ADVENTURE PROBE

VOL IV ISSUE 5   MAY   1990

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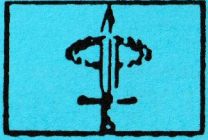
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Please send all correspondence, subscriptions etc to the Editor. All payments MUST be in pounds sterling. All cheques and postal orders should be crossed and made payable to Adventure Probe.

EDITOR: Mandy Rodrigues, 67 Lloyd Street, Llandudno, Gwynedd, LL30 2YP (If writing from overseas please add United Kingdom.)

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HALL OF FAME
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My sincere thanks to all the following readers who took the time and
trouble to send in contributions over the past month (ie. between 14th
March and 14th April):

Jim Struthers, Jack Higham, Lol Oakes, Keith Burnard, Tom Frost, John
Yates, The Grue!, Tony Melville, Brian Pell, Joan Williams, Lorna
Paterson, Ann Potter, Amanda Oliver, Nic Rumsey, Sharon Harwood, Neil
Shipman, George Kersey, Jim Donaldson, Angie Cobbold, The Wayfarer,
Ron Rainbird, Barbara Gibb, Gordon Inglis, Alan Davis, Bob Adams and
Sandra Sharkey.
A special thanks to Kez Gray for this months cover picture.
****

CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions are always needed and ALL readers are invited to send in
items for every section. Anything from a single hint or tip to a full
article are all very welcome. Reviews of the adventures you have
played are especially welcome. Please check first to see if a review
has already appeared. Don't worry if you cannot send items typed up
for inclusion in the magazine as handwritten items are just as
welcome. If you send in contributions for more than one section then
please make sure that you use different sheets for each and make sure
you include your name and computer. If you send in items ready typed
then please use A4 with a nice margin all round with text being approx
70 chars across and 60 lines per page. If you prefer to send items on
disc, I am able to print out from Amstrad 6128 (Tasword or Protext),
C64 (Easyscript or Mini Office II) or Atari ST (Firstword Plus). All
discs will be returned. If you send in ads for software for In-Touch
section please ensure that adventures, arcade, utilities etc are
clearly marked so purchasers know exactly which is which........Mandy

EDITORIAL

Welcome to Volume IV, Issue five of Adventure Probe.

Goodness me! how time flies. Two years ago this month I was waffling my way through my first editorial. It really doesn't seem that long ago does it? Which also reminds me to tell you that next month is Probe's FOURTH birthday! So we will try and celebrate next issue. And there is even more to celebrate! Congratulations and very best wishes to Paul Brunyee and Trudy who were married last week. We all wish you both every happiness for the future.

Last month I had a visit from Tom Frost and we spent a very enjoyable afternoon and evening chatting like old friends. Tom had fun answering the phone and giving everyone a surprise as they thought they had dialed the wrong number! It was great meeting another Probe reader. So far I have only had the pleasure of meeting Joy Birley, Jim O'Keeffe and Tom. Dicon Peeke and Jason Deane are long time friends as well as Probe readers and, as they live nearby we meet regularly. It was unfortunate that I couldn't go to the Bugblatter's Ball in Wigan where, I understand from my official Probe mole, that Pete Gerrard, Pat Winstanley, Sandra Sharkey, Janice Charnley, Jackie Wright, Lol Oakes, Jim O'Keeffe and The Grue! had a fantastic evening get-together (if I have missed anyone out then please forgive me). They plan to have more of them and, if they have an afternoon meeting, it will allow more of us to attend. They all survived the meeting with Grue! and a couple of the ladies who were there have expressed surprise that the Grue! was so good-looking! Dicon Peeke has been delving into an very ancient copy of Encyclopedia Frobozica and discovered that there is a legend that Grues are, in truth, sweet, cuddly, fluffy and kind and that they put the nasty rumours around to protect themselves from over-cuddling which can lead to overheating of Grues. This in turn can lead to a population explosion in the Grue caves. I dare say that our Grue! will make haste to put us right on the facts. This month sees the start of a serious series of articles by the Grue! (honestly, it really is serious. I didn't believe it either until I read it!) I am sure you will find it very interesting.

A special word of thanks must go to the members of Confidential Magazine, this month. They gave Probe great coverage throughout their magazine and this has led to loads of new subscribers joining us at Probe. John Trevillian is giving extensive coverage of 8-bit users and home produced adventures so, even if the Special Reserve no longer caters for your computer you can still join Confidential and find lots to interest you, it really is well worth a look. See centre pages of this issue for further details. Thanks also to all the other columnists, Mike, Pete, Keith, Balrog etc who kindly mention Probe in their respective magazines, it really is appreciated very much indeed. My thanks also to all who kindly send out Probe leaflets with their software and distribute them at every opportunity. So many of you work very hard behind the scenes and never get a word of thanks so it is about time you did. Thank you all.

Well, once again, I'm nearing the bottom of the page so I had better sign off. Just one last thing. The list of solutions available from Probe has now grown to FOUR pages and I will have to think of ways of including it in Probe in stages as it doesn't make very interesting reading does it? Meanwhile, if you want the full, updated list then just send me a S.A.E. I do hope you enjoy this issue and I will see you all again next month as usual.

Mandy

REVIEWS

CASTLE MASTER

By Incentive Software/New Dimension International Ltd, Zephyr One, Calleva Park, Aldermaston, Berkshire, RG7 4QW. For Amstrad CPC's, Spectrum and Commodore 64 on Cassette for £9.99 and on disc for £14.99. For Atari ST and Amiga at £24.99 and for PC at £29.99.

Reviewer - MANDY played on Amstrad 6128 and Atari ST

I was sent this new game for playtesting and, in normal circumstances wouldn't write a review but, as there were no bugs to be found and no comments or suggestions of mine used in the production of the game, I think it is safe to go ahead and give you my comments.

Incentive have used their 3D Freescape system to produce a game which, in my opinion, is more of an adventure than a strategy game. Set in an old Norman castle, this game gives you the opportunity to take on either the male or female role to save your twin who has been captured and imprisoned in one of the towers of the castle by the wicked demon-wizard Magister. To complete your task you must destroy the many evil spirits which inhabit the castle and to try and discover some vital keys which are needed to unlock ten doors in the castle. Treasure is also to be found and food and magic potions can be found to make life much easier.

In this new version of Freescape you can manipulate objects to a certain extent to examine, eat, pick up etc and there is plenty to keep you occupied for hours. Battling with the evil spirits is simply a case of a well aimed rock once you have got them in your sights. As the whole scenario is in solid 3D it is possible to walk all around objects and examine them from all angles and even to move over and under them. Looking underneath furniture often brings nice surprises. There are various modes to use such as run, walk, crawl etc and you are provided with a "spirit level" to see how well you are doing. Pressing the I key will take you into the save/load mode and also to identify which keys you have managed to collect so far.

There are many problems to be overcome too. For instance, how do you empty the pool in the hot baths, how do you get onto the chapel roof, how do you discover the entrance to the many secret rooms and where on earth is the last spirit to be destroyed? There are many, many more puzzles to be solved but I won't spoil your enjoyment by giving too much away. There are lots of cryptic hints to be found if you examine all the pictures carefully around the castle which will help you quite a bit, although I have to admit that some of the cryptic hints kept me puzzling far longer than the puzzle they were refering to!

In the Amstrad CPC version there are four floors to be explored including the catacombs, which are a puzzle in themselves, and I found

myself playing again and again to find more and more missed treasure
until I finally solved the puzzles and rescued my twin. Even played
on a green screen monitor was an enjoyable experience.

I then turned my attention to the 16 bit version of the game and this
was where I found that the Freescape system really came into its own.
The extra memory has been well utilised with hundreds of much more
intricate problems to be solved such as finding a way to get through
an elusive trapdoor to land on that strategically placed mattress,
finding the correct combination of buttons to be pressed to open a
path through a long passage, trying to get the timing just right to
avoid being crushed whilst going through the portcullis and through
the sliding doors and many, many more. In this version there is a
whole extra floor as well as many more rooms added to the existing
floors. The problems are tougher, probably because they are more
intricate and I have to say that this version really did give me more
entertainment.

I wasn't too impressed with my first sight of the game until I got
into the castle proper and started exploring but in no time I found
that I was completely hooked on the game and kept coming back for
more. It can be very addictive indeed. The game is very playable. Just
being able to climb onto convenient chairs to reach high shelves,
opening and exploring cupboards and crawling under furniture was very
satisfying in that 3D landscape. I honestly feel that, at last, the
Freescape system has been put to its very best use - in an adventure.

The price is, I feel, just a little high for this game but if you want
to spend some very pleasant hours of exploration and discovery then I
would suggest that you order your copy, I don't think you'll regret
it.

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THE HOUND OF SHADOW

Electronic Arts. Price around £24.99.

Reviewer - THE GRUE! played on Amiga

Set in England in the 20's and inspired by the works of H.P.Lovecraft,
you are guest at a mysterious seance. Six people surround the table, a
real mix of characters, one of them your host the Adept Karmi. Your
host begins his ritual for the start of the seance and then proceeds
to fall into some kind of trance you begin to think is all rather
false. You've seen it all before, choose an obvious victim from among
the guests, imitate a departed relative and they're laughing all the
way to the bank. Suddenly the Adept throws his head back, stiffens
and starts to sweat profusely, his eyes bulging and full of menace. He
looks at everyone seated around the table, pausing at you and then
turning to a young man seated nearby, proclaims "The Hound of Shadow
is upon you and you bear its mark". The Adept collapses in a heap on
the table and appears to be in a bad way, something is obviously
wrong. Jasmine, the maid, quickly ushers the guests out and you find
you have become involved in a mystery, one of the occult, demonic
possesion and other unmentionable horrors.

This is, I think, Electronic Arts first adventure and is a role-
playing game using the Timeline system. What makes this rather

different is that apart from choosing a pre-defined character or setting one up yourself, is that your character will be recognised by any future Timeline games and adapt itself to the character, each game becoming part of the characters history and personality. Unfortunately the role-playing element of the game is fairly weak, for if your character doesn't have the required trait needed for a certain problem the game automatically either adjusts or does it for you if you just wait a turn or two. I tried two pre-defined characters and one set up by myself, the game played almost identically no matter which I used.

The parser is also very poor because it seemed that it was only as long as my input contained the correct verb needed at that particular time that I was OK. One thing I did like about the parser was when communicating with others, no need to use inverted commas or specify who you wanted to talk to. All you had to do was ask in the normal manner... do you have his address, is quite acceptable for the game to understand what you mean. Also you will not need to wander around using N.S.E.W type of inputs, if you wish to go to a particular place you just use Go to British Museum or Go to 49A Museum Street. This works very well and speeds the gameplay up nicely.

What makes Hound of Shadow remarkable is the quality of the text and the immensly powerful atmosphere generated by the game. If you thought Infocom's Lurking Horror was frightening, the Hound of Shadow will soon have you sweating at your keyboard.

The game is played over a period of eight days by which time you should have gained enough information to confront and defeat this efil force, fail to do so and you will becomeyet another victim! The first two days don't cound for a great deal apart from gleening a basic background history about a strange occurence in San Fransisco which might be related to the Hound. Your computer friend suggests you might learn more from the British Museum and it is here that a large amound of the game is spent.

The pleasure I got researching various reference books in the reading room was amazing. A clue within one book led to another and so on. Eventually you learn of a huge black dog (obviously the Grue's) and the macabre events that happened at a place called Blythburgh. The accound of these events are vividly documented by the local priest at the time and as the story unfolds it becomes more and more chilling. You even manage to survive an attack from the Hound but take heed it is just a warning, it wants you to survive so you have time to think about the real horror... of knowing you're next!!!!

I felt at times that the game was too helpful to me and it really didn't allow the player to take enough control within the game. Hound of Shadow, for all its faults and that includes a very poor parser, is a game I enjoyed hugely. It is so atmospheric, allowing your imaginatioin to run riot. The writers have really done their research and it all adds to the authenticity of the game. They have also written a great story.

A very commendable first effort and with improvements to the parser etc, Electronic Arts could be a name on the lips of a lot more adventurers!

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STREET PATROLLER - THE REMIX
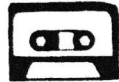
Central Computing, 61 Beech Road, Gillway, Tamworth, Staffs B79 8QQ

Available for the BBC Model B on cassette for £4.00

Reviewer - Neil Shipman

Simon Maren has been busy programming of late as, hot on the heels of
IT'S MAGIC, we're treated to STREET PATROLLER - THE REMIX. This is a
re-working of and vast improvement on the original version released
three years ago and, once again, Simon has done his usual clever job
of getting the utmost out of the Beeb's tiny memory capacity.

So, what's it all about? Well, in this text adventure you play the
part of Paul Grace, a young policeman whose promising career has been
blighted by his being accused of a crime he didn't commit. The
scenario is outlined in a small booklet which includes the playing
instructions and accompanies the game. What's happened is this:

Dressed in civvies, Paul was taken as a hostage by a gang of bank
robbers making their getaway. A photographer for the The Daily Gossip
snaps him before he's thrown out of the thieves' car and the local
rag loses no time in printing false accusations of Paul's complicity
in the raid. Knowing The Gossip's reputation as a scandal sheet,
Paul's superiors ignore its calls for charges to be pressed and are
content to conduct a "routine investigation". Then, in a violent and
bloody raid, the royal jewels are stolen. The paper puts two and two
together, comes up with anything but four, and prints a story under
the headline "Local Cop In Jewels Theft". This time Paul is suspended
- and this is where you come in. You have three weeks to prove your
(Paul's) innocence before the preliminary hearing.

When the game begins you are in your living room and you've not long
before you're carted off to the police station and have to hand over
your uniform. Then you can't do much for the rest of the day because
you haven't got any money, but this is the ideal opportunity to map
out most of the 70+ locations. Different places are accessible at
different times of day and I initially felt I wanted to see a display
of the time on the screen. Then I came across this fantastic
multipurpose robot which not only told the time and date but did a
number of other useful things too.

Once I'd managed to acquire some cash on the following day I was able
to buy loads of goodies and also recruit clever Trevor Dick, the
local Private Investigator, to help me. The adventure is peopled with
lots of other characters leading out their own lives as the days
progress. You can only react with or avoid them according to the time
and date, what you've got and where you are. Different weather
conditions have an effect too. This may seem pretty complicated at
first but becomes clearer the longer you continue playing.

With the story taking place over a three week period in May (and each
move only using up 5 minutes) you've a lot of time to fill. Waiting
around is, however, provided for by different ways of using the WAIT
command. WAIT followed by 20 to 55 advances time by that number of
minutes, while a number between 1 and 19 moves things on in hours.
WAIT UNTIL X (where X is a date like 14 MAY) takes you home,
automatically SLEEPs as required, and sets the time to 9 am on the
appropriate day.

This generally works extremely well, but do make sure that you pay close attention to the exits mentioned in the location descriptions because new ones may appear at certain times and dates. Be prepared to wander around, too, as the whereabouts of new locations are not always obvious. For example, after Trev had announced that he'd traced an illegal radio station it took me an awfully long time to find where it was - and when I did it was quite by chance!

When you get stuck you can always look at the very comprehensive hints program supplied on the flip side of the cassette. This is followed by a verb list which can be printed out - something I found only after I'd laboriously noted down all the recognised verbs as they scrolled across the adventure's loading screen! Then there are some adverts and a profile of the programmer himself.

The parser in STREET PATROLLER is up to Simon's usual high standards. Commands available include GET/DROP ALL or EVERYTHING EXCEPT a list of objects, RESCUE to get yourself out of a fix, and the recognition of IT as the last used noun. Several commands can be strung together, separated by a comma, full stop or THEN. Most words can be shortened to just 7 letters and there are the usual abbreviations for (L)ook and (R)epeat.

Interaction with people is achieved by ASK character FOR object or GIVE something TO him. Because of memory constraints there's no RAMSAVE, but that doesn't matter because you hardly ever get killed off. I actually found this encouraged me to explore further through the adventure even after I'd done something wrong. This, in turn, gave me a glimpse of some of the things that were going to happen later on which I needed to be prepared for.

The method of scoring is very novel, being based on a cricket match. You have to reach a fixed target to win, but you lose a wicket every time you do something silly or use RESCUE. Lose 10 wickets and the game's over. I found this particularly appropriate because, at the time I played the adventure, England were going great guns against the West Indies! The screen display was attractive, too, with a blank line being left before and after the input line which itself appears in green.

I felt that the logic behind one or two of the puzzles in the game was a bit "iffy" - e.g. why should I need a knife with which to cut a thread instead of the sword I'd already acquired? But that's just me being nit-picking. On the whole, STREET PATROLLER - THE REMIX is a well-planned, excellently programmed adventure and one which I enjoyed playing.

As we've come to expect in anything from Central Computing, Simon's quirky humour shows through, although I think this is probably his most "serious" offering to date. If you weren't one of the readers due to receive a free copy then it's worth sending off for. This looks like being Simon's last one for the Beeb - but watch out C64 owners because he plans (threatens?!) to start programming for you!

:::
ALSO AVAILABLE from CENTRAL COMPUTING for the BBC Model B on cassette
        Street Patroller - The Original £1.99
        The Mystery Of The Lost Sheep £2.50
        It's Magic £2.50
:::

THE CASE OF THE BEHEADED SMUGGLER

Zenobi Software, 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancs, OL12 7NX
For Spectrum 48/128K on cassette priced at £2.99
Reviewer - BARBARA GIBB

In this two part text-only adventure you play Sherlock Holmes, the world's greatest detective. He is accompanied by his friend, Doctor Watson. One day in January 1899 they had a visit from a Victor Wathley who is worried about his uncle, George Wathley, a tea-importer who has been smuggling various goods into the country, concealed in the tea-chests. Although Victor is upset about the reason for this, it seems his main concern is that for the last few weeks his uncle has remained in his country house. When his nephew visited him he was told to mind his own business, and was pushed outside, an action that caused a crumpled note to fall from his pocket. Victor retrieved it; it read "Remember Johnson, you will get the same - signed F.O.S."
Holmes says he remembers that a Nathaniel Johnson, who owned a tea-parlour, had been decapitated and dumped outside his house, a note with 2 crossed swords drawn on it was pinned to the body; the murder is still unsolved. He explains to Watson that F.O.S. stands for "Fellowship of Swords" and thinks Victor has every reason to fear for his uncle's life. Holmes agrees to help Victor.

They travel by carriage then train to the country station of Horsham where Victor is waiting for them. Together they walk the short distance to the house. From the large gates a gravel path leads to the front entrance which is around the corner of the building. As they approach the corner their eyes fall on a gruesome sight. There, in a scarlet pool of blood, lay George Wathley, his decapitated head lying beside the body. Your aim is to discover the motive and murder weapon, and accuse the killer or killers.

Part 1 of the adventure starts with Holmes, Watson and Victor Wathley looking down at the sickening sight of the decapitated body. A layer of snow covers the trees, lawns and path, and the house has the usual upstairs and downstairs rooms, also a secret room and a cellar if you can find the entrances. You will have to search everywhere and everything for evidence.
Some inputs have to be exact and in particular instances may give rise to gnashing of teeth, but by the time you are ready to start part 2 you should be accustomed to the style of inputs required. You can TALK TO (character's name), QUESTION (char.name) for information, also EXAMINE (char.name) to ascertain their appearance, and the only playing hint I will give is start with Victor as he has some important information. Some clues are in full view, and of course some are hidden, so EXAMine (everything) LOOK IN (object) are necessary. In part 1 only, you can even ask a companion to FIND (char.name) although I admit I was never successful with this input.

Part 2 starts outside your (Holmes's) residence. From here you can HAIL CAB, but must know what to say to the Cabbie - your adventuring in part 1 should have elicited a few addresses. It's difficult to describe part 2 without giving too much away, suffice to say you will visit interesting places and meet some unsavoury characters before being in a position to ACCUSE the murderer/murderers.

"Beheaded Smuggler" is written by Patrick Walsh using the P.A.W. and initially released last year, but now published by Zenobi Software with all the original mistakes corrected. An inpressive loading screen has been added. It's credited to Krazy Kez Gray but I know it was

greatly improved by John Wilson. Another improvement is that the introduction has now been printed as an accompanying leaflet instead of having to laboriously load and read it before loading in the actual adventure.

Patrick shows a good knowledge and understanding of the Conan Doyle stories, and in my opinion transfers the characters of Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson to the computer adventure more successfully than some other writers. Some of the responses are lengthy exchanges between Holmes and Watson, illustrating the impatience of Holmes and placid nature of Watson. The locations, as far as I know, are mostly original yet faithful to the period.
The character set is a clear, readable print with the top of the screen showing available exits and the time of day, which advances by one minute per input. To store and re-load to and from memory you can use RS and RL; for more permanent saves to tape use TS and TL, however as a concession to the "oldies" of us who are in the habit of expecting SAVE to be the standard command, you will be asked the unusual question TIME for the filename of the save to tape, but only in part one.

A detective story is probably the most difficult plot to translate into a computer adventure so all credit to Patrick for a thorough knowledge of his subject, although I think at least one assumption is a bit far-fetched. Nevertheless, a very interesting and enjoyable adventure to play.
==

DRAKKEN
Available for Amiga and Atari ST. Shop around for best prices.
Reviewer - BRIAN PELL played on Amiga

Fancy yourself as a St George and killing a few dragons? Well Drakken is the game for you. It is a role playing adventure which has Bloodwych at its knees. The realistic sound effects of birds and the roar of the winds echo around your room making you feel that you are really in the great out-doors. The graphics add to the feeling of realism too. Smooth and lifelike dragons make you really think they did exist and if they did exist you would expect that they would have looked, sounded and killed exactly like this and you do get killed with alarming regularity at first.
You can take your pick of male or female characters. I picked all male perhaps because I'm a male chavanist pig. I did have a look at the famale characters without their clothes and the scout was a very big girl. (Shame on you!..........Ed). Anyway, back to the game, the more you kill the more points you score and what do points make? Money, weapons and wagons which you can keep or sell at the weaponsmiths. The more points the higher you go up in magic too. You'll need spells to play the game and hit points to kill the many foes. The object of the game is to collect the eight gems and restore Drakken. Sounds easy, except the gems are held by the dragons and as they have hit points of around a hundred and your are at five you get fried more than a bag of chips! Fight on your own or with the help of your mates may seem old hat in RPG's but with Drakkens great programming you'll live and breathe, have nightmares of the mummies, fire, bats, desert women (who say "I love you" and then zap you to dust) to name a few.
Drakken is not a game to play in one night or for the weak-hearted. I liked Kult but this tops that and comes close second to Dungeon Master.
****

THE PUZZLED ADVENTURER
by
Alan Davis

On page 29 of Vol 4 Issue 2 of ADVENTURE PROBE, you'll find an interesting letter from Jim Struthers about the demise of Level 9. It's an interesting letter for several reasons, but one particular comment struck me very forcibly: Jim refers to "the main aim of the adventure ... which is solving puzzles."

Now Jim was actually referring to his dislike of "character interaction" at the time, but I don't want to get involved in that particular debate here. What I'm interested in is the statement that the main aim of adventuring is "solving puzzles". I think this bears looking at more closely, even though on the face of it it seems to be obviously true! After all, there's no doubt that we adventurers do, indeed, spend a great deal of our time solving puzzles. We seem to thrive on frustration, don't we? To an unbiased observer, puzzles would seem to be the adventurer's lifeblood, and to say that solving puzzles is the main aim of adventuring would seem fair enough. But IS it? Are we REALLY in it for the puzzles, over and above all else?

According to the gospel as passed down to us from guru Scott Adams, yes we are. And yet, somehow, somewhere along the line, I feel as if I was bamboozled or conditioned into swallowing this - because with hindsight I can see that for me it simply isn't true! Now I suspect that we all play adventures for different reasons, but even if you do think that the aim of adventuring is the solving of puzzles, see if you still think so when you've read what follows.

Think back to the very first few adventures you ever played, and try to remember what it was about them which had you hooked. My own first adventure was "The Hobbit", closely followed by Hewson's "Quest" and "Adventure 1" (a version of the original Crowther and Woods game). Now as it turns out, these three games are very different in their appeal - but they were the ones which got me hooked, and so it's worth looking at them in more detail, in turn. This is an unashamedly personal approach to take: I don't see any other way to make my point.

"The Hobbit" had a special appeal because I was already an admirer of the book - so as far as the plot and scenario were concerned I knew what to expect. I well remember the first hour or two of utter bewilderment, but it didn't take too long to make the necessary adjustment (there was an initial tendency to be too ambitious in one's dealings with Gandalf and Thorin) and from that point on the thrill of _participating_ took over. Yes of course the computerised Gandalf was exasperating. Yes the computerised Thorin was a moron. And no, they weren't even remotely adequate representations of the characters in the book - but it didn't seem to matter. I never saw the program as some sort of _substitute_ for the book - it was something _else_; something which ran parallel with the book, and drew on it for inspiration. I know that for some players the characters remained wooden, artificial dummies and the trick didn't work. All I can say is that for me it did. When I fought goblins in the caverns it seemed as though I was _really_ fighting goblins. When I jumped through the trapdoor onto the barrel there was a sort of breathless excitement about doing it! And what of the puzzles? Well there's the rub. There weren't many, they weren't

particularly difficult, and really they seemed irrelevant, more or less. They still do. The point of it all was simply to experience it, and when one game was finished the immediate urge was to "go out there again" to see what happened next time....

"Quest" was completely different. The problem here was basically one of mere survival. After a few preliminary explorings it soon became apparent that progress in the game was going to depend on the removal of various hostile creatures who guarded various routes and/or treasures. Puzzles, as such, were pretty scarce. The problem was one of discovering the rules that seemed to govern this vaguely surreal world, and then using them to advantage - but really the whole game was played in a rather mystified, baffled way - and right up to the end you didn't really know what on earth was supposed to be going on. Again, it was the _experience_ that counted. The odd puzzle just provided a refreshing change when it arose.

As for "Adventure 1" - well, everybody knows this in some version or other, and of course it has lots of puzzles. But when I think back now to the first few times I played it, I don't find myself thinking "what a great set of puzzles". No - I remember crawling along that tunnel _wondering what was going to happen next_. It was the exploring that counted. The puzzles just added to the tantalising prospect of further exploration by slowing you down, making you stop and study your surroundings carefully. I don't remember "Adventure 1" for its puzzles. I remember it as a terrific place to explore and fool around in.

So much for my introduction to adventuring. But as I played more and more adventures, it seemed that in most cases the puzzle was the thing that counted, and often little attempt was made to create an atmosphere that might make the adventure worthy of exploration. I remember exactly when things came to a head: Level 9's "Emerald Isle" was the culprit. I had been sitting at the keyboard playing it for several evenings; my eyes had been continually assaulted by the most dreadful graphics I'd ever seen; I'd produced a detailed map of a place that was so uninteresting that it was boring me to tears; and I had all these ridiculous objects, some of which I'd "solved", some of which I hadn't, but didn't really care about anyway. It was at this point that I realised that I was not involved in any sort of _adventure_ at all. I was simply the victim of a marketing exercise, in which a programmer had said "Hey look I'll make up this terribly boring place and take all these pointless objects and throw them up in the air and let them come down anywhere and then I'll sell this mess to people who are daft enough to want to sort it all out." I pulled the plug on the game for good.

There are hundreds of adventures of the "Emerald Isle" type, though I must say that "adventure" hardly seems an appropriate description of them. "Computer puzzles" is better. And if computer puzzles are what you want, then fine - no harm in that. But to say that puzzles are the main aim of adventuring is surely to put the cart before the horse. The aim of adventuring is surely to indulge in _adventure_: to explore strange and exciting new places; to do strange and exciting new things; to take risks and pursue lost causes against impossible odds; and even, now and then, to solve the odd puzzle. If you must......

THE ADVENTURE THAT GOT ME HOOKED
By HUGH WALKER

I became hooked on the idea of adventure before I ever saw one on a computer. I had wanted to try war-gaming but the one attempt was a bit of a disaster when this chap we knew came round with his boxed soldiers. After an hour of setting up it took about 10 minutes to prove that I was not a born dice-commander. Somehow it wasn't as much fun as it used to be back home, rolling marbles instead of dice to simulate cannon fire. We never did get round to arranging another session, nor that day out with the Sealed Knot.....!

Having dismissed war-gaming, I thought about role-playing and I bought a book called *"Dicing with Dragons"* by Ian Livingstone. There was a section on computer-gaming and I was intrigued. We had acquired a Spectrum, for the kids (of course) and I was still at that stage when one buys every magazine going plus any book with the word Spectrum on the cover. I bought one called *"Invent and write games on the Spectrum"* (or somesuch) by Noel Williams (who?) which turned out to be about Adventure games rather than space invaders. After typing in the listings AND "persuading" them to work (!) I wanted more ... so I bought the book which Tony Bridge wrote with Roy Carnell. Now Roy did the programming while Tony did the background to adventure, including a reference to Level 9's *"Dungeon Adventure"* which fascinated me, especially as it was not available in the shops in the Southeast - No! I don't know why either!

The problem with typing in listings is that the game presents little challenge once you start playing - even worse if you write the game yourself. My first, written in BASIC ran out of memory and never did get finished. However, what I did do was to write a random combat/treasure hunt game whose program was a confusing tangle of GOTO's and GOSUB's and for which ZX Computing Monthly were kind enough to pay £27.00 (for exclusive world rights, which sounds awfully posh!) I was very pleased indeed since I had never seen a computer until 6 months before. Looking back on it, my "Warlock" was a very environmentally friendly game because monsters never died but simply ran away when sufficiently scared. It wasn't through any high moral posturing, I had never heard of the Greens (other than the Spring variety) it just seemed a bit nicer and didn't upset the junior branch of the family so much if he didn't have to kill anything, although he didn't object to being killed himself. BUT I still wanted to write a proper adventure and so decided to BUY one but, being broke again, the cheapest in the shop was Pharoahs Tomb (£4.95)... inspite of which I bought another and struck gold with *"Colossal Adventure"* (Level 9) which gave me an address from which I could buy *"Dungeon Adventure"* by mail order and from this grew my friendship with Level 9. Finally I was in wherever they go for their holidays in heaven.

I did get around to writing a role-player, ie. combat plus puzzles, with the (then) compulsary 5 location, illogical maze at the start - this was called *"Hughberts Revenge"* and wasn't very good although the friends on whom I inflicted it were very polite about it. Hughbert is still alive and well and lives in the attic, having never quite made it into the big wide world outside and somehow, I don't think we'll ever see the ST version.

However, back to the plot! ... on the whole I think the nomination for the game which got me hooked must go to *"Dungeon Adventure"* but that for the PERSON who is most responsible for putting me into a position to be so hooked is Tony Bridge with a small token prize to Ian Livingstone for laying the ground bait.

WELCOME TO DUNGEON
By THE GRUE!

DUNGEON is a game of adventure, danger and low cunning. In it you will explore some of the most amazing territory ever seen by mortal man. Hardened adventurers have run screaming from the terror contained within. In Dungeon the intrepid explorer delves into the forgotten secrets of the lost labyrinth deep in the bowels of the earth, searching for vast treasures long hidden from prying eyes, treasures guarded by fearsome monsters and diabolical traps!

No DECsystem should be without one!

Dungeon was created at the Programming Technology Division of the MIT Laboratory for computer science by Tim Anderson, Marc Blank, Bruce Daniels and Dave Lebling. It was inspired by the adventure game of Crowther and Woods, and the Dungeon and Dragons game of Gygax and Arneson. The original version was written in MDL (alias MUDDLE). The current version was translated from MDL into Fortran IV by a somewhat paranoid DEC engineer who prefers to remain anonymous. On-line information may be obtained with the commands HELP and INFO.

Confused?? Well maybe not if any of the above names sound familiar to you. Dungeon was the original name for what is probably the most famous adventure game I can think of, ZORK. The above is the actual mainframe introduction for the now legendary Zork - but I'm getting a bit carried away, let's start at the very beginning...................

The beginning was really sometime in the '60's when DEC (Digital Equipment Corporation) created the PDP-10 computer. This computer became very popular at many research installations and had a huge amount of software written for it. At one of these research centres a place called the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the Artificial Intelligence Lab, an operating system called ITS (Incompatible Time-Sharing) was written for the PDP. ITS was designed to make software development easy, the designers of the system assumed, quite wrongly, that it would have a small friendly group of users, so they did not include any of the normal security features. About 1970 ARPAnet was invented, making it possible for researchers from all over the world to communicate with each other and to use each others machines. Access in those days was unrestricted, you could logon from any machine connected to the net or by knowing the appropriate phone number.

Budding hackers soon discovered this and a group of people at MIT were no exception. They also discovered that there were some computers at MIT with some great stuff on them and, best of all, no security. Also around this time a language called MUDDLE (MDL) was developed as a successor to LISP. It never really fully succeeded but at MIT's Dynamic Modelling Group it was to become quite popular. The Dynamic Modelling Group was responsible for some famous games in addition to its other accomplishments, the first was a multi player game called Maze. A person called Dave Lebling was chiefly responsible for the existance of this particular game. The next game was Trivia, unlike Maze this could be played by other network users on the ARPAnet. Someone called Marc Blanc wrote the second version of Trivia and Tim Anderson maintained it. Trivia was actually a real test of a database system the group used for a research project.

In 1977 the original ADVENTURE came out, Willie, Crowther was the

original author but Don Woods expanded greatly to it. At this time the only people who could play this game were computer researchers with access to ARPAnet. It eventually arrived at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The reaction to this game by the guys at MIT was going to change the face of computer games, especially Adventure games. Everybody at MIT spent a lot of time doing virtually nothing but trying to solve the ADVENTURE, a small group was also thinking how they could write something better. What most people don't realise is that although they thought themselves clever enough to write something better, they had to cheat to find out how to obtain the last point in ADVENTURE. Bruce Daniels examined the game with the aid of a machine-language debugger! Anyway, once the game had been solved the group were looking for more ways of having fun. Dave Lebling had written a command parser so Marc Blank and Tim Anderson took advantage of this to write a prototype, four roomed game. It contained, amongst other things, a Band, a Bandbox and a Peanut room. Dave played the game and soon realised it was awful! Marc, Bruce and Tim decided to write a real game.

They began by drawing some maps, inventing some problems etc. Bruce prefered design to implementation, plus he still had thoughts on graduating so it was left to Marc and Tim to start work on creating this new game. This was done as a midnight programming project and soon the first version of the game we know as Zork was under way. As for the name Zork, Infocom would have you believe that it was a nonsense work commonly used by the guys at MIT but they also would have you believe in an issue of MAD magazine back in 1954, the name Zork was used to describe a type of monster, a Slime-oozing, Knife-toothed Zork, to be precise.

Dave Lebling who was now back at MIT after an enforced vacation, mainly to recover from the shock of the four roomed prototype, discovered that Marc and Tim had a more-or-less working game on their hands. Zork at this stage contained most of the well known bits including the Thief, Cyclops, the dam, part of a forest and, of course, the house. They now had the basics and with their programming techniques it was easy to drop in new parsers which was their main problem for it was restricting the making of good problems and a poor parser wouldn't allow for a complicated solution. Nearly everyone involved at sometime tried their hand at writing a new parser. Marc eventually became obsessed with them, writing at least fifty of them. By now they had a game up and running and it didn't take long for people to find out that if they got into something called HOST 70 on the ARPAnet and ty ped in the magic word they could play a game, the

magic word, by the way, was MARC;ZORK.

Although by 1977 Zork was still fairly primitive it still had that unique falvour as seen in Zork I, the Flathead Dynasty was represented and the official currency was the Zorkmid and it was Bruce Daniels who was responsible for these. In fact most of the G.U.E. was based on whimsical and silly ideas, WHAT! how can a GRUE be a silly idea?! It seems that in those days if you wandered about in a dark place within the Dungeon the player fell into a bottomless pit, many of the users pointed out that a bottomless pit in an attic should be noticed from the ground floor of the house. It was at this point that Dave Lebling came up with the idea of Grues and he wrote the description of them.

In the living room the game had contained a copy of US News + Dungeon Report describing recent changes in the game. All changes in the game were credited, one issue of the report described Bruce spending weeks working to fill in all the bottomless pits in the dungeon. It was this act alon that forced packs of Grues to roam around the dungeon.

To be continued...

****

PERSONAL COLUMN

"Can I thank, through your pages, JASON DEANE for his generous, hand-written solution of the whole of The Fourth Protocol, and JOAN PANCOTT for her help in part 3 (Amstrad version)?"................LINDA FRIEND

"I would like to say a big thank-you to JOHN WILSON of Zenobi. Not only did he replace my copy of Secret of Little Hodcome by return post (after he couldn't find any fault with it), but when I still couldn't load it on my +3, he made me TWO copies from his, as well as sending TWO first class stamps to cover my postand AND allowing me 10% off my next purchase. Now that's what I call service!".........SHARON HARWOOD

****

ASK GRUE

Dear GRUE!
How come you know all the answers to Infocom games? I reckon you cheated and got lots of solutions. I reckon you got them from Mandy and she is frightened to tell. I reckon you've never solved a single one on your own. It wouldn't be so bad if you weren't so smug, frobing everyone in sight. I reckon you only got an Amiga to get bigger cheats, so Grue, if you're so clever how come it didn't occur to you that anyone with some common sense would find you out? Cheat!

Signed ANTCRUSHER

Dear Ant,
I reckon I'm too busy to answer your little problems, with opening all my mail full of solutions. As for Frobbing, do I detect a touch of jealousy? Well, let me assure you, you will never get one as you're not clever enough or funny enough!!!

Signed GRUE

(ASK GRUE is supposed to be lighthearted and funny. Neither Grue nor myself found this particular Ask Grue funny at all. Probe has earned a reputation as being one of the friendliest magazines around. Recently there has been a distinct trend in the opposite direction which I have had to take action to stop. Let's keep it friendly please.......Mandy)

GUESS WHO THIS IS?

WITH A DIFFERENCE!

This month Probe features not one, but FIVE faces for you to try and put names to. Just to make it even more interesting I have listed the names of the gentlemen featured as anagrams! First you should work out the names from the anagrams and then try and fit the names to the faces - couldn't be simpler. The prize for guessing the names correctly will be a copy of a brand new book entitled COMPUTER ADVENTURES - THE SECRET ART by Gill Williamson published by Amazon Systems RRP £7.95. (review of this book in next months Probe!). All correct (or the ones who get the MOST RIGHT!) entries will be put in the hat and one winner drawn out. Closing date for entries is 20th May 1990.

1. SIR SHERTECH.   2. SAM DOBBA.   3. JEFF MEEKIO.
4. WHAL HERGUK.   5. PHIL SLAPILLAN.

Face A is .... Face B is.........................

Face C is .... Face D is.........................

Face E is ....

DIARY OF AN HONEST ADVENTURER
By KEITH BURNARD

DAY 1   Right, I've loaded a new game and this time I will finish it without any help whatsoever. ALL BY MYSELF! So far so good, doing well. Only died twice but good old RAMSAVE.

DAY 2   Built a bridge and crossed a ravine. Pretty clever of me. Now what? Oh yes, I need a rope to reach a cave. Where is the rope?

DAY 3   Can't find the rope! Oh well, just one phone call to Doreen, "Hello, Doreen, I'm stuck, where's the blinking rope? Well, fancy that, I didn't look there. Thanks Doreen, Bye".

DAY 4   Got the rope and climbed up to the cave. Of course I've got a lamp, I'm not daft. Oh dear! How do I light it without matches?

DAY 5   Phoned Alf, "Where's the matches Alf? Well, I would never have thought they were there. Thanks Alf, be talking to you".

DAY 6   Got the matches and lit the lamp. Entered cave and met a monster. Wish I'd got a weapon. Never mind, good old RAMSAVE.

DAY 7   Found a sword and killed the monster. I'm getting brilliant! Went out the other side through passaage to a forest.

DAY 8   Doing great! arrived at a river, found a boat and some oars. Boarded boat and started to row then guess what? The boat started filling up with water! Yes, it had a hole in the bottom. Wonder why I didn't see it?

DAY 9   Can't find a bung for the hole anywhere. "Hello, Mandy, do you know where the bung is for the boat? It's WHERE? Fancy that, OK. Thanks Mandy, goodbye".

DAY 10 Found Bung! Plugged hole in boat and crossed river to safety and thus the end of the adventure. I've done it! What a lovely feeling. I had a little help but of course that doesn't count. I could have done it ALL BY MYSELF!

▪▪

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

"If I start mapping here, I'll have plenty of room...", but then, as we all know, "Adventuring is ... falling off the edge of the map!"

LINDA FRIEND

"Goodness this is an exciting game... can't remember when I last saved... must do it soon... I'll save just as soon as I've crossed this flimsy rope bridge..."

GRAHAM FORSTER

"Eeeek! I haven't much space on the disc. I'll just save over my last save, after all, I only ate the tasty packed lunch after that last save and that was sure to be the right thing to do."

MANDY

INTERESTING INVENTORIES!

Isn't it funny? I was thinking about the actual content of adventures and the items we carry around on our travels. For instance in EMERALD ISLE you can carry an anchor! Does anyone realise just how heavy an anchor is? BLACK KNIGHT also got me thinking, in this game you can carry a ladder. Can you imagine me going into the Manor in the village and climbing the stairs, searching the rooms and looking under the beds etc and all the while I am trying to guide a ladder around corners etc. I must have been knackered. Recently I was playing an adventure when I entered a room which had a body slumped on a chair. I examined the body, as we do. Search body and move body - you know, the things we adventurers normally do as a habit. Well about 20 locations later I found a gun and tried to pick it up. Back came the response YOU CAN'T CARRY ANY MORE! I took an inventory and guess what? For over three miles I had been lugging a corpse around, I ask you?! Yet we adventurers never worry about these little things do we? Solving puzzles, no matter how we go about it, is all we think about. The more we can carry the better. Strange, if all at once we find that we can carry a ladder, an anchor and a body it seems to make sense to us!

JIM STRUTHERS

I once had an adventure sent for review, which must remain nameless as the bugs were finally corrected and it now works perfectly, which gave me hours of fun. I soon came upon my first problem which was how to pass a nasty snake, lurking in the undergrowth and blocking progress. As you all know, it is when you get really stuck that you try all sorts of strange ideas (and usually discover a few bugs in the process) and in frustration I typed GET SNAKE. Back came the message OKAY and I checked my inventory and sure enough I was carrying the blessed thing without being bitten. So when I came across my next obstacle, an armed and dangerous terrorist, I tried the same thing ... and it worked again! It seemed that every time I came across any creature or object that prevented progress, instead of solving the problem, all I had to do was pick it up and carry on! Now I was REALLY having fun! The adventure didn't seem to have a limit on the amount of items that could be carried and, as the adventure was absolutely packed with creatures of all shapes and sizes and strange objects, you too would have laughed if you had seen the inventory of items that I ended up with. By the end of the game I was carting around a Viscious Serpent, an armed Terrorist, a caged lion, a bull, a goat, a dangerous panther, some climbing equipment, a parachute, a chair, a whip, a pair of wellies, a net, a feather, a mongoose, a crowbar, a bow, a white coat, a flute, a key, some water-wings, a fish, a crab, a hairdryer, a gun, some antidote, a camel, a nun, some scales, two babies, a deadly scorpion, an innkeeper, an archer, a ram, a huge boulder, a mud monster, a sleeping giant and a crystal bridge leading north!

MANDY

Some of you may recognise the game by the items listed in the inventory, (which has also, suddenly given me an idea for a future puzzle or competition!). Has anyone else any other INTERESTING INVENTORIES which they would like to share with us? Anything weird, wonderful or strange you have carried around recently? We are waiting to hear from you!...Mandy)

'Miser'

Down through the years one man's name has conjured up great visions of
cold-heartedness towards others and a flagrant disregard for the suffering
of fellow human-beings .... that man's name was EBENEZER SCROOGE.

A lonely and solitary figure of a man, he dwelt in his uncared-for house
surrounded by nothing more than memories and dust. With just the occasional
cry of .... "Humbug!" to rent the silence, he went about his daily life quite
unconcerned with the plight of others. That is, until the arrival of the
ghostly form of his late partner JACOB MARLEY at the foot of his bed one
dark and fateful morn. From then on, the man who was the epitome of meanness,
was to undergo a change of character the likes of which was never to be seen
again.

This is a 'lighthearted' tale of this man and of his endeavours to perform
something that was contrary to his beliefs ..... namely a 'GOOD DEED'. In
fact not just ONE good deed, but TWELVE of them!!!

Return with us now to those 'thrilling days of yester-year' and relive the
struggles of Scrooge as he sets about his task. A task, which in his own eyes,
was almost impossible. After all it is bad enough that he should have to perform
such deeds, but in order to do so he must first discover what the deeds actually
are and then how to perform them!

Zenobi Software

NOTES

To complete your task you must perform TWELVE good deeds, though these deeds may
be performed in any order that you so wish. Once you have done this, then it is
just a simple task of making your way to your newphew's house in order to finish
the game.

