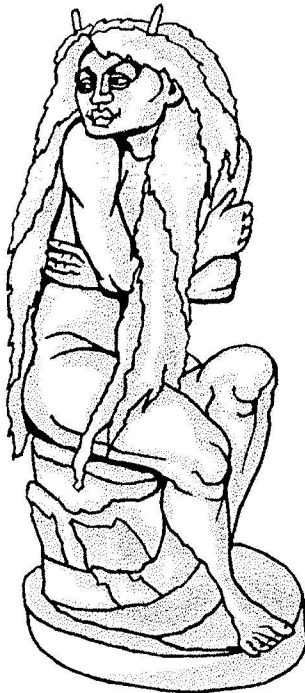


# ADVENTURE PROBE

FEBRUARY 2001 £2.00

VOLUME 15 ISSUE 2



"It is freezing in here so hurry up and  
find the key to the wardrobe."

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### **CONTRIBUTIONS**

All contributions are gratefully accepted. Please keep me well supplied with computer and adventure-related material. It doesn't matter how brief it is - it may be exactly the information someone needs. 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. Contributions can also be submitted on disc, which will save me a lot of typing.

### **POSTAL ADDRESS**

Please send all correspondence, subscriptions, and of course, contributions, to:

Barbara Gibb - Editor, Adventure Probe  
52 Burford Road, Liverpool L16 6AQ, U.K.

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## HALL OF FAME

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

Chris Heppinstall, Bev Truter, Walter Pooley, Dorothy Millard, Peter Clark, Laurence Creighton, Mary Scott-Parker, Dot Healey, Derek Shaw, Edwina Brown and Kez Gray

Special thanks to:  
The Copyshop, Allerton, Liverpool for printing the magazine

## EDITORIAL

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Welcome to the latest issue of Probe. Not as late as the January magazine as the postal strike now seems to be over and the backlog of mail sorted, although I didn't receive my copy of February's Cable Guide (a monthly TV magazine) until last Saturday, 17th February.

Those of you with very long memories will remember Phillip Ramsay saying he didn't want anything other than reviews of his adventures published. Well, as I have been unable to contact either Phillip Ramsay or Phil Reynolds (who sold his adventures via The Adventure Workshop) for a very, very long time, I have decided now is the time to ignore his wishes. The three adventures I receive the most requests for help are Hades and The Assassins' Guild 1 and 2, the first particularly difficult because of the limited carrying capacity and red herrings. Although I have always given individual help on request, I've decided to publish a "getting you started" for Hades in this issue, and may consider publishing hints for The Assassins' Guild 1 and 2 in future issues. What do you think? Are there any other games you would like to see featured? Please let me know.

As a tie-in with Chris Heppinstall's mention of the Myst site (which would not allow me to download anything - anyone else have trouble?) I would like to mention the following site which has screen shots of the five ages for "still in production" Myst 3

<http://www.myst3.com/html/myst3ages.html>

Roger Staff's references to the Beeb in his article "Confessions of a Faint-hearted Adventurer" will stir memories in more than one of you, and next month's Website(s) of the Month will feature two of the best sites for BBC and Electron games and emulators.

As some of you already know, three years ago my daughter had an emergency operation. Last November she had another operation, and the final one is scheduled for 5th March, postponed from 19th February. We are hoping she makes a quick recovery, and that things will be almost back to normal in a few months. She thanks everyone who sent her their best wishes, cards and prayers, they are much appreciated.

Until next month, happy adventuring,

*Barbara*

## LETTERS

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### **From Edwina Brown of Newmarket .....**

I found Alex Darracott's GUIDE TO PLAYING TEXT ADVENTURES - PART ONE very interesting. However I cannot agree with his definition of the EXAMINE command. He says it only lets you look at an object from a distance. This is not so, you can examine something you are holding in your hand, or a person standing close by. Take the box in his example, surely that was not in the distance. The difference between EXAMINE and SEARCH, as I see it, is that when you examine an object, you see only that which is visible, whereas when you search it, you delve deeper, opening that box for example, or rustling through some papers.

Anyway I thoroughly enjoyed the article, and am looking forward to reading part two, in next month's Probe.

### **From Bev Truter of Carnegie, Australia .....**

Any news of the elusive David Haire yet?

...and I feel impelled to comment on the January cover of Probe - I know 90% of the global population celebrated the "new" millennium on 01/01/2000; but hey, I agree with you - we're not mathematically challenged! We can count!

\*

No, I'm sorry, David has not replied to my letter.

Last year a lot of readers commented about 2001 being the real start of the new millennium. Having spent a lot of time playing Aureum I appreciated the difference between BC and AD and how to calculate a certain number of years without there being a year zero.

There didn't seem to be any really special celebrations for the start of 2001, everyone felt they had already done it 12 months earlier! What a shame!

I chose the picture and thought it needed a caption, and I'm glad I took the opportunity to "put the record straight". (Barbara)

## REVIEWS

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### **6<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL INTERACTIVE FICTION COMPETITION GAMES 2000**

**Reviewed by Dorothy Millard on a PC**

(Continued from last month)

#### Letters from Home by Roger Firth (Z Code) 12<sup>th</sup>

In Letters from Home which is set in a old-fashioned large house you must gather letters masquerading as objects which are then used in a cryptic crossword at the end, using each letter of the alphabet. This game can best be described as a puzzlefest.

#### Little Billy by Okey Ikeako (Windows) – 50<sup>th</sup>

Strangely one of the opening screen states "The author has no writing talent whatsoever." The game screen is divided into four boxes, a large one at the top which shows your location and other relevant information, with a smaller one underneath where you click to take action. The other two small boxes on the right contain buttons for save, inventory and quit in one and the story number in the other. The story moves along by you simply clicking in the bottom box, for instance there will be a knock at the door and you simply click on "continue" to open door and the story moves on. Very occasionally you get a chance to even choose from several options! Forget it!

#### Marooned by Bruce Davis (ADRIFT) – 45<sup>th</sup>

After finishing with some afternoon fishing, you notice some rather dark and menacing clouds have snuck up on you. While preparing to head back to port, the wind picks up and jagged streaks of lightning stab the sky. A heavy rain begins to pelt you. The waves grow stronger and threaten to dump you in the raging ocean. Dark clouds drift overhead and the ocean swirls angrily around the boat. You can barely make out anything in front of you. Despite your attempts to keep the boat upright, a huge wave hits you and dumps you into the raging ocean. Thus the game commences with you marooned on some kind of apparently uninhabited island. You must get off this speck in the middle of the ocean.

You are free to explore the island in this traditional type game. It was nice to see a game with a different colour scheme (I've been playing too many Z Code games). The ADRIFT Interpreter completes words for you, for example if you type "x c" it will complete the word to read x clothes. Sometimes it completes with the wrong word, for example I wanted to type

IN but I got INVENTORY instead, but if you keep typing the correct letters appear and so long as you are aware of it, it's not a problem. Additionally Auto-Correct can be turned off if this annoys you. The ADRIFT Interpreter also has a Control Panel with all the standard commands such as Examine, Pick Up, Wear, Remove, Goto, Help etc, which can be used with the mouse. You can also use the mouse to point to the text instead of typing words and in fact, if you wish, most actions can be accomplished using the mouse.

Marooned is nothing new or special, but fun anyway, despite it's low ranking in the IF Competition.

#### Masque of the Last Faeries, The by Ian R Ball (Z Code) – 31<sup>st</sup>

The prologue sees you entering through the grand entrance where you are told that you are late and to hurry to get your costume. In Act One the masque has begun – you are Belephron, Regent of the Elves. In the early part of the game I couldn't really find anything to do other than wait to see what eventuates. Later on you are able to visit the Forest Glade but I was still not sure what I was supposed to be doing and had to resort to the hints to find out. The characters in the game are interesting.

#### Masquerade by Kathleen M. Fischer (Z Code) – 8<sup>th</sup>

Masquerade is set in the Civil-War era of the 1800's and is a romantic work of story-based interactive fiction. The plot is fairly linear but there are several forks which lead to different endings based on your decisions – apparently there are 12 different endings. There are few objects in the game. Using the senses, examining and interaction with NPCs is what is required.

#### Metamorphoses by Emily Short (Z Code) – 2<sup>nd</sup>

The author states that it is not a difficult game, although I am not so sure, and that almost all puzzles have more than one solution. Apparently it is possible to put the game into an unwinnable state, but it is not particularly likely unless you go out of your way to do so. It has great atmosphere and is very well written.

Metamorphoses takes place in an otherworldly realm, a plane obliquely linked with the physical world, to which you have been sent on an errand. At the start a voice, remembered, tells you to "Find the elements and bring them to me." The game abounds with breathtaking imagery and there are many nooks and crannies to explore. While exploring you will learn more about yourself and your past. The theme is, appropriately, metamorphosis, the transformation of objects, of elements, of light, of the universe, of yourself. There are several different endings.

#### My Angel by Jon Ingold (Z Code) – 6<sup>th</sup>

My Angel is based very loosely on the poem “The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe. There are two modes in which this game can be played, Novel and Normal. I found the Novel mode to be difficult to follow and recommend that the game is played in normal mode.

The author states that My Angel is an interactive short story – a story is written, with the game prompting you for what you want to be described, or done by the main character. It moves the onus of telling a good story partly onto you, the reader. Instead of typing compass directions you must WALK LEFT or WALK RIGHT and this form of movement takes a little getting used to. The story flips back and forth between the main thread and some flashback sequences and you can actually interact with the characters and objects in the flashback sequences. You and your companion are telepaths and it is important to remember this. For the most part it’s a well-told story that manages to keep the player involved.

#### Nevermore by Nate Cull (Z Code) – 7<sup>th</sup>

Described as an interactive gothic, Nevermore has intricate inventory-based puzzles and a spooky tower to explore, Nevermore is a classic, just don’t do what I did and try sleeping near the start. Anyway after a restart I did much better and thoroughly enjoyed as far as I have got in this game.

#### On the Other Side by Antonio Márquez Marín (DOS) – 46<sup>th</sup>

I quote from the readme: “On the other side is a strange piece of interactive-fiction. In this game you will be the computer that guides the interactive-fiction player, that is, we will type the descriptions of the locations, the responses to the commands of the player, etc...”

What can I say? – forget it!

#### Pickpocket, The by Alex Weldon (Z Code) – 32<sup>nd</sup>

It’s been twenty years since you left your home to come to the little-known nation of Weldonia. You can hardly remember why... it was mostly just because you were unhappy with the state of your life as it was and wanted to go somewhere to start anew. You have learnt the local language and make a living selling miscellaneous trinkets in the marketplace of the nation’s capital, Alexandria. Today was fairly uneventful until a street orphan about 12 picks your pocket. You vow to yourself that you won’t go home for the night until you get your money back. This puzzle-oriented game has an interesting story, but there are some “guess the verb” situations. I particularly liked the puzzle to get rid of the dog as it was original and made a change from the usual bone, meat etc. I enjoyed this game.

Planet of the Infinite Minds by Alfredo Garcia (Tads) – 19<sup>th</sup>

As a librarian you are told to “lighten-up” by your boss, so you head off to the funfair during your lunch break. I managed to finish the game without solving any of the puzzles or scoring any points at all! Oh well, back to the drawing board. I restarted and this time followed the gypsy to be drawn into the game. She tells you that you are not from this Earth at all, but from a far off planet, a planet much greater and more beautiful than this one: Medvidev – Planet of the Infinite Minds. The sub-title of this game is Interactive Farce and it should not be taken seriously. Worth a look.

Prodly the Puffin by Craig Timpany & Jim Crawford (Z Code) – 35<sup>th</sup>

You are a puffin and you want your pitchfork back. Prodly the Puffin is a simple bizarre fun game which includes things like making a snowman. It is completable in about half an hour.

Punk Points by Jim Munroe (Z Code) – 22<sup>nd</sup>

Punk Points opens at the show in a dark, poorly lit and packed club, but it’s all a dream. The game is set in a school and you are a 13 year old male teenager with a poor self-image. Enough said!

Rameses by Stephen Bond (Z Code) – 13<sup>th</sup>

Rameses is the story of an adolescent boy who is his own worst enemy. It is implemented well-enough but it is not a happy story. It wades through unpleasant adolescent experiences, and being stuck with a bunch of stereotypical boarding school students doesn’t appeal to me at all.

Rameses is puzzleless and heavy on NPC interaction, using a menu-based conversation interface rather than ask/tell. There is little the player can do to alter the course of events. You can get through almost the entire game by typing “wait” repeatedly. There is some profanity in this game.

Return to Zork: Another Story by Stefano Canali (Z Code) – 26<sup>th</sup>

Return to Zork is a traditional adventure set in the world of Zork and developed with permission from Activision. It opens up with the familiar “Hello Sailor.” You won the grand prize of the Dizzy World Resort sweepstakes, a map to Shanbar and a Tele-Orb. This sounded great when you found the package in your mailbox, but you underestimated how hard the journey would be to Shanbar to claim the prize. Anyway, the trip is nearly over, and soon you’ll be able to meet Rooper and Trembyle and get what you deserve!

The game commences atop a rock path in the Flathead Mountains. You will find many references to the Zork Universe in this traditional game.

Shade by Andrew Plotkin (Z Code) – 10<sup>th</sup>

Shade is a one location game (if you don't count the kitchen and bathroom nooks) set in your apartment. I looked around for a while, became thirsty and managed to sate my thirst, but was still none the wiser as to what my objective was. Perhaps there isn't one! Anyway I lost interest and moved on.

Stupid Kittens by Pollyanna Huffington (Z Code) – 44<sup>th</sup>

Stupid Kittens is described as a game for mature players but I found it to be juvenile. This game is just weird, for instance at the start, you find yourself in Karen's room where she is holding a grenade. She states "Today we'll see if Fuzzles (you as one of the stupid kittens) is smart enough to save its own life. Seeing as I couldn't even get out of the basket and was told that I'd rather lounge right here and sniff my arse, no thanks, I don't think I care. On to the next game.

[Chris Heppinstall's review of this game is also in this issue .... Barbara]

Threading the Labyrinth by Kevin F. Doughty (Tads) – 40<sup>th</sup>

An experimental "game" where you type words found in the text to explore. The writing is more poetry than prose.

Transfer by Tod Levi (Z Code) – 5<sup>th</sup>

A puzzle oriented game set in the Cliffside Underground Research Laboratory where an experiment has gone wrong and there is a traitor in your midst. Transfer is a well-written interesting game, well worth a look.

Trip, The by Cameron Wilkin (Tads) – 33<sup>rd</sup>

Life after college has turned out to be a bummer. The real world, as it turns out, is kind of rough, and it's hard finding work. This, along with the realization that you are getting older and your intense fear of death, has put you in a lengthy and ever increasing depression. Your friend from high school, Joel, has invited you to come up and spend the weekend with him in Utah. It's a bit of a journey, but since you've nothing else to do, it might take your mind off life for a while.

I didn't like the way this game was written. It is hard to put into words, perhaps it's the subject matter, using words like dude, trippy, alright man, yeah etc. Anyway it didn't suit my taste in games and I didn't want to complete it.

Unnkulia X by Valentine Kopteltsev – 27<sup>th</sup>

The Great Master of your village announces that the Demons of Unnkulia are back again and they demand a human sacrifice, unless we want our nice Vilefen to be wiped off the Earth's surface.

After a long discussion the villagers decide that since you, Joan Fleaumont, are an orphan, you are optimal for the purposes of sacrificing. Of course, they don't ask YOUR opinion on the matter. In great haste, they tie you up and throw you into a cell. You are left there while they prepare to burn you alive as a sacrifice to the Demons of Unnkulia. Your task is to escape your fate and save your village from the dreadful demons.

Interestingly Unnkulia X doesn't mean ten but the letter most often used in mathematics to substitute an unknown number. It is used because it's not easy to assign numbers to the Unnkulian games. After Unnkulia I and II, Unnkulia III and IV have been announced but never released. So Unnkulia X means "Unnkulia I-don't-know-what-number." As a traditional type text adventure this didn't rate well in the IF Competition, however, it is a fun puzzle-oriented game for those who like this type of thing. It was probably a little large for the time limit imposed by the Competition

VOID: CORPORATION by Jonathan Lim (AGT) – 41<sup>st</sup>

This one did very badly in the IF Competition, mainly because the author forgot to compile it before sending it in and for a lot of people it was just too difficult to get it working and play it. In this regard, I thank Bev Truter for compiling a working version for me to review.

One of the two most powerful corporations in the world, The New Sydney Corporation, make Electric Hallucinations or EH, a virtual reality beamed into the brain centres, which are used in booths by people for entertainment and information. They build a massive city, New Sydney, in the Australian desert, where everyone sleeps during the scorching day, and moves about during the freezing nights. You, as privateer Dan Clayman, the toughest, fastest gunslinger in the Solar System, get the meanest assignments, and this one is MEAN. You are to cheat your former bosses.

Although entered in this year's Competition the game was written several years ago (the date on the opening screen is September 1998). Although not a literary masterpiece, the story is intriguing and the game is reasonably well-written. I had problem in that you can't PUSH BLUE BUTTON you must simply PUSH BUTTON or it doesn't work, despite this being in the walk through. One point I did like was when I tried to read the graffiti, I got the following message "You can't read the graffiti so you just examine it." At the end you are told that you have completed the most complex, hardest game to come from JPC Electronics, but really it isn't very hard and can be completed in about an hour.

[Bev's review will be in the next issue. She has kindly sent me a copy of the compiled game, which seems to work only through DOS. Please contact me if you would like a copy .... Barbara]

What-IF? by David Ledgard – 52<sup>nd</sup>

In What-IF you choose from a menu of seven historical items and are presented with a story. The choices are 1226 Holy War or Jihad, 1433 West Meets East, 1492 New World or Old, 1807 The failed American Revolution, 1861 The Trent Affair, October 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, September 1938 The Munich Crisis. The stories are interesting in themselves but it is not Interactive Fiction, unless you consider choosing a menu item interactive, also some of the stories are inaccurate.

Withdrawal Symptoms by Niclas Carlsson (Z Code) – 36<sup>th</sup>

The objective in Withdrawal Symptoms is to find out what's inside the safety deposit box willed to you by your aunt. On the way, you have to solve a few rather contrived puzzles. The writing is passable but should have been proofread by a native English speaking person, for example "the room is crowded with impatient customers waiting to go about their business." A fairly short game.

Wrecked by Campbell Wild (ADRIFT) – 39<sup>th</sup>

A mate has recently got you interested in shipwrecks, you never knew there was so much unclaimed treasure lying at the bottom of the oceans. All you need to do is find a wreck, search it, and you're a billionaire. At least, that was the way he put it. After doing some research you find out about a particular ship sunk in not too deep water and get your supplies together. Arriving in a village near the ship you step off the bus and all your stuff is stolen by a pizza-faced 14 year old desperate to feed some drug addiction. The game commences with you stranded in the village Ambersville without any money, only the clothes you are wearing and a rather desperate ambition.

I am only part way through Wrecked but I have enjoyed as far as I have got in this traditional type adventure. Although rated poorly in the IF Competition give this one a try. It is nothing new or revolutionary but is a good solid fun game.

YAGWAD by Digby McWiggle aka John Kean (Z Code) – 9<sup>th</sup>

This game about a dragon is a conventional, funny and thoroughly delightful game. You're an unlikely hero hoping to rescue the princess from the nefarious beast and win the king's favour. It is impossible to put the game in an unwinnable state and there are no sudden deaths. Puzzles are not too hard and fun to solve. Recommended!

*Please write in and let me know what you think. Do you agree or disagree with my comments above? Whereabouts would you have placed some of the games? I look forward to hearing what other people think .... Dorothy*

## **FUTZ MUTZ**

**Written by Tim Simmons**

**Reviewed by Christopher Heppinstall on a PC**

Okay, I admit it - I only downloaded this game (from the Internet ftp.gmd.de location) because I was so curious about the name. And I'm glad that I did give it a try.

Futz Mutz was an entry for the 2000 Interactive Fiction competition which I stumbled across a few days ago, never having noticed them before. I don't know how well it did, but I personally think it is one of the most original games I have played. The story? You are a nine-year-old boy, and it is your birthday. But, by some strange twist of fate, you have been turned into a dog. And this is how the adventure begins - trapped in a cage within a pet shop called 'Futz Mutz' (ah-ha!). Naturally, you want to get out of this predicament, so getting out of your cage is first on your agenda. You have two chances at this, fail them and it is Game Over. However, there is an essential item that you mustn't forget to deal with - or else the game will reach a dead-end. This happened to me, and it wasn't until I was 'forced' to look at a solution that I discovered what I had done wrong - an action I had tried in the game, but I must have tried the wrong words because it did not work for me. This rendered six of my seven saved games useless.

The game features some graphics, and a fair amount of sound and music. Indeed, the music changes depending on which area of the game you are, giving a suitably dark melody when traipsing in the pitch black, or a slightly brighter tune when out in the streets. You can also type in BARK or CRY (amongst many other dog-like commands) and you hear a suitable sound resonating from the speakers. However, there is a price to pay for these luxuries in the form of a 1.17MB file size. Whilst this may be okay for those of us with reasonably fast internet access, it can be a little tiresome for those without - and unfortunately there isn't a version available without these extras.

Some may groan to hear this, whilst others may rejoice, but there is a maze in Futz Mutz - albeit a rather small one. Whilst I am not the largest fan of mazes, this one has a fun solution that is somewhat reminiscent of the maze in Mandy Rodrigues' game: Black Knight, but with a slightly different viewpoint. Hopefully I've not made the solution too obvious, but traversing the maze isn't essential to the plot anyway. It is merely for building up points, and obtaining an otherwise useless item that clearly comes from the author's heart regarding a certain IF competition winner a couple of years ago.

For those that like searching for links, there are some other things you can examine that feature references to other adventures, the adventuring world, and the creator's own musical work (a nice bit of self-advertising).

Futz Mutz has a good range of puzzles but, limited by the rules of the IF competition, is quite a small game. But it still has some interesting locations like a dog hair salon and poodle restaurant. It isn't too difficult, and I found that the parser was much better than what I have experienced in many adventures before. I was also happy to discover that pretty much everything that is mentioned in the game can be examined. Some people argue that this means irrelevant items become important in the player's eyes, causing an abundance of red herrings. Personally, I love a fully descriptive game and I found myself nicely immersed in Futz Mutz - despite the obvious anti-realist plot. I found two bugs in the game, one of which stops you from winning, but it is very unlikely that anyone else would try the commands. I recommend that you play this game at least once, and allow yourself to just look and play around - without even trying to complete puzzles - as there are several things you can do which are there just for fun, and it is a game that can easily raise a smile.

You will need the latest version of HTML-TADS to run this game, which is also available within the if-archive at <ftp.gmd.de>

Get Futz Mutz at:

<ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/games/comp00/tads>

or send a blank disc and return postage, or £1.50, to the Probe office.

(Final note - anyone know of a similar style game but featuring a cat? Although I loved Futz Mutz, I do prefer cats to dogs...)

[Have you played Edwina Brown's **FELINE SLEEPY**, a delightful whodunit set in a hotel full of guest and staff who are cats? Check out the advertisement in this issue .... Barbara]



## **LITTLE BIG ADVENTURE 2**

**Reviewed by Peter Clark on PC.**

The original game, Little Big Adventure 1 is a game that I have not played although reviews of the game were quite good. Electronic Arts and Adeline Software in 1997 published Little Big Adventure 2, as a sequel. The game is set initially on the planet Twinsun. You take the part of Twinsen, a young Quelch and hero of the planet. Four main races exist on Twinsun. There are the Quelch who can be recognised by their ponytails, the Grobos who look like elephants, the Bouboules who are little fat people and the Lapichans. On other planets you will meet four other races. The Knants who look like sausages, the Sups who have triangular hearts, the Mosquibees who are like large insects and the Blafards who are the Tristo people.

Your task is to restore peace and harmony to all these planets, saving not only your friends, but also the wizards and children of the planet Twinsun. To do this you must find the objects and elements that will help you and you must also seek out those people who can lend you their knowledge and assistance.

You will have to travel great distances in your attempt to save the world and overpower the evil Dark Monk. Your enemies can gain the upper hand at any time and put paid to your quest for peace.

Thus says the introduction in the manual but what of the game? I must admit that I installed this game with a certain amount of trepidation as I had heard that the control interface in the original game was difficult to master. The mouse is not used as the directions are all controlled from the cursor keys and all other actions are keyboard controlled. However, I found little difficulty in playing the game. After a half hour or so of play the control became quite natural.

The game is huge and involves travel between several planets and lands many times. It is not completely linear and tasks can be completed, to some extent, in different orders. To start with, you are permitted to carry out your tasks without hindrance but, later on after your world is invaded, you will have to contend with quite a selection of aliens that seem to have no other task in life but to exterminate you. It takes a page out of the role-playing games in that you need to find power ups as you progress and, as you receive damage from aversaries, your strength will diminish. The same applies to money used in the game. You start with nothing and have to unearth coins as you progress. Whilst I was playing the game I discovered a cheat code that allowed me to top up both my strength and money at regular intervals and so I cannot really say just how difficult these tasks

would be. However, I found no real difficulty in finding power ups and money before finding the cheat so this may not be too difficult a task. Twinsen can operate in four different modes. There is the NORMAL mode where he walks everywhere and you must be in this mode to find money. The second mode is SPORTY and here Twinsen runs and jumps. Thirdly, AGGRESSIVE mode allows you to fight and use any of the many weapons that you will find as you progress through the game. Lastly there is DISCRETE mode that allows you to creep quietly around and can be used to bypass some but not all of the opposition.

Transport comes in many different shapes and sizes and your first task is to find a remedy for your sick dynofly. This is very much a cross between a dragon and a dinosaur. When he is well, he will be able to fly you to several of the places that you must visit. Within the game there are several ferrymen that you will have to pay to transport you around. One of these is needed to cross a sea of molten lava. At other points in the game you will have to master driving a car through the desert and using a rocket back pack. The acquisition of a space shuttle that doesn't belong to you becomes necessary and is another method of transport that you will need several times if you are to be successful in your task.

The save game facility is one that I used many, many times as there are a large number of places where Twinsen must negotiate rivers, cliffs and molten lava and, unless you jump from the correct place, you die! Towards the end of the game the number of adversaries increases to a point where it seems that all you are doing is fighting. If I have any criticism of the game it is here. I found that the continual hack and slash became boring. However, it is only the last part of the game that is affected this way.

The graphics are good if a little dated but the sound, especially the background music, is really very good and enjoyable. There is a control within the game allowing you to alter the volume of both the speech and background. This is one of the few games that I have played recently where I have not wanted to turn the music off.

I bought the game on budget label, Electronic Arts Classics. The game needs Windows 95 or upward. I played on Windows Me with no problems. Any Pentium processor will do and only 8Mb Ram is needed. Usual SoundBlaster cards are accepted and anything over a quad speed CD Rom Drive is Ok.

All told, I would recommend this game. It took me around a month to complete even with help from the net. Go for it. It's worth a few quid if it is still available. [Due out soon with another game ... Barbara]

## **ICE STATION ZERO**

**Written by Mike White**

**Review by Bev Truter on a PC under Spectrum emulation**

Unfortunately there was no on-screen introduction to this game that I downloaded from the Net, so I had no idea what the aim of the game was, apart from trying to stay alive. But right at the end, in the final confrontation with the arch-villain all becomes clear, and you realize why you have had to be pretty bloodthirsty to progress this far through the game. I finally worked out that you play the role of a gung-ho James Bond-ish type of secret agent, sent to the frozen wastes of the Arctic wilderness (North Pole) on a mission to save the world, or at least the northern bits of it, from a madman intent on setting off a nuclear explosion.

You begin the game outside your tent, surrounded by a wasteland of snow and ice. The action kicks in very soon, and never lets up until the end. You will soon have to find a weapon, get rid of a pesky pack of wolves following you, avoid falling into the icy water, and generally make several unprovoked attacks on various animals and people. Hmmm. All this killing and mayhem wasn't exactly my cup of tea, but I suppose it does make for an action-packed tension-filled kind of game. Oh well, at least the Eskimos escape being assaulted by you - you'll have to do some trading with them to obtain a very necessary item.

ZERO is a large, complicated game, with almost instant death lurking around every corner if you do the wrong thing, or fail to do the right thing. The standard of writing in ZERO is very good, conveying a real feel of what it must be like to travel around in a world of snow and ice. There are many problems to solve, obstacles to overcome, and enemies to deal with, and my advice in playing this game is to SAVE - frequently! Although basically a text adventure, there are some not-too-bad graphics in several locations. These graphics aren't frequent enough or irritating enough to send you searching for the correct input to turn them off, and as a result I never did discover what input (if any) got rid of the graphics. One slight criticism of location descriptions is that often there was no clue about exits from a particular location; so I spent a lot of time floundering around trying to find which of 10 possible directions I could move to. A few more rooms with hints like "there is a dazzling blue glow coming from the east", or something along those lines, would have been much appreciated.

In ZERO you must negotiate your way through several types of scenery - a glacier, ice floes, an Eskimo village, an icy precipice, and even a section of strangely lush scenery, to find Ice Station Zero-1, and Ice Station Zero-2, both more or less deserted, ransacked and gradually getting covered by

snowdrifts. Apart from the hungry wolves following you near the start of the game there is also a polar bear and Yeti to dispose of, as well as an enemy guard, a tribe of cannibals (!), an eskimo chief, a snowplough full of soldiers, and of course the major baddie at the game's end.

This is a very "busy" type of game to play, and will probably suit those who enjoy plenty of drama, action and excitement in text adventures, plus the chance to roam around some interesting Arctic scenery. Although not exactly my favourite type of adventure, the quality of writing in ZERO was so much better than that found in many old Spectrum games that I thoroughly enjoyed playing this particular one.

## **A SPELL OF CHRISTMAS ICE**

**Written by Mike Turner**

**Reviewed by Bev Truter on a PC under Spectrum emulation**

The credit screen in this little game stresses that this is a very easy adventure for novices and children, and that sums it up exactly. The introduction tells about the Wicked Ice Witch, who has cast a spell on Santa Claus to prevent him delivering all the presents for Christmas day. You begin the game at the North Pole, where you must find a way to reverse the magic spell and ensure that Santa and his helpers are restored to normal.

There are only about 10 locations in total, and no puzzles, aside from finding a few objects and using them/it in the correct place. About the only barrier to progress initially might be in discovering how to get into a dark cave, and into Santa's grotto, as the normal north, south, etc. directions won't do the trick for entering these two sets of locations.

However, lack of puzzles aside, the writing in this small adventure is fairly descriptive. Rooms are imaginatively described, and on discovering Santa and his plight you'll definitely want to help the poor man, and his little elves... There are no "deaths" in the game - just as well, given the young audience this is aimed at; and even the Wicked Ice Witch is absent from her kingdom, only a few scattered possessions giving any indication of her presence. What a shame, as I was quite looking forward to meeting her.

All in all, a pleasant, totally undemanding 10-minute romp through some wintry scenery, even if you are neither a child nor a novice player.

## **STUPID KITTENS**

**Written by Pollyanna Huffington**

**Reviewed by Christopher Heppinstall, on a PC**

The key to this short review is: steer clear

After playing Futz Mutz (a review of which is probably also in this issue), I went back onto the GMD site to find a new game to play. Once again, I looked at the entries for the 2000 competition and chose a game labelled kitty. With hopes that this game would be similar to Futz Mutz, but with a cat, I downloaded it.

I have chosen on purpose not to look at any of the comments made about the games before I play them myself. But if only I had read them for this game, before I downloaded it.

The game certainly does not deserve the category of a "text adventure", and even "interactive fiction" is pushing it a bit. Stupid Kittens allows almost no freedom, is pointlessly rude (if you type in a noun the parser doesn't understand, you are told: "I don't know what '[word]' is supposed to f\*\*\*\*\* mean!"), and tries to be funny - but fails miserably. Even the hints system is full of garbage with little relevance to the game.

The plot seems to involve your owner, Karen, throwing a grenade into your basket, you going to the vet, then taken to jail, electrocuted, entering kitty heaven, and talking to Buddha. I got to next point where someone was shouting at me to "DROP EVERYTHING!", and I gave up - tired of this game in just a couple of minutes.

If this game did not come last in the competition, then I hope I do not come across those that did.

You will need an Inform interpreter to play this game, which is also available from the [ftp.gmd.de](ftp:gmd.de) site.

Get this game from:

[ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/games/competition00/inform/kitty](ftp:gmd.de/if-archive/games/competition00/inform/kitty)

or send a blank PC disc and return postage, or £1.50, to the Probe office.

# GUIDE TO PLAYING TEXT ADVENTURES - Pt.1 CONT'D

## 'The Structure of Text Adventure Games'

by Alex Darracott

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### PARSER

The parser is the tool that all adventure games has that process all the commands that you input, and is also the tool that generates the messages that I described earlier. The processing of commands involves the parser comparing the words that make up your command to the words that the game has been programmed to recognised, and these words are located in what is known as a 'vocabulary table'. After comparing the words the parser creates a suitable message and presents this to you on screen.

OK, that's the basic idea of a parser but would you like a more detailed and comprehensive description on what exactly happens when you input a command? OK, here goes.

As soon as you enter your command it is immediately taken to the parser. The parser then scans the command letter by letter and compares these to the letters to the ones programmed into the vocabulary table. When all the letters are scanned and are placed back into the original worded command the parser then decides whether it understands the command or not. Basically if just one word was mistakenly spelt by just one letter it will not be understood, because the parser does not correct spelling mistakes. It only understands the words that it has been programmed to understand.

I will leave it as that, because if I were to explain how a parser works I would be entering the scary and complicated world of programming. I have no wishes to discuss the programming aspect, as I don't fully understand all of it yet (I am only a college computer student, after all).

So, the parser will not be able to determine when humans will leave Earth nor will it tell you the true meaning of life, but a good parser is extremely effective. A good parser would generate the 'constructive error messages', would recognise a huge range of words and would be able to understand the various ways in which the same command can be worded.

An example of a bad parser can be taken from the otherwise good game 'Aftershock' from Interceptor. Right at the beginning of the game you find yourself stuck in a lift with the only means of escape is through the ceiling after a panel has been removed.

"OK", I thought, "simple enough". I typed in 'LIFT PANEL'. It didn't work. "Humm", I said to myself, "seemed like the most obvious command to me". I tried another command – 'TAKE OFF PANEL'. "YOU CAN'T", said the dreaded error message again, not indicating which word it is having trouble with. "What in goodness name do you understand then?" I was thinking. I tried more commands – "MOVE PANEL", "PUSH PANEL", "PRESS PANEL", - but none of them worked.

After losing half of my hair due to stress and starting to think about clubbing the computer with a sledgehammer I found the right command, which is "REMOVE PANEL".

After failing to replace the yanked out hair, I managed to lose the other half trying to figure out how to get out of the lift. I tried everything, including trying to physically get into the computer to give the poor sod a lift up. However, good sense came through and I found the right command, which is "CLIMB OUT OF THE LIFT". How in the world is anyone going to think of that? I tried other, simpler commands that mean the same thing, like "LEAVE LIFT", but none of them worked. I found this simply more annoying and frustrating than it should have been.

It is from this that I have come to the conclusion that it is important for a parser to understand various ways in which a command can be worded, as well as understanding a wide range of words and high understanding of logic.

A perfect example in how great a parser's understanding can be is found in Level 9's masterpiece "The Price of Magic". The parser for this game is extremely intelligent and has such an incredible understanding of a wide range of words that a command can look something like this:

"TAKE ALL EXCEPT THE BAG AND THE AXE, THEN GO NORTH AND KILL THE SLUG".

This command shows that a parser can not only be programmed to recognise verbs and nouns, but also conjunctions, prepositions and the 'definite article'. Furthermore, this causes the game to become easier to play, less frustrating and have quicker gameplay.

Unfortunately, parsers of this high intelligence were usually only found in the games of the top adventure software houses of the 80s like the legendary Level 9, Rainbird and Infogrames as they all used highly complex, top level programming adventure languages. Us poorer saps could only make do with the Graphic Adventure Creator or the QUILL. However, you could create some fantastic games on both of these.

To conclude this parser section, here are my overall thoughts on how the parser should be created.

The parser should be able to recognise a wide range of words and not be bothered about how commands are worded (look back at the Aftershock example to see what I mean). Having a large vocabulary table would be ideal in this case.

Also, the parser should be able to create constructive error messages so that the player will be able to understand what words the parser understands, and what words it does not. I feel that the implementation of these two would allow for a much easier to play game with less frustration and annoyance.

Also, remember this:

*Effective and constructive communication between the game and the player is of extreme importance as without effective communication the game would have the feeling of unfriendliness and would cause the player to feel uninvolved, and would put the player off. A game must have high communication levels so that gamers can be attracted to it, maintain their interest for a long time, and to make the game feel more enjoyable and friendly.*

## VOCABULARY

During this article I mentioned the 'vocabulary table' several times. "What exactly is it?" I hear you all ask. Well, I don't wish to go too deep into this or else I'll be dealing with programming again. However, there are three main features that I have found out about it.

Vocabulary is the be all, end all of the words that the parser can understand (the amount and the type of words). All the words within the game are programmed into something called a 'Vocabulary table'. The table is split into sub-tables and these sub-tables represent the word classifications that words come under. Examples of these would be 'Nouns', 'Verbs', 'Adjectives', 'Pronouns', 'Prepositions', etc.

This is all done in programming language, though commercial software creators like the Graphic Adventure Creator have an easy to use vocabulary table, as it is already made for you and all you have to do is simply input the words to be used.

Some games allow you to take a look at some of the words that the game understands and to do this you use a command called 'VOCAB'. All the words that the game are not listed, just some to help you on your way. The rest you would have to find out for yourselves.

The fewer the words programmed the higher the likeliness of the game being less interactive, unfriendly and frustrating. The higher the number of words programmed, the more enjoyable the game will be.

AND FINALLY.....

Well that's the first part finished with, and I hope that you all found it an informative, entertaining read and look forward to the second part of the series, which I will start typing at the start of the New Year.

In the second part of the series I will be leaving the technical parts of adventure games and start actually playing them, and give you practical advice on what to do when encountering different obstacles and events. Fancy a sneak preview? OK

- \* The second part of the series I will be discussing how to create the best looking adventure map in town, with illustrations to show you exactly what it should look like (based on what I have done, of course)
- \* Discussing when it is best to save the game, and to explain the different types of save options.
- \* Giving you in-game practical advice on examining all manner of items and objects
- \* And... Well, you just have to keep an eye on Adventure Probe!

## A PRAYER sent in by Laurence Creighton

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Help me log on without fretting,  
Guide me as I'm internetting.  
Bless my down and uploading,  
Keep my browser from exploding,  
May my Web Site be protected,  
Let not my password be rejected.  
Keep my line connection clear,  
and Tech Support always near.

(Author unknown)

## CONFESSIONS OF A FAINT-HEARTED ADVENTURER by Roger Staff

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Right - I must come clean. For those of you into Usenet, I am the typical "lurker" – someone who is quite happy reading everyone else's efforts, and not bothering to contribute anything myself. However, Barbara's continued pleading, plus a massive pang of guilt on my part has produced my first ever article in over 20 years of on/off adventuring. (Well, there was one "wanted" advert in 1993 but that doesn't count...)

### The Early Years

I first encountered adventuring in the late seventies on an old Hewlett Packard mainframe, This was an adventure called "MMM" (Mystery Murder Mansion ?), which was essentially an adventure form of Cluedo – get the culprit along with the murder weapon in the murder location and you've solved the mystery – but like all good adventures it had lots of sub-plots including attempting to gain the favours of the mansion's maid (or butler, depending on your player's name!), and the Mole maze, something I had no idea how to tackle until years later when adventures for the Speccy and the Beeb became commonplace. It also had lots of magic words like HIWOM, WIMOX and others which could be read either as mirror images or upside down to give other words, and woe betide you if you read it wrong. Also, being a multi-user machine, lots of people could effectively play the same mystery against each other and against the clock. More lunch-hours were wasted (sorry-sorry-sorry, "spent" NOT "wasted") on MMM than I care to remember. Did it ever surface in micro or PC format?

"Time passes..." as it does in all good adventures, and come 1980 I shelled out for a BBC Micro and a subscription to "Micro User" (Does anyone remember the slanging matches between Micro User and Acorn User? – was never sure whether they were for real or just pretend). The one overwhelming reason for going for Micro User was the wonderful "Mad Hatter" adventure page. At this point, She Who Shares The Mortgage Payments enters the picture – she had never played an adventure in her life, but was hooked just from reading about them. Subsequently, she turned out to be very much an adventuring natural, until the early 90's when horse-ownership robbed the adventure world of one of its finest solvers. (If you think adventuring is time-consuming, try keeping a horse)

We decided that our first bit of software for the Beeb had to be an adventure, and on the Mad Hatter's recommendation, Level 9's "Lords of Time". We actually went and bought it from the Austins in person - they

were programming out of what I guess was Dad's garage about a mile down the road from us –our only-ever brush with fame. Let's face it, "Lords of Time" was, and still is, superb. In fact, we still regard Level 9 as best adventure writing team ever. We subsequently made the mistake of buying some of the official Acornsoft adventures – not a good move ..... (oops - hope I haven't trod on too many toes there)

### The Wildemess Years

Time passes ..... and a new job, on the road an awful lot, a new daughter, all conspired to consign the Beeb to a dusty attic. The PC appears on the scene, and suddenly everybody is buying them. Except me that is – mortgage, SWSTMP at home looking after the heir to the Staff millions, LandRover burning 12mpg, all thoughts of a PC out of the question. However, I keep up to date thumbing through the PC mags, and in the late 80's just happened to note on a software review page that the rights to Level 9 adventures had been bought up and they were being re-issued for the PC as trilogies. Still penniless, I filed it away for future reference.

### The Dawn of the PC Era

Time passes ..... The mists clear, and we are in 1992. SWSTMP is back at work during term time, the LandRover has been replaced by something eminently more sensible and cheap to run (but nowhere near as much fun!), and PC prices are continuing to drop. So, we plunged, and as with the Beeb, our first thought was "Where do we get the Level 9 stuff from?". Shock horror – nowhere to be found. After much searching, it appeared that the two companies that were putting out the trilogies (Mandarin and Firebird, I seem to remember) had gone belly-up, and nobody knew anything about adventures for the PC – it was all "shoot-em-up" stuff, and you got some very funny looks going into your local games shop and asking for "text adventures". So, we were stumped. Doom and gloom all round – not enough space in the spare bedroom for both the PC and the Beeb – PC had priority because of work use, therefore no adventures.

### Serendipity

Time passes ..... (a year in this case) and I am mooching around the local library (wonderful word, "mooch" – a very adventurey type of word) when I hit upon a slim tome called "Computer Adventure Games" by Bob Redrupp(?). I take it home out of nostalgia (nostalgia is a thing of the past), read it from cover to cover, and discover that Bob is in fact the Mad Hatter from the old Micro User days. "Aha" I think, "maybe he will have contacts where I can get PC adventures", and so write off to him. I get a very nice reply, but no specific sources of text adventures. However, he did mention

a mag called "Adventure Probe" edited by a certain Barbara Gibb that might be worth looking at..... Hence my only other contribution to Probe – a forlorn plea back in 1993 for anyone that could point me toward the Rainbird/Mandarin titles. A deafening silence followed. However, Barbara managed to sell me a subscription to Probe and I was bitten again. A magazine produced by, and for, like-minded people (even if I didn't understand a word of the "Personal" ads! – whatever happened to them?)

### The Later Years

Time passes..... Adventuring is very much on and off (for the first few years mostly off). My subscription to Probe never got renewed until the threatening letter arrived (only joking Barbara), and for a couple of years never got renewed at all. Got hold of the Adventure Game Toolkit and wrote absolutely nothing with it. However, 1998 saw a resurgence of enthusiasm with the purchase of the Spectrum emulator, the availability of the old stuff via the internet, and a dip into the strange world of Karen Tyers, who not only fielded a lot of stupid questions about the marvellous "Rhyme Cryme", but helped a so-called computer professional sort out a desperately unhappy config.sys, so that the Speccy emulator ran at more than one turn per minute. Planned to go to the convention twice, never got to either. Regretted it both times.

Retirement looms - 4 years for myself, or less if I can get a good deal! - and a similar timescale for She Who No Longer Has To Share The Mortgage Payments (we own it all at last!). This time, I really am determined to buckle down and go adventuring. But I do need help – please feel free to nag, either by e-mail or through the pages of Probe! There are so many other things to do, and adventuring takes a loooong time. We have this dream that come retirement, life will be a long succession of "W,N,N,E, get rope" etc. Reality will probably be different with the hundred and one other interests we have between us, but you've got to have a dream.....

## FAMOUS COMPUTER (MOSTLY) QUOTES

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"Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons."  
- Popular Mechanics, 1949

"I think there is a world market for maybe five computers."  
- Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943

(more next month)

## STREET NAMES by Frank Fridd

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Reading 'Beautiful Street Names' by Ken Webb set me thinking. What about some unusual street names in my part of the country, Kent. Then my brain, what little there is of it, continued with the theme, what about unusual place names in Kent and how they came to being. Some reasons are obvious but the others? Here are some names I have come across.

### Street names.

Gorse Mead	Ashford	Flood Lane	Faversham
New Rents		Tanners Street	
Rabbit Hole	Barham	Brewers Hill	Folkestone
Creve Coeur Close	Bearsted	Zig Zag Path	
Lilk Hill		Grassy Glade	Gillingham
Bridge Down	Bridge	Stream Lane	Hawkhurst
Beer Cart Lane	Canterbury	Knaves Acre	Headcorn
Duck Lane		Gallows Comer	Hythe
Iron Bar Lane		Grotto Hill	Margate
Lime Kiln Road		La Belle Alliance Court	Ramsgate
Tile Kiln Hill		Ocean View	
Turnagain Lane		Screaming Alley	
Via Romana	Chalk	Bath Hard	Rochester
Tar Path	Deal	Spring Hollow	St.Mary's Bay
Fishmonger's Lane	Dover	Mulberry Field	Sandwich
Green Meadows	Dymchurch	The Pantiles	Tunbridge
			Wells
The Plat	Edenbridge	Smugglers Way	Westgate-on-Sea
And lastly, my favourite name		Squeeze Gut Lane	Whitstable

### Place names

Allhallows	Old Wives Lees	Plucks Gutter
Cop Street	Otty Bottom	Plumpudding Island
Crabble	Paddlesworth	Shatterling
Hogs Bush	Pett Bottom	

A legend on how Squeeze Gut Alley got its name. The ends of the alley are quite wide and narrows to about three feet at the centre. Apparently a very fat man was trying to escape from the police and not knowing the area went into the alley, got stuck and had to be released by being pushed out by the police.

## CATS sent in by Dorothy Millard

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I thought you might enjoy the following written by my boss!

Recently my daughters 'found' a cat while walking home from the bus stop. Not being a cat lover I had to enforce strict rules for as long as the cat hung round:

Stray cats will not be fed.

Stray cats will not be fed anything except dry cat food moistened with a little milk.

Stray cats will not be fed anything except dry cat food moistened with warm milk, yummy treats and leftover fish scraps.

Stray cats will not be petted, played with or picked up and cuddled unnecessarily.

Stray cats that are petted, played with, picked up and cuddled will absolutely not be given a name.

Stray cats with or without a name will not be allowed inside the house at any time.

Stray cats allowed inside will not be permitted to jump up on or sharpen their claws on the furniture.

Stray cats will be permitted on furniture but must sharpen claws on new \$114.99 sisal rope scratching post with three perches.

Stray cats will sleep outside.

Stray cats will sleep in the garage.

Stray cats will sleep in the house, but not in our bed.

Stray cats will sleep in our bed, but not under the covers.

Stray cats will not play on the desk.

Stray cats will not play on the desk near the computer.

Stray cats are forbidden to walk on the computer keyboard on the desk when the human is using it.

Stray cats will not CJDJBEFUBEDBVKJB KNCX ZXMLNJNI

## **MORE REAL Qs AND As IN COURT** **sent in by Laurence Creighton**

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These are things people actually said in court, word for word, taken down and now published by court reporters who had the torment of staying calm while these exchanges were actually taking place:

Q: Do you know if your daughter has ever been involved in voodoo or the occult?

A: We both do.

Q: Voodoo?

A: We do.

Q: You do?

A: Yes, voodoo.

Q: Trooper, when you stopped the defendant, were your red and blue lights flashing?

A: Yes.

Q: Did the defendant say anything when she got out of her car?

A: Yes, sir.

Q: What did she say?

A: What disco am I at?

Q: Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

Q: The youngest son, the twenty-year old, how old is he?

Q: Were you present when your picture was taken?

Q: So the date of conception (of the baby) was August 8th?

A: Yes.

Q: And what were you doing at that time?

# MY PERSONALITY QUIZ

## by Mary Scott-Parker

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Dear Barbara - with reference to November's personality quiz, I was so shocked at the idea of someone not eating broccoli stalks that I felt I had to respond to some of the questions.

### LIVING ARRANGEMENTS?

1 husband of 33 years [time for a change...surely?], middle daughter lives in the upstairs granny flat, granny [my mother] is bed-ridden so lives with us too, and one largish ex-church organ [don't ask!] - my beloved 12 year-old German Shepherd dog was put to sleep last week - good start to the New Year!

### WHAT BOOK ARE YOU READING?

Stan Barstowe mode at the moment - just finished his A Kind of Loving trilogy and I'm currently reading his A Brother's Tale - as well as trying to write another local history book - the fourth to date.

### FAVOURITE MAGAZINE?

Don't read any.

### FAVOURITE SMELLS?

Fried bacon - sage and onion stuffing - Pears soap - new leather - the sea-weedy smell of the ocean - Escada [and lots of unidentified men's perfumes that I just get a whiff of in passing] - petrol - Jeye's Fluid - parafin...maybe I should quit while I'm ahead!

### FAVOURITE SOUNDS?

Waves breaking on a pebbly shore followed by that sucking sound and the pebbles rolling back [there's a perfect theatre-shaped pebbly beach in South Cumbria at St Bee's Head where each time a wave breaks and rolls back the sound is like a round of applause - truly remarkable] and the sound of a mountain brook gurgling over a rocky bed.

### ROLLER COASTER?

I loved them as a kid - but the last time was at Terre des Hommes [Man and his World as it became] in Montreal, and it really WAS terror des hommes! It was in the days when you weren't fastened in, just held on and prayed, and I really thought I wouldn't make it alive. I vowed [if I was spared] - NEVER again. I think I was in shock when I got off - I couldn't stop shaking.

#### FAVOURITE FOODS?

Funnily enough we agree on this one too. I just love fried bread and fried egg. When I was at junior school, the Education Dept had the use of two Youth Hostels in the Lake District, and to one of these our class went at about the age of ten, for a taste of the outdoor life. One meal I had never experienced before - beans on fried bread. I loved it so much that when I returned home it was requested at every meal time. I progressed to adding a fried egg and this is still a huge treat - only to be indulged in about once a year for obvious reasons. Also M&S custard in cartons [the cheaper one of the two] with cream - I can eat a whole one in a day so I have to avoid the custard aisle like the plague, unless it's my birthday, and prawns - with mayonnaise etc and scampi with tartare sauce.

#### FIRST CAR?

My first car was bought in about 1971 - a 2 yr-old white Mini with a full black sun-roof [the only one in Cumbria at the time, I think]. It had bags of oomph, lasted for years and I loved it. Second car was another Mini - brand new - metallic blue - and it was pathetic. Not a scrap of oomph even with the pedal flat to the floor [no, I wasn't pressing the brake] - and it rusted after two years. I said "no more Mini's" and the next few cars were Golf's and Audi's - no complaints! And no - I don't like travelling at high speed - either driving or being driven.

#### FAVOURITE ALCOHOLIC DRINK?

1 measure whisky - 1 measure Cointreau - splash or two of soda water - also I have a weakness for Bailey's [take 1 bottle of Bailey's.....]

#### ZODIAC SIGN?

Scorpio - Water sign - [the sex-obsessed demoralizer....moi?]

#### STEMS OF BROCCOLI?

Most definitely! I think they're the best bit. I buy the one with the biggest stem [without a hole through the middle] and cut it off to use in a stir-fry. Peel it, slice it and stir-fry with red peppers, onions, garlic, celery, mushrooms etc. Delicious - you don't know what you're missing. I like it just boiled or steamed with the tops too.

#### ANY JOB?

Yes, Controller of all TV Programmes sounds rather appealing - I would get rid of all sport for a start - a popular move I should think - except Wimbledon, that could stay. Australian soaps would be for the chop too, also tacky docu-soaps. Time Team would be on every day - why do I find it endlessly fascinating to watch a man with a trowel poking about among stones and finding nothing?

### DYE YOUR HAIR?

I already dye my hair blond in a pathetic attempt to stay young and sexy.

### FAVOURITE MOVIES?

The Wizard of Oz

Once Upon a Time in the West

Pretty Woman

Educating Rita

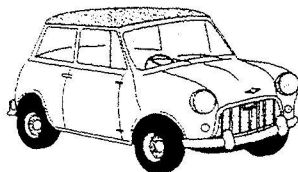
Your choice of movie made me smile Barbara - the daily journey to junior school took me down a main road and past a selection of bill-boards, just this side of an old railway bridge. One day a new poster appeared. It was a huge picture advertising the forthcoming attraction at the nearby Regal cinema - Don Siegel's Invasion of the Body Snatchers. It was a masterpiece of blatant persuasion - a monument to artistic licence. This colourful, graphic and almost criminally misleading scene depicted tiny terrified people, cowering beneath the impending threat of gigantic, green, magnificently bony, hands swooping from darkened skies like malignant eagles. I was instantly hooked. I was desperate to see this wonderful movie [which would undoubtedly have put me one up on the designer of the poster] and I cursed my lack of years. Daily the picture held me prisoner, while I stared at this tantalising scene - this locked gateway into another world. I vowed that the second I gained the magical age of admission I would rush to the cinema - never stopping to consider that after such a passage of time the film almost certainly wouldn't be around! Of course it wasn't and I didn't. But I never forgot that poster, in all its glorious, spine-chilling, Technicoloured splendour. Years later, I watched the film on TV and had I been admitted to the cinema at the age of ten, I would surely have died from the disappointment of a black and white movie about pods - and not one huge green hand in sight!

### CHOCOLATE OR VANILLA?

Chocolate.....AND vanilla.

### SLEEP WITH A STUFFED ANIMAL?

Not since I was about 5 [I still have it though] - but my daughter once dreamed she was pregnant and when she woke up found she was lying on her knitted teddy.



## HELP WANTED

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Does anyone know who wrote any of the following? If so, please email Dorothy Millard or contact the Probe office. Thank you.

### SPECTRUM

1. Adultia
2. Andromeda 3
3. Ankh-Morpork
4. Assault, The
5. Carl's Adventure
6. Chronicles of Yaw
7. Church of Lost Souls  
(aka Church of Death)
8. City of Death
9. Colditz Story, The
10. Crystals of Doom
11. Curse, The  
(at the start a cool evening wind blows)
12. Cyclop's Lair
13. Day Trip
14. Deadly Mission  
(Commences on scoutship Orion)
15. Devils Sceptre
16. Dining
17. Dollars in the Dust
18. Dagnet Case
19. Dun Durah
20. Escape from Time
21. Five Treasures of Ryuzar, The
22. Gauntlet of Meldir
23. Ghoul Manor
24. Giant Adventure
25. Go West Young Man
26. Gothic
27. Hewson's Quest
28. House of the Dead
29. Jason & The Golden Fleece
30. Jersey Quest
31. Jewel of Power
32. Journey, The  
(Start dawn and the birds are singing)
33. Kaa's Kingdom
34. Keeper, The
35. Key, The
36. King of Magic, A
37. Magic Circle, The
38. Malice (Start standing  
outside palace gates)
39. Manor Murder Case, The
40. Masterclass
41. Missile Command Base
42. Missing Panel, The
43. Murphy's Murder Hunt
44. Mystery
45. Mystery of Arkham Manor
46. Not Lord of the Rings
47. Operation Stallion
48. Pirate Gold
49. Ring of Dreams
50. Ring Quest (Start in the large  
entrance hall of an old castle)
51. Rings of Saturn, The
52. Sealed City, The'
53. Serpent's Eye
54. Spellcaster
55. Star Crash
56. Stranded (Set in Year 2020)
57. Stroll in the Bleak Forest
58. Survivor (Start in Attic)
59. Time Switch
60. Toot 'A' Come In
61. Tower of Depth
62. Tunnel Adventure  
(Search for the lost city of Kez)
63. Whistle
64. Yuppie

(next month - AMSTRAD)

## ADVENTURE PROBE SOFTWARE

### ADVENTURES FOR THE AMIGA AND AMIGA(e)

#### AMIGA

CLEAR-UP IN CLOGGIELAND by Harold Dixon	£2
EXPLORING ITMUS by Harold Dixon	£2

#### AMIGA under C64 emulation

THE GREAT AUSSIE ADVENTURE by Dorothy Millard	£2
THE DRAGON DIAMOND by Kenneth Pedersen	£2

#### AMIGA under Spectrum emulation

##### Single games

MAGICIAN'S APPRENTICE by Simon Avery	£2
A HERO FOR SORANIA by Doreen Bardon	£2
CASTLE WARLOCK by Ken Bond	£2
FELINE SLEEPY by Edwina Brown	£2
HIDE AND SEEK BY EDWINA BROWN	£2
TEN LITTLE ADVENTURERS by Edwina Brown	£2
WHERE IS ZEUS? by Frank Fridd	£2
SHIMMERIKIN by Christopher Hester	£2
DIE FEUERFAUST by Larry Horsfield (4 parts)	£2
MILLION DOLLAR GREAT JEWEL HEIST by Dorothy Millard	£2
TROUBLE AT BRIDGETON by Dorothy Millard	£2
BLACK KNIGHT by Mandy Rodrigues (2 parts)	£2
CASE OF THE MIXED-UP SHYMER by Sandra Sharkey	£2
CURSE OF NIMUE by Karen Tyers (2 parts)	£2
TEN GREEN BOTTLES by Karen Tyers	£2
THERE'S A HOLE IN YOUR BUCKET by Karen Tyers	£2

##### Larry Horsfield Collection

MAGNETIC MOON (3 parts)	
STARSHIP QUEST (3 parts)	
REVENGE OF THE SPACE PIRATES (2 parts)	
AXE OF KOLT (4 parts)	£7 (all 6 on 2 discs)
RUN, BRONWYNN, RUN (3 parts)	
SPECTRE OF CASTLE CORIS (2 parts)	

##### Walter Pooley Collection

CASTLE ADVENTURE	
DESERT ADVENTURE	
MANSION QUEST	£5 (all 5 on 1 disc)
MISSION X	
PYRAMID	

# WoW SOFTWARE/ADVENTURE PROBE SOFTWARE

**ADVENTURE FOR AMSTRAD, SPECTRUM, ATARI(®), AMIGA(®) and PC(®)**

## **FELINE SLEEPY** by Edwina Brown

Your name is Jenny and you are taking a holiday touring England. Suddenly, in a quiet country road a deer dashes across in front of you. Shaken, you pull into a layby to calm your nerves. You must have fallen asleep as a whole hour has passed. You decide to check into the next hotel, so start driving.

Before long you see a sign which reads "CATNIP HOTEL". Turning in through the gateway you draw up in front of some imposing steps. As you get out of the car a man-sized cat dressed in porter's uniform comes towards you. Touching his cap he says "Would madam like me to park her car?" You nod dumbly, hand him the keys and watch him drive away..... Why does C. Ustard give you a strange look? Can you discover the reason why so many guests are unhappy, and then solve a lot of tricky puzzles to make it a very happy ending to the day?

"Feline Sleepy" was originally released on the Spectrum plus Atari, Amiga and PC under Spectrum emulation. Now even more adventurers can enjoy the game, in which all the characters are cats, as Edwina has programmed it for the Amstrad.



£5 - Amstrad CPC6128 (3" disc)  
£2 - Spectrum (tape)  
£2 - Atari, Amiga and PC under Spectrum emulation  
(cheque or postal order payable to B. J. Gibb)

WoW Software / Adventure Probe  
52 Burford Road  
Liverpool  
L16 6AQ

EDWINA HAS KINDLY DONATED ALL PROCEEDS TO THE PROBE FUND

# **WoW SOFTWARE**

## **ADVENTURE FOR AMSTRAD and PC(e) (SPECTRUM VERSION AVAILABLE SOON)**

### **THE UNWANTED GIFT by Frank Fridd**

This 3-part text adventure, a sequel to "Where Is Zeus", is dedicated to the memory of Joan Pancott, founder of WoW Software. Without her commitment and enthusiasm to computer adventures of all kinds, especially Amstrad games, the world of fantasy would have been a poorer place.

Since rescuing Zeus from his prison in "Where Is Zeus", you have become rich and powerful. There is only one problem. Zeus, in gratitude, gave you one unfortunate gift, a rain cloud. Every time you go outside the cloud enthusiastically pours rain onto you. No one will come near you and you feel very lonely. You decide something must be done to get rid of the cloud, which you have called Horace, without offending Zeus.

This Amstrad version has been amended slightly so it can be played on the PC under Amstrad emulation. Although Amstrad players will need a special saved position to start part two, and a password to start part three, PC owners will need passwords for parts two and three.



Available for  
Amstrad CPC6128 - £5 on 3" disc - £2 on 3.5" disc  
PC under Amstrad emulation - £2  
(cheque/postal order payable to B.J.Gibb)  
from  
WoW Software  
52 Burford Road  
Liverpool L16 6AQ, U.K.

FRANK HAS KINDLY DONATED ALL PROCEEDS TO THE PROBE FUND

# ADVENTURE PROBE SOFTWARE

A TEXT ADVENTURE FOR THE PC

TO CATCH A RAINBOW ...or an Aussie Bushwalk.

by Lyn

It is a fine Saturday morning and you have decided to ride your bike to the nearby bush forest to observe the wildlife. Dismounting from your bike, you lean it against a notice by the bush track. Picking up a sturdy stick lying close by, you head along the track into the bush, when you hear a yell. It comes from the car park; you run back to see what all the commotion is about and find a small, dark-skinned man sitting on a log under the banksia trees, looking miserable as he rubs his ankle. He asks for your help, and then tells you a story.

"I was given a task to do for Mother Nature, but alas, I sprained my ankle and I can't continue. The Rainbow Bunyip has turned against us small people, and is destroying the rainbow, scattering all its colours around the countryside. If I don't find all the colours and put them back into the great crystal prism before the next shower, we will never see another rainbow again, please find them." He puts some stones into his dillybag and hands it to you, adding "You will need these."



You take the bag and sling it over your shoulder. "Here, take my stick," you reply, as you hand the sturdy stick to the little man." He says, "My name is Narkoor, It means 'gum tree' in my native language. What is yours?" "Oh mine," you reply, "it's Gillian. I don't think it means anything." You both laugh. Narkoor stands up. "Ouch, ow! I think I will get back if I take it slowly. Good luck, Gillian." He turns and hobbles slowly away along the track, out of the car park.....

Can you, as Gillian, find the seven colours and restore the rainbow?

Only £2.00 from

Adventure Probe, 52 Burford Road, Liverpool L16 6AQ

LYN HAS KINDLY DONATED ALL PROCEEDS TO THE PROBE FUND

## NEWSDESK

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Walter Pooley has found a source of Spectrum Spares including keyboard diaphragms. Their postal address is:

Trading Post  
Victoria Road  
Shifnal, Shropshire  
TF11 8AF

Tel. 01952 462135

The web site is:- <http://www.Tradeinpost.com>

## WEBSITES OF THE MONTH sent in by Chris Heppinstall

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I don't know if any of the following have been mentioned to you by Probers yet, but I haven't seen them in previous Probes.

Firstly, I stumbled across Scott Adams' site last week at:

**[www.msadams.com](http://www.msadams.com)**

He released in August 2000 a new game for the PC called Return to Pirate Island 2 - the sequel to one of his old classics. I haven't come across a demo/shareware version of it and - not really liking the old Scott Adams games enough to pay \$20 for the new one - haven't had a taste of what it is like.

I've also paid a little visit to:

**[www.realmyst.com](http://www.realmyst.com)**

This is the official web-site of the new version of the adventure game Myst. The old one was a "stand-and-spin" 360° game with a pre-rendered environment, whilst this one is more similar to the 3D shooters we get today - in that you can walk and turn freely, and it is generated in real-time. The basic game is identical, it is just the new 3D engine which is the difference between the two. The screenshots look amazing though, and I only wish my computer was faster so that I could play the downloadable demo.

## IN TOUCH

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Dot Healey says "Sad though it is I have the following for sale."

Spectrum 128, several keyboards, data sets, etc. books, (manuals, programming & information) plus loads of games (mostly oldie adventures)

C64 keyboards, cassettes, disc drive, printer, mouse, joysticks, all sorts of books, gadgets. includes 3 disk boxes (overfull) about 300+ and cassettes. includes wordprocessing, most board games, art programmes, back up and disk management, money managers and adventure writers and adventures. loads of spares as well.

I offer the above to the first sensible offer. I need the space and my husband is nagging because we cannot get into the spare room. each as complete package. no splitting.

Phone Dot after 7.00pm on 023 8036 0460

or e-mail me on [deeteegyptowl@aol.com](mailto:deeteegyptowl@aol.com)

## C.A.T. NEWS

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Phil Richmond emailed me to say he has added a new CAT game in the games download area on his page at:

<http://www.richmond62.freemove.co.uk/index.htm>

THE SANDS OF EGYPT by Ambrosine is a demo adventure written to test of the features and capabilities of CAT - the Creative Adventure Toolkit.

It is not a big game, more of a mini-adventure. It is fully solvable and save/load enabled. Beginners or experienced adventurers should have little trouble in completing the game. You simply have to find the burial chamber in the nearby pyramid, get the treasure, and make it out of the pyramid within 24 hours and time is ticking away as you sit and think! You score points for overcoming obstacles, solving problems, or making progress. A perfect score is 235 points.

Download (1.3Mb zipped) and enjoy. If you are not on the Internet, you can get a copy by sending a blank PC disc and return postage to the Probe office.

## OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

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### CRYSTAL OF KINGS Pt.2

**Played by Doreen Bardon on a PC under Spectrum emulation**

Carrot (in bushes)	Bait for catching a rabbit
Cow (in a field)	Lead it to a bull
Spade (in a field)	For digging
Vase (near tower)	For carrying water
Trough (in a field)	Full of drinking water
Rug (in tower)	Pull cord (thread)
Cushion (in tower)	Sit on it
Needle (in cushion)	See Thread
Thread (rug)	Mend windmill sails - need needle
Tied man (forest)	Release him
Coin (a gift)	Be generous in church
Rope (in forest)	For opening portcullis
Thirsty man (in keep)	Give water
Amulet (a gift)	Wear it
Meat (on a path)	Feed to monster in lake
Pitchfork (in cornfield)	Useful throwing weapon
Candle (on altar)	For sealing hole in boat
Cross (in church)	Hold to pass Elberack
Flask oil (in windmill)	Fill lantern
Bottle poison (in bench drawer)	Poison meat
Sack (scarecrow)	For carrying flour
Rags (scarecrow)	Plug hole in boat
Scythe (in garden)	For cutting ripe corn
Tinderbox (in boat)	To light candle/lantern
Shrubs (clearing)	For covering a hole
Lantern (on jetty)	Your light source
Rabbit (clearing)	Strangle it, give to witch
Wand (among some lead)	Wave to defeat Karma
Hammer (inside a bell)	Breaks a chest and grave lid, also kills a man
Sling (on a dead body)	See stone
Stone (in a grave)	Rid a man on river bank - need sling
Star (in a chest)	Insert into an indentation
Flour (from mill)	Throw over invisible stalker
Spear (secret room in temple)	To defeat Karma
Skeleton (in grave)	Ignore it, burn

Horn (in grave)	Blow for warriors
Book (in grave)	Read it for clues
Whistle (in witches hovel)	Blow for carpet
Carpet (in witches hovel)	Magic, fly on it
Dogs (circular room)	Leave them alone
Karma (room)	Defeat him to win
Warriors (grave yard)	Instruct them to fight army
Knapsack & 4 crystals (river bank)	Needed to raise warriors
Witch (hovel)	Give rabbit
Vark (an impostor)	In a copse
Priests (forest)	R.H.
Elberack (in forest)	Hold cross to pass

## TREASURE CHEST

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### **VALLEYMAZE ADVENTURE played by Dorothy Millard on a PC under C64 emulation**

1. Ostrich-Feather Cloak (in the chest in the forest).
2. Three-Legged Stool made By Chippendale, Haig, And Co. (in kitchen)
3. A Faded Envelope with a Penny Black stamp on it (in the mausoleum).
4. A Bent Platinum Teaspoon (in the remains of campfire in tunnel).
5. An Opal as Big as Your Fist (in the gully).
6. A Silver Dagger (under the skeleton).
7. A Hand-Written Musical Score of Beethoven's Symphony #10 (in the tidy parlour).
8. A Large Gold Nugget (dig in the mine under the castle) - unlike the one In Tunnelmaze this one is real.
9. A Brilliant Diamond (in one of the boulders when smashed).
10. A Solid Silver Pyramid (found after leaving gifts in the three shrines).

## GETTING YOU STARTED

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### **EXPLORER (aka EXPLORER 2) played by Bev Truter on a PC**

You begin EXPLORER on top of a Plateau, apparently with no way down. Get plant, X plant (it's very fragile), get parachute. Jump, open parachute, then Wait and Look until you glide gently to the ground on a Grassy Knoll, and the parachute disappears.

E, push button, E to a Platform where a tree sprite is busy gardening. Give plant to tree sprite, and he drops some planks on the floor. Get planks, W, push button, W, drop planks, W to a Forest Glade where you see a pair of lock cutters and a peculiar gnome who won't let you pass and is spoiling for a fight. Laugh at gnome until he disappears, then W, get stamp, X stamp, E-S-E to a Small Shop where you see a can of Dragon Repellent, a Magic Book and a Wooden Torch. X shop keeper - he is pasting stamps into a book - and talk to him until he mentions a rare stamp .....

### **GOLDEN APPLE played by Dorothy Millard on a PC(e) - also available on Spectrum and Amiga(e)**

(Start on a road near a mansion), E, E (wood), N, E (small tree), CLIMB TREE, GET AXE, D, W, S, E (heavy log), CHOP LOG (using axe), LOOK (see a silver bar and some planks), DROP AXE, GET BAR, GET PLANKS, W, W, W (near mansion), N (mansion grounds), E, N, E (greenhouse), GET SEEDS, GET CAN (watering), W, S, W, S, E, E, N (by stream), FILL CAN (with water), S, W, W, N, E, N (vegetable plot), PLANT SEEDS, WATER SEEDS (something is beginning to grow), LOOK (see carrots), GET CARROTS, S (flower garden), SMELL FLOWERS (they make you sneeze and you find a small key when you pull out your handkerchief), GET KEY, GET HANDKERCHIEF, W, W (gatehouse), GET MATCHES, PULL LEVER (it breaks), E, N (front porch), UNLOCK DOOR .....



## **HADES played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum and Amstrad**

Note : Although there are slight differences, the following seems to work for both computers. There are many traps, and red herrings. Carrying allowance, based on the weight of objects, is very limited.

You start on the west bank of the river Styx. I (carrying nothing, wearing a toga and pair of sandal). You can examine the bank and take obolos, but it will be stolen from you. Instead, go N, N, N (rocky bank), WAIT or L(ook) until some shades appear. X SHADES (see one is Hecate), TALK HECATE (says Pan can help you - note that a vortex has appeared to the north), N (now in Arcadia), N (you may find a bracelet here but it isn't needed), E (edge of wood), X WOOD, TAKE SHOES, X SHOES, N (there is a vase here but it isn't needed), E (tranquil part of wood), X WOOD, TAKE COINS, N, N (see Artemis swimming - do not do anything here), S, S, W, N (path in grass) .....

## **STILL LAUGHING AT MY CARDIGAN played by Bev Truter on a PC**

The aim of the game is to find another cardigan to wear, as aliens from outer space have vaporized the brand new cardigan your mum knitted for your birthday. Type HELP or HINT for clues during play, and remember that the policeman can be asked about various topics; eg: ask policeman about cardigan. It is necessary to TALK to everyone you meet, and to GIVE certain items to people you meet. You will also need to BUY things from some shops in the game. Talk to your grandma several times to find out what you have to do; also talk to your grandad and examine him.

Start at edge of village. X view for a clue, and look under the bushes here. Go to grandparents cottage and talk to granny several times, and grandpa. Open the fridge and cupboards in gran's kitchen - someone might like a cold drink. In the spare bedroom you'll need a key to unlock the wardrobe; also X bed, move it, and look under it.

Hiker: She's forgotten some camping equipment, perhaps you could help her. The dog belongs to her, and will leave with her. X flowers, search flowers, pick some for your gran. You will have to help the hiker out a second time, but in a different location.

Chessplayer: X his chess board, you may be able to help. When he moves off you can sit on the bench .....

## HINTS AND TIPS

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### **AURA-SCOPE (aka HORRORSCOPE) played on a Spectrum (128K) and PC(e)**

#### ARIES (horn)

Find Hercules (patch of weeds location) and SCRATCH BUM *three* times to obtain a rusty sword.

Go to the Building Site and pick up the bucket and tongs. Now go to the Abandoned Forge (from Building Site go NW, W and W) and TAKE EMBER then PUT EMBER IN BUCKET.

Now go to the Copse (SW and W from Haunted Crossroads), pick up the wood and go W to Ancient Pyre. Put the wood on the pyre, then light it with the ember - you now have temporary protection against the Galactic Fire. Go E, E and N into the Hearth of the Galactic Storm to get the Galactic Fire.

Return to the Abandoned Forge to change the Rusty Sword into a Trusty Sword.

Go to the Thorny Thicket and TRIM HORN of the Unicorn - need Trusty Sword.

Now go to the Lynx in the Large Cave (from Haunted Crossroads go NE, W, NW and GO IN) and give it the powdered horn - he tells you how to find the Chameleon.

As you have to cross the desert, ensure you fill the cup at the well - it can also be filled at the oasis, when you find it. Go E at the Oasis and examine the lowest branch and pick up the coconut. THROW COCONUT until the Chameleon falls out of the tree and turns you into a Mongoose.

Now go to the Clump of Grass where, disguised as a mongoose, it is now safe to pass the Serpent.

Rescue the Fledgling Eagle and take it to the Eagle's Nest (NE, E, NE, N, NE, NE, NW) and put it into the nest to be given a phial of cosmic antidote.

Give the cosmic antidote to the mother eagle who will take you to the Pinnacle where you will find the Horn, your objective. Blow it to be carried back.

**CASTLE BLACKSTAR played by Barbara Gibb on a PC(e)  
- also available on most other computers**

To escape from the Castle after all the usual exits have been closed, go to the top of a tower, and use the broomstick by SAYING ABRACADABRA. go U until you can TOUCH STARS.

Return the Orb to complete the adventure.

**CONFESSOR'S SAPPHIRE played by Barbara Gibb on an  
Amstrad**

You need the key from the forge fire to open the door in Martin Tower.

Make a rod and stick something sticky to the hook to get a pendant out of the well.

You can't retrace your steps from Martin Tower. Check the window and be patient - timing is important.

Remember the note found in the Inn? Make your way to the jetty and board the barge before it sails to end part one.

**GATEWAY TO KAROS played by Barbara Gibb on a BBC  
and PC(e)**

Top of Hill

See a stone with a "ring pull", so LIFT STONE WITH RING to reveal an ancient book. Do *not* pick up the book - you won't be allowed to get rid of it. Instead READ BOOK three times for hints (must be wearing the circlet).

How to Find the Cap of Gold Mesh

Go to the Grassy Riverbank (accessible by land or boat), then W and S to Stone Web - a small maze. Go N to find a wooden rod, then SW to return to the Edge of Stone Pillars. Go N, NE, S, E and IN the Black Grove (the place the ancient book warned you about) with no exits. Take the cap and WAVE ROD to be transported to the Stone Web - N and SW brings you back to the Edge of the Stone Pillars. The cap will make you invisible to the dragon, although not essential as there is a way of killing it.

**ECLIPSE played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum - also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)**

Go to the workshop and recharge the RCU several times during the game.

Examine the code book then read the telex for the blast-off code.

In the gym WEDGE the CLOSET door open with the wood found in the workshop.

You need the crowbar to PRY CUPBOARD open.

In the rock garden, dig using the spade - now you can allow the gardener to claim his spade in exchange for a battery. Also rake garden to find a piece of paper.

If you have a working torch you should find a pound coin and a computer disc in the cinema. Use the coin to buy the sandwich.

Read the journal in the library for a hint.

In the games room, dust the table with the feather duster.

Enter the sauna to lose weight - check your weight by STANDING on SCALES.

The message from an admirer is a clue to opening the red door leading into (and out of) the laboratory.

Before you board the spaceship, do what the graffiti advises, also ensure you repair your space helmet.

You need a prescription for vertigo so you don't get space-sick.

To read your ID number - go to the games room, examine the lamp (it is ultra-violet) and then examine your ID.

Insert the weight to balance the spaceship.

Repair the laser gun with the wire from the walkie-talkie.

When in space success is a question of timing - when the screen is in view, AIM and then FIRE the laser.

## **HEIST by Barbara Gibb played on a PC - also available on Amiga**

STUDENT'S PHOTOGRAPH (continued from last month)

### Information Superhighway

Pick up the can of paint and examine it. TURN RIM until it is the colour on the ID then TOUCH <shape> until it becomes the same as on the ID, now SPRAY <shape> and ENTER TUBES.

### Cubical Chamber

X BUST and then spray the eyes and hair to match your own. X SYMBOL (which will depict either Male or Female). If necessary, change it to female.

ENTER DOOR (back at End of Tunnel). Now go U and E to inside the Depository Building. SHOW ID and if you have done everything correctly you are now in an elevator/lift.

### Elevator

WAIT here until "nearly reached the vault floor" and SPRAY MANAGER (need aerosol spray you made in the factory). Pick up the gold key he dropped.

### Outer Vault

READ SIGN (note time indicated - I was told 6:46am)

X DOOR then X SLOT (singular) to find their position then X <?> SLOT to learn specific details of each. Now put each of the shapes you have collected into a slot - it is correct when the 000 number changes to match the other number. Get all 5 correct for the door to open.

### Inner Vault

Hatch - put the silver key in the left keyhole and the gold key in the right keyhole. Tie the cotton to each key then pull the cotton to open the hatch.

X HATCH to see a stopwatch, socket and lever.

X WATCH and PLUG TERMINAL INTO SOCKET and then PRESS SWITCH on terminal to enter a Virtual Plane.

### Virtual Maze

It is a digital time display. You have to change it to read the time on the sign. Touch the spheres to alternate between ON and OFF. Get it correct and the laser beams will be deactivated.

**MONSTER played by Barbara Gibb on a PC(e) - also available on Spectrum (128K)**

Take the wand to the wizard Tudaw who, using the staff you gave him earlier, charges it to its full strength. He also tells you your next task - find Prince Grott and return him to King Gruff of the ogres. He then gives you the wand. Examine it for clues.

To get the hammer from the blacksmith in Aurum - WAVE WAND and SAY "TRANS MOGRI OGRUS" to transform yourself into an ogre. This frightens him away leaving you to pick up the hammer.

As you look like an ogre you can visit the Ogre's Encampment. To get there from the Magic Circle, go south three times to reach the Poison Swamp, then go SW to get close to the encampment. (Pick up a reed while you are here.) Now go SW, S and W to enter Prince Grott's hovel. Find a crossbow. Find an empty hovel and sweep the straw (need broomstick) to find a diamond. Leave the encampment.

**SEASIDE SORCERY played on a PC(e) - also available on Spectrum, Atari(e) and Amiga(e)**

Go behind the theatre and WAIT if necessary to see a small boat approaching the pier and LOOK NORTH to see a rocky island in the middle of the bay.

Enter the theatre (dark unless you have the lit lantern) and go W to inside the cupboard. EXAM HOLES to get a view of the theatre and stage. WAIT patiently until a troll climbs onto the stage via the trapdoor. Continue to WAIT until the troll leaves the theatre. Now go through the trapdoor to see the boat moored at the pier. WAIT in the hold until the troll returns and rows to the island.

In the church, the troll will eventually eat the bleach-covered candy pebbles you should have given him. He will run into the woods, giving you a chance to GET TROPHIES FROM SACK (do *not* take the sack). Make sure the troll doesn't catch you on his way back to the rectory by waiting at the bottom of the bell tower.

Return to the boat and ROW BOAT TO BEACH.

Return the trophies to the Wizards to complete the adventure.

**OPPRESSED LAND played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum - also available on Atari(e), Amiga(e) and PC(e)**

Do not sit on the log until you have searched it.

After a while a Warlock will appear - give him the wand to be offered a flask of wine, take it.

On the farm track, ROLL ROCK for a piece to break off. You can now sharpen something.

Look under the bridge to find some wire.

When you try to cross the bridge a troll will jump out and demand payment. You don't have a gold coin, so kill him (need sharpened sword). Examine the troll to see he has some very sharp claws - CUT CLAWS - you can now cross the bridge.

In the stable - catch the dog and find a rope.

WEAR CLAWS in order to climb the cliff.

When you meet the villager who is looking for his dog, give it to him - your reward is a jug which you can give to the worker in the forge.

**TWIN KINGDOM VALLEY - available for most computers**

General hints

- 1) Don't fight till you've cured the giant.
- 2) Certain people have treasures - you have to locate them and kill them
  - a) The desert king has a crown - he walks in his palace
  - b) A guard with a bag of silver - walking in the desert's king palace
  - c) A guard with a bag of silver - walking in the desert's king palace
  - d) A sand lurker with a bag of silver - walking in the desert
  - e) A dwarf with a ring - walking down and east from the brass grate

## **WORLD (version 1.06) played by Bev Truter on PC**

### **MARTIAN WORLD**

#### **NIGHTTIME -**

Go to North of Building, i.e. the disco, and "shoot" - get photo of Martians and examine it. Go to Base of Tower, drop moss (and everything else you're holding or wearing), then "jump". Get diamond - it lands on the moss. If anything you dropped disappears you'll find it at the Dump the following day.

#### **DAYTIME -**

Outside disco "cut glass with diamond". South, stand on glass, then tie wire to knob. Take shortest route to South of Building and "touch dimple with wire" to unlock door. You only have 40 moves with both sphere and camera before the radiation from the sphere causes the camera to malfunction; so toddle off to south of the louver you broke and drop camera, then return to the Martian area for the sphere. You can get a rock from the Red Rocks area if you drop everything, so use the rock to get puck from centre of Bowl by standing on a higher lip and "throw rock in bowl".

#### **IN CAVE -**

UNDERGROUND Return to the dark cave with the sphere (light source) and camera. Save a game here, map the maze (sorreee!), then restore and race around to take 2 more photos before trying anything else. Oh all right then, here's the maze moves, at the end of this section.

FERRET HOME - shoot, get photo of family.

ARTIST'S CAVERN -shoot, get photo of paintings.

SCULPTOR'S STUDIO - drop seed and get statue.

FERRET NURSERY - "look in house". Eat egg to get coin. Get mushroom (food) and gold nugget (swim in pool).

HALL to PAINTINGS: NE, SE, U, D.

PAINTINGS to STATUE: U, N, NE, W, N.

STATUE to HALL: S, W, N, U, U, S, SW.

## SOLUTIONS OF THE MONTH

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### **BY JOVE**

**Written by Neil Mallet**

**Solution by Barbara Gibb on a C64**

Start in a room, not the one you went to sleep in last night! I (nothing), EXAM RECORD and TAKE RECORD (seems to be stuck in mid-air -come back for it later), EXAM DOOR, EXAM LABEL (door is voice-activated), SAY OPEN and go W, W, W, S, W and S (hydroponics centre). EXAM PLANTS and TAKE FLOWER.

N, E, N, N, N, N, E, S (teleporter room), EXAM TELEPORTER, ENTER TELEPORTER (you teleport to the start location and bump into the record, knocking it off the invisible teleporter. TAKE RECORD, SAY OPEN, W, W, S, SAY OPEN, E (sleeping quarters), EXAM GRAMOPHONE, PUT RECORD ON GRAMOPHONE (lots of loud noises!), PUT FLOWERS ON TABLE (falls off and changes into something else), TAKE PLASNET, EXAM PLASNET (attracts plastic).

SAY OPEN, W, EXAM MACHINE, EXAM DISPLAY, PRESS BUTTON (now have a bottle of vodka), N, W, N, N, N, W, W, SAY OPEN, W (shuttle bay), EXAM CRATE, OPEN CRATE and TAKE SEED, SAY OPEN, E, E, N (observatory), EXAM PANEL (see switch), FLICK SWITCH (dish outside is now pointing to Earth).

S, E, N, N (medical room), OPEN CABINET, LOOK IN CABINET, TAKE nurses UNIFORM, S, S, S, S, SAY HELLO, GIVE UNIFORM TO MAN, TAKE pressure SUIT, S, S, S, PRESS BUTTON, (in airlock), WEAR SUIT, EXAM BUTTONS, PRESS RIGHT BUTTON, S, S, E (near crater), EXAM DUST and TAKE BOX, EXAM BOX, READ INSTRUCTIONS, W, W, U (top of tower), EXAM DISH, LOOK IN DISH (only if you have pointed it towards Earth - see plastic pass card), TAKE CARD WITH PLASNET, DROP PLASNET, D, E, N (outside airlock), PRESS BUTTON, N, PRESS LEFT BUTTON, N, DROP SUIT, N, W, EXAM WORKBENCH, EXAM DUST, E, N, EXAM POSTER, TAKE POSTER, LOOK BEHIND POSTER (now have computer disk), N, N, W (recreation area), EXAM PARROT, EMPTY VODKA ON SEED, DROP SEED (parrot flies down, eats it and returns to perch, It gives you a password before it passes out).

E, N, EXAM COMPUTER, PUT DISK IN SLOT, EXAM MONITOR, TYPE BARNARD (note number), TYPE EXIT, N. PUT CARD IN SLOT, E (atomic research lab), EXAM ACCELERATOR, EXAM HOLE.

OPEN BOX (you have 15 seconds to escape), PUT BOX IN HOLE, SAY OPEN and go W, S, E, E, EXAM DOOR, TYPE 2605 (door opens), E, EXAM PODS, ENTER POD....

#### FINAL MESSAGE

The pod closes and you enter suspended animation before being ejected into orbit around Jupiter. The pod's distress beacon starts emitting though whether you get picked up or not depends on who, or what, happens to be in the area. You could be there for ages, but then what's another 125 years.....?

## **A SPELL OF CHRISTMAS ICE**

**Written by Mike Turner**

**(Star Dreams in association with 16/48 Magazine)**

**Walk Through by Dorothy Millard (Spectrum Version)**

### Scenario

There is trouble at the North Pole. The wicked ice witch has cast spell on Santa Claus to prevent him delivering the presents for Christmas Day. You are taken to the North Pole and must find way to reverse the magic.

### Walk Through

(Start with snow all around), N (crossroads), E (outside Santa Claus' grotto), ENTER CAVE (to gnomes' workshop), S (storeroom), GET TORCH, N, E (despatch shed), GET KEY, W, W, W (back to crossroads), W (slippery path), W (outside a dark cave), ENTER CAVE (hall of the ice witch – don't wake the cat), OPEN TRAPDOOR (you unlock it with the key and see a stone staircase going down), ON TORCH, D (witches' cellar), GET WAND, GET BOOK (of spells – leave the stuffed crocodile), U, DROP TORCH, GET HAT (witches'), WEAR HAT, S.

E, E (crossroads), N (a sign tells you that the North Pole is closed to tourists out of season), S, E, ENTER CAVE (gnomes' workshop), N (Santa's great hall where you see Santa Claus and his gnomes frozen into giant blocks of ice), READ BOOK (must be wearing the hat and carrying the wand and spell book - there is a big flash of coloured smoke and the ice blocks around Santa and his helpers vanish... he thanks you and says that you must have been clever to reverse the ice witch's magic).

THE END

# SERIALIZED SOLUTION

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## **SCAPEGHOST**

**Written by Sandra Sharkey, Pete Gerrard & Pete Austin  
1989 (Level 9)**

**Walk Through by Dorothy Millard on a C64 Version also  
available for most other computers including PC**

## **PART 2 - HAUNTED HOUSE**

### Notes

1. In this part you can PUSH, COOL or BLOW things.
2. Evidence: Map, ID card, bookmark, briefcase and paper.
3. CONCENTRATE in various locations to gain extra clues.

(Start by your grave and must find the gang's hideout), FIND JOE (he says you'll soon be able to heat, cool and reach through solid objects... he offers to follow you to help find the crooks), RUN TO VILLAGE GREEN, WAIT (until you see pale headlights approaching), S, N (you should see the red tail lights of a car that has passed), N (across the green), N, N (front garden - as you approach the house you see images of many figures... Joe says if you concentrate in various locations you can see what happened), CONCENTRATE (you visualise yourself leaving the house with something small in your hand and heading west into the herb garden), N (hallway), W (kitchen - you visualise Sarah), E (back to hallway), WAIT (you visualise yourself struggling with the crooks), WAIT (you visualise a body being dragged upstairs), E (lounge), WAIT, WAIT (you visualise a crook burning papers and one piece being carried up into the chimney), W (back to hallway - you visualise the crooks carrying your body outside through the front door).

OUT, W (herb garden), CONCENTRATE (you visualise yourself approaching), WAIT (you visualise yourself burying an identity card), DIG, GET ID CARD, E, IN (hall), DROP ID CARD, EXAMINE DIRECTORY (see a bookmark), EXAMINE BOOKMARK (it's an envelope which shows the postmark of the village near the crook's new hideout), JOE, WAIT THEN GET BOOKMARK, GET BOOKMARK (you pull it out), SCORE (380/1000), OUT, W (herb garden), EXAMINE WATER (see a branch), EXAMINE BRANCH (on it is a map), COOL WATER (it freezes), GET MAP, EXAMINE MAP (shows the gang's new hideout), E, IN (hallway), DROP MAP, SCORE (405/600).

E (into lounge), EXAMINE CHIMNEY (see a shaft), REACH INTO CHIMNEY (you brush against a piece of paper but can't quite reach... Joe suggests you try from the other side), W, OUT, E, EXAMINE IVY, PULL IVY (you put your hand through but can't find the paper), W, IN, E (lounge), JOE, WAIT 5 THEN REACH THROUGH WALL, W, OUT, E, WAIT, WAIT (until Joe's hand appears through the wall giving you the position), REACH INTO WALL (you dislodge the paper), W, IN, E (lounge), GET PAPER THEN EXAMINE IT (gives the names of the gang), W (hall), DROP PAPER, SCORE (430/600).

UP (the ghost of Luke attacks but Joe saves you... to go upstairs it is necessary to turn on the landing light but not the downstairs light), GET BULB (from lamp holder), DROP BULB, PUSH SWITCH (the landing light comes on and the ghost of Luke vanishes... however the upstairs light now prevents you going up), W (kitchen), GET BULB (the pearl one from the lamp holder), DROP BULB, GET FOIL, PUT FOIL IN HOLDER, PUSH SWITCH (you blow the main fuse and the lights go out), E, UP (landing), UP (into attic), CONCENTRATE, WAIT (until you visualise men carrying Luke's body to the attic), WAIT (until you visualise it being put into the water tank), EXAMINE TANK (you see a shape through the crack in the top), GET INSIDE TANK (you see Luke's dead body... you get out pushing aside the lid as you do), LOOK, GET PLUG, EXAMINE PLUG (a mains plug on the end of a long extension lead with a socket on one end).

RUN TO BATHROOM, EXAMINE MIRROR, THROW PLUG AT MIRROR (it smashes revealing a secret alcove containing a briefcase... Joe says we've collected enough evidence for the police), GET BRIEFCASE, OUT, D (hall), DROP BRIEFCASE, UP, IN (bathroom), GET PLUG, OUT, UP (attic), FREEZE PLUG TO BODY, D (landing), GET SOCKET, OPEN PANEL (clock), PUT SOCKET IN PANEL, CLOSE PANEL, PUSH CLOCK (it falls down the stairs dragging the body with it), D, W (kitchen), PUSH BOTTLE (of whisky - its vapours fill the room), LIGHT VAPOUR, BLOW CURTAINS (the fire takes hold), WAIT (the fire brigade arrive... they realise the dead man in the hall wasn't killed by the fire and they call the police), SCORE (600/600).

Next month - Part 3



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LAURENCE CREIGHTON - 603 Hillside Heights, Wessels Road, Green Point, 8005, South Africa

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

ZENOBI SOFTWARE - 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancs. OL12 7NX

## WEBSITES

Adventurers Convention - [www.adventureconvention.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.adventureconvention.fsnet.co.uk)

FSF - [www.fsf-adventures.ic24.net](http://www.fsf-adventures.ic24.net)

Creative Adventure Toolkit - [www.richmond62.freemove.co.uk](http://www.richmond62.freemove.co.uk)

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BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHTE (Spectrum and BBC)	01935 426174	Sun - Sat 10am - 10pm
STEVE CLAY (PAW and AMOS)	0151 2005861	Mon - Fri after 7pm Sun - any reasonable time
ISLA DONALDSON (Amstrad)	0141 9540602	Sun - Sat Noon -12pm
BARBARA GIBB (Various)	0151 280 5616	Afternoon and Evening
PHIL GLOVER (Sam Coupe)	0121 7777324	Mon - Thurs 6pm - 10pm Sun 11am - 5pm
SUE MEDLEY (Various - especially PC)	0181 302 6598	Any day 9am - 9pm
MANDY RODRIGUES (Various) (Mobile)	01492 877305 07776 413293	Mon - Fri 10am - 9pm
KAREN TYERS (Golden Oldies)	01347 838667	Mon - Fri 6pm - 11pm Sat - Sun Any reasonable time

## THE ULTIMATE INFOCOM HELPLINE

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

Call GRUE 01695 573141 - 7.30pm - 9pm Mon - Friday  
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64 County Road, Ormskirk, Lancs. L39 1QH

**MAKE SURE YOU TELEPHONE ONLY AT THE TIMES STATED  
PLEASE ENCLOSE AN S.A.E WHEN WRITING FOR HELP**

Some helpers also have an e-mail address -  
please check the previous page for details.