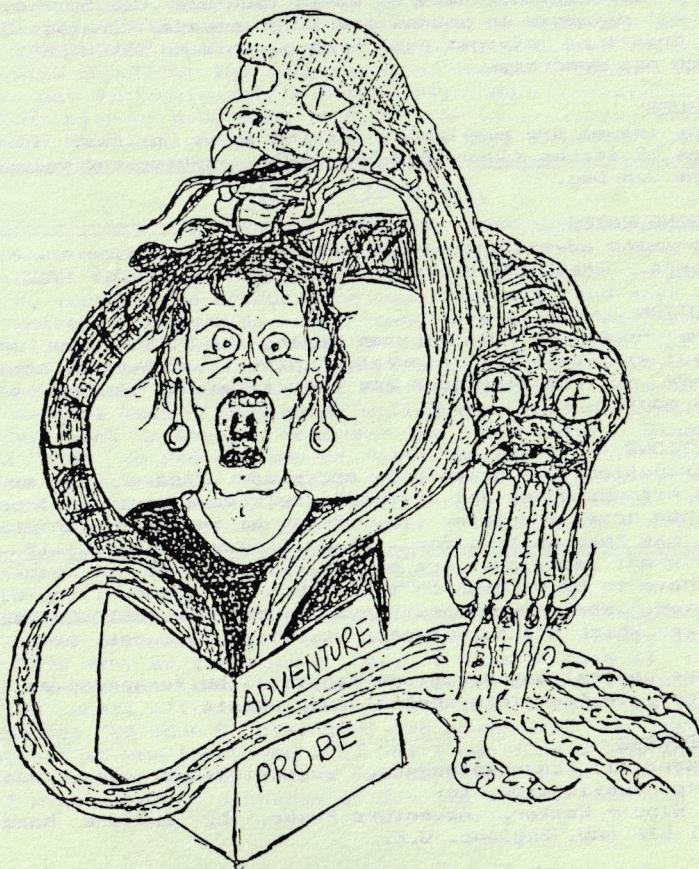


Adventure Probe

£2.00

Vol. 6 Jul 1992 Issue 7



Now in its **SIXTH** Volume

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ADVENTURE PROBE

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LETTERS

It will be assumed that letters sent directly to June Rowe (Letters Editor), 46 Hurdon Way, Launceston, Cornwall, England, PL15 9HX are for publication, all other communications should be sent to the address below.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Copies can be ordered monthly or in multiples up to 12 issues; sorry no discount for quantity. Prices per issue: U.K. £2.00, Europe & Eire £2.50. Rest of World (Surface) £2.50 (Airmail) £3.00. All payments in pounds sterling please. Cheques/Crossed Postal Orders or International Giro payable to ADVENTURE PROBE. Please do not send cash.

BACK ISSUES

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

ADVERTISING RATES

Short, private advertisements in the In-Touch section are free to subscribers. Trade prices are: FULL PAGE £5.00 HALF PAGE £3.00

DISTRIBUTION

Adventure Probe is distributed during the first week of the month (but will be a little erratic until I get back on schedule) Copy date for contributions and advertisements is 14th of the previous month.

CONTRIBUTIONS

All contributions are gratefully accepted. Please keep me well supplied with computer and adventure-related material. It doesn't matter how brief the entry is, it may be the very information someone has been waiting for. It will be very helpful if items for different sections are on separate pieces of paper. It doesn't have to be printed or typed, but best handwriting will be appreciated. When you submit an entry for the IN-TOUCH section please mark which are adventures, utilities, arcades, etc.

Other more general contributions can still be forwarded as I hope to collate them into special supplements.

POSTAL ADDRESS

Please send all correspondence, subscriptions, etc. but not letters for publication, to:
Barbara Gibb - Editor, Adventure Probe, 52 Burford Road,
Liverpool L16 6AQ. England. U.K.

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HALL OF FAME

Many thanks to the following whose contributions I have used in this issue. Mandy Rodrigues - her advice has been invaluable as I had no idea how to produce the magazine until she told me a few trade secrets. Grimwold, June Rowe, The Grue, Major Beardwell, Alex McEwan, Phil Glover, Neil Shipman, Pat Bradley, E.F.Bugler, Tony Collins, Joan Fancott, Tom Frost, Walter Pooley, H.Knott, Margo Porteous, Steve McLaren, Ron Rainbird, Alf Baldwin, Jackie Holt, Barbara Bassingthwaighte, Will Orton, Philip Reynolds, Neil Ashmore, Jack Lockerby, Mongoose the Snake Eater, Simon Avery. Thanks also to Steve, son of Keith Burnard, for the lovely picture of his dad. (*The next issue will list readers who have sent in contributions from hereon*) I will be grateful for some suitable pictures for the front cover - ideal size 4 x 4 or 6 x 6

SOLUTION SERVICE

This service is suspended for the time being - mainly because I don't have many at the moment, but I hope to have it organized in a few months time. I wouldn't advise anyone to purchase a solution until all other avenues have been tried. as it can be detrimental to your enjoyment of the adventure, no matter how strong-willed you think you are. As I don't have instant access to a photocopier it may take a few days for me to post them, and also I'm considering a charge of 2 x 18p stamps each and an SAE.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to Volume 6, Issue 7 of ADVENTURE PROBE.

To some readers this issue will come as a surprise, to others, who have willingly backed me with encouragement and advanced subscriptions, I hope you aren't too disappointed.

Mandy very kindly forwarded a large bundle of contributions which helped me with some sections, but others have suffered because not many readers knew if or where to send contributions. Now you all know, so please, please, look out all those adventures you have been playing over the last few months, and write up a few lines for me. They don't have to be long articles or reviews, in fact with only 40 pages to fill, I would appreciate shortish hints & tips, reviews, letters, articles, etc. so that more of you can see your work in print. Sorry to be a bore, but it would also help if you could use separate pieces of paper for each section, and don't forget to clearly mark them with your name and relevant computer - please see inside front page for addresses!

Alert readers will notice I wrote "addresses". My second shrewd move (the first was to ask Mandy to allow me to become editor) was to appoint JUNE ROWE as Letters Editor. Letters for publication should be sent directly to her. June has up to SIX pages to fill for the next issue!!!

I've tried to make this issue similar in appearance to previous issues, and I must say I am quite chuffed with the result considering I haven't the same hardware and software as Mandy. I had to master 1st Word Plus on the Atari, which keeps giving me FOOTNOTE and I have to restart because I can't find a way to cancel it. I fiddled around with TIMEWORKS and eventually got a lovely screen layout but when I tried to print it out, my Citizen 120D gave a very peculiar result. It is probably only a minor problem, but to be honest I think the word processor is adequate, once I learn not to press the wrong function key, but no doubt I will use TIMEWORKS in the future for fancy layouts. Nothing is ever wasted, as I have just found a label printing programme I bought years ago for my BBC.

I didn't have the time or material to make any drastic changes to Adventure Probe for this issue, even if I had wanted to. What I do need is some feedback from you, stating what you like, if anything, and what you don't like, with reasons. Only then can I give you what you want, rather than what I think you want.

The telephone helpline is a little depleted at the moment. I would like to thank Walter Pooley for all his help, but he now feels he can't take telephone calls. Also, I was sad to hear Alf Baldwin isn't very well. Get better soon, Alf, we all need your help and guidance. Out of space, so, 'til next monthBye

MANDY RODRIGUES
67 LLOYD STREET, LLANDUDNO, GWYNEDD, LL30 2YP.
Tel: (0492) 877305

Dear all,

I am absolutely delighted that our Probe is not dead but alive and well and in the extremely capable hands of Barbara Gibb. Barbara has been a Probe reader and contributor since the start and I couldn't think of anyone more suited to continue the long tradition of a Lady Editor of Probe. I sincerely hope that everyone will continue to keep Barbara well supplied with material for future issues as you all so kindly did for me and I hope too that she will get many new and old subscribers back into the fold to keep Probe healthy financially as well. One of the initial difficulties for me when I started as editor was in honouring all the outstanding subscriptions without the wherewithall to do so until the subscriptions ran out and people started resubscribing to me. That was one of the reasons that I couldn't expect anyone to take over Probe and to honour your outstanding subscriptions to me - they would have probably ended up in the same way that I did without financial support to get things started. Editing Probe is a labour of love and, over the past four years I have derived more pleasure and enjoyment out of being with you all through Probe than anything else. I sincerely hope that Barbara will get the same pleasure out of editing Probe in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking each and everyone of you for supporting me during my time as editor and for your continued friendship, support, kind wishes, understanding and help during my recent troubles. To know from your letters and phone calls that I hadn't lost your friendship was wonderful and enabled me to smile through all my problems. Please remember that I am still here for you if you need help. I haven't vanished off the face of the earth and will keep in touch with you all not least through the pages of Probe as I hope I will be allowed to send in contributions to Probe as I did in the past. I also hope that, despite the recent drastic cut in our finances, I will be able to attend the convention in October so that I can be with you all once more.

Finally, I would like to wish Barbara and Probe all the very best for the future. I hope that Probe will go from strength to strength and prosper. To Barbara and to all of my friends in Probe I would like to wish all the very best. May your swords stay sharp and long may your little brass lanterns shine!

Mandy

=====

It came as a surprise to me, and probably to other long-standing subscribers to learn that Mandy's editorship started off in such a difficult way. I fully appreciate her efforts, and everyone else's help in ensuring my "take-over" ran smoothly. Now that you have the time to play adventures we're waiting to hear from you, Mandy.....Barbara

REVIEWS

COLDITZ ESCAPE

Written by Frank Fridd, Reviewed by GRIMHOLD

This two part adventure was first released by Friddsoft a little while ago, but has now been re-released by WoW Software. Unsurprisingly, the idea is to escape from Colditz prison and return to bonny England.

The first part places you in the centre of the main yard and you have to find various items and give them to either the Forger or the Clothing Officer in order to get a set of civilian clothes and some false I.D. After that, you have to find the Escape Officer and escape. On top of that there are many escape objects to be picked up, this seems to happen regularly when German Officers walk up to you and offer you one of three items. No wonder they lost the war!

The game area is very large but is well laid out and can be easily mapped. Every now and then you get called to Morning or Evening Appell and get placed back at the starting point, which is a bit annoying but is more realistic. The Guards move around at set times and can usually be avoided, if you're carrying an escape item when you move into the same location then they confiscate it. If you're not carrying anything then they merely say "Hello, how are you." A good point is that you can HIDE certain objects around the buildings and can relocate them using the WHERE objects command, although I haven't been able to find how to pick up hidden objects yet!

Nice little touches abound in the game, like the arrow keys which have been re-defined to imitate the direction commands, i.e. up arrow for North. Now and again you get picked up, told "You have been a naughty boy!" and placed in the cell. To get out of there you can either wait until they get bored and let you out or bribe them with certain objects.

Written entirely in Basic, COLDITZ is an admirable feat of programming, the responses, so often deathly slow in Basic games, are quicker than most GACed games. Some of you may remember the articles Frank wrote in Adventure Probe about writing your own parser and with this game it shows that he knows what he is talking about. The game seems to be bug-free, although having said that, it did crash with a "Subscript out of range" at one point. It could be got back into simply by typing "GOTO 30" without losing your position or objects. I don't know why it crashed and it wouldn't happen again so it was probably just a one-off.

The second part sees you outside the prison and you must journey across Europe to get home. I haven't got very far in this part,

but I have been killed a few times by the over-zealous Hitler Youth and some German Officers. The game seems to have been well researched and well written and, as I say, very well programmed. Not a bad game, logically planned and it progresses at a good pace.

Available from: WoW Software, 78 Radipole Lane, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 9RS. Price: £3 tape, £5 Disc, for the Amstrad 464 and 6128

=====

RUN, BRONWYNN, RUN

Written by Larry Horsfield, Reviewed by *JUNE ROWE*

In this romantic, escapist fairy tale, you are a princess, and the scene is set by a story-sheet which comes with the game. Right now, you are bored stiff by all the speeches at your brother's wedding. You are enjoying a fantasy about what your own wedding will be like after your dream prince comes along, when you hear your name mentioned. Now, being a princess is very nice usually, but not when your father decides without so much as a "by your leave" that you will marry a wimp of a prince called Timothy, from the neighbouring kingdom of Karsten. You object to this, of course, saying that you will NEVER marry him, and for your disrespect, you get escorted to your chambers. The king decrees that you shall stay there until you change your mind, and a guard is placed outside your door to ensure that you do stay there.

You won't change your mind, naturally, so you realize that your only course of action is to sneak out of the palace and seek sanctuary with your cousin, Kelson of Hecate. Unfortunately, Hecate lies many miles to the west, beyond Karsten, so you will first have to travel through the land of the prince who wants you for his bride.

Your most important task is to escape from the palace while the wedding celebrations are still going on, so the game starts in your chambers. What can you find in these two rooms to help you to escape? Well, for a start, you won't get very far in the ball gown and tiara you are wearing, so (amongst other things) you'll need some more sensible clothes!

What you find indicates that your next requirement is a horse, so when you have figured out how to get out of your room, you head for the stables. You can't just ride out now, though - there are soldiers all over the place who will recognize and apprehend you unless you find a suitable disguise.

OK, so you manage to get out of the palace gates, but now you're in a maze of alleys, and it's not the usual sort of maze, either. You can only get through this by using a specific route, to which you might have found a clue in your chambers. Well, you might have found it, by diligently examining and searching everything, but did you recognize it as a clue? Rather a clever one!

The first part of this game is taken up with escaping from the city, and you start Part Two in a woodman's hut where you took refuge for the night, but you wake up to find that your horse is missing. Talking to a woman you soon meet will give you a clue as to what has happened to your horse, but the woman won't give you any more information until you supply the wool she needs to finish her knitting. This leads to another puzzle and a bit of match-making - I told you this was a romantic story! Handsome Stefan, the sheep-shearer doesn't realize that Sue, under her dirty skin, uncombed hair and tatty dress, is the beautiful girl of his dreams, so you have to sort these two out. You still don't get your horse back though - the woman's son has already sold it to the gypsies, but she tells him to lead you to the gypsy camp. You have another problem now - posters have been put up about you and everyone knows what you are wearing, so another disguise is called for to enable you to cross the border into Karsten. Unfortunately, your guide recognizes you and runs off to betray your presence to the soldiers and claim the offered reward. You end Part Two with no belongings and being chased by soldiers with dogs.

You start Part Three in a forest, which you are given the opportunity to explore before playing this part of the game, and you are told that you can hear a wood-cutter chopping a tree. If you LISTEN, you will discover where the wood-cutter is, then it takes a bit of logical thinking, or a few trial-and-error goes, to figure out how to delay the dogs, cross the river and find your horse. The extremely useful RAMSAVE can be utilized here, to save having to load a SAVEd position if you get captured, as you probably will before you sort out this tricky area, which gets even trickier when you land in a bog. Even after that, you aren't at the end of the problems - another hazard now appears in the shape of outlaws on the border between Karsten and Hecate. If you can manage to overcome these, you will have solved a most enjoyable, most playable and addictive game.

Playing instructions are on the back of the story-sheet, and they include useful abbreviations like G for GET, RS/RL for RAMSAVE/RAMLOAD, X for EXAMINE and SC for SCORE, which indicates your progress. I'll give you a tip here - some actions will score although they do not actually help with the game. There are, in fact, thirteen of these optional inputs, so you could possibly complete the game with only 435/500 points.

Along with a lot more people, I had a go at the first part of this when it was a competition game at the first Adventure probe Convention, then I had to wait a long while for the completed game to be released. Now it is finally available, and I found it well worth waiting for.

Available from: FSF Adventures, 40 Harvey Gardens, Charlton, London SE7 8AJ

Prices: £2.49 tape or +D 3.5" disc, £3.49 +3 disc.

£1 extra for Spectre of Castle Coris on other side of +3 disc.

UNNKULIAN UNDERWORLD : THE UNKNOWN UNADVENTURE
PC Shareware : Registration \$10, Reviewed by *THE GRUE*

"Come closer my child," your aging master Kuulest whispers. "Soon my life will end, but yours is just beginning! The unnkulian menace threatens to rise again, destroying all that stand in its way...and I am dying before my time." You are an untrained slave, certainly not fit to carry on in the tradition of the ancient wise man Kuulest but you are the only hope for this world...and perhaps worlds beyond! "You must find the ORB OF" then with a final splutter, your master expires, leaving you as so often he did in life a task uncompleted for you to finish. If only you knew what the task was....

The game starts with you inside the hut where you have spent your entire life, a slave and apprentice to the ancient wise man Kuulest. The only thing you know for sure is that for some reason you must find some sort of Orb. After rummaging through the old geezlepimple's pockets, you decide to have a wander about outside. There is not much too unusual in the surrounding area, a lake, a lighthouse, a small wood and oh! The Cheez Fiz Inn. But this game really starts once you have opened the grate that leads down into the Unnkulian Underworld.

Once in this underworld you will find that your master Kuulest has left a message for you and you must restore the Orb of Studosity to its rightful place atop the Pillar of the Valley King. For if the Dread Unnkulian Warrior, who stalks these caverns, ever opens the Unnkulian Vault and reaches the Orb, the Demons of Unnkul will be released and destroy the world. How can you resist such a challenge? As you progress through the underworld you will find a real odd assortment of objects and characters. Perhaps the best of these is the monk you find outside the monastery, who has a great line in odd sayings such as "An egg cannot be laid by a human or we would know which came first".

The text in Unnkulian is very well written and puzzles are not too difficult, although I did experience a little bit of bother with a couple of them but it was down more to not using the correct syntax more than anything else. What makes Unnkulian better than a lot of others is the style of the text and the subtle humour of the author. For example, if you examine any of the objects etc. in the game you are given its description phonetically; this can result in some rather amusing descriptions, like the Acme Brij Kreeyator Sooper-Dooper Reecharjor.

All the puzzles in Unnkulian are logical even if they don't seem that way at first but then most things seem logical in hindsight. I just love the whole feel of this game; subtle humour, well written text and nicely constructed puzzles. Yes, Unnkulian is a real joy to play and if you own a PC you should really have this in your collection.

Damn! I forgot to tell you about the giant beaver that appears in your dream when you eat the green powder, the legend of Duhda and the Shot of Heaven, the Acme Salesman, the monstrous mouse, the rubber doggy-doodle...gurgle-gurgle.

=====

PUZZLE PAGE

In the last issue Mandy printed three *BRAIN TEASERS*. A few answers have found their way to me.

Keith Burnard got them all correct. Margaret Abbie, and Neil Shipman got most of them right. Peter Bergmann and Ian Osborne were correct in those they answered. Grimwold was not quite as close.

Answers: Money Problem - I actually have £42.86

- Everyday Sayings -
1. World without end
 2. Way behind the times
 3. Word to the wise
 4. No two ways about it
 5. One at a time
 6. A terrible spell of weather
 7. An outside chance
 8. Just between you and me
 9. Split second timing
 10. At the point of no return
 11. A lucky break
 12. Unfinished symphony

Easier one? - The green man on the traffic lights

I thought I would give you a little more time to work out the answers to the Birthday Competition so I'm not printing them yet. I have received answers from Margaret Abbie, Doreen Bardon, Peter Bergmann, Keith Green, and Ian Osborne, none of which are completely correct. When I tried this I only got about 30, of which 28 were correct, but couldn't submit my answers by the closing date. If anyone, including the five readers named, would like to have another look at them in June's issue, I will refrain from publishing the answers until September's issue.

No prizes, but the promise of your name in block capitals for anyone who gets at least half of them correct.

=====

Now for a little whimsy, courtesy of *THE GRUE*, which I couldn't resist, and it fills up the page nicely!

SICK OF SOGGY BACON

Buy Borph's Spray-On Baco-Crisp
Easy to use! Just spray on and watch
as your bacon turns nice and crunchy!
ONLY AN AMAZING 25p

LETTERS

Dear Handy

Many thanks for "Probe" and my letter contained therein! Things happen!! I have received 3 answers to my letters (one of which I wrote last September!) and 3 complete solutions to WOMBATS - one of which by John Wilson. I had no wish to "make waves" (as they say) but feel that it was time to clear the air! Enough said! It is gratifying to know that help is at hand and that there are many more reliable folk other than those who are not! However - I am still looking for the blasted key in OCEAN DANCER!!! (maybe it is a skeleton key). Again many thanks for your patience, help and wishes for my health.

Major H Beardwell, Norton Fitzwarren, Taunton

If you LOOK when on the track to the house, and a key does not appear, then you have a bugged copy. I have checked with a very knowledgeable friend, and he says that if you send your copy to him he will "be-bug" it for you. Send it to: W. Pooley, Flat 1, 46 Exeter Road, Liverpool L20 7BLBarbara

Dear Handy

I have found out that a second Infocom compilation, called Lost Treasures Part 2 has been released in the US. Earlier this year I wrote a review of my imported version of Lost Treasure Part 1 for Probe, and as a result of this I imported a number of copies for a few of your readers. I would like to offer the same service this time around to anyone who is interested in buying the latest compilation. Initially I heard that there are eleven titles in the new collection, but I have only been able to get hold of a list of 10 of these. They are:

Bureaucracy,	Wishbringer,
Trinity,	Nord & Bert,
Sherlock,	Cutthroats,
Seastalker,	Flundered Hearts,
Border Zone.	A Mind Forever Voyaging.

At a guess, I think the extra title will be Hollywood Hijinx. The price for the new set is \$10 less than the original collection. Obviously it is difficult to gauge exactly what this will mean when converted to Sterling as exchange rates fluctuate, which in turn affects Customs charges. Based on past experience I would expect the package to work out around the £40 mark. If any of your readers are interested they can contact me at the address below or by telephone on 0256-475906. The dealer offers a discount on quantities of six or multiples thereof, so it benefits everyone if I can place one sizeable order rather than several small ones, as happened last time. In order to do this I would ask that everyone who is interested should contact me at the earliest opportunity. As with the original package I have to ask that payment be made in advance as the supplier will not deal on a COD basis.

Alex McEwan, 39 Warbleton Road, Chineham, Hampshire, RG24 0RF

Dear Barbara

Since the sad demise of Adventure Probe I've read that there may be a chance of it continuing under your control...I'm currently helping to run the SAM ADVENTURE CLUB, along with a bi-monthly disk for members. Amongst our sixty or so members we have several PROBE readers who wish to see PROBE survive. If we can be of any help in publicizing any rescue bids for Probe, we would gladly do so. Our club is thriving at present, and our members are very enthusiastic, judging by the letters and contributions we receive. SAM can easily run many Spectrum 48K games, as well as CP/M 2.2 software using an emulator. We now have a writing utility called the SAM ADVENTURE SYSTEM which may lead to more SAM-specific adventures being written, up to 710K in length. If such adventures are produced, we'd naturally like to see them featured in the multi-format magazines as well as SAM-only disk magazines (of which there are nearly ten). If Probe survives, I'm sure you could expect some of our members to contribute to Probe occasionally. Please let me know if there are any future plans for Probe, as I'll include any relevant information on our disk for existing Probe readers, and maybe entice some readers to sample the delights of Probe! Even if PROBE cannot be saved, I hope that the spirit of PROBE will continue amongst its readership, and that many of us will remain friends. I'll certainly be attending the October convention, and perhaps I'll see you there.

Phil Glover, Birmingham

I've received many letters from readers who had heard I was taking over as editor of Probe. Many were from readers who didn't know me personally, but still enclosed an advanced subscription. I'm sorry I haven't had time to answer all of them but I had to clear my playtesting commitments and then start on this issue. I would be too embarrassed to print most of them anyway. I replied to Phil's letter and enquired about the SAM COUPE's capabilities. My main reason for printing his letter is to inform readers of the Club and the S.A.S.....Barbara

Dear Mandy

Ken Bond's letter in last month's Probe was the second time in as many weeks that I had heard criticism of the memory constraints of the AGT programming utility. "Wouldn't it be great," says Mandy, "if there was an easy to programme adventure creator for 16 bit computers that allowed you to select the amount of memory to allocate to various parts of your game?" well, there is, and it's called TADS: The Text Adventure Development System, written by Californian programmer and adventure enthusiast Michael J. Roberts.

Regular readers of Probe will know from my recent reviews of DITCH DAY DRIFTER and DEEP SPACE DRIFTER what an excellent system I thought it was from the player's point of view, producing adventures with the look, feel and friendliness of Infocom titles. Mandy's and the Grue's favourable comments about UNNKULIAN UNDERWORLD tend to reinforce my opinion and the UNNKULIAN UNADVENTURE series shows just what can be accomplished with wit, imagination and a good utility.

But what is TADS like from the programmer's point of view? Well, until a couple of months ago I had done no more than dabble with it, trying to get used to an "object-oriented" language. Now, having spent more time at it, I am amazed at how powerful, flexible and programmer-friendly it is. Earlier in the year Mike Roberts agreed to do a postal interview in order to make adventure writers in the UK aware of TADS and its capabilities. I hope Mandy will be able to devote space to this in forthcoming issues as it is really quite interesting whether you're a writer/programmer or simply a keen text adventurer. With this in mind I don't intend to go into any detail about the language. I just want to say that one of the many compiler options enables you to adjust the already large default areas of memory allocated to objects, verbs, vocabulary words, etc. to suit your requirements. It couldn't be easier! Unfortunately from Ken's point of view, TADS is only available on the PC, ST or Mac and there are no current plans to do an Amiga version. However, there is more than a glimmer of hope because it is highly probable that Amiga owners with either PC or ST emulators would be able to use TADS with one of these. Perhaps someone would like to try this out? If it works then it ought to be possible for a writer with an Amiga to use his/her computer to produce adventures which will run on the PC, ST and Amiga (with emulator) without any alteration. Both the ST (1 meg) and PC versions of DITCH DAY DRIFTER include the relevant compiler and run-time programmes as well as heavily-documented files so you can see how this adventure has been written.

Neil Shipman, Bristol

The first part of Neil's interview is in this issue, and will be completed next month. I really must get my ST upgraded to 1 meg, as I have already bought some of the adventures mentioned above, but haven't been able to play them.....Barbara

Dear Mandy

I read your article in the News Section of June Probe about Software firms and the types of service they provide. I think this is an excellent idea but as you say how do you set it up to include all aspects. I would like to relate 2 short stories to you and both come under F, A and R, but I think with a little extra:-

1.RIVER SOFTWARE (Jack A Lockerby) - Recently I sent to Jack for two of his adventures - wrote a letter and enclosed my cheque - the adventures were received by return together with a cheque for £5. Jack pointed out that his adventures were £2.50 each and as I had inadvertently made my cheque out for £10 (in a hurry) he returned the difference. HOW'S THIS FOR HONESTY - I would not have noticed my mistake but for Jack?

2.ADV. & STRATEGY CLUB (Hazel Miller) - I sent to Hazel for a list of adventures for sale, this was received by return. I ordered several adventures from the list and received same by return with a letter to say if any did not load they would be replaced and postage refunded - this did happen with 2 adventures and the promise was honoured. I wonder just what response I would have received in a Software Shop?

ADV & STRATEGY CLUB	Commodore	F	A	R	+?
GUILD SOFTWARE	Commodore	F	A	R	+?
RIVER SOFTWARE	Commodore	F	A	R	+?

Pat Bradley, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria

I'm not surprised at the excellent service you got from the software companies & Club. They are run by fellow enthusiasts and they give the sort of service they expect from others. Commodore software is difficult to find, but Tony Collins of The Guild tells me that he is now selling as many Commodore games as Spectrum, which is great. I have a Commodore, love the keyboard, and wish I had more time to play adventures on it. Many companies specialize in software for specific computers, and we must support these hard-working people who rely on good sales to keep in business, for indeed it is a business, as bank accounts have to be watched very closely.....Barbara

Dear Mandy

I have followed with understandable interest the correspondence generated by my letter on the broadening of the contents of Probe. Although you have introduced one or two changes as a result, which I applaud, I am left with the clear impression that I am performing an act of nature into the wind in that despite the support of a handful of members there is undeniably a solid base of 8 bit adventurers who make up the bulk of the membership and who in all probability will resist the broadening of Probe's coverage. I feel that this is rather selfish as no one is suggesting the curtailment of their items, merely the further expansion of items which are of interest to other members. It has somewhat inevitably suggested that if I want to read a particular form of article then I should write it, as you can only print what you are sent, but of course I subscribe in order to read other people's ideas, not my own! Although I appreciate the efforts you have to make Probe all things to all members, there is still a chronic imbalance to someone with my interests, but I hope that the 16 bit and role-playing coverage will increase in the next few months or I really fear that you will lose a significant number of members, leaving it as a fanzine for home-grown Spectrum adventures the days of which are surely numbered. This may be a heretical thought but frankly it is as certain as night follows day that the Spectrum market is ultimately going to be a declining one, if it is not so already. So far as my own position is concerned, I have now joined The Adventure and Strategy Club for six months, after which I will decide which of the two subscriptions to renew. I doubt that I will want the outlay of both, and although at the moment Probe undoubtedly works out the better value for money in terms of the number of pages each month, I just find so little of real interest in it so that the likelihood is, on present form that the enclosed cheque will be the last. Obviously I am not going to prejudice the question at this stage, however, and I very much hope that something will happen to Probe to strengthen it's appeal to me over the next few months.

E.F.Bugler, Farnborough

I get the impression that Mr. Bugler expects Adventure Probe to change - rather than he change to a more suitable magazine....Ed

TADS: THE TEXT ADVENTURE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

by Michael J. Roberts of High Energy Software

Interviewed by Neil Shipman

Regular readers of Probe will know how impressed I was with Ditch Day Drifter and Deep Space Drifter as well as with TADS, the Text Adventure Development System with which they were written. Their author and developer, Mike Roberts, kindly agreed to a postal interview from sunny California...

Perhaps you would like to begin by telling us a bit about yourself.

I'm 27 and single. My hobbies include text adventure playing and writing (obviously, I guess), computer programming in general (despite the fact that I do it professionally), aviation (I hold a private pilot license), pinball and bicycling. My real job is with Oracle Corporation, writing database management software.

How did you first get interested in computers?

I started playing with computers when I was about 12, when I had a chance to do some BASIC programming on a DEC PDP-11. Through most of junior high and high school I was able to find computers that I could play with.

What were some of the first adventures that you played?

The original mainframe game Dungeon (which later was rewritten as the Zork trilogy) was probably the first text adventure I played. I never really made it that far in it, since I was more interested in programming than playing, but it got me interested in the genre.

Which adventures have made the greatest impression on you?

Planetfall was probably my favorite. It convinced me that adventure games should be logical, even at the expense of being difficult. Lots of other adventure games I've played have very random puzzles that don't make a lot of sense and aren't particularly motivated. I also really liked Monkey Island. It was very clever and funny, and it was very playable. I had the impression that its designers had actually thought about what they were doing, unlike so many of the other graphical adventures on the market these days. Both of these games have convinced me that the best adventures are those where you can have a feeling that you're making progress throughout the game, without artificially stalling you with an obscure puzzle where you just have to guess the one dumb thing that you're supposed to do. Puzzles should be motivated - you should have some idea of what you're supposed to do next - and they should make sense within the context of the game.

How did your interest in writing adventures start?

I became interested in writing adventures mostly to figure out how they worked. There are a number of challenging programming problems in designing a simulation of an artificial world and making sense of "natural language" commands from the player.

As I've spent time trying to figure out how to program these games I've grown to like the genre as much for its artistic merits as for its programming challenge. I think the medium has real potential and I'd like to see many more adventures written. I've only seen a handful of adventures that I'd consider really good, but then there haven't been all that many adventures ever written compared to books or plays or movies. I hope that TADS makes it possible for more people to write text adventures. A couple of excellent games have already been written with TADS and I look forward to seeing more.

Whose work has influenced you most?

The conventional wisdom is that the old Infocom games were the greatest games ever but I think that some of them were better than others and these are probably the ones that have stuck in people's minds. Steve Meretzky wrote some of the best in my opinion. Of the more recent games the best I've seen are some of the Lucasfilm graphical adventures. I think the Lucasfilm people are making a real effort to figure out how to improve the adventure game genre - to make adventures more playable and accessible - which none of the other companies producing graphical adventures seem to think much about.

Why did you decide to develop an adventure writing system?

After I'd written one game and wanted to start work on another I realized that there was a lot of work that would be mostly duplicated in a new game. I started out putting the routines from the old game into a library so that future games could use the same routines. Before long, though, I realized that this didn't go far enough.

The big problem with using a general-purpose language for writing an adventure game is that you end up with information scattered all over the place. My games at the time had something like five data files - one had room descriptions (by room number, of course), another had the vocabulary, another had object descriptions. It was horrible trying to figure out what room number in the program corresponded to which exit list in one of the data files. It was clear that everything had to be in one big file. At first I thought it was good enough just to combine the data files into one, but this actually didn't help at all because that made it more difficult to find things within the data file.

Instead, what I really wanted was to have everything about each object - all the text, vocabulary, and even the code - in one place. Obviously this requires a language interpreter to execute the code in the file.

Once you decide to go this far it's a simple matter to find ways to make adventure game writing more convenient. For example, I noticed that a lot of what an adventure game program does is display text strings, so I made the syntax for this especially compact.

Tell us about TADS.

TADS is an entire system for writing text adventure games. The heart of the system is an object-oriented language which looks a lot like C but is much higher level; for example, the TADS language operates directly on datatypes such as lists, strings and objects. Using the TADS language, an adventure game author implements a description of the behavior of the objects making up the game.

One of the things we wanted to do was to improve a lot on the standard features of most text adventure games, particularly in the area of the run-time user interface. For example, we provided full command-line editing and recall. In addition, TADS saves the text that scrolls off the top of screen, so you can scroll back and review text from much earlier in the game.

What do you mean when you say that the TADS language is "object-oriented"?

With traditional programming languages like C and Pascal you tend to think procedurally: you have some data and you write some code to do something with it. There's a clear division between code (subroutines, functions and so forth) and data (variables, arrays, structures).

Object-oriented programming brings code and data together. Instead of breaking up a program into functions and subroutines you break it up into objects. The implementation of an object contains everything relevant to the object, including both code and data. For example, a "room" object has all the descriptive data about the room (such as its name, the text you see when you are standing in the room, and a list of exits) plus any code that's associated with the room (for example, you might want to put some code in the room that defines what happens when you set off a bomb in the room).

This wouldn't be all that different from traditional programming languages if we didn't add "inheritance". This is what makes object-oriented programming really powerful. Inheritance allows you to say that one object is pretty much like another, with a specific set of differences: that is, the new object inherits everything from the old object except for a few things you're overriding.

With TADS we've provided the source code for basic objects like rooms, fixed items, carryable items, doors, vehicles, chairs and so on. Most of these are fairly complicated. Fortunately, when you're writing a game, you don't have to do any of that work yourself because you can just make new objects that inherit all of our work. Of course, because you can override anything you want, the system is totally flexible. It's very easy to add a room to your game - all you have to do is make a new object that inherits everything from the "room" object and then customize it by filling in the name, description and exits. That's all you need to do for a basic room; but, if you want something more complicated, you can override anything you want from the basic room object and even add new things.

How difficult is it to write a TADS game?

It's very easy to write a simple game. There's a sample game in the TADS Author's Manual that's about forty lines long and it's fully working. Of course, it doesn't do much - it's just a couple of rooms and a couple of objects with a simple puzzle. However, those rooms and objects are just as flexible as rooms and objects in full TADS games. The sample game source code is so short and so simple because it doesn't change much about the basic objects defined in the TADS object library.

More complicated games will naturally take more effort. Writing a game like Zork would be a large effort even with TADS, but much easier than it would be to write in C.

But there's a lot in between the two-room sample game and Zork. The thing about object-oriented programming is that you can start with a really small, simple game, and gradually add more objects to it, eventually building it up to a big, complex game.

To be continued...

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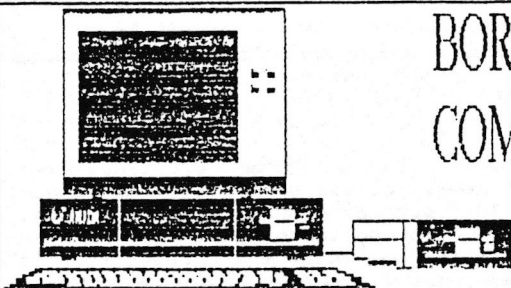
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THE LIFE OF GRIMWOLD

by GRIMWOLD

Part Two

Grimwold awoke. He stood shakily upright and stretched his stubby frame to it's full four feet, albeit on tiptoe. He yawned. And yawned. And yawned. The sort of yawn only a Dwarf can make, showing a full set of yellowing teeth and half his throat. Shaking his head to clear the muzziness that filled it, his heavy brows flapped amongst the depths of his beard, he looked around. Grimwold realized how lucky he had been, for across the width of the tunnel, barely ten feet in front of where he had fallen, was an echoing chasm. This chasm was probably the only thing that could out-yawn even a Dwarf. If he hadn't been overcome by the Grue's roar, the Dwarf would have fallen into its gaping maw in his headlong rush to escape the monster. The tunnel from whence he had come now opened out at the entrance to the chasm, the walls not nearly so close together.

However, Grimwold now faced another choice. Either go back along the tunnel or try to find some way to cross the chasm. Rattling snores from the way he had come confirmed his suspicion that the Grue had fallen asleep at the entrance of the side-tunnel. The Dwarf picks up his sack where it had dropped and emptied it over the floor. He sorts through it, putting things that are of no use back into he sack until he comes to a wooden stick. This he grabs, triumphantly, in his calloused hand. Holding it aloft, he waves it about with lazy flicks of his wrist. Sure enough, sparks fly from the end and swirl around in the darkness, creating false shadows upon the walls. The sparks grow denser, grouping together over the chasm, seeming to form into a shape, Grimwold's brow furrows in concentration as he tries to make out what the shape is becoming.

"A bridge!" he shouts, "That travelling magician wasn't lying when he sold me this stick! It's a pity that I killed him really, although he did mutter something about a curse before he died, I wonder what he meant?"

The curse soon became apparent when another snape began to form on the now solidified bridge. A winged snape. A large winged snape. A large winged shape with big teeth. Grimwold gripped his war axe tighter as he began to realize that he now faced a Balrog. An angry Balrog at that. It flapped its wings and rose into the air, fixing the Dwarf in a terrifying, unblinking stare. Suddenly, it swooped low over the Dwarf, he ducked, feeling the swish of displaced air over his head. Grimwold saw his chance, while the Balrog was behind him, he could rush over the bridge and escape!

He started running, short legs pumping away at the rocky floor, dropping the sack lest it should slow him down, he mounted the gentle curve of the bridge. An unearthly shriek came from close behind, too close. Grimwold realized he wouldn't make it but continued to run as fast as he could. Suddenly, he felt a blow in his back as the creature's talons hit him a glancing blow. Unbalanced, the Dwarf was pushed off the side of the bridge. A brief curse came from his lips as he vowed that if he ever met the creator of magical bridges (Magbridge plc) he would kill him for not incorporating guardrails in it's construction.

As a rule, Grimwold rather liked flying, but for some reason he was not enjoying it very much now. He had crossed over two-thirds of the bridge when he was knocked off and was now heading towards the far cliff of the chasm about twenty dwarf-feet down. The wall of the cliff was sheer except for a small hole that was roughly at the end of Grimwold's present trajectory. He angled his body towards it, trying to streamline what is basically an unstreamlinable body. With a solid thump, he landed inside the hole, sliding along the rocky floor before crashing helmet-first into a not-very-soft wall. Grimwold groaned. He had never got entirely used to being knocked unconscious and he was upset at having to go through the trauma of it twice in rapid succession. He groaned again. He groaned yet again as he realized that he had lost all his equipment, and most of all, his beloved war axe. The very axe that his mother had used to kill that Slimebeast all those years ago. Grimwold's bearded mouth smiled as he remembered that battle; he was barely a child then, no more that sixty years old. How tasty that Slimebeast had been, and useful too. The slime from its back had kept the mine's wagons oiled for a full year.

The dwarf stumbled to his feet and looked around the hole in the side of the chasm. Now he had a chance to see the inside of it he could see that it was more of a ledge than a hole, overlooking the deathless depths. To one side of the ledge there was a low tunnel that looked promising. Grimwold walked down it. He liked low tunnels, they made him feel tall. It led down for a way before levelling out into a wider tunnel which made his footsteps echo hollowly before him. He started to sing about gold again, then stopped abruptly as he remembered the trouble it had got him into last time. As he walked, Grimwold looked through the pockets of his leather jerkin.

"Fluff." he thought, "nothing but Fluff." He was feeling hungry now and started to wonder if he could eat fluff. He tried it. He decided that he couldn't.

Soon, the echoes started to fill out as the tunnel widened further. Up ahead, the Dwarf could see light. He trudged a little faster, perhaps the owners of the light would have some food. Dwarves can be very single-minded when hungry, and Grimwold was very hungry.

NEWS SECTION

THE ADVENTURERS CONVENTION 1992

Doesn't time fly! It isn't long to go before you meet at the Royal Angus Thistle Hotel, Birmingham on Saturday, 24th October. Tickets are £7.00 each. Send SAE to V. Jackson, 128 Merton Hall Road, Wimbledon, London, SW19 3PZ, for a Ticket Application Form and also an Awards Nomination Form.

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When booking, please mention the Convention.

The Grue's text adventure, THE FOUR SYMBOLS, is being converted to the Spectrum format by Larry Horsfield. (Now I don't have to buy an Amiga....Ed)

Alex Kinch is organizing a get-together/convention/computer fair for Spectrum/Sam Coupe owners. Stalls £10, Admission £1 in advance, £1.50 on the day, namely Saturday 26th September. For more details, write to Alex at 153 Pickhurst Rise, West Wickham, Kent, BR4 0AG

NEW BI-MONTHLY FANZINE

Richard Pascoe has written to say he is venturing into the fanzine market. Called Spectrum Owners Guild (S.O.G. for short) it will be a bi-monthly, with the first issue planned for August. It will "....review/feature all material available from the enthusiast/small commercial sector.....include letters, readers adverts and trade adverts....P.D. features, and adventure game reviews....F.C.G's Desk Top Publishing software will be used to produce the fanzine, which will be A4 format, and cost around £2.50 to £3".

Apply to: 127 Brampton Road, Newton Farm, Hereford, HR2 7DJ

I've just received a leaflet about the above, which states that the first issue will be available from 10th August, 26-30 pages, at the special price of £1.25, special 6-issue rate of £6.25, subsequent issues will be £1.50 with 6 issues for £8.50. Richard also runs a Secondhand Spectrum Software service.....Ed

TOPOLOGIKA

Brian Kerslake, proprietor of Topologika, has written to say that he regrets he has discontinued the supply of Spectrum +3 adventure games.

Probably won't get the promised Atari conversions either.....Ed

Bob Adams runs a new Bulletin board. See the Bulletin titled "Adventure Probe". Phone: +44 (0)707 323403 FidoNet: 2:252/309.1 Hours: 22.00 - 07.00 7 days a week. Based on an Amiga and only a 2400 modem for the moment. All the usual File and Message areas including FidoNet, plus a huge collection of Adventure solutions. Amiga, Amstrad CPC and other computer file areas also available. Based in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, A local call from London. Early day, but the number of callers is growing.

Les Mitchell has just sent me a copy of August's issue of his new-style BARE-BONES magazine - an all new, 8-bit dedicated (Amstrad, Commodore & Spectrum) adventurers bi-monthly fanzine. It has 32 pages filled with reviews (written by yours truly), news, letters, solutions, and articles, plus a wanted page and helpline. There is also a competition to rename the fanzine! Hurry, the closing date is 15.9.92 £1.50 Order your copy from: L. Mitchell, 10 Tavistock Street, Newland Avenue, Hull, HU5 2LJ

BUGS AND AMUSING RESPONSES

Grimwold has been playing "Treasure Island", and in Part Two tried to GET the goat DROPPINGS.

The response must be amusing, but I don't know what it is.....Ed

He also thought it funny he could walk around in a pair of wellies full of water in "Microfair Madness".

The last time I wore wellies they had a great deal of water sloshing around inside.....Ed

AMAZING!

Direct from Taiwan!

Never seen before in this country

THE PING PONG BALL PLANT

This fantastic plant novelty is simplicity itself to keep

Can survive indoors or outdoors

Simply water and watch your ping pong balls grow

Will delight your friends and amuse the children

26 pounds (+VAT)

IN-TOUCH

AMIGA ADVENTURES FOR SALE: Amiga, and the odd one for the Atari Original Intocom, Sierra and Level 9.
Telephone 0926 427261 for prices, titles and reservations.
Please give alternatives in case your first choice is not available.

This is one of several requests forwarded to me which appear to be from people who are not regular subscribers. My apologies if I have got it wrong due to the sudden changeover of editor, but I feel I should warn purchasers that I can't accept any responsibility when you answer such advertisements. With limited space, I think priority should be given to readers who give full support to the magazine. In future my policy will be to only print requests (of any sort) from readers who have already paid for the issue in which their request appears. Sermon over. (Ed)

The following are from known Probers

COMMODORE ADVENTURES FOR SALE: The Pyramid, Castle Adventure, Desert Island, Mansion Guest, Mission X,
£2.50 per game or £10 for all five - please state tape or disc
Cheques/Postal Orders to: W. Fooley, Flat 1, 46 Exeter Road,
Liverpool L20 7BL

ATARI ST SOFTWARE FOR SALE: Over 100 adventures including DUNGEON MASTER plus maps/soin (£8), DEMONIAK (£8), TIME AND MAGIK (£5), HOUND OF SHADOW (£5), MINDWHEEL (£5), FISH (£5), GNOME RANGER (£4), LEGEND OF THE SWORD (£4), DEMONS TOMB (£4), LANCELOT (£3), THE PAWN (£3), SPACE QUEST 1 (£3), AMAZON (£3) CAPTAIN BLOOD (£3), BARDS TALE 1 (£3), WHIPLASH & WAGONWHEEL (£2), THE BLAG (£2), SHARDS OF TIME (£2), DEAD END (£2), TRIALS OF KRONOS (£1.50), TARK (£1.50), STAR PORTAL (£1.50), THE GRIMOIRE (£1.50), INVASION (£1.50).

Send SAE for complete list to: Neil Shipman, 1 Heath Gardens,
Coalpit Heath, Bristol BS17 2TQ.

ZX SPECTRUM COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS WANTED: I have written a lot of BASIC programmes and a few MC programmes mostly about 10K long. I would like some help to expand some of them to 48K or 128K and produce a commercially saleable game or utility. Would anyone be interested? Also, are there any computer musicians out there? I am not musical and so I cannot write the music for my programmes.

Contact: Geoffrey Pogson, 4 Gowan Crescent, Staveley,
Kendal, Cumbria, LA8 9NF Tel: 0539 821304

SPECTRUM SOFTWARE FOR SALE: Over 100 48K adventures, plus THE QUILL/ILLUSTRATOR and some Football and Cricket strategy games. Prices from 50p! Please send SAE for complete list to Geoff Wallis, 119a Fairbridge Road, London N19 3HF

WANTED FOR SPECTRUM +3: A working copy of PHILOSOPHERS QUEST
Please send details to the editor at the address on the inside front cover.

WANTED ON CPC DISK: GNOME RANGER in exchange for MINDFIGHTER
Please telephone Robert on 081 6688525

WANTED FOR ATARI 520 STFM: Infocom - Bureaucracy, Mind Forever, Nord & Bert, Sherlock, Starcross, Suspect, Suspended, Plundered Heart. Level 9 - Emerald Isle, Gnome Ranger, Knight Orc, Lancelot, Ingrid's Back, Red Moon. Please send lists and prices to: Brian Palmer, 8 Central Avenue, Sandiacre, Nottingham, NG10 5FN

WANTED FOR AMIGA: Infocom's (in original packaging) - Mind Forever Voyaging, (£20), Bureaucracy (£15), Sherlock (£15). Also offer £10 for Hollywood Hijinx, Plunder Hearts, Suspended and Suspect. Also wanted Uninvited and Shadowgate (£10 each)
Write to: Ernesto Simao, Portimoveis, Rua Bento De Jesus Caraca, 1 B/C, 8500 Fortimao, Portugal.

HELP WANTED

Please could anyone lend, photocopy or tell me what is on the inlay of PRELUDE TO D-DAY. I don't even know what my mission is.
BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHTE, 70 Coronation Avenue, Yeovil, BA21 3DZ

Can anybody help me in JEKYLL AND HYDE 128K version by the Essential Myth? I'm getting nowhere. Any help would be welcome.
ERNESTO SIMAO, Portimoveis, Rua Bento De Jesus Caraca,
1 B/C 8500, Fortimao, Portugal

Can anybody help with DRAGONSTAR TRILOGY? I can't get started.
Mrs. S VOLANTE, 16 Sheila Walk, Liverpool L10 4XT

I have recently acquired an Amiga, and would appreciate any reader's help in the following adventures, none of which am I making significant progress in: MORTVILLE MANOR, MAUPITI ISLAND, IT CAME FROM THE DESERT PARTS 1 AND 2, and a rather obscure adult adventure BRIDE OF A ROBOT, Any hints for these programmes would be much appreciated.

NICK BRAND, 39 Sutherland Crescent, Dundee, DD2 2HF, Scotland

I have a Spectrum +3 and I am trying to load Level 2 of MICROFAIR MADNESS, from tape.

BERNARD WOOD, 2 Culpins Close, Spalding, Lincs. PE11 2JL
(Bernard gave further details, and I wrote to DTHS to check if there was an incompatibility problem. It seems there could be, and the best advice given for Bernard, and anyone else with a similar problem on a +3, is for them to return the tape as a disc version is now available. Ed.)

I've received a distressing letter from Lol Oakes about his bad experiences with a mail order company who will, unfortunately have to remain anonymous for legal reasons. Ordering software from the advertisements in "glossies" is a risky business, and I haven't done so for years. When I want an expensive commercially-published game I always use Special Reserve, who are a little slow with orders sometimes, but if they can't fulfil your order for one reason or another, they ALWAYS send you a credit note, which can be used for future orders, or exchanged for cash.

HINTS AND TIPS

CASTLE BLACKSTAR on a C64 & Spectrum

FREEZE and UNFREEZE acts as RAMSAVE and RAMLOAD

THE WIMP GAME

by *H. Knott* played on an Archimedes

Room 8 - Switch on computer and monitor. Get cartridge from bottom shelf - cream with white label and black M. Insert it in slot at top right. Wait for Merry Christmas then switch off.

Room 9 - Find the middle Christmas card above the fish tank, then take any present from under the tree, except the stocking, and put it on the card. Do this until only the stocking is left. Take stocking and hang it on the nail on the right of the fireplace. Turn on the fish tank. Drag a log from the bottom of the pile and put it in the fireplace - three times. Put glass at the bottom of fireplace and put the mince pies next to it. Father Christmas appears down the chimney with a "YO HO HO!".

THE RUNES OF ZENDOS (Spectrum)

by *Margo Porteous*

The shimmering scroll opens the luminous door.
The Book of Spells opens the richly decorated gateway
The ornate key opens the gold-encrusted gateway
The filligree key opens the delicate latticed door
The Skull and crossbone key opens the sea chest
The tarnished key opens slimy door
The rusty key opens bloodstained door

Of the weapons, the sword has the most power.

You can greet the surly dwarf, but drop your possessions at another location first, or he will steal something you may need.

POLICE QUEST

by *Steve McLaren* played on an Amiga

When you are pursuing a light blue caddy and have finally stopped the car, f4, ctrl-d, f4, f8, go freeze, raise hands, lay down, f8, cuff man, search man, get up, follow me, open door on police car (the prisoner will get in), close door, walk over to light blue caddy, look in car, open glove compartment, examine glove compartment, get book, get licence, close glove compartment, open trunk, examine trunk, get bag, close trunk, get in police car, take prisoner to jail.

SPACE QUEST 3

by *Steve McLaren* played on an Amiga

The senseless part in the game is when the rat has a punch-up with you and he steals the reactor plus wire; just go back to where you got them from in the first place.

Planet Ortega - wear underwear, examine equipment, look through telescope, examine box, get detonator.

ENCHANTER

by *Steve McLaren*

To trap the beast in the trans room, examine map, draw line from f to p, examine map, erase line from v to m, examine map, erase line from p to f, examine map, draw line from m to p.

FOURTH PROTOCOL

by *Joan Pancott* played on an Amstrad

Part 3 - SAS ASSAULT

Warehouse name, enter "TIPTREE"

Look at all items you are carrying, particularly the machine gun (when doing this you release the safety catch), E. USE BOOBY TRAP (on the kitchen door), W, S, DROP SCREWDRIVER, USE KNIFE, GET SCREWDRIVER, E, USE GRENADE, USE MACHINE GUN, E, USE WIRECUTTERS, N, USE SHOTGUN (3 times), LOOK (twice), ANSWER YES, remember the date 12th May 1987, enter "12051987", USE SCREWDRIVER, LOOK, ANSWER YES, remember "SVETOFOR" (from Pasternak, Part 1 - Russian for traffic light) PRESS RED BUTTON, ANSWER YES, PRESS YELLOW BUTTON, ANSWER YES, PRESS GREEN BUTTON, USE WIRECUTTERS, ANSWER CUT RED WIRE.

DUNGEON ADVENTURE

by *Ron Rainbird*

Shaking the seed pod will defeat the Siren.

Drop a berry on the Giants.

To make you stronger, wear a Giant's belt.

Enter the packing case to store items, but don't forget to carry the case with you when you exit.

Throw six items at the Killer Willow, but don't chop it with the axe.

Driftwood makes a find torch, but only temporary.

Examine the corpse but don't leave it behind.

Carnivorous jelly needs something meaty to feed on.

To transport from pedestal to pedestal use a coloured collar, provided your collar is of a higher spectrum colour than the colour you wish to go to. Get a Mithril collar and you can go to any pedestal.

Wear yellow collar to get a hammer and nails.

Push the rock more than once.

HIT

by *Alf Baldwin* played on a Spectrum

You will need to use the only bullet left in your gun to get past Machine-gun Harry.
When captured by the heavies, insert the blow-tube in the keyhole to dispose of the bodyguard, then pick the lock with hairpin Attack MacDowell when he reaches for his gun.

SECRET OF ST. BRIDES

by *ANON* played on a Spectrum

To open the door in the wide corridor, USE NEWSPAPER, UNDER DOOR, USE PENCIL, PUSH KEY
You must have the satchel full of mud in order to get thrown off the train.
Always KNOCK before entering houses.

BOOZE UP

by *Jackie Holt* played on a Spectrum

Which pub wants what

Comet.....record
Cross Keys.....autobiography
Bakers Arms.....stale sandwich
Painted Lady.....miniature portrait
Black Horse.....say HELLO, must have a bank account
Fountain.....three coins
Angel.....harp
Bull.....oily rag
White Hart.....spur
Green Dragon.....flame thrower
Railway Inn.....Bradshaw's guide
Isaac Newton.....apple
Duke's Head.....bust
Pink Geranium.....flowers
Anchor.....butter
Man In The Moon.....mouldy cheese
Sinclair Arms.....CS
Plumber's Arms.....plug
Royal Oak.....acorn
Blacksmith's Arms...music book

PHILOSOPHERS QUEST

by *Barbara Bassingthwaighte* played on a BBC

When you cease to exist, THINK.
In the shipwreck, the octopus needs the ink.

STARSHIP QUEST

by *Barbara Bassingthwaighte* played on a Spectrum/BBC

At the bottom of the cliff, SKIN TIGERILLA

OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

RIGELS REVENGE - PART TWO

by *WILL ORTON*

Gun charger	Charges stun gun
Rifle	Carry to pass barricade
Documents	Contains identicard
Identicard	To cross bridge
Patch	No use, you can't get it
Spray can	Spray camera on android
Dustbins	Contains survival kit
Survival kit	Contains flare and dinghy
Flare	To kill sewer monster
Dinghy	No use, holed
Light guide	To get sphere
Android	Obstacle on bridge
Dipswitch	Press 1, 3 and 4 to set
Soldier	Holds paper
Sphere	Detonator
Paper	Contains switch sequence 1101

AGATHA'S FOLLY - PART TWO

by *Alf Baldwin*

Crystal shards	Sharp enough to cut creepers
Scarf	Wrap around hand when picking up shards
Leaves	Cure infected wound if you cut yourself
Shell	Dish to hold berry juice
Febbles	Throw them for Ted to fetch
Branch	Bridges fissure for Ted to cross
Stalactite	Bridges fissure for you to cross
Paper	Note left by Agatha for Kaz
Red parchment	Unknown symbols on it
Blue Parchment	Tell you how to cure wounds and plague
White Parchment	Tells you where Crystal Cavern is
Statue	Conceals entrance in cliff
Blue eye	Press to spray vines
Red eye	Press to reveal entrance
Yellow eye	Press to close entrance
Fruit	Edible and juicy. Rub on white parchment
Nuts	Edible and contain oily substances
Berries	Crush them in shell to get juice for ink
Feather	Use it to write with
Vine	Leash for Ted, and to pull stalactite
Phial	Clue to how to read white parchment
Blue crystal	Put it in the mosaic to replace broken one

GETTING YOU STARTED

PURPLE SEA

by *Barbara Gibb* on a C64

E, E, MOVE ROCK, TAKE MACHETE, X MACHETE (quite sharp), NE (slippery path), X POOL, TAKE BUCKET, SW, W, W, CUT VEGETATION, S, (field), E (mound of stones), TAKE STONE, SW, W, N, N, W, GRIND SHELLS (need stone), DROP STONE, TAKE GROUNDS (need bucket) W, S, SW, IN, X TABLE (see "BAZIN" scratched onto the top), TAKE TABLE, OUT, NE, N, TAKE HAT, WEAR HAT, WAIT (tide goes out), GO ISLAND, TAKE ROCK, X ROCK (your light source), S, E, E, E, E, NE, THROW GROUNDS, now safe to go NE to outside cave, S (winged creature swoops and grabs hat if worn, otherwise you are dead) S (it's coming at you again) DUCK, SW,.....

MANSION QUEST

by *Barbara Gibb* on a C64

Start in a train compartment. STAND, X RACK, TAKE SUITCASE (train moving slowly towards the station), OPEN DOOR (now moving slowly past the station), JUMP (land on platform - gate is locked) W (into waiting room), WAIT (station master returns and opens the gate), E, SEARCH POCKET (find train ticket), GIVE TICKET (ushered through gate)

A.R.E.N.A.

by *Philip Reynolds* on an Amstrad

GET BLUEPRINT, N, U, GET MOUNTING, D, S, EXAMINE TREE, ENTER HOLE, W, GET STONE, E, PLAY DEAD, CHOP BEAR, EXAMINE BEAR, GET CLAW, SKIN BEAR, GET SKIN, CHOP BEAR, LOOK, GET MAGAZINE, GET STICK, EXAMINE STICK (it's a match), GET BEDDING, MAKE TORCH, LIGHT TORCH WITH MATCH, D,

AURA-SCOPE

by *Barbara Gibb* on a Spectrum

X PARAPHERNALIA, TAKE (broken) COMPASS, U, X TAPESTRY, TAKE IRON (find needle), DROP IRON, MEND COMPASS, U (note 12 plinths - your task is to find 12 new items to replace the old zodiacs, and place one on each of the plinths), D, D, WEAR COMPASS, GO OUT, N, E, E, SE, E, NE, N, W, X REEDS, TAKE CATGUT, S, STEAL LYRE, MEND LYRE (with catgut), N, E, S, SW, W, NW, NW, W, W, W, W, NW, PLAY LYRE, NW, NE, SAY DANDELION (anagram of AN ODD LINE), SW, SE, SE, E, E, S, GO IN, U, U, PUT DANDELION ON PLINTH (11 more to find)..

THE BIG SLEAZE

by *Neil Ashmore* on a Spectrum

Part One - EXAMINE DESK, GET FLASHLIGHT, SMOKE LUCKY, WAIT (until woman appears), GET CHEQUE, N, GET MAC, WEAR MAC (when spot appears READ NOTE and DECODE NOTE), N, D, UNLOCK DOOR

ASK A SIMPLE QUESTION ?

This section is intended as an answering service for some of the specific adventuring questions you ask in your letters, so the answers are as direct as I can make them, rather than cryptic clues. If I can't give the answer here, your question(s) will be printed in the HELP WANTED section, so this may be a very short-lived section.

- Q. How do I get through the locked door in the palace in THