game" is Freeware and can be downloaded from the if-archive at ftp.gmd.de in the 1997 IF Competition directory.

A BEAR'S NIGHT OUT

David Dyte, Inform, Freeware

Reviewed by John Ferris on a PC

Another entry in the 1997 IF competition, "A Bear's Night Out" has the player taking the part of a teddy bear. The bear's owner, David, has forgotten about tomorrow's picnic, so teddy has to make all the preparations. The game calls itself a children's game, but the difficulty level is too high for the age group who would be into soft toys (the first time around, that is).

The game is set inside David's flat which turns out not to be as dull a setting as it could have been, since a teddy bear's view of the world is somewhat different (lower) than our own. Once out of bed, teddy has to explore the flat in an attempt to find out what to do. The clues to this are there, though it took me a while to figure it out. It pays to be very curious about everything.

There's one NPC in the game, Holly the cat. Holly is well written and can often be seen doing cat-like things in the background. I spent a lot of the game being worried about the sort of cat-soft toy interaction that results in lots of fluff but if you treat her right she's just a big pussy cat.

The puzzles are on the whole logical and clever, although the solution to the dark location was found by accident. The author insists the solution works in real life, but as I don't own one of those objects I would never have guessed. At least finding the solution by accident is inevitable.

One thing I will give away is that this is one of those games where some objects have to be examined more than once. In hindsight you can see the logic, but it does go against convention. I did like the way some puzzles had more than one solution and I was impressed at how well the tape recorder code had been written. In fact the game understood most of what I was trying to do, although the "unlock" command was a bit dim. I don't like to be asked "with what" when I'm carrying the only key because I'm not going to try using the ukulele, am I?

As for atmosphere, the descriptions are short but adequate and most of the atmosphere was created in my mind. The worry about the cat, trying to keep time limits (although there's only one) and the knowledge that almost everything in the game had a purpose. It managed not to be childish or too cute and there is a lot to hold the player's interest, not least the number of references to other games that can be found. Oh yes, there's one surreal moment that worked against the atmosphere but I didn't find any bugs*.

In summary, "A Bear's Night Out" is a short, well-written game of about average difficulty, well worth the download.

*"A Bear's Night Out" can be downloaded from the if-archive at <ftp.gmd.de> in the 1997 IF Competition directory along with a solution, if required.

*Although with my play-testing performance on "Zero Sum", I wouldn't take my word for it.



ELF'S CHRISTMAS ADVENTURE or GOD BLESS FROSTY THE SNOWMAN

Written by Bruce McKay

Reviewed by Dorothy Millard on a PC

"Elf's Christmas Adventure or God Bless Frosty the Snowman" is a musical text adventure, created with AGT (Adventure Game Toolkit), about an Elf's efforts to help Santa save Christmas when the North Pole is fogged in. The music is okay but after a while I was really grateful for the SOUND OFF command.

As the oldest elf you are summoned out of retirement on Christmas Eve by Santa because disaster threatens Christmas. So this is what happens when Santa calls you out of retirement. You had wondered what it felt like to be subjected to Baron Justus von Liebig's teleportation methods. Well now you have experienced it first hand. You remember when you were very young and the wisest, oldest elf was summoned. The mirror in the Great Christmas Hall is still cracked to this date. Never had such an emergency required such drastic measures. The burden of your responsibility rests heavily on your shoulders. Christmas has gone amuck and you must call on your years of wisdom and the recollections of your youth to put it right.

Starting in an octagonal room filled with hundreds of elves, each of which is identical and appear to move in unison. You stare at the elf directly in front of you. He stares back. You feel an itching in your nose which builds and builds until you sneeze and the entire room of elves sneezes simultaneously. You realize that you are still in the mirror. Going west takes you to Santa's Workshop where you soon realize that not all is well as it is unseasonably warm. Checking the thermometer which can be found in Santa's Cottage you will discover that the temperature is stuck at 10°C. and switching on his computer reveals that it is due to remain warm until Boxing day. Meeting Santa you find him in a pickle trying to hold up his trousers with one hand because he has lost his black belt, while trying to decide what to wear and doing everything else with his other hand.

Heading to the reindeer barn you find Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer hanging his head in shame because he has lost his glow. Help to solve this problem can be found in a diary belonging to Egbert who documented the secrets of Christmas. Now you must find the ingredients to make the *No Doze Noze Gloze* to cure Rudolph. After finding some warm clothes I travelled to the Penguin Colony in the Antarctic where I met Percival the penguin, dressed in a smart tuxedo with enormous pockets, so be careful what you are carrying when you meet him. The penguin colony consists of a large and complicated maze of ice floes where one false step plunges you into the water which is icy cold and fatal. There is a map of the ice floes but I found it very difficult to follow and finished up mapping it myself. Returning through the ice door I visited Santa's runway which had become a slushway to where some snow remained and built a snowman, which when animated became Frosty the Snowman. In return for a favour Frosty magically transforms the poinsettia into beautiful real flowers, which is just what you need for Rudolph's potion.

I had a great deal of trouble with the ending and just couldn't find the snowflake. It was just something silly that I had missed and once completed it really wasn't that hard. Anyway, help was at hand and eventually Rudolph's glow was restored, Santa's trousers no longer continually fell down and the temperature was restored to normal for that part of the world. Rudolph led the reindeer sleigh and all of Santa's gifts were delivered on time. Everyone lived happily ever after.... until next time that is! Merry Christmas.

THE REALM

(Willysoft/The Cult)

Reviewed by Dorothy Millard on an Amiga/PC under Spectrum emulation

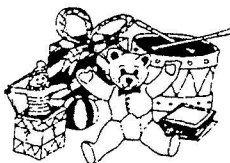
My first impression of "The Realm" was one of watching trees draw! This problem was largely solved by swapping from the Amiga to the PC, that emulator running much faster.

You start the game on a long road from Thryll Town with no idea of your quest. Going north you encounter a cottage and on entering meet a wizard who asks you to look after things while he goes off to look for a goblin who has taken a page from his spell book. So off he goes, leaving his spell book for you to read. On reading the book you will soon notice that page 5 is missing and will discover a long list of spells which you will need to copy as you aren't allowed to take the book out of the cottage. In order to cast spells you need first to find certain objects to use as a focus in order to make them work.

In order to make Ramsave/Ramload functional you need to cast two spells and for these you will need a twooble which can be obtained only if you have the honey. You are probably asking "What are twoobles?" They are small furry creatures which are an invaluable aid to the serious magician. They subsist on honey, without which they refuse to cooperate. The problem is that if you get the honey the bees chase you, but they will leave if you jump in the pool. However, if you re-enter the location where the bees are they kill you. This is a problem because the only other way is to go through The Tangle from which all exits are random and I never seemed to get where I wanted to be. I found it easier just to use the tape save and ignore Ramsave/Ramload.

Moving along I discovered a Fair Maiden who is not adverse to a kiss or two and a slithery snake which can be difficult to get, a very frightened duck and the weaver who has a very necessary object. Until you find something to put objects in there is a strict carry limit which makes life difficult. I met a troll who was intent on preventing my exit and a spider who wasn't impressed when I tried to take his gossamer thread. Using a spell I managed to enter the tower where I met some unfriendly goblins and the wizard, but it was worth it because I also found the missing page. Now to deal with the belligerent knight who has been chasing me out of The Bower throughout the game, usually to a location I didn't want to go to! I picked up the chalice and returned to the cottage for an important object and read the all important page 5, before finding the wizard. All that remains now is to cast the spell of absolute authority!

"The Realm" is a much better game than I first anticipated with lots of puzzles to solve. Location descriptions are adequate for this era of game (early 1980's I think.... Barbara) which was written with The Quill, Patch and Illustrator.



ADVENTURE MEMORIES WHIRLING AROUND CHRISTMAS SPECIAL by JON SCOTT

DECEMBER 1997 saw Bob. B. Dazzler a very altered man. No, he had not joined the priesthood or become a vicar. But he was an "industrial gypsy", one of the North's many long-distance commuters. He journeyed to London on an early-morning train on Mondays and returned to Newcastle late on Friday night. He'd barely seen his family the previous weekend, due to a report on "Computer Analysis of Faecal Residue in the River Thames" he'd been writing. Nor had he a chance to play 'Riven' on the Pentium PC he'd bought the kids for Christmas. It was the last Friday before Yule-tide and Bob sat down beside a solitary figure who lay fast asleep on the train. He began reading 'PC Review'. Somewhere near York the figure stirred.

"Hey, where are we, mac?" murmured the American concernedly.

Bob chortled. "We're near York. And the name's not Mac. It's Bob."

"Ah, sheenies! I was supposed to get off at Doncaster. I'm such a kook."

"Never mind. You can get off just as well in York: there's plenty of loose women there."

The stranger exploded into laughter. "Funny, man. Real funny! I like a tad o' humour on this dreary ride home."

"Yes, well I should take on stand-up comedy," replied Bob, placing his briefcase cautiously on one side. "Now which restaurant or hotel do you work for?"

"Huh?" said a bemused Yank.

"You said you were a . . . cook?"

"Geez, ya English! I didn't say I was a cook. I said I'm a kook."

"Oh."

"I see ya're none th' wiser. 'Kook' with a 'K', man!"

Bob shook his head. "I thought 'cook' had a 'K' - at the end."

"Nah, at both ends, dude. K-O-O-K - y'know, like a 'prat' as ya English guys would say."

"Why didn't you just say 'prat'."

"It wasn't the first thing that came t' mind, Bob. Unlike those loose women in York, huh? Ha ha. And I'm Harley, so we get on a first name basis."

Bob placed his magazine on the table. "What do you do, Harley?"

"Oh, I'm the director of PALLADIUM SOFTWARE in London. I'm just headin' up - or down or whatever - t' Doncaster t' meet up with a guy who's gonna manage the new North-East branch."

"North-East branch?"

"Yeah, up in Nukie. We had t' expand some time."

Bob's pupils dilated. "It's not Palladium, as in the one owned by Sixteen Sides, the French lot?"

"Yeah. Why?"

"Oh, they published a few games of mine some years back. Nothing special."

Harley's jaw dropped (I know, there's a lot of anatomical parts dropping and dilating, oo-er).

"Ya're not Bob B. Dazzler, perchance?"

"I am the very man. How d'you know of me?"

"Well, that's the dangedest thing. Dave Akabuka, who I'm meetin' t'morrow, suggested we develop ya game, 'A Miner's Life', from I.F. to G.A."

"I.F.? G.A.?"

"Yeah, interactive fiction and graphic adventure."

"I see. Well, I know 'Dodgy' Dave Akabuka already. Maybe he's making amends after all these years?"

"Amends?" exclaimed Harley. "Why, what'd he do?"

Bob's heart was by now in his boobs. Or rather, Bob's heart was by now in his boots. His Doctor Martens were pumping blood around his body. And you're probably peeved by all these anatomical references. "Oh, he once . . . split a p . . . p . . . pint on m . . . m . . . me." he stammered.

"Split ya with a pint!?" expostulated Harley, as he leapt to his feet and injured his head on the luggage rack above. "Ugh . . . eee . . . agh!"

"No, he spilt a pint of mine!"

"On ya . . . ugh . . . or of a . . . eee!"

"ON ME, you Yankie-Doodle!"

At this point, Harley collapsed to the ground with suspected concussion. So Harley was rushed into E.R., or rather the inelegant A. & E., in York General Hospital. Bob missed the last train home. Harley missed his meeting with Dodgy Dave, who got rat-a***ed instead thinking his last business opportunity was no more. Dave even jumped off a bridge, but only succeeded in knocking a fisherman unconscious. The next morning Bob brought the convalescing Harley some grapes.

"Ya saved ma life, Bob," said Harley. "and ya can have a job in the new PALLADIUM SOFTWARE joint - as a Game Designer."

* * *

BOB WALKED through the front door of his new-ish home, stopping momentarily to pick up the pieces of glass and splintered wood in a dustpan. He'd come home on the earliest train, and it was still dark outside. The first person he encountered was the nine-year-old Patrick, who looked so unrebelling in his Bart Simpson pyjamas and 'Lost World' slippers. Patrick listened to Oasis, Suede and the Spice Girls, always at 130 decibels and never through headphones. He'd argue with his parents, ignore the curfew (imposed by his Mum) and sneak into '12' certificate films. But, despite all his intentions, he could never achieve the heights of badness attained by youngsters in the most popular soap operas.

"So where have you been, Dad?" chirped Patrick. "Mum was worried."

"I phoned eighteen times, but never got through. Patrick!" bawled Bob. "I wish your mum would stop unplugging the phone at night."

"It's cos o' those obscene phone calls."

Bob fell onto the sofa (poor sofa). "Yes, which I make. She only refers to them as obscene because I refuse to send up as much money as she demands. I have to pay rent and eat, y'know."

Patrick sighed and collapsed into the sofa beside his dad. "It's not Mum's fault. It's Kevin and Audrey being at College."

"Yeah, Birmingham and Cambridge! Why couldn't they just go to the Uni of Newcastle. That's where I did my Computer Science Degree. If it's good enough for me – and I was a mature student – then why not them? It was only four years ago that I graduated."

"Cos they want to drink, smoke dope, go to concerts, stay up all night, and get --- er, y'know."

"Get away from home?"

"Yes, that's it," (rep) lied Patrick. The word he was thinking of was one that Kevin had used, and was the same as the word describing how a hen 'gives birth' to an egg (so to speak).

"I suppose I'm as bad. Apart from the concerts."

Patrick stared at his father disbelievingly.

"Okay then – the staying up all night too."

Patrick's eyes bulged like those of a starving Labour MP (!).

"And, of course, I don't smoke dope. Never touched the stuff. No, not once." Bob said dishonestly. Boy, there was some amount of deceit going on between father and son . . .

"I miss Audrey rotten. Kevin's a plonker, anyway. But with just Mum here it's not like it used to be. When we'd go to the park to play footie an' stuff."

"We'll not have that prob any more, Patrick. I've got a job in Nukie!"

"YIPPIE!" yelled Patrick as he leapt to his feet and, by virtue of his tender age, he didn't succumb to older people's habits of colliding with the ceiling or with items of furniture. "It will be fantastic!"

Ros stumbled down the stairs. She was now more top-heavy due to her silicon implants, so this clumsiness was inevitable. It had been almost a decade since she'd given birth to Patrick, and the post-natal depression that followed led to a feeling of inferiority when she saw the likes of Samantha Fox on TV. She wanted to be like them. So that was her ---th birthday present from Bob, her mother, and Susan Brief, and . . . numerous others (including the vicar). It was expensive, after all – not quite as bad as BUPA, though.

"Who the flip are you talking to, Patrick?" enquired a bleary-eyed Ros. "And why all the flipping yelling?"

"It's just your old man," said Bob cheerfully.

Ros looked puzzled. "Thought you'd run off with some floosie. Well, your dinners in the oven, or rather it's in the dog. Sorry."

Bob perceived this as a cue. If he didn't break in now, he'd be snookered. Ros would pot all his colours. "No! I'm sorry. I had to take a man with concussion into hospital."

"Yes, and next you'll be telling me that he gave you ten grand for saving his life."

"Of course not, but he gave me a job in Newcastle."

Ros was overwhelmed. Even little Patrick was still delighted. "Oh, that's wonderful, Bob," said Ros sweetly. "Don't you think so, Patrick?"

"Yes, Mum. It certainly is. We'll be a happy family again," replied Patrick. "Wait till I tell Adele and Serena."

Bob chuckled. "Yes, those little gals slept through the commotion. Amazing! Must take it after their dad."

"Patrick, wake your sisters up. Tell 'em the good news," said Ros commandingly as she beamed a healthy colour, and Patrick rushed upstairs. "I feel sorry for him sometimes – being the youngest – it would be so different if he'd been born before the girls."

You see, when Audrey told Bob that she was pregnant in early 1988 she wasn't aware of one minor detail. And that is an understatement. Ros had conceived triplets: so first Adele was born, then Serena, and finally Patrick. ("Typical of boys to be last out, eh?" Ros had proclaimed, despite being under heavy anaesthetic.) Ros had been delighted, but overburdened. Three times the trouble, she had agreed, but three times the joy. I'm sure you can imagine her reaction when Bob accepted the job in London. The air was certainly bleu, as the French would say.

* * *

CHRISTMAS DAY '97 arrived and around the table sat Robert Bartholomew Dazzler, Roslyn Evelyn Dazzler (Bob's Lady in red as her crimson dress signified), Kevin Ian Dazzler (the kid – not so much these days as he was 22), Audrey Rona Ivy Dazzler (who tended to have rather arid humour), Patrick Andrew Clive Emulator Dazzler (who usually paced up and down the dining room), Adele Carrie Teresa Examine Dazzler (who always acted up) and Serena Una Sinclair Spectrum Elsa Dazzler (who'd long sussed out the meaning of her initials). The influence of the old Speccy on Bob's and Ros' lives could not be denied, especially when their kids' names were considered. Their special guest was Harley Marley Ph.D (Harvard), Bob's new boss, who belched a lot like Barney Grumble.

"So do ya like ya new home, Bob?" said Harley, blatantly making small-talk.

Bob was bemused. "Actually, we've lived here for three years."

"Two years and ten-and-a-half months, you'll find," said Kevin in a Brummie accent.

"I say!" interrupted Audrey, with her Cantabrigian dictum and accuracy. "I make it two years and eleven months, act-tu-ally."

Harley chuckled. "Geez, did ya foster these kids, or adopt 'em or somethin'? What diverse accents, man."

Bob rose to his feet. "No, we found them on the back-door step. Wish we'd left them there now."

Patrick, Adele and Serena appeared to be distraught, while Kevin and Audrey remained smug. Ros was too busy devouring a turkey drumstick to become involved in this domestic argument.

Bob sat down again. "I'm not talking about you nine-year-olds. I mean the University students in this house."

"Dad, why did you just stand up and sit down again?" enquired Serena.

Bob shook his head. "I haven't the faintest idea. Must be the gravy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" was the general consensus, and Bob had broken the tension between himself and his two 'college scroungers' as he termed them.

Harley was well chuffed. "This meal is a real turkey, Mrs. Dazzler."

Ros jumped to her feet, but she was not going to sit down as quickly as her weak-kneed husband. "You blighter!" She'd wanted to say something stronger, but that would have involved evacuating the nine-year-olds out of the room. "American scoundrel: how can you come into our home and call the meal a 'turkey'?"

"Ain't it, Mrs. D?" said Harley perplexedly. "Well, it sure ain't a chicken."

Ros was relieved. "Ah, you were referring to the bird. Sorry, Mr. Marley." She chose to remain standing. As a woman of the twentieth century she had to stick to her decisions. No matter how silly.

And so Christmas Day went on in much the same way. Arguments, fun poked at one another and misunderstandings. A typical day in the Dazzler household. Bob would be glad to see Kevin and Audrey heading back to College - "to drink, smoke, dance, and bonk their way into oblivion," as he put it. So, as Ros gossiped on the phone to Susan Brief (mainly about Susan's ex-husband, Del, and his near death at the hands of a crazed steam-roller operator, his second ex-wife, Margery), Harley and Kevin got plastered on a bottle of Jack Daniels and Audrey on a crate of alcopops, Bob powered up the PC and with his nine-year-olds watching and guiding, played 'Riven' into the wee small hours. By that stage, the phone bill had skyrocketed and Harley, Kevin and Audrey had passed out. Audrey had stayed conscious ten minutes longer than the others and had won the wager - she'd also glued Kevin's nostrils together.

"Well, kids, this has been the best Christmas yet," declared Bob to his three on-lookers. But they too were fast asleep on the sofa in the computer-room. Bob smiled affectionately at them and carried all three slumbering kids, one by one, up to their bedrooms. He climbed into bed beside Ros two minutes later. His wife too was snoring loudly, as were Harley, Kevin and Audrey who lay sound asleep on the floor. "There's no way I'm lifting those blighters," he assured himself. "It'll do their backs the world o' good, anyway. Tehee!"

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE DAZZLER FAMILY.



'ELLO 'ELLO 'ELLO, WHAT'S ALL THIS THEN? 4

by DAVID HEBBLETHWAITE and DAMIAN STEELE

Here we go again with the latest of these brainteasers. Can you work out what's going on?.

Before I start, I must say a big THANK YOU to Damian Steele for sending me some puzzles; thanks to him I can now do another one of these. I've used some of his puzzles for numbers 2 and 5 in this collection, and there's some more left for next time. Once again, thank you very much, and I'm sorry I haven't thanked you before now.

Damian asked me where I got all these puzzles from, and no doubt other readers are wondering the same thing. Well.....I'll tell you in the next collection! 'Til then, enjoy these!

1. Mr. Smith was carrying his suitcase towards the harbour, taking his time and enjoying the walk, when he saw that the fully laden ferry was several feet away from the jetty ramp. He broke into a run and threw his case at the ferry. Against all odds, the case landed on the ferry's car deck. Mr. Smith then took a few steps back, and sprinted towards the water. He leaped forwards, and just managed to scramble aboard the ferry. The first mate helped him up with a few words of welcome, and Mr. Smith's triumphant grin quickly turned to a look of despair.

WHAT WAS IT THE FIRST MATE SAID TO CAUSE THIS CHANGE OF MOOD?

2. We all have names; we all wear a tag.
We all have tails, but they're hard to wag.
We multiply fast, but never breed.
Folks love us and hate us, but we do serve a need.

WHAT ARE WE?

3. Charles Fletcher entered the house, cursed quietly in the darkness, and fumbled to the living room. He switched the light on and moved towards the fireplace, where the fire was almost out. Suddenly, Charles threw his arms up and leaned against the chimney breast, with his hands placed high up the wall. He remained like this for several seconds, before collapsing on the floor, laughing hysterically.

WHY DID CHARLES ACT IN THIS WAY?

4. The weather was awful, but the car that pulled in at the local petrol station had both its side windows wound down. A couple were sitting inside the car. The husband was in the driving seat and a length of string went across his body and out of the window. The wife was holding the end of the string, and held the end of another piece of string in her other hand. This length of string went out of her window. Sadly, the attendant was unable to help the couple.

WHAT WAS THEIR PROBLEM, AND WHAT HAD THEY DONE TO SOLVE IT?

5. Mr. Jones was in bed with his wife, asleep. Suddenly she sat up and called out. Mr Jones, startled out of sleep, leapt up and threw himself out of their second-storey window, causing himself considerable damage.

WHAT WAS IT THAT MRS. JONES CALLED OUT TO HAVE THIS EFFECT?

THE BALROG AND THE GRUE

CAUTIONARY TALE No.2 by MARY SCOTT-PARKER

This story is true...
Once the Balrog and Grue
Went to sea in a homemade canoe.
Each took a fried Goblin
To stop them from squabblin'
And a flask of Adventurer stew.

They drew up a plan,
And the journey began.
They paddled all night and all day.
Someone had told 'em
That just West of Oldham
A Grue had moved in.... Ormskirk way.

Their spirits were high
And they gazed at the sky,
As they sailed through the velvety night.
Their glasses a-clinking
Dragon Mead drinking,
They were soon both as high as a kite.

The sea was unkind
When they left land behind.
It wasn't the calmest they'd seen,
And with the motion
Of waves on the ocean.
The Grue turned a delicate green.

He hauled his black hide
Well over the side,
Of the boat that was rockin' and wobblin'
And as the Grue
Said goodbye to his stew,
The Balrog just chewed on his Goblin.

"Are we not there?"
Said the Grue in despair,
With compass and plan in his hand,
But the wind took the map
Right out of his lap,
in a movement completely unplanned.

The Balrog he swore
As the precious map tore
And vanished before he could catch it,
And when the compass
Was lost in the rumpus
He reached out his hand for his hatchet.

Said the Grue "Take it easy,
I still feel quite queasy.
I'll navigate using the stars."
"Oh, that's fantastic!"
Said the Balrog sarcastic
"You can't tell Uranus from Mars!"

Several weeks later
They passed the Equator,
Both sporting a tropical tan,
The shortage of dinner
Had made them both thinner,
Then the Grue thought he sighted Japan.

But the wind blew them harder
And like the Armada
They raced along out of control.
They flew all that night,
Past mountains of white
And ended up at the North Pole.

There the icy wind froze
Both their noses and toes
Said the Balrog "I know how to beat it!"
But when he lit a fire.....
It was their funeral pyre,
Coz you can't have your kayak.....and heat it!



DUMB ANIMALS by Steve Clay

This tale evolved from a puzzle I was working on for an adventure that never quite made it.

Trogor is the hero of the piece and is the character the player was to control.

Trogor crested the brow of the tree-lined path and saw, a short distance ahead, the Muggit. Now a Muggit is a big, fierce creature with sharp teeth and dulled wits. The Muggit seemed to be guarding a stout, wooden door set into a massive Unglebar tree. Attached to the Muggit via a heavy chain was a slobbering, growling hound. It howled at Trogor's approach.

The Muggit stepped forward brandishing a crude sword with a traditional nick in the blade. Trogor was wise enough to know that a crude blade does not mean it's a can't kill you blade, and the Muggit certainly didn't appear to be worried by its lack of sharpness. The hound bared its teeth and a fine set they were too.

Trogor raised his weapon – (a loaded crossbow before the Carry-on team write in) – and pointed it at the Muggit. Trogor applied pressure to the trigger. As he was about to squeeze he realised that killing the Muggit would mean the hound would be free to attack Trogor. The crossbow lowered. The Muggit took a step forward and seemed about to free the hound.

Raising the bow again Trogor took aim at the hound. The animal looked at him with those cute eyes all dogs can manage and Trogor felt his will weaken. Regaining his composure he aimed once more at the hound and squeezed the trigger. As the bolt left the bow Trogor yanked his arm to his right and the bolt flew past the Muggit and above the hound's head. The hound watched the bolt fly past and with the instinct of all its breed when confronted by something moving at speed the hound gave chase. The hound being attached to the Muggit meant that the Muggit also gave chase, however in his case it wasn't in as dignified way as the hound was managing. The bolt thudded into a tree and the hound, realising that its prey had stopped, did likewise. Alas the braking of the Muggit was not in such good condition and it collided heavily with the tree. The hound thought this was such good fun he sat on the Muggit and wagged its stumpy tail.

Trogor opened the door with a key he found on the unconscious Muggit and headed into darkness, where the next puzzle waited...

PHRASES AND SAYINGS

How many Phrases and Sayings can you guess from the initials –

e.g. TNFLAOF is There's No Fool Like An Old Fool.

1. ACIAGAAR

2. CHWH

3. CINTG

4. AAADKTD A

5. TEIH (TFD)

6. FRIWAFTT

7. TBTA, THTF

8. BCBC

9. DMTNT

10. DAIS, NAID

11. BBP

12. FBC

THE PLAYTESTER written by STEVE CLAY

"Hi there! Could I have a word with Brian please? Could you tell him it is his playtester? Thanks..."

"Hi Brian! How are you? Good! Now a few things you may like to look at with regard to your game. Starting with the title, THE BASHFUL DEMON AND THE CRIMSON WARRIOR AND HIS FAMOUS GANG. Bit of a mouthful isn't it? And one too many AND's in there as well. THE BASHFUL DEMON sounds a lot snappier to me. Although he doesn't sound a particularly bashful sort if you don't mind me saying. Not many bashful characters would tear off a maiden's head and then suck the innards out through the neck would they? So bashful seems a rather unsuitable adjective... pardon? An adjective? It is a describing word. Well yes the NASTY DEMON is better but not very exciting is it? Anyway it's something for you work on.

I had a lot of trouble with the colour scheme. Purple ink on a yellow background is a little sickly and the text tends to blur after a while. Didn't you notice it when you played the game? You used white, on black, I see. Could you let the rest of us play with those colours as well it would be a great help.

Next up was the boat at the lake... What? ... Is it really your best puzzle? Hmmm! Well the difficulty I had was if you set sail without a paddle, it has two D's by the way, the boat explodes. Why? Because the engine overheats? But you describe it as a rowing boat. It's a joke? Not actually a side-splitter is it? Even when I had the paddle the boat wouldn't move when I tried to row it. I tried a number of combinations before viewing the database for the solution and I found I had to shout at the boat. Is this a typing mistake? No? You shout at the boat because it is a ROWING boat, rowing as in arguing. I see. It must, indeed, be the way you tell 'em. I would suggest you have a good look at that puzzle as I think it really needs tidying up.

Anyway the next big problem I had was the maze. Now I like mazes as a rule but yours appears to be a 12x12 grid with random exits. Even for a maze lover this is incredibly boring. What's that? It makes the game bigger? Well yes, but surely a couple more puzzles would have been more satisfying and you could have had a small maze as well. By the way there is nothing to find in the maze and if I said BRIAN at the entrance I was transported to the other side. It is a short cut for you? So you don't have to solve the maze when you play it? Why? Because you don't like mazes? I rest my case.

Moving along to the Crimson Warrior character. Do you not think that he is a touch sexist? To start with, why does he give the Hoover to the... and I quote here... to the crippled old bag so that she can clean the bedroom so that he doesn't choke to death when he has a sleep? Why doesn't he do it himself? Because it is a woman's job. I see. Not everybody will agree with you there I'm afraid. I think you should lose the Hoover as well as it is a brand-name and your fantasy world doesn't have electricity. Back to the subject of sexism. I think your female players will find the description of the Princess as a 'nice bit of stuff with big bazzoomas' offensive. Yes, women do play adventures and, no, I don't think you can stop them buying them although as it stands nobody is likely to want to buy it.

How old are you Brian? Thirteen! That explains the Monster with the big willy then.

The final problem I had with your game - I'll send you a report on the rest of the bugs, spelling mistakes continuity mistakes etc. in the week.

The last thing is the Prophet, there is a PH in the middle not two F's. The Prophet sitting in his wigwam asks you a question before you enter the Keep. The question is 'Who is the ugliest, fattest boy in class 2W?' Again I looked at the database and found that the answer is NOBBY FINK. Who is Nobby Fink? I see, he's the ugliest, fattest boy in class 2W. Yes, but the players aren't going to know that, are they? And you could get into serious trouble if Nobby finds out.

Anyway, those are some things you should look at before you send me the second version. Yes! Second version! What do you mean you've sold two copies already. What about the spelling mistakes, the awful puzzles, the in-jokes, the dreadful graphics? As it stands the game is a disgrace and unplayable... No. it has nothing to do with me being too thick to complete it... Hello? Hello?...."

FADD ON FOOD

I propose reading to you tonight some extracts from the works of Professor Fadd – the great Food authority and Faddist.

Perhaps you have never heard of Professor Fadd – or, to give him his full name – Professor Alkaloid Glucose Vitamines Fadd, O.D.D., D.F., Q.E.D., S.W.2., &c., &, Professor of Antiseptic Gastritis at Balham University. Author of "Dont's for Dyspeptics", "Menus for me'n you", "Mutton and how to disguise it", "Rabbits and how to poach them", "Was Liver discovered by Bacon?", "Are Omletes rum", &c., &c. Published by Messrs. Adenoid, Massage & Co., Little Mary Street.

The following is an extract from his latest work, "Fadd on Foods" – a wonderful digest of a meal, and of which the Professor is very full. His digest commences very properly with Hors D'Oeuvres and goes as follows:-

HORS D'OVEUVRES – These are several little meals in one, consisting of articles served so as to tempt the appetite. Bits of broken sardines, chopped vegetable skins, flavoured with bath salts, on several plates. small pieces of horseflesh rubbed with essence of kipper, and some under-sized and under-ripe plums bottled in sea water. These are placed on one large dish, which all the best waiters hold so that whilst you are salvaging a sardine you have your elbow in the potato salad. Several people like these appetising things so much that when they've finished they ask for a glass of water and the bill. Besides, it comes cheaper, especially if you cut a roll in two and make a sandwich.

SOUP – Soup is the next course. These are of two kinds. Thick and clear. Clear soup is invariably hot water in which a vegetable has had a bath. Thick soup is thicker than clear soup. This can be made by boiling any old thing and adding something else. It should not be thick enough to bend the spoons. So much for Soup.

[The above has been taken, word for word, letter for letter, from a little book sent to me by a reader. I think it is quite funny, and may give someone an idea for a contribution.

Next month – FISH, ENTREE etc.Barbara)

TREES sent in by TERRY TAYLOR

1. Neat and tidy.
2. Shelter for the village smithy.
3. Reward for Little Jack.
4. Old-fashioned punishment.
5. Long for North of the border.
6. Two of a kind.
7. Not me.
8. Hardy's partner.
9. Almost a sporting trophy.
10. Adam's apple tree.
11. Teacher's bribe?
12. London district.
13. Is this one sad?
14. George Washington's tree?
15. "Public house" in which Charles II reputedly hid.
16. Prickly girl.
17. Appointment on hand?
18. From Amsterdam?
19. Simian enigma from Chile.
20. Mum, Dad, Children, and their antecedents.
21. Provides cover in the rain.
22. The reason why koalas don't get colds?
23. Policeman on the shore.
24. Capital aircraft.
25. "Three ha'pence a foot it'lli cost ya" for this bunk panelling!
26. As an offshoot. its a peace offering.
27. Love-sick in reverse?
28. Does this grow from 30 pieces of silver?
29. Related to the grasshopper?
30. Huge tree of Norse mythology which connects Heaven and Earth.



The Adventure Workshop

Adventures for the Spectrum

NEW RELEASES

WHERE IS ZEUS

A Three Part Text Adventure

Written By Frank Fridd

Zeus, ruler of the gods and sender of rain has disappeared and without him rain cannot fall to give sustenance to the land below. The grass and crops cannot grow, the river has dried up and there is no water for the animals or humans to drink and everything everywhere is slowly dying. The other gods seem helpless, so you a mere human decide to try and find him and so bring life back to the land.

Available Now on Disc Priced £5.00 and Tape Priced £3.00

SLEEPIN' AGAIN

A Two Part Text Adventure

by PETER CLARK

You have, yet again, just completed one of your Mega adventures and, after a short well deserved rest, have decided to start another. Remembering that you had inspiration for one of your other games whilst day dreaming, you make your way to a local park and make yourself comfortable on one of the benches. Your eyes slowly close as you drift off to dreamland!

Available Now on Disc Priced £5.50 and Tape 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 Amstrad

NEW RELEASES

P U Z Z L E D

by **TONY MARSH**

I,ve just had a terrible nightmare! Or have I? Could it be that it's REALLY happening? That's the problem - I just DON'T KNOW!!

I dreamt (or thought I did) of this huge jigsaw puzzle, from which six pieces were missing. Locating the pieces and completing the jigsaw, and unlocking its "secret" was my only means of escaping the nightmare - but that meant overcoming all manner of strange tasks!

There seems to be a strange silence and an awful chill in the air! I rise from my sweat-drenched bed and look around.....

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

DEATHBRINGER

BY **TREVOR WHITSEY**

It is the 26th Century, 500 years after the Reptilian War that threatened the Free Systems....

Forged at the beginning of time, it rose from the ashes of a once mighty race. It was to become the most formidable weapon in the galaxy, leaving destruction and devastation in its wake. Its power was legendary, and it was missing. But with the discovery of an abandoned alien spacecraft in the Amazon came new developments.....

Although one component had been found, its occupants were gone, victims of their Death Search. Using the advanced alien craft, you must embark on a desperate race against time that will take you to distant, uncharted systems in your search for the power of the DEATHBRINGER.

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.

PERSONAL MESSAGES

To All – Answer number 4 in the "Squares Quiz" sounds as if it might be uncomfortable, especially for cavaliers. (The Trainspotter)

To Ellen – When you say "Trolls", do you mean those little long-haired toys you can buy in Toys'R'Us? (M.Polo)

To Loobiloo – Well, I would have been back earlier, if it weren't for the old diarrhea! (M.Polo)

To All: How do your 'other halves' survive? I'd really like to know – perhaps we could form a Survivors Club and have our own magazine..... (The Survivor)

To Doreen – Welcome back to the realms of Probe. (Pigpen)

To M Polo – Welcome back (Pigpen)

To Ellen – If you can manage Trolls and rabid rabbits, how about starving pigs? (Pigpen)

To Ellen – Journey was 'BORING!!' – Got there in record time without getting lost – need you there.... (Pigpen)

To Ellen – I'm sure you could manage to "post" plenty of stuff in there – perchance do you mean bills, etc.? (Jon)

To Gilly – Err, who would be "talking about" you? I'm sure they'd never speak about people behind their backs, or would they? (Jon)

To Dusty – I thought that you would, so ya would. (Jon)

To Fudge – No, but you might be able to subtract from it. (Jon)

To Snow White – Thanks, much appreciated. (Jon)

To Loobiloo – I haven't the faintest idea. I think I banged my head. (Matt)

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **1998 ADVENTURERS' CONVENTION** will be held in Birmingham on Saturday, 24th October – further details to follow, so watch this space.

The next meeting of the **Hamilton Halls Gang** will be held at the usual venue of Hamilton Halls, Liverpool Street Railway Station, LONDON, on Saturday, 28th March. Everyone is welcome, especially first-timers (initiation ceremony involves buying a round of drinks! ha. ha.) If you would like further information please telephone either Jenny Perry on 0181 979 4851 or Karen Tyers on 01347 838667 or E-mail Larry Horsfield at alaric@larryhorsfield.demon.co.uk

NEWSDESK

INTERACTIVE FICTION ARCHIVES ON THE INTERNET

Dorothy Millard has sent me more details about sites on the internet, as follows:-

ftp://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive (Germany)

and should be available soon at the mirror sites:

ftp://wuarchive.wustl.edu/doc/misc/if-archive (U.S.A.)

ftp://ftp.funet.fi/pub/misc/if-archive (Finland)

ftp://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/games/infocom/heist.z8

(Heist: The Crime of the Century by Andy Phillips - release 4 / Serial number 971125)

ftp://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/games/tads/son1.gam

(The Sea of Night - release 1, by Garry Kevin Wilson. A short TADS adventure in which you are a sort of "interplanetary trucker" making a run with a load of bananas. Bad things happen, and you wind up on an odd spaceship that seems to be organic.)

NEWS FROM WEIRD SCIENCE LTD

Their latest leaflet details some CD-ROMs available now. The first, The Network PC, allows the transfer of files between an Amiga and a PC - price £17.99. They also offer a Companion CD for £4.99 which seems to be an upgrade to the previous Network PC CD.

Out now are two games mentioned in Amiga News, Probe Oct.97. "OnEscapee" requires an Amiga with at least M68020/AGA/2+2Megs/CD/HD. (The speed of the CD is not mentioned, but 4-speed may be needed so check before ordering.) The leaflet states this game is "a mix the styles of Flashback and Another World together with new original ideas..." It continues with some more technical details but nothing that gives you an idea of what you have to do in the game. Price - £29.99. "The Final Odyssey" from Vulcan but distributed by Weird Science Ltd. is described as an Action/Adventure/Puzzler. You play Theseus on his quest to rescue six maidens from the clutches of the Minotaur. The leaflet says it is available now (price £29.99) but admit that "the game is so vast that we have been unable to reach the end (somewhat disturbing as we're supposed to be testing it) but then rather unsurprising as some of the levels reconstruct themselves every time you play....". No minimum machine requirements stated, so check before ordering.

The leaflet also says they are taking pre-orders for QUAKE (£25.99 pre-order, otherwise £29.99 - may be ready for release 1st Feb.). Minimum Amiga requirements. 68020 with FPU. 8Mb of RAM, CD-ROM and 30Mb hard drive. but they recommend 68020 16Mb RAM and Internet connection. Also available is THE TIME OF RECKONING described as "the ultimate add-ons compact disc for Quake, Doom 2 and Duke Nukem CD" - £19.95. or you can order both for a total of £39.99.

I notice that the three Valhallas are available at £14.99 each and Lemmings for £8.99. and they run on most Amigas. Contact Weird Science Ltd at Q House Troon Way Business Centre, Humberstone Lane, Leicester. LE4 9HA. Tel. 0116 246 3800 Fax. 0116 246 3801.

E-mail. support@weirdscience.co.uk.

HELP WANTED

In **CORRUPTION** – how can I obtain the sandwiches, talk to the tramp, and where is the camera?

In **WONDERLAND** – how do I get the silver key from the dog, and what exactly do I do at the Mad Hatter's crazy Tea Party?

Please contact Lee Morrall, 83 Cannock Road, Heath Hayes, Cannock, Staffs WS12 5HQ.

*

Whilst I was on holiday in Devon I purchased from a second-hand computer shop an Amiga game called **ADVENTURES OF MADDOG WILLIAMS IN THE DUNGEONS OF DURIDIAN**. It is a genuine copy complete with box and instructions, unfortunately the first disk was corrupted and I am unable to use it. Can anyone supply me with a copy of disk 1?

Please contact Peter Brown, 36 Chyngton Avenue, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 3SN.

*

Can anyone provide solution, part solution or hints for **SON OF STAGEFRIGHT**, **CRISIS AT DERSENIA** and **SWORD OF THE FALLEN ANGEL**?

Please contact me at the Probe Office asap. Thank you, Barbara.

A-MAZE-ING ESCAPES

LABOURS OF HERCULES played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e), MAC(e) and PC(e)

TO FIND TWIGS (from armoury) – E, S, S, SW, SW, W.

TO HUT (from twigs location) – NE, NE, IN.

TO OUTSIDE CAVE (from hut) – N, NE, E, S, SE, E (swamp), E, SE, S, SE.



OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

BLACK MASS played by Barbara Gibb on a C64

- Small keyunlocks drawer in study
- Iron key unlocks bathroom door
- Brass keyunlocks cellar door
- Big key unlocks chapel door
- Heavy key unlocks front gates
- Vase will hold water
- Dagger cutting tape and "treasure"
- Chalk "treasure"
- Rope climbing aid
- Vial of red liquid "treasure"
- Book gives information
- Crowbar open window
- Black hood "treasure"
- Black cape "treasure"
- Pair of candlesticks "treasure"
- Candles "treasure"
- Page from a book additional information
- Can of oil oil bolt
- Chalice "treasure"
- Goat-head mask "treasure"
- Wooden staff "treasure"
- Silk hangings "treasure"
- Dining chairwedging aid
- Framed photographhiding something
- PlansUSE to find route through cellar
- Handwritten noteinformation
- Adventure Probeadvertisement for magazine



GETTING YOU STARTED

MICROFAIR MADNESS (Level 1) played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum 128K only – also available on Amstrad (128K), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

Start outside the Sir Clive's Exhibition Complex. I (nothing), E (tramp hands you an empty bottle), W, W (small alley – see a dripping drainpipe), FILL BOTTLE WITH WATER. E, E. GIVE BOTTLE TO TRAMP (he gives you a bit of paper), I (it is a pass), W, N (okay if have pass), N, N (note telephone), N, N, E (dragon forces you back), S, S, DIAL 999. SAY FIRE (that's got rid of the dragon), N, N, W (meet The Goons), R (until one of them drops some keys). TAKE KEYS, X KEYS (see round fob), BREAK FOB. W (small room), OPEN CURTAINS (see a door). X DOOR (has numbers on it) X NUMBERS (note response) E, E, S, S (by telephone) INSERT FOB, DIAL 03698 (given a password), N, N, W, W. SAY BABY OIL (door to the north opens – don't go north yet unless you want to explore), PULL CURTAINS. TAKE CURTAINS. E, E (junction). Somewhere south of here a frog will appear at random. When you find it. TAKE FROG (need curtain). You may have to pursue it as it moves around. Go to the telephone location, then E, E, S (musical demonstration), DROP FROG. TAKE laser HARP. N (Delbert The Hamster Software), X BARS (one is loose), PULL BAR. W, W, N, N, E

MYTH (Barry Volain) played by Dorothy Millard on a PC

SATURN

Start in a beautiful field), INVENTORY (carrying a whistle and a length of rope), EXAMINE WHISTLE, DROP WHISTLE, EXAMINE ROPE, DROP ROPE (for later), S (small boulders), EXAMINE BOULDERS (one is slightly different), MOVE BOULDER (keep trying until you find a rusty knife), GET KNIFE, N, W, W, W (swamp), EXAMINE REEDS (one is thicker than the others), CUT REEDS (using the knife), EXAMINE REEDS, E, E, S (corner of field where you see a crown and a group of laughing children), GET CROWN (the children won't let you), EXAMINE CROWN (paper), MAKE PIPE (from the reed using the knife), BLOW PIPE (the children follow you), NE, BLOW PIPE (again the children follow you), E

PIRATE ADVENTURE played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available for most computers

Start in your flat in London. TAKE RUG (nailed down – return later) TAKE BOTTLE (of rum), TAKE SNEAKERS, TAKE SACK (of crackers), CLIMB STAIRS (to an alcove), TAKE BOOK (note the bookcase slides to reveal a secret passage), INV (have a blood soaked book), READ BOOK (note details), GO PASSAGE, E (attic – note what the sign says), TAKE BAG, OPEN BAG, DROP BAG, TAKE MATCHES, TAKE TORCH, SAY YOHO (transported to a ledge on a tall building – you must always be carrying sneakers and book for this spell to work correctly), SAY YOHO (now on a sandy beach), DROP BOOK, DROP SNEAKERS, E (outside shack – see pirate), GIVE RUM (pirate grabs it and scuttles away), TAKE PARROT, W, W (beach), DROP PARROT, DROP SACK, E, E (foot of hill), GO PATH (top of hill), LIGHT TORCH, GO CRACK (dark if not carrying lit torch), TAKE SAILS, GO SHED, TAKE HAMMER, TAKE WINGS, N, GO CRACK, UNLIGHT TORCH, D, W, W (beach), DROP TORCH, DROP MATCHES, DROP SAILS, DROP WINGS, TAKE BOOK, TAKE SNEAKERS, SAY YOHO GO WINDOW, D

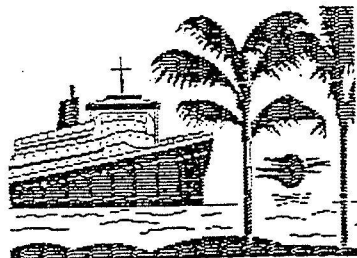
RHYME CRYME played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum (128K only) – also available on Amiga(e) and PC(e)

Start outside the Nurseryland Theme Park. I (envelope), OPEN ENVELOPE (now have a letter), READ LETTER, DROP ENVELOPE, DROP LETTER, X MACHINE, KICK MACHINE, TAKE TICKET, INSERT TICKET (now inside the park), X PLACARD, READ PLACARD, LOBE PLACARD (you look behind the placard and find a tube of superglue), W, W (see mlss Muffet), SAY HELLO (she hands you a note), X NOTE, READ NOTE (a ransom note concerning her spider), DROP NOTE, E, E, E, E, READ NOTICE, SAY HELLO (the farmer wants Goosey Gander), W, W, NW (outside Hickory Dickory Dock's cottage), X PLANTS, TAKE CATNIP, EN (now inside cottage), X CLOCK (see a face and door), X FACE (number 1 missing), X DOOR (locked), LOBE CLOCK (now have a bucket), X BUCKET, LE, SE, NE (outside Old Mother Hubbard's cottage), EN, SAY HELLO, X CUPBOARDS, LIN CUPBOARDS (you look in and see that they are bare), LUND CHAIR (you see a pair of boots under the chair), TAKE BOOTS (she won't let you), X SHELF (note response for later), LE, SW, N, N, N (bottom of hill – see Jack and Jill), SAY HELLO (some hints), U (top of hill by a well), LISTEN

.....