To learn of each and every good deed that must be performed just read all the text
carefully and question every person you encounter on your travels. To talk to such
people merely input TALK TO THE BUTCHER or TALK TO THE SHOPKEEPER or TALK TO TIM
and if they have something to discuss then they will allow themselves to be engaged
in conversation.

This game will accept all the standard commands such as LOOK UNDER THE BED and CLIMB
OVER THE FENCE as well as RAMSAVE and RAMLOAD ... use these last two to record a
game position to memory, though always use the standard SAVE and LOAD to make a more
permanent record to tape.

ADVENTURE

Atlas Adventure Software

PRESENTS

THE BLACK KNIGHT

A two part, text only adventure written by Mandy Rodrigues. Long ago
there was a beautiful and peaceful valley. One day, it was attacked by
the evil Black Knight and the inhabitants, loyal to their king, were
enslaved and imprisoned in the castle dungeons. Those who resisted
were destroyed. Only one man survived to take the news to the king.
After large forces, sent to free his subjects, have been repelled by
the Black Knight, the king calls upon you, his most trusted knight. He
hopes that single-handed, you may have a better chance of entering the
valley unseen, and getting into the castle. "..... this is a nice
adventure to play. The text is nicely written and quite descriptive."
Commodore User Review April '88. This adventure rated No1 for several
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ATALAN

Shipwrecked after a dreadful storm you wake to find yourself lying on
a sandy beach in the warm sunshine, washed ashore on a small island
thousands of miles away from civilisation. The storm has passed but
there is no sign of the ship or your crew-mates. There are many
obstacles before you on this strange island but one of the first
problems to overcome is how to get off the beach as it seems to be
completely enclosed by towering cliffs. This text adventure, written
by Mandy Rodrigues, is a traditional style adventure. There are lots
of problems to solve and many treasures to be discovered before you
can make good your escape.

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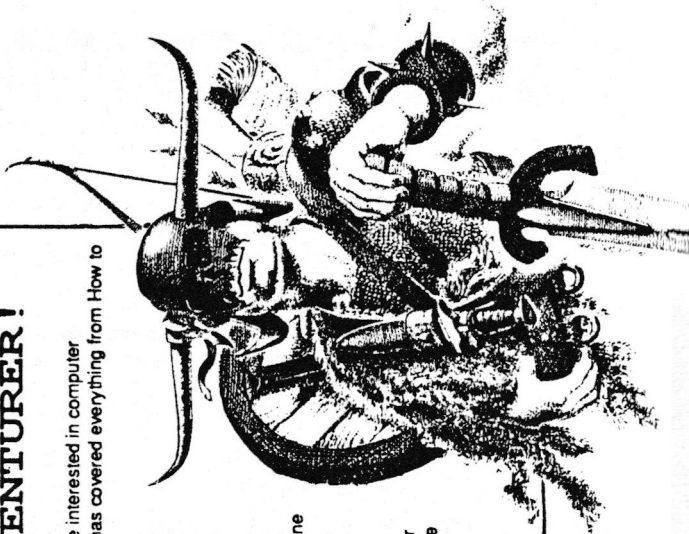Outside the U.K. please add one pound to cover additional postage.

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by Magnetic Scrolls
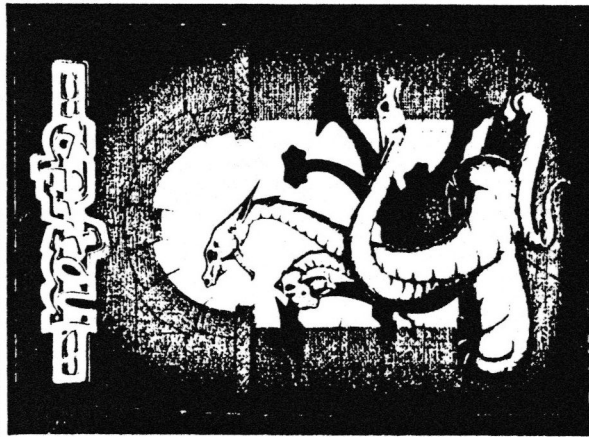
"*MYTH* is destined to become a classic!"
Rated 91% by Crash

"Don't be put off by it being a mini-adventure - it is about the same size as a 'full size' text adventure."
Rated 90% by Keith Campbell of Commodore User

"An excellent adventure... witty, cunning and just plain good fun! If you liked Fish! you'll probably like this, because they're similar in style: you may even prefer *MYTH*, it's that good!"
Rated 87% by Skippy Dunn of Amiga Format

"A worthy addition to your Magnetic Scrolls collection..."
Andy Moss of Commodore Computing International

ADVENTURING IN THE 1990's

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40 HARVEY GARDENS, CHARLTON, LONDON, SE7 8AJ

LETTERS

Many thanks for yet another great issue of Adventure Probe. I am glad you managed to get the photocopier sorted out, I was beginning to think my magazine had been sent to Timbuctoo! I don't think the Dispatches section was hard or opinionated, after all, if everyone agreed with one another then there would be no point in having a letters section - we'd all know what each other was thinking! I have had a reply from Activision which I've sent to you. It looks exactly the same letter they sent to Neil Shipman (February issue), but with the name changed. I recently phoned Mediagenic in the USA again to check up on what they're doing, and they confirmed that they weren't doing any Atari ST conversions of Infocom games. Thank you for printing my plea for help in tracking down the Zork posters, I have sent you a few stamps and envelopes in the hope that you will pass on any replies to me. I really wish I'd bought one when I had the chance... I'm always doing that, missing the boat and then going back later only to find its too late!

LIZ AHMEDZAI, Chatham, Kent.

Dear Ms Ahmedzai,
Thank you for your letter with regard to Atari ST version of Infocom titles. The Infocom product line is originated in the United States where the Atari ST installed base has not yet reached levels at which it would be targeted as a supported system in the development cycle. It is true that this is not the case in Europe at this time where the machine is commanding developer attention. As such it is receiving constant review and as and when sales projections on Infocom titles are of a consistent volume which means that the US development costs can be absorbed from an economical viewpoint then you will see Atari ST versions of Infocom programmes. In saying this there are no immediate plans at present but obviously should this change then we will make it known in the computer press. We appreciate your concern which moved you to write to us and it has not gone unnoticed and I hope that at some future date we will be able to consider you as a satisfied customer by providing you with the software of your choosing. Thank you for your interest in Infocom.

R.COUSENS, Vice President, Activision (UK) Ltd

(Thank you for sharing your correspondence re Infocom with us, Liz. I hope that, if sufficient numbers of readers write to Activision in this way that we will eventually get some results. As for the photocopier, well it did decide to act up again and is at present undergoing an overhaul. In the meantime Sharp have thoughtfully provided me with a substitute to keep me going but it isn't really working too well. I hope everyone will understand my difficulties until it is sorted out...Mandy)
==

Thank you for sending me my first issue of Probe. I can't tell you how wonderful it is to find a magazine devoted to Adventures! I'd been getting very worried recently on reading in some magazines that "the text adventure is dead!". I only discovered text adventures relatively recently (Level 9 - PRICE OF MAGIK) and was worried that, just as I got into playing them, they'd be impossible to get hold of. What a relief when I got Probe throught the post! For anyone out there playing SCAPEGHOST on Commodore 64 - if you get stuck on the shed lock problem and send off for the Level 9 hintsheet (shame on me!) - it's

wrong! You don't TURN BARREL you have to PUSH BARREL. Being a fairly
inexperienced adventurer I was stuck on this for ages. I rang Level 9
who gave me the telephone number of a very nice lady called Joan
(might she be Joan Pancott as mentioned in the Grue's letter (Jan
issue)? She said, during our chat, that she was disabled. I sat by my
C64 and we tried things out until Joan came up with PUSH BARREL. What
a relief! She also told me about Probe and gave me the address. Joan,
if you're reading this THANK YOU SO MUCH! I don't get as much time as
I'd like to play adventures what with home, work, wedding plans etc
but look forward to keeping up with what's going on with the aid of
Probe.

                    YVONNE COOPER, Harold Wood, Essex.

*(Thank you for the tip for Scapeghost, Yvonne. I'm sure that will help
to put some people out of their misery. Yes, it was our Joan Pancott
who came to the rescue. Don't worry about text adventures dwindling,
there are plenty in the pipeline at present.....................Mandy)*
===

Thanks for your help in Sorcerer. I had a Clayton's problem, it seems.
That's a problem that is not a problem - I just thought I had one! (If
you don't have Clayton's in the UK - it's a non-alcoholic beverage
marketed as "the drink you have when you're not having a drink" - The
term has become quite colloquial here). The commercial 8-bit adventure
scene seems to be taking a dive. We seem to depend on Level 9 and
Magnetic Scrolls to lead the way but the former has given up
adventures and I haven't heard anything from Magnetic Scrolls for
ages. Do you have any news on that front? If things keep going the
way they are I'll have to start writing adventures!!!

                    MAREE WALSHE, Victoria, Australia.

*(I understand that sales of Scapeghost have done rather well so far
and I, for one, am still keeping my fingers crossed that Level 9 will
change their minds about their 8-bit adventure plans if Scapeghost
does well for them. Things have been rather quiet at Magnetic Scrolls
but Gordon Inglis very kindly sent me the latest information from MS.
Good news, their new game WONDERLAND will be released in June. This is
based on Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland and can be played either
as a pure text adventure or with their new system called Magnetic
Windows. More news as it comes in. I haven't heard of "Clayton's
problem" - personally I usually suffer a chronic case of Murphy's
law!..Mandy)*
===

I do not have loads of spare time but I do enjoy reading your magazine
and the encouraging letters from the many other readers. I am
currently working my way through HOLLYWOOD HI-JINX with my wife. In
fact adventure games are about the only computer games that I have
managed to interest her in. Do you have an index of games reviewed in
the magazine over the past three and a half years worth of issues?
Perhaps it could be a subject suitable for inclusion in a future issue
assuming that you have not already done such a thing? With all this
talk about Level 9 deserting the adventure scene it set me to thinking
of whatever happened to some of the other companies that lead the way
in the early days such as Interceptor Micro's. Their JEWELS OF BABYLON
was our first encounter with adventure games and kept both of us
intrigued for weeks. We particularly liked the strong graphics from
Terry Greer and the consistency of the user interface due to the very

straight forward parser. For example, it was possible to "guess" words
that it might know simply by typing them in and it would honestly tell
you if it did not know the word. So, I would like to give a vote of
thanks to David Banner and Interceptor Micro's for their work back in
1984 and 1985 when they set the scene for me with their great
graphical adventures for the Amstrad CPC464.

ROY HARROW, Dorking, Surrey.

*(An index of reviews, hints etc covered in the first two volumes of
Probe was supplied with the December 1988 issue and the December 1989
issue contained an index for 1989. I hope to include an index at the
end of each year from now on so you don't have to wade through all the
back issues to find what you want..............Mandy)*
==

I really enjoyed the March issue of Probe. The piece by Bob "Amster"
Adams was a classic, the way he brought each character in was very
funny. I didn't know you had a taste for Ale? The piece about Jim
Struthers in reference to his escapade with the police in a back issue
was hilarious. Jim has helped me out a lot since I started
adventuring. I couldn't have asked for a better friend than he has
been. He has gone out of his way to help me and I would like to take
this opportunity to thank him. Are all adventurers like him, or have I
just been lucky? I must thank Joan Pancott too, as it was she who
recommended Probe to me. Hope you keep up the good work. I look
forward to the next issue.

JIM HAZLETT, Thornaby-on-Tees, Cleveland.

*(I'm afraid I don't have a taste for ale - I am one of those silly
people who go completely legless after just one glass of wine so I
usually stick to coke. My favourite piece in that particular article
was the bit about my ears, I thought it was hilarious........Mandy)*
==

After reading the March issue of Probe I once again feel the need to
put pen to paper. I don't believe a word of the story by Bob Adams,
what was it called again, "Dumpy Ralf and the landlord of the Rugs",
and who gave him permission to use my leg? I also feel the need to
ask a certain Probe reader, who shall remain nameless, even to me? to
refrain from sending me pictures of himself. Even though he tried his
best to disguise himself as Arthur Dent, I could see that he was
really ugly. Perhaps a Probe convention wouldn't be such a good idea,
especially if other Probe readers looked like him. I thought only a
Grue could be that ugly but I was wrong! (The Grue is produced on an
Etch-a-Sketch computer. The finished product is output on a granite
slab using a 24 pin Burin!).

THE GRUE! Ormskirk, West Lancs.

*(Grue! bites again! Actually, knowing the sender of the photographs, I
can say that if he removed his shades you would find he is not a bad
looking chap at all. I won't give away his identity, I will just give
him the nickname of Ed and say that he is a real Coder on the
Adventure scene!..Mandy)*
==

The Balrog's letter (the Bath one) in the March issue was interesting,
as it rekindled the memories I have of Scapeghost. That was the last

full price ST adventure I bought, so disgusted was I with it. The text
was very poor, the graphics kept repeating themselves and the puzzles
were too simple. I thought the humour was comparable to the Beno. As
you can see, I did not really enjoy this adventure. The Balrog also
mentioned about conversions of games. If any person owning a C64 or
CPC would like to contact me I would be pleased to give details as to
a conversion (I wrote the CASE OF THE BEHEADED SMUGGLER on Spectrum).
Returning to the ST, I have recently taken to searching out the old
Infocom titles, such as SUSPECT and MOONMIST. The current state of the
ST adventure market is not too good, if new titles are what one is
looking for. With a few exceptions, such as Hound of Shadow, the
market seems to have moved to the Sierra type games which, while
tending to be quite good, also tend to be very s-l-o-w. Give me the
old Infocom anytime!

PATRICK WALSH, 36 Verney Rd, Langley, Slough, Berks, SL3 8NX
===

Firstly I'd like to say how much I enjoy this magazine and what a lot
of interesting articles are contained in it, also very informative. My
own views on adventures are that anyone who spreads the good news,
whether it is a freebie contained on a cassette with other non-
adventures or reviews or word of mouth, can only be good in the long
run. We get two magazines, mine is YOUR SINCLAIR, my son gets CRASH,
but it's me who looks at the tape to see what's on it. I got through
part one of Karyssia in no time, so I imagine a few others must have
become aware of adventures through this source as I did with Ket. I
also think a convention for Probe readers would be great but distance
and commitments may prove problematic.

SHEILA SIMPSON, Redcar, Cleveland.
===

Being a fairly newcomer to computer adventuring I find your magazine
extremely interesting and informative and once having read my first
issue I was hooked for more. Keep 'em coming. I say newcomer to
adventuring, which I am, but I actually first did an adventure on my
erstwhile Vic 20 many moons ago and that was the famous Scott Adams
ADVENTURELAND on a plug-in ROM. I had never come across this kind of
game/pastime before and was instantly addicted to them. This was in
the days (as far as I know) that adventures such as THE HOBBIT,
VALHALLA and all the others, now familiar adventures had still to be
born. Anyway, I slowly but surely plodded my way through the game
getting frequently stuck (but there were no helplines then). We had
just formed our local (but short-lived) computer club in the local pub
and I used to take the adventure along with me when I was stuck and
crowds of us (middle-aged) pub-customers would gather round the Vic 20
trying to fathom out the mysteries set by Scott. One day we were stuck
on the crevisse where the bear will not let you get across and we
became so frustrated that someone typed in "Naughty and nasty
swearword the bear" and believe it or not, the message "the bear was
so amazed that he fell off the cliff" came back and we were able to
pass. Oh, those were the days! After having finished that one I tried
some of the other Scott Adams adventures for the Vic 20 such as
TREASURE ISLAND etc, but ADVENTURELAND was the one I'll never forget.
Following the demise of my Vic 20, I temporarily stopped computing as
it was taking up too much of my time. Last Christmas I bought a
Spectrum 128K computer for my young daughter - unfortunately it is a
Spectrum +2A - and following the disappointment of it not loading most
of the Spectrum software and getting absolutely no response from the

makers when I 'phoned to complain about it, I decided to enquire
locally if anyone had a second hand 48K Speccy for sale and I bought
one for £20. The keyboard wasn't working so I sent it away for repair
and had a new keypad membrane fitted and the computer returned - all
for only £14.95. Having got my daughter a fully working machine I
felt the pangs of remembrance of ADVENTURELAND days pulling, and
decided to take computer-playing up again myself and now use the
machine more than my daughter, often into the early hours!

                PETER HOLDSWORTH, Huddersfield, Yorks.
===

Thanks for the March issue of Probe. It doesn't take long to improve
things does it? It was more easily readable, enjoyable and the
responses to the letters much more friendly. I thought the quoted
passages from Skallagrigg were quite superb and I've immediately
ordered the book from my local bookshop. About the best written text
I've found in an adventure recently is in THE HOUND OF SHADOW. This is
an immaculately researched RPG and the screens of text are so
atmospheric that they can even make a Grue tremble - or so he tells
me! It fails rather badly as far as the parser is concerned though,
and it plays more like a straight adventure than a RPG. I loved
Antcrusher's Gruesome Blues and the funnies about the rainbow turtle.
From the TV listing for Tues 13th
March! A repeat showing of some of
the wild and wacky exploits of our
very own Grue in his younger days.
Enjoy the thrill of lurking with
this denizen of the darkness in the
caverns of the Great Underground
Empire. Slaver with him as he
sneaks up on his next luckless
victim. A must for all Infocom
fans. Don't miss the fourth
programme in which our teenage hero
rides his new motorbike straight
onto the stage of the Velvet
Underground's rock spectacular and
carries off the future Mrs Grue!
(Programmes are in Black and Black
only). This series follows hot on
the heels of a revealing interview

Time	Programme
4.15	**BEST FRIENDS**: Story, Part 2.
4.25	**THE NEW YOGI BEAR SHOW.**
4.35	**THE REALLY WILD SHOW (T):** A flea which jumps right out of the studio, an animal which lays 2,000 million eggs and a 14-day-old white rhino.
5.0	**NEWSROUND.**
5.5	**GRUEY**: Part 1 (rpt.).
5.35	**NEIGHBOURS (T)** (rpt.).
6.0	**NEWS; WEATHER.**
6.30	**REGIONAL NEWS MAGAZINES.**
7.0	**HOLIDAY 90 (T):** Robert Robinson sets off to the Hebrides, Phillip Schofield visits the French Alps and Bill Buckley takes a look at Copenhagen.
7.30	**EASTENDERS (T):** Phil Mitchell has his sights on Julie, but brother Grant seems to be one step ahead.

with the Grue of today in Confidential magazine, including a
previously unreleased photograph! Talk in adventuredom is that he's on
the verge of making a comeback after his brutal battle with self-
styled "Grueslayer" Entharion. Could we next be seeing our fiendish
friend on the box with his very own chat show? Gruegan? Saturday Night
Grue?

          From our Media Correspondent, Neil "The Frob" Shipman.
===

For a long time now, I have been just another silent subscriber to
Probe and thoroughly enjoyed reading it whilst contributing nothing
but my subscription. I decided long ago that it was time that I put
pen to paper and actually wrote something that was worthy of being
printed therefore helping to make up the magazine. Unfortunately, I
could never think of anything that could possibly be of interest to
anyone so I just sat back and developed a guilt complex about it. The
point is, whilst I can talk for hours about all aspects of

adventuring, I find it very difficult to put down in writing exactly what I mean. I suspect that there are many other subscribers who feel the same way so I'm speaking for them as well. It's not just because we're lazy or can't be bothered to make the effort, we're simply extremely boring people who are too thick to be able to express ourselves and also suffer from giant inferiority complexes. No, only kidding, but you do get my drift don't you? Thank goodness for the hard core of regular contributors whose names appear again and again in Probe, they are the people who keep the magazine going. Mind you, they are also the ones with the richest imaginations or perhaps a degree in English language! When you are faced with the wild imagination of the Grue or the clever wit of Bob Adams and his ilk, it is a daunting prospect for us mere mortals to try and match their writing skills. However, daunted or not, here goes.

First of all, what a superb Dispatches section in the March edition of Probe, for me, mainly the joy of seeing Hugh Walker in print again. I have followed his "creative writing for adventure fanzines" for many a year now, going back to R***r G****t's (who?) Guiding Light, through ACL and Oh! how I wish that I had his command of our language. I adore sarcasm and deem it the highest form of wit, not the lowest. Hugh so often writes exactly what I feel and expresses opinions (usually the same as mine) in the precise way that I would if I could but can't so for all our sakes Hugh - write on! Secondly, what a great event a Probe convention would be if only everyone could be pursuaded to show up. I for one would love to be able to put faces to the names that appear in the pages of Probe every month and some of the voices I hear on the phone. Maybe we could start by deciding where would be the best venue (Birmingham perhaps - being central) and then "Probites" who live in that area could suggest a suitable hostelry or suchlike place where we could meet. I don't know, maybe it's all a bit pie in the sky but I'm sure that if enough of us got our heads together and showed an interest, something could be organised. Thirdly, I have occasionally experienced the same loading problems as Frank Gray on my Spectrum 128K (see letter in March Probe). The way that I solved the problem was to make a copy of any game that wouldn't load. I have made copies both on the 128K or my old 48K, it doesn't seem to make any difference. I have always found that the copy would then load and run without any trouble. I haven't a clue why this works, I know nothing of the technicalities of these machines, I just know that it does. Try it Frank, it may work for you too.

Gosh, I have rabbited on a bit haven't I?! This is probably my debut and my swan-song all in one go but never mind, at least I've made some sort of an effort. Maybe some of you others of the silent majority out there will be inspired to jot down the odd words and submit them for our perusal. Let's hope so.

ANN POTTER, Crossens, Southport.

(Well, Ann, for someone who reckons that they have difficulty in writing down what they mean, you have certainly written a beautiful letter. I certainly hope it isn't your swan-song. I too hope that your letter will encourage other silent readers to put pen to paper and write in to Probe. Every reader is a part of Probe and their opinions are valued. I agree that at first it can be rather daunting to send in a letter or contribution but we would all love to hear from you. Don't be shy...Mandy)

****

Thanks for the latest Probe. I see that you have come in for a bit of stick over the letters page. The letters page of any magazine is a barometer of the success of the magazine in generating interest (though not necessarily its commercial success, for which see MicroAdventurer RIP). I, like the "small but very vocal group" felt that the new design was a mishmash of hard-to-decipher styles. I know my poor old eyes are beginning to give out, but the first rule of good design is restraint in choosing typefaces. You know you've done a good job when no-one notices your hard work!

As someone who has assiduously avoided reading countless dozens of those Copyright Notices included with every software package, The Grue's revelation that all those Infocom adventures in my collection are not, after all, mine to sell on when I've had enough of them (unlikely event) came as a bit of a surprise! I hesitate to condone law-breaking, but I imagine that selling your (genuine) old adventures is not going to bring the full weight of the US court system down on your head. I have to say, though, that Dave Havard's argument that it's somehow OK to copy deleted games is indefensible. I'd love a Bugatti Royale, but because they're not built anymore doesn't mean that I can happily go and steal one with a clear conscience. If an adventure is no longer available, and genuine copies are legally un-saleable, it would seem that your luck is not in the right quarter. If someone had finished with an adventure that I particularly needed to see, I'd ask them to let me have it on permanent loan (which doesn't seem to be covered in Infocom's Prohibitionary Caution) and accidentally drop a tenner in the envelope!

A pleasant surprise to see Alan Davis' letter - I haven't heard from him for a long while, though back in the Golden Age of Spectrum adventuring, the correspondence between Alan and The Elf fairly crackled through the Mail system. He was one of the true pioneers of adventurers, though, as so many others have found, there's many a slip 'twixt the writing of a brilliant program, and the selling of the same. Of the many casualties of the software business, he was one I missed more than most - it's good to know that he is still around. But Alan, do yourself a big favour and have a look at the 16-bit machines and see what you're obviously missing!

Almost finally, my grateful thanks go to Jason Deane for his Bloodwych series and his personal help with the Mirrorsoft adventure in which I've been struggling for many months, and having as much fun with it as DungeonMaster.

Finally (well almost), how depressing to read Linda Wright's letter of farewell. I hope that her unique touch with story-telling manages to survive the transition to PBM. And I have to endorse her remarks about Mike Gerrard's book on Spectrum adventuring - it's useful and although there's really nothing new, the sections on writing, selling, buying and playing adventures are made as interesting as only the best writer (currently, ahem!) on the subject can make them.

Finally (at last), I'm sorry to have missed the inaugural Bugblatter's Ball. Someone (or thing), who is at this moment, I hope, melting slowly into a great blob of smelly fat, took it into their brain (if such a thing exists) to remove my car from outside my house while I slept, blissfully ignoring the frenzied barking of the three dogs that I keep for just such an eventuality! As public transport remains an unknown entity to me, I am currently housebound until my car is returned (thankfully, it was found the very next morning, though unfortunately a little lighter). Maybe next year....?

TONY BRIDGE, address c/o Probe.
****

HELP WANTED

"I am playing the Spectrum 48K version of THE HERMITAGE which is a good game but I am stuck half way in part two. The part I am stuck on is where you go into a barn (after saying "John Gamon" to a man on the door) and a cockerel fight is going on. I can't seem to place a bet - maybe I'm getting the wording wrong. I've tried everything I can think of and the game crashed on me on one occasion. If someone can tell me what the proper command is I would be really grateful as I will then know if it is just my copy of the game that is "not right"."

TONY FLECK,178 Campden Hill Rd, Notting Hill, London W8 7AS
==

"I would be very grateful if someone could give me some help on SHARD OF INOVAR. I have got back across the mire a second time and invoked the Ritual of Release but what do I do now? I hope someone can help me. Also has anyone got any hints on WOLFMAN, KWAH and GRANGE HILL? If you have then please could you send some to me. Thank you."

AMANDA OLIVER, 7 The Hassocks, Waterlooville, Hants, PO7 8QQ
==

"We have read all the blurb in magazines about the SAM COUPE computer but that's not at all the same as hearing from someone who has "hands on" experience of a new model and it's a lot of money to spend in the hope that the computer will really do all the things the blurb says it will. So I wondered if you would be kind enough to appeal in Probe for a/any Sam Coupe owner/s to either write to me direct or send an article in for Probe about using this computer? An article would be nice as it would surely be of interest to any computer owner to know what a new model of computer is like to actually use."

JUNE ROWE, 46 Hurdon Way, Launceston, Cornwall, PL15 9HX

(I too think that an article on the Sam Coupe would be an excellent idea. Any Sam Coupe owners out there willing to help out?........Mandy)
****

IN-TOUCH

SOFTWARE FOR SALE

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RED MOON. ROBIN OF SHERWOOD. RIGELS REVENGE. MORDONS QUEST. SNOWBALL. RETURN TO EDEN. SHERLOCK. THE QUILL. Also SCRABBLE. MONOPOLY. PIMANIA. DUNGEON BUILDER (Graphic Adventure Writer). IS COMPILER (converts games written in Sinclair Basic into Machine Code) - £15 for the lot plus £1.50 postage and packing.
    DAVID GRAY, 34 Hunters Hall Road, Dagenham, Essex. RM10 8JD
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    SCAPEGHOST. TIME AND MAGIK. GNOME RANGER £7 each. DRILLER £6.
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==

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===
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1 Large Amster cage! Including extras: 2 Drinking troughs, 1 Spindizzy
wheel (disc driven), 1 feeding container and a bag of nuts and 1 large
dozing compartment full of soft bedding. Suitable for someone with an
amster called Alf (as this was the name of the previous occupant and
it has been etched onto the door). I will accept in exchange any Bob
Adams mug shots, especially ones from the '30's! Apply to:
  JIM STRUTHERS,112 Disraeli St, Cowpen Quay, Blyth, Northumberland.
===
                              WANTED
Does anyone have a recent catalogue from CASTLE SOFTWARE of Stoke on
Trent please? Contact:
  DICON PEEKE, Lliart y Goddart, Capel Garmon, Gwynedd. Tel:06902 654
===
WANTED: September 1989 (Vol.11 No.12) issue of OMNI Magazine, the
foremost publication in the realm of science fact, fiction and
fantasy. I'm prepared to pay a ridiculously high price to enable me to
complete my 11 year old collection. Contact:
  NEIL SHIPMAN, 1 Heath Gardens, Coalpit Heath, Bristol, BS17 2TQ
===
PLAYTESTERS WANTED for work on new game called "Jewels of Scotland".
The only reward I can offer is a free copy of the first adventure in
the series entitled "Border Harrier". Please write to:
         STUART LORD, 319 London Rd, High Wycombe, HP11 1EJ
===
WANTED FOR ATARI ST: The ZORK and ENCHANTER trilogies. Please write
with price required to:
         LEE HUDDLESTONE, C/o 35 Lyddon Terrace, Leeds, LS2 9LA
===
WANTED FOR AMSTRAD 6128 (TAPE OR DISC): Any adventures but am
especially fond of those by C.R.L. Please write to:
         BEN ISBA, 11 South Rd, Bowdon, Cheshire, WA14 2JZ
===
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SNOW QUEEN, ADVENTURE QUEST, QUESTPROBE III and JACK THE RIPPER.
Please write with price required to:
  JIM STRUTHERS, 112 Disraeli St, Cowpen Quay, Blyth, Northumberland
===
WANTED FOR SPECTRUM 48K: THE BOGGIT, BORED OF THE RINGS, HAMPSTEAD,
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     KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE CASTLE
AMANDA OLIVER, 7 The Hassocks, Waterlooville, Hampshire, PO7 8QQ can
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THE PAY OFF, ZZZZ, MYSTERY OF THE INDUS VALLEY, KOBYASHI NARU, QUEST
FOR THE GOLDEN EGG CUP, QUEST FOR THE HOLY GRAIL, VENOM AND SOULS OF
DARKON.   Don't forget to enclose S.A.E.

HINTS AND TIPS

GUILD OF THIEVES
By DAVE HAVARD played on Amstrad CPC

Make sure, when you buy the lute from the miller, that you put it into
the sack when you leave the windmill. Examine the rats before the
race, then bet on the grey rat. Use the prize to buy the lute. In the
billiard room, open the red ball. Hit the coal with the pick before
hitting the mineral vein as the latter causes the pick to break. The
music sheet is a treasure, and should be banked, unopened, to get a
further 10 points.
Snake, when leaving the reptile house, run directly towards the hot
room. Before moving the statue in the temple, make sure you have the
gloves from the garden. They solve a slippery problem. Having moved
the statue, dig in the sand with your hands. This solves another
slippery problem. To help the lute work properly, examine the
paintings in the gallery.

PUZZLED
By VICKY JACKSON played on Spectrum

PART 1.

> To mend the hole in the bucket use the chewing gum.
> To get the batteries for the torch feed the birds.
> Do a bit of dusting to find a piece of jigsaw.
> Set a trap to catch a rat.

PART 2.

> Examine the key to find the password to enter the cemetary.
> To get rid of the vampire find yourself a nice juicy steak.
> To open the safe pump the bellows.
> Drop the scarecrow by the blackbird.

PART 3.

> Eat a B.R. meat pie (Ugh).
> Flush the toilet to stop the train.
> Have fun in the snow, build a snowman.
> Give the comedian a big hand.

MAGNETIC MOON – PART 1
By ALF BALDWIN played on Spectrum

In the lifeboat, examine the couch and search the compartment to find
the bubble helmet. Attach the oxygen bottle to the helmet. Press red
button to open airlock and enter. Wear helmet, press green button and
leave. Because of the moon's low gravity, you can jump down to the
surface. At the nose of the freighter, throw the grapnel and climb the
rope into the port. You may have to throw the grapnel more than once
before it catches. In the hold, search the wreckage and use the laser
cutter to cut off the girder sticking out. Leave it in the centre of
the hold, it is too heavy to climb with.

You can jump to the bottom of the hanging catwalk, and use the grapnel
to climb the gap. Search the junk in the storeroom to find a coil of
wire. Tie the wire to the hole in the doorway, throw the wire into the
hold, then go down and tie it to the girder. Go back up again and pull
the wire to haul up the girder. Prop up the loose plates with the
girder and go aft along the gangway. Be ready to go as soon as you
prop the plates the girder will only hold them for a short time.

CHAOS STRIKES BACK
By SANDRA SHARKEY played on Atari ST

A useful place to go as soon as you can is to the Demon Director. You will find a pit that asks you to "Trust Me Jump In the Pit" - do it! You will find some stairs leading up where you have to contend with a floor switch that activates a poison trap. Leave a rock on the switch and the poison is deactivated. You need to kill a rock giant, which can take ages and is best achieved by hit and run tactics. You also need a solid key to open the door that the giant is guarding. Through the door you will find a sign on the wall saying "Dead End". Once you reach the end of the passage it is indeed a dead end. Turn around and you will find some knights bearing down on you. DON'T PANIC! Just keep trying to walk backwards and the wall will disappear, keep backing away from the knights and eventually you will be teleported behind them. I don't know if I found a bug but as I followed the knights they suddenly dropped dead in front of me. A quick search of the walls reveals a button which opens the wall to reveal a stairway. Go down the stairs and along a passage that leads to "Dragon Den". You can fireball the doors to release the dragons, or let them do it for you. Once you have killed the three dragons don't get complacent as each room has a secret passage that conceals yet more dragons. You will also find some chests which are very useful for carrying the dragon steaks around. Show the Power Towers to the eye in the wall to open up a passage.

SCAPEGHOST
By STEVE McLAREN played on Amiga
PART 1
> To get your strength pick up items in the right order.
> To show David your strength push urn.
> To unlock shed door, enlist a few friends.

PART 2
> When outside old hide-out do what Joe suggests.
> Find enough evidence against the crooks before getting police.
> To get rid of Joe, turn lights on, be careful how you do this.

PART 3
Can't get in farmhouse, find something to short the electrics to the house. Don't forget to find power breaker before the lights come on again. Make good use of Sarah while you carry out your job.

SOULS OF DARKON
By AMANDA OLIVER played on Commodore 64

> Don't drink too much mead.
> Put crystal in fountain.
> Zap the robot and run for cover then examine arm.
> Give coin to Blacksmith.
> Climb tree then look to find something.
> Attack Krayler with the star.

Attack Darkon with star, plunge sword into flask, plunge sword into Darkon.

MYSTERY OF MUNROE MANOR
By GEORGE KERSEY played on Spectrum

There is a red key in Book 1 which can unlock the door opposite the Library. There is something in the drawer. Tie the rope to the rails of the broken stairs. Lets you climb down into a hole. The door after going north from the stairs can only be unlocked with the other key.

"KARTOON KLUES."

DRAWN BY KRAZY KEZ GRAY 1988.
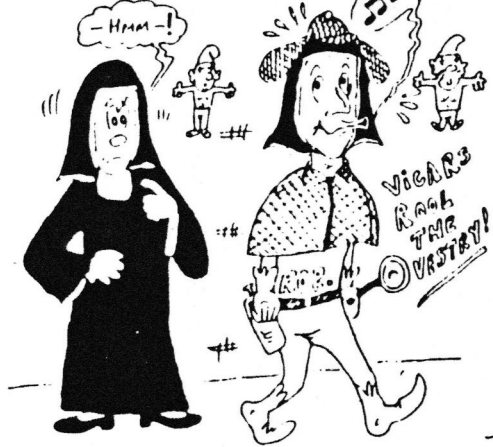
(THIS WEEK - "ROBIN OF SHERLOCK" - BY DELTA 4!)

A-MAZE-ING ESCAPES
By RON RAINBIRD played on Atari 800XL

COLOSSAL ADVENTURE

THE VENDING MACHINE MAZE
From East End of Long Hall, go SOUTH, WEST, WEST, EAST, EAST which should bring you to the Vending Machine to obtain batteries for your lamp. To return go WEST then EAST.

THE PIRATE'S MAZE
From West Bank of Fissure, go SOUTH, EAST, SOUTH, SOUTH, NORTH, EAST, EAST, NORTHWEST. You should now be at the Pirate's storing place. Don't forget to take the Chest! To return, go SOUTHEAST and NORTH.

THE STONE MAZE IN THE END GAME
From the top of the ladder, go EAST and then DOWN.

ZORK I

THE UNDERGROUND MAZE TO KEY AND COINS
Go down through the Living Room trapdoor, then NORTH, WEST, WEST, WEST and UP. Get the key and the bag but do not touch anything else. To return, go NORTH, WEST, SOUTH, EAST, SOUTH and UP.

ZORK II

THE BANK PROBLEM
From the Bank Entrance, go NORTHEAST to East Teller's Room, EAST to Safety Depository, SOUTH to Chairman's Office and get portrait. Go NORTH and ENTER LIGHT, ENTER THE SOUTH WALL, ENTER LIGHT again and get bills. ENTER NORTH WALL, then drop the Bills and the Portrait. Go EAST and EAST again, get the Bills and the Portrait, ENTER THE LIGHT and go SOUTH. You've done it!

ENCHANTER

THE "TERROR" PROBLEM
To negotiate this Maze, you must first have the Magic Pencil with Eraser and the Map.
Go DOWN to the Translucent Room, then SOUTH and EAST. Draw a line from F to P on the map and examine map to make sure the alteration is being made. Then erase the lines from V to M and P to F. Finally, draw a line from M to P, which should seal the Terror in another part of the Translucent Room. You can now get the GUNCHO spell and go NORTHWEST, WEST, NORTH and UP to the South Hall via the Dungeon.

LORDS OF TIME

THE MAZE IN ZONE SIX
Go through the Secret Panel after playing the Lute, then EAST, WEST, WEST, SOUTHWEST, EAST, SOUTHEAST. Go in a well, fill the Horn and drink the water. Go NORTH and you are back in the Clock.

WISHBRINGER

TO PLAY THE GAME SUCCESSFULLY IN THE ARCADE
Insert token, push stick WEST, then again. Push stick SOUTH, then again. Now push button and say "Yes" twice.
****

OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

FUTURE WARS
By GRAHAM WHEELER played on Atari ST

BUCKET (of water)	- Put over door to drench Boss.
FLAG	- To put in hole in map.
TYPEWRITER	- Examine it to find code.
PAPER	- Put in copier to get documents.
INSECTICIDE	- To pass Mosquitos.
AMULET	- Show to guard to enter castle.
COIN	- Give to Innkeeper to hear information.
ROPE	- To climb tree.
PLASTIC BAG	- Fill with water to throw at wolf.
HABBIT	- To wear in Monastery.
LANCE	- To get Habbit from tree. and clean camera above door.
CUP	- To fill with wine for Supervisor.
REMOTE CONTROL	- To open small cabinet and barrel.
1ST MAGNETIC CARD	- To open glass case.
GAS CAPSULE	- To put in grill in cell (air duct).
BLOWTORCH	- To kill creature in sewers.
FUSES	- To fix T.V.
GAS TAP	- To fill blowtorch.
COIN	- To get newspaper.
NEWSPAPER	- To cover air duct.
PENDANT	- To transport Lo-Anne.
KEY	- To open air duct.
2ND MAGNETIC CARD	- Use on card reader in ship and on computer console at base.
GARMENT	- To cover video screen (croughars ship).
PILL	- To become invisible in order to leave ship.
CASE	- Lie inside to Travel on ship.

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GOLD ICON
By WILL ORTON played on Commodore 64

NAILS	- To build a ladder.
OATS	- Feed to Yak.
MATCHES	- Light lantern and light dynamite.
WAND	- Wave to cross gorge.
ROPE	- Tie to root for access to maze and map.
YAK	- To frighten snowman which protects way south.
DAGGER	- To stab dog which guards waiting room.
PILL	- Swallow to lose weight.
MIRROR	- Break for access west.
ROOT	- Tie rope to this.
AXE	- Chop root and chop plank.
PLANK	- Cross gap and chop to build ladder.
MAP	- Directions through maze to pill and clue.
DYNAMITE	- To clear rock fall.
HAMMER	- To break mirror.
COIN	- Insert in slotted lock to open door.
RUM (use bottle)	- Offer to sailor who guards the way west.
WALL OF ROCK	- Secret opening (medallion needs to be present).
SHIELD	- Reflect light to enter pyramid.
INSECT SPRAY	- To kill fly which protects access to arch.
MEDALLION	- Opens secret door.
KEY	- To open gate to exit at end of game.

GETTING YOU STARTED

WIZ BIZ

By GRAHAM WHEELER played on Amstrad CPC

GET CAN, OPEN CAN, DRINK LAGER, SAY TROOL, UP, S, E, S, GET PIPE, GET
POKER, W, U, W, W, GET KEY, GET TOKEN, E, N, EXAMINE GARGOYLE, PUT
TOKEN IN SLOT (paper comes out which says your future is by water),
EXAMINE WELL (a spectre appears), GET SYPHON, E, GET VACUUM, SUCK UP
SPECTRE, GET PAN, S, GET LONG ROD, E, N, GET SAUSAGES, GET BREAD, GET
MUSTARD, W, N, KISS FROG, KISS FROG (ugly dwarf appears and steals
vacuum), N, GET DREAM WEED, N, GET PROP, S, VAULT WALL, NE, FISH, GET
SUCK, DROP LONG ROD, W, N, W, W, THROW SUCK AT DOG.....................

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FRANKENSTEIN — PART ONE

By AMANDA OLIVER played on Commodore 64

LOOK AROUND, GET MONEY, WEST, DOWN, EXPLORE ROOM, SIT (your money
drops from your pocket), WAIT (father appears, hands you a knife and
unlocks the door), STAND UP, SEARCH ARMCHAIR, GET MONEY, EXAMINE
CHIMNEY, GET PICTURE, EXAMINE PICTURE, EAST, EXPLORE GARDEN, EXAMINE
CHEST, EXAMINE HINGE, UNSCREW HINGES WITH KNIFE......................

==

THE HOBBLE HUNTER

By SHARON HARWOOD played on Spectrum

FOLLOW DWARF, EXAMINE DWARF, TAKE COIN, N, TAKE CARROT, E, N, N, E,
SE, N, TAKE LAMP, GIVE CARROT TO PONY, MOUNT PONY, S, W, DISMOUNT,
ENTER TAVERN, E, TAKE SANDWICH, EAT SANDWICH, SAY TO LANDLORD "GIVE ME
A BEER", PAY LANDLORD, TAKE BEER, E, TAKE PORK PIE, GIVE BEER TO
HOBBLE, TAKE PARROT. If the landlord hasn't already lit your lamp (he
usually does it without being asked - nice fella!) then ask him.......

(CONTRIBUTIONS ARE NEEDED FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE........MANDY)

****

AMUSING RESPONSES

DEADLINE

By NEIL SHIPMAN played on Atari ST

Kiss and kill any of the suspects!
Analyze the ladder after 12 noon!
Clean the suicide note!
Read July 31 on calendar!

CONTRIBUTIONS ARE ALSO NEEDED FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE

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SERIALISED SOLUTIONS
THE LOST CITY a guide to completion by JUNE ROWE

PART TWO

In the orchard outside the villa, you can CLIMB TREE to get a peach, which you should EAT to be left with the stone. This should be PLANTed in an earthy area, then if you BREAK PHIAL, a vine grows up the wall. DO NOT CLIMB it yet - well, not unless you have RAMSAVEd the game, because this is a point of no return and may lead to the end of the game if you don't have the trident, so return to the courtyard and collect all you can. You won't need the key again, for one thing.

CLIMB VINE to Poseidon's Temple, and as soon as you meet him, GIVE TRIDENT TO POSEIDON - he's an impatient type, so if you don't give it to him within three moves, he throws you out of the window.

Once Poseidon has what he wants, he will still throw you out of the window, but this time you float down safely onto a sandy beach.

Go north first, from here, then northeast to get a footman's mace, which you will need south from the beach, when you come across a belligerent crab. HIT CRAB WITH MACE to enable you to go south to a lonely beach where there is a boat.

Precise inputs are required here to find a necessary item - X BOAT, LOOK IN BOAT, TAKE DUST OUT OF BOAT then CLIMB INTO BOAT and ROW SOUTH.

This brings you to the Demon Isle, but do not panic! The dust will get rid of him when you meet him, but firstly, you need to find a mound, which has to be examined carefully to reveal a parchment. The mound is southwest then south of where you land - as in the bath-house, you do not need to LEAVE BOAT, but just use a direction. The boat stays where it is.

Go north now, to where the river to the west is a raging torrent. If you now DRINK ELIXER, you will be able to JUMP ACROSS RIVER, where you meet the demon, who threatens you with instant death if you move away.

OOOOER! He means it, too! So THROW DUST AT DEMON. He doesn't like that at all, so now you can proceed west, but it's one thing after another.....now you are told that there is a quicksand to the west, and this is sudden death, too!

How do you get over the quicksand? This is where the carpet comes in useful: (bet you thought it was a flying one - I did! Wrong!). DROP CARPET, that's the answer.

You will soon arrive at a dense part of the forest, where the undergrowth is covered in leaves, but it is not autumn - could this be a clue? It is - X UNDERGROWTH CAREFULLY to find a hole, which you can go down to arrive at the mystic cove.

This is where you do what the conch message told you - BURN PARCHMENT (destroy the magic scroll), TURN HOURGLASS (turn time on its head) and hey presto! You wake up in your cabin, having successfully completed THE LOST CITY.

ADVENTURE COMPLETED!

****

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