SHIPWRECK played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum

Start on the port side promenade deck of the ship. I (nothing), E, E, D (bottom of stairs), S, S (in your cabin), TIDY CABIN (you find something), LOOK, TAKE MONEY, TAKE colourful TIE, WEAR TIE, N, N, U, W, W, S, E, N (ship's bar), TAKE NEWSPAPER, READ NEWS (note the name of the captain), DROP NEWSPAPER, BUY DRINK (need money), TIP BARMAN (who gives you a bottle of beer), TAKE BOTTLE, S, W, S, S, E (shop), BUY MAP (of the South Pacific), W, S, S, E (must be wearing the tie), ORDER MEAL, EAT MEAL (when the waiter clears the table he drops something), LOOK, TAKE bottle OPENER, OPEN BOTTLE (of beer), DROP OPENER, DRINK BEER, N, E, S, S (sun deck), TIDY CUSHIONS



WEST played by Dorothy Millard on a C64

Start in the Main Street of Tucson. S, E (into saloon), E (to bar), GET WHISKY (payment is required), W (you are arrested by the Sheriff and led off to jail..... he says he will let you out if you agree to capture Black Bart who is holed up somewhere in the desert), YES (you are let out), EXAMINE wanted POSTERS (one has your face on it), E (back in Main Street), E

.....



SPERIS LEGACY played by Terry Taylor on an Amiga (1200 only)

General – although many of the “nasties” met on your travels are slow, and can be avoided, it is advisable to kill as many as possible and thereby build up both your experience and vitality – you will need all the vitality you can get when you eventually come face to face with the final adversary!

SHARMA CITY

After waking from sleep, first visit the King in the palace, and learn of your quest.

You will not be allowed to leave the city until you have adequate protection – i.e. a sword and a shield.

Talk to all the inhabitants you meet to learn secrets of the city – specifically that there is a sword nearby, and that there is another way into the palace.

Ignore the block of ice at this point – you cannot get what is in it until much later in the game.

Enter the house to the far West of the city; open the chest to find a key.

Go to the Eastern side of the palace, where you can now enter the locked door.

Avoid the “nasties” and push the chair to reveal a teleport: stand on it to be transported to a secret room.

Open the chest and get the sword.

Stand on teleport again to return.

Follow the signpost and path for the Royal Maze; use the sword to cut a hole through the hedge, and enter the maze.

In the maze, use the sword to cut down the flowers, to reveal bombs, coins and vitality stars – there are also three teleports hidden under the flowers.

When you find the stone pillar, press the button on the front – this retracts the spikes which prevent access to the centre of the maze.

In the centre of the maze, open the chest to get the shield.

Return to the main city via the teleports.

You can now exit the city via the path in the North-East corner.

Follow the path, and enter the village of Gilliards Rhine – where your quest really starts.

GILLIARDS RHINE

Talk to Rupert (the first person you meet); find the green plant guarding the steps and talk to him, talk to Rupert again – you are now on your way.....



HINTS AND TIPS

AFTER THE PARTY played by Barbara Gibb on a C64

You need the steps to help you look through the window of the door on the ground floor.

DROP the MINTS through the window to restrain the dog.

If you bend the paperclip, then fire it at the dog (need rubber band) you will enter the lobby. The dog will never let you go south from here, so just grab the battery and retreat North.

You need the screwdriver to open the vent in the men's room. Now throw the messages (into the vent) and use the broom and fan to get them to blow out and alert the security guard.

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)

You have to access Wilder's office, so his staff have to be distracted. This means keeping Wilder busy, getting the secretary to leave her desk, opening the door to the office, then opening the safe and bureau. Read on if you want more detail.

First, throw the pill dust at Zimmerman so that he leaves his post.

Take the coffee from Wauchope, if you don't already have it, and ask her to go North, which means she will keep Wilder busy for a while.

Slip into the building via the entrance Zimmerman was guarding. You will now encounter Wilder's secretary. Spill the coffee on the secretary.

WAIT until you see Wilder leave his office with Wauchope.

Push the yellow button to open the office door and go inside.

You have 4 moves to discover the combination of the safe, open it, and recover a ledger from the bureau.

Find somewhere to hide when the security guards are alerted.

Lock the guards and Wilder in his office to prevent capture.

Take the ledger (and transcript) to your boss, Pirelli, who now sends you and Wauchope to Chicago. You will need the revolver, hacksaw, billfold and pen in this section, plus other objects which you will have to find along the way to the poker game.

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

The branch will stretch across the hole in the floor – and anchor the rope.

Polish the shield with the cloth, try to read the runes, then translate them

Whiskers on your face will prevent you closing the visa on the helmet.

After killing the dragon – find the staff, wear the cloak and return home to complete adventure.

CITADEL (Jack Lockerby) played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum – also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e), MAC(e) and PC(e)

Pull hard on the vine.

There is a dung beetle east of the well. Follow it to its hole.

To get the garlic buds – drop the insect-infested dung to distract the Budsnapper.

Examine some dry grass to find a magnifying glass.

Throw the backpack at the dangling sword, then untie the man.

Look under the table (need magnifying glass) at the north end of the hut.

Dig (with the spade) at the south end of the rope bridge.

You can only see the tiny keyhole in the door of the stone building if you are carrying the magnifying glass.

To find a knife – enter the tunnel (need lit lamp) and move the statue in the bare room.

Ward off the bats by carrying the garlic buds, and search the droppings *twice* in the attic.

MEND the GUIDES of the rope bridge with the vine and knife – recross by going N or S CAREFULLY.

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

Crush the violet to enable you to go through the mousehole at the top of the tower.

Try to pick up Jack O'Lantern, then look for him in the marsh.

Wave the pin to catch the Angle of Death.

Warts will help you make yourself attractive to the gargoyle.

To get rid of the Stone-Demon – enter location *without* the light source, and WAIT until something happens.

Eat humble pie to go N at the gates to the River of Time.

Wind the mouse (need key) and drop it near the rats.

Give the cap to the soldier, who will allow you to enter the camp.

Wear the suit to prevent death from radiation poisoning.



DARK CITADEL played by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga

The bronze key will unlock the chest in the "tap" room – you need the needle and the ring from inside.

Examine the 1st. Skull Stone beside the locked door, then the writing and drop the needle to open the door.

The fish is needed to open the 2nd Skull Stone door. Collect the bell and cross before returning to the long east/west passage.

Note that the 2nd Green Orc is standing on a grid, so get it to disappear down it.

Put the saw on the 3rd Skull Stone.

Put the horseshoe on the 4th Skull Stone.

Find the bronze key and use it to unlock the chest in the "already-used catapult" room. You need both the coin and ring found inside.

Put the bell on the 5th Skull Stone.

The final Skull Stone wants 2 coins and you have to USE all three rings to enter Level 2.

ELVEN CRYSTALS 1 played by Barbara Gibb on an Atari

There is a knife/dagger in the tower – you need this to deal with the woodcutter.

BURN LOG at the inferno to light it to reclaim the crystal. Examine it for details of how it has changed.

FLIPPING THE LID played by Barbara Gibb on an Atari

In the presence of the dragon – read the grey paper and pray.

Throw the silver horse at the pawn.

You need the bronze key to open the door north of the pawn.

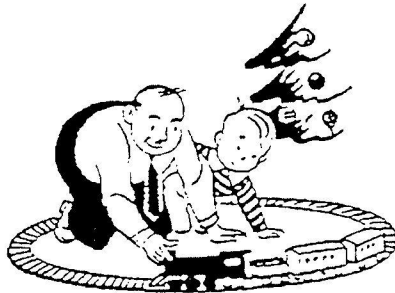
The tinderbox is the object you need from Gollum – you will have to answer all 5 riddles first.

Select the pewter key when in the Grotto.

The sneakers will enable you to JUMP a wide gap.

Investigate the snowman *three* times.

The pewter key will unlock the door north of the snowman.



HELP INC played by Barbara Gibb on an Amstrad

In the cell

Examine the thingy and prisoner.

Knock on the door more than once.

Press the green button – patience will be rewarded.

Shed

The thingy is the “key” to accessing the shed.

Field

Fighting the haystack can be revealing.

Garden

You need the hammer to pull the nail from the sign.

HILLSFAR

Cleric's Quest – Mission Three

- A) Having rested, leave the Temple and search directly outside it for your first clue.
- B) Re-enter the Temple and talk to the Master. Having donated some money you will eventually be given your next clue.
- C) Head for the Mage's Tower. Enter it and search the chests. You should find a Wand with blue runes carved on it.
- D) Take the Wand to the Master of the Temple.
- E) Once again, search outside the Temple for a clue.
- F) During the hours between 8pm and 10pm visit the Rat's Nest Pub. While there, listen to the local gossip until you meet a Woman.
- G) Return to the Pub and listen to the gossip again.
- H) Return to the Temple and have another chat with the Master.
- I) Revisit the Pub and listen to yet more idle banter.
- J) Once again, return to the Master of the Temple for a quiet word.
- K) Make for the Rock Quarry: you can find it by using a secret path from the Hermit's House. Open the various chests until you find the dead woman and a new hint.
- L) Explore the Haunted Mansion and open the chest to find the missing Ring.
- M) Return to the Master of the Temple to end the third mission.



LABOURS OF HERCULES – available on Spectrum, Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)

Visit King Eurystheus to be given the first, then each subsequent, task

NEMEAN LION

Visit the armoury and pick up the knife. Find the lion's den and strangle him. You have to skin the lion and take the carcass back to the King.

LERNEAN HYDRA

You need the bow, quiver and sword from the armoury, twigs and string from the forest of Cerynithia (see A-maze-ing Escapes), and the rag found in the village of Nemea.

The Hydra is a tough monster to defeat. Go to the cave east of the Spring of Amymene. TIE RAG (to arrow) and light the rag using the lit torch, then fire the burning rag into the cave so that the Hydra emerges from the cave. Now CHOP HEAD off, and BURN NECK (with lit torch) to prevent more heads from growing. Pick up the head then dip arrows into the blood to poison them (needed later).

Before leaving the area, enter the cave and pick up the horn before extinguishing the torch (which is needed again later).

LEGEND OF THE SWORD played by Barbara Gibb on an Atari

Don't bother to use the raft to cross the river. Instead take the rope that binds the wood together.

At the stone bridge – examine the leprechaun and try to make him hear you to know what he wants in exchange for a useful item and a hint.

At the small clearing/junction of four paths – LOOK to see something interesting.

Climb a tree and pick some apples.

Don't bother with the talking sphere/glowing gateway until you have a gold key (the other object needed is already carried by one of your party!).

West of the clearing/apple tree, you will be ambushed by humanoids. Attack them with your knife then pick up the bow and quiver and give them to Belar who is your marksman.

South of the clearing/apple tree you will encounter a huge mynah bird called Shuuka – say YES but do not give it anything.

LOST CHILDREN played by John Schofield on a Spectrum 128K

After the wedding, check out the pews

The fisherman has beeswax in exchange for a new needle

Give Bob the tobacco – he actually gives you the directions through the mazes. The letters on the box are the return route.

Look for a safe route past the trolls from on top of the boulder. You can only defeat the first troll if properly armed.

Use the crowbar and rope to reach the opening

You should have something to add to the troll's ale

MANOR OF DOOM played by Edwina Brown on a Spectrum

Get cardboard and pen from the bin then write "STOP".

Examine the man in the pub and buy him a beer. (PAY LANDLORD)

Buy the motorbike from the man.

In the telephone – examine the identity card then open directory and read the number.

Type in telephone number and then give identity card number to get account number.

Carry the sign to cross the busy main road.

Take the treasure to the bank on the motorbike.

Give your identity card number followed by your account number.

Put the treasure in the deposit box and close the lid.

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

Shake the torch to cure Tiny Tim.

You need a spade to dig in the churchyard – you should now be able to deal with the dog in the builder's yard.

You need the hammer, nails, plank of wood and saw to mend the shelf for the butcher.

MONSTERS OF MURDAC played by Barbara Gibb on an Atari – also available on Spectrum +3, BBC, Amstrad and PC

At the pool of sparkling water – take water (need golden bowl) and then LOOK (into the bowl) to see the image of a man in flowing robes (wizard) waving one of three possible items.

At the South End of Beach – waving the same object seen in the bowl of water will reveal an east/west causeway leading to Cannibal Island.

Wave the beads to save the missionary from the cannibals.

Digging when your sword twitches will reveal a scorpion and a hoard of pieces of eight.

Remember the goblin's password to leave the island.

THE PORTAL played by Barbara Gibb on an Amstrad

Talk to the creature in the large hut for ~~lots~~ of information and a useful item. His hut contains something else of interest.

A knife can be used for actions other than cutting.

You won't melt the ice, and can't cross it on foot.

The bird is your only way of getting to the top of the rocky outcrop.



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

Part Two

You can BUY FOOD in the Inn if you have at least six shillings. Walsh and Somerville are here – you can examine them, but it isn't advisable to speak to them.

When you have both the dagger and ruby, join them together and give it to the curate who will give you a choice of three items – your adventuring experience may help you to decide which will be the most useful.

MYTH (Magnetic Scrolls) played by Barbara Gibb on an Atari – also available on Amiga, Amstrad, C64/128, Spectrum and PC

How you may win at Blackjack to get a Licence

1. Inside the Wooden Shack – X TABLE, X CHAIRS (note their positions), X CUPBOARD, OPEN CUPBOARD, LOOK IN CUPBOARD (see 6 different keys plus a notice), READ NOTICE (note details), X PATCH (see a nail), HANG SHIELD ON NAIL
2. On the Jetty – If the ferry isn't here, take the horn and blow it to summon Charon. WAIT for him to arrive. Now he and Death begin an animated discussion on the merits of Blackjack, a card game. ASK CHARON ABOUT LICENCE for him to indicate that he once issued one to a gambler. ASK CHARON ABOUT CARDS to move into the shack (hence earlier preparation).
3. SIT ON WOODEN CHAIR (facing south and therefore looking at your polished shield on the wall so that you can see the cards held by Charon), ASK CHARON ABOUT RULES (sounds easy, but it took me hours to win). When you PLAY CARDS note what you have, and then BET * OBOLS (* being anything from 5 to 50).

I found there were too many draws (which Charon won) and was glad I saved my position before blowing the horn at the jetty. I reloaded three times before I won the import licence, which happened when I had 633 obols, but this may vary.

Before leaving the shack, collect the shield as it is needed again. Now work out how to get the keys across the river.

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

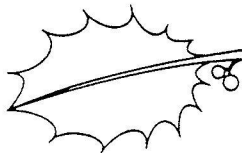
The iron copy of the bronze key will open the door in the garage.

Trying to take the ring from, then hitting, the mechanic is a quick way to arrive at the hospital.

Give something to Joe, then follow him *undetected*.

Cut a hole in the hedge SE of Iron Avenue.

If you have taken all the "short cuts", found a ticket and not wasted any moves, you should be in time to catch the bus.



STARSHIP QUEST played by Edwina Brown on a Spectrum – also available on Amstrad, Amiga(e) and PC(e)

Look around in the children's playground to find another location.

Use the plastic spade to dig under the bench.

Look under the bushes in pit location, then throw worm in hole. You will need to do this twice.

When you come to the missing rungs in the grav-shaft CLIMB ACROSS RUNGS.

In the tubecar SEARCH CAR then open the compartment.

Disconnect cables then recharge cell before connecting the cables once more. To travel in opposite direction REVERSE CABLES.

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

Part Two

Talk to the hermit, then talk to the handywoman. Reunite them by telling her about his shack. If you are carrying the translator, the handywoman will mend it.

Talk to, then hug, Pete for a proposal and a useful gift.

You need the pass to enter the pyramid.

Throw the pincushion at the serpent so that Ophelia can escape.

You can see much better in the cave if you have the lit lamp.

Give your medical card to Dr. Webber.

VALHALLA 3 played by Barbara Gibb on an Amiga

Level 3

Look into the mirror and eat the vanity cookie to open the nearby chest.

At the top left corner of the playing area you will find four standing witches. Talk to each of them and examine (eye icon) the appropriate sign you should have collect on your way up here.

Collect the 4 symbols and put them on the stones to open the nearby chest.

Put the metal ball on the drill table and operate both levers to smash the glass sphere and obtain a key to open the door by Uncle Augustus.

Give the head to the Phrenology Witch. Pick up the pumpkin and put it on the Flame of Halloween to obtain an asp. Put this on the Flame of Cleopatra to obtain a Sphinx.

Fill the cocktail glass with vodka, orange and galiano and give to the witch who likes Harvey Wallbangers. You will be given the first of two familiar symbols.

To bake the dough on the oven you need the heat protection potion. Pick up the street name. Examine it via your ancestor to learn more. Give it to Aunty Mavis.

Put the plates on all the banqueting tables to access the nearby staircase

Put the autobiography on the bed covered in roses.

Put the pillow on the Burke and Hare Shrine.

SERIALIZED SOLUTION

DUNGEON MASTER 2 – THE LEGEND OF SKULLKEEP

Played by Mary Scott-Parker on a PC

PART FIVE

Beyond the gear doors is the Boiler Room. The blue, flashing holes on the walls are portals, through which Attack Minions come and go, and, although they can be closed with ZO spells, they will reappear if you change levels. In an alcove is a square, yellow key. Put it into the appropriate key-hole in the alcove beyond and then press the green button round the corner. This action allows the first door to open – but unfortunately also opens a pit, into which the key then falls, and as it's needed to open the next door it has to be retrieved from its resting place 2 levels down. Dropping down the pit will take you directly to the key, but injuries sustained will make the party easy meat for resident nasty Dru Tan, who throws extremely potent poison clouds and who, unfortunately, needs to be killed.

Put both levers in the boiler room to the down position. Return to home base via the teleporter, to set the return position, then descend the ladder in the boiler room. Round the corner is an Attack Minion guarding the furnace – so dispose of it. Head South, then East to find a boulder blocking the way into the next cave. Push it into the hole – then head North and East to find an exit to the outside world [which only opens when approached from the West] – midway between the Moon door and the Energy door. Return to the cave, and about 11 steps West and 2 North should bring you to a down ladder. Save the game. The ladder is one way only and leads to Dru Tans domain. As Dru Tan carries the Blood key he must be killed.

Killing Dru Tan can either be incredibly easy or frustratingly difficult. Make sure each party member is carrying at least one Cure Poison potion [VI BRO]. At the bottom of the ladder go 4 steps East, 6 steps North, 12 steps East and then 2 steps North and with a bit of luck you'll arrive at a door just ahead of Dru Tan. Inside the door is a spike trap, and, if all goes smoothly, Dru Tan will be spiked to death. Go through the door and take just 1 or 2 steps. On the floor a couple of steps ahead is the floor stud that activates the trap – so don't step on it until you are sure Dru Tan is behind you. With Dru Tan following proceed to the end of the corridor and press the button on the wall ahead, near the floor. This opens the second door from the inside once only. Go through the door and close it behind you. Dru Tan cannot open it – but he's quite likely to have skipped out the other way when you were sure you had him trapped. If he escapes then reload the game – it's just not worth trying to kill him by ordinary means. When he's successfully squashed, open the door, and, if you can't get the key, then go back to the other door and flick the switch that resets the trap and the Blood key can be retrieved. Don't make the mistake of triggering the spike trap a second time if the door at the end isn't open.

Collect the square, yellow key and any other items lying around before opening the Blood door, where the Rockies are, as they throw pyros at you. When the way is clear enter the room and just round the corner is a wall switch which makes a teleporter appear in the cave. The Rockies will walk into it – and so must you to return to the furnace cave. Kill the attack Minion again and set 2 Guard Minions at either side of the furnace before climbing the ladder to the Boiler room. (more next month)

SOLUTIONS OF THE MONTH

DANCES WITH BUNNY RABBITS

Written by Simon Avery

Solution by Barbara Gibb on a C64 – also available on Amstrad

Note : LOUN is short for LOOK UNDER, LOIN is short for LOOK IN.

Start in your bedroom. LOUN BED and TAKE GUN, LOIN WARDROBE and TAKE CLOTHES, W (kitchen), TAKE cookie JAR, TIP JAR (cookies fall to the floor), TAKE COOKIE, EAT COOKIE (you spit out something hard that was baked into the cookie), I (now have a key), UNLOCK CABINET (need the key – now have Mummy's ring and a lacy handkerchief), TAKE CARROT, S (parents' bedroom), TAKE DRESS, WEAR DRESS, N.

N (main street), TAKE STICK, EXAM STICK (forked at one end), N (telegraph office), CLIMB COUNTER, EXAM SAFE, TURN DIAL, OPEN SAFE, LOIN SAFE and TAKE MAGAZINE, CLIMB COUNTER, S, W, N (reception of hotel), CUT MIRROR (need Mummy's ring), RING BELL (hear click from roof as bell is pressed), S (hear loud boom from hotel), N (see pile of rubble), EXAM RUBBLE (leads upwards), U (top of hotel where you see a sniper), PUSH SNIPER (into the street below), D, S (to street). EXAM dead BODY and TAKE RIFLE. The Milky Bar Kid arrives and throws bars of chocolate around. S (saloon), EXAM BAR (see Madam Lulu), GIVE MAGAZINE (to Lulu – you grab a bottle from the bar), HIT MAN (with bottle). A fight breaks out and you pick up the saddle and retreat to the street. SADDLE HORSE, RIDE HORSE (out of town).

When you are in the middle of a long long road an Indian appears, shoots your horse which collapses beneath you. GIVE RIFLE (to Indian, who tries to shoot you with it but it doesn't work, so he take you on a guided tour of a lake. He throws you in. You are now on the bottom of the lake. FILL JAR *before* you DRINK LAKE (yes, you drink the lake), DROP HANKY (if you are wearing the dress a gentleman rushes up and rescues you, kissing your hand), REMOVE DRESS, WEAR CLOTHES.

U (still–quite–nice–lands). You see a poisonous snake. USE STICK, E, E (meet an old Indian and a dog), GIVE MIRROR (to Indian who gives you a match), THROW STICK (otherwise the Gundog shoots you), E.

E (Badlands), EAT CARROT (so that you can see in the dark), S, EXAM STATUE (Sphinx with a large pointed nose), SHOOT NOSE (need gun), EXAM STATUE (now see a hole where the nose used to be), FEEL HOLE (statue slides back to reveal a secret tunnel).

S (into mine), EXAM DOOR, EXAM WRITING (present from Blackpool – oh, it is *that* sort of rock!), EAT DOOR, W (small antechamber), EXAM POT (sealed with wax), MELT WAX (need match), OPEN POT (an Arab jumps out and runs away), LOIN POT and TAKE DAGGER, E (see the Arab holding a lamp), SHOOT ARAB (need gun), MOVE ARAB and TAKE LAMP, S (see a man wearing a sign that reads "The end of the world is nigh"). WAVE DAGGER (man runs away), S (now deep within the bowels of the mine), READ SIGN (clue), POUR WATER (from cookie jar), I (now have "some untold riches"), EXAM RICHES, RUB LAMP (a genie appears), EXAM GENIE, TALK GENIE. SAY HOME (you are transported to western end of town), E (you run indoors in embarrassment), S to finish.

THE LAST BELIEVER – Written by Paul Lucas

Solution by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum (PAWed)

Start under statue of mayor. X STATUE, READ INSCRIPTION (a clue). N, N, N, N (outside house which doesn't appear to have an entrance), SAY PRESTO (pre-before, sto-stone without the end bit – told your mission), S, TAKE BOOTS, S, S, S, E, E, E (stone circle), TAKE ROPE, W, S (grocer's shop), X SHELVES (now have a plank), N, W, S (by well), TIE ROPE TO WELL. D, TAKE ORB, X ORB, U, N, W, N, W, S (inside house). D (cellar), X COFFIN (empty), TAKE COFFIN, U, N, W (shore of lake), DROP COFFIN (into lake), ENTER COFFIN, PADDLE COFFIN (need plank), LEAVE COFFIN (now on west bank of lake). W (by oak tree). WEAR BOOTS, U (okay if wearing boots), TAKE STAFF, D, W, W, N, W, W (clearing), TAKE GLOVES, E, E, S, E, S, E, S, W, S, W, W, BREAK ORB (must be wearing boots), TAKE ALL (magic candle and glass fragments), CUT UNDERGROWTH (need glass fragments – now exit west), DROP GLASS, W, TAKE BERRIES, E, E, E, N, E, N, N, N, E. ENTER COFFIN, PADDLE COFFIN (need plank), LEAVE COFFIN, E, E, N, N, N, N (inside mayor's house), W, W (store-room), TAKE POT, E, E, E, E (dark passage), X DOOR, HIT DOOR (it opens), E (dungeon), WEAR GLOVES *before* X BODY, TAKE THORNS, W, W, W, N, N, N, E (entrance to garden), THROW BERRIES AT PLANT (it dies), E, S, X POND, TAKE BRANCH, N, W, W, S, S, S, S, S, S, S, W, W, ENTER COFFIN, PADDLE COFFIN (need plank), LEAVE COFFIN, X POT, X CANDLE, PLUG POT WITH WAX (from magic candle), FILL POT (with water from lake), W, W, W, N, N, N (cave guarded by a Fire Demon), LIGHT BRANCH *before* THROW WATER AT DEMON, N, N, N (inside Temple), PULL LEVER (exit appears in west wall), W, TAKE BOOK, X BOOK (the book of spells you're looking for), E, S, S, S, S, S, E, E, E, ENTER COFFIN, PADDLE COFFIN (need plank), LEAVE COFFIN, DROP PLANK (not needed again), E, E, E, E, S, E (stone circle), X ALTAR (see gap), LEVER ALTAR (need staff). D, E, N, N, U, E (by bench), TAKE HERBS (another of the items you're looking for), W, D, S, S, S, E (cavern – see wild beast), BREAK STAFF, I (now have a hollow rod), INSERT THORNS INTO ROD (now a blowpipe), BLOW THORNS AT BEAST, U (wasteland), S, S, S, S, S (ice dome – see a snow statue), X STATUE (holding a wand), MELT STATUE (need burning branch), TAKE WAND, N, N, E, E, N (on ice bridge), E (ice bridge breaks), JUMP (safe on other side), E, N (city of Magic), WAVE WAND (transported to Magician's Sanctuary), GIVE HERBS, GIVE BOOK, GIVE WAND. The magician casts a spell to reverse the evil curse. Your belief in magic has saved your village, and your mission is now at an end. CONGRATULATIONS

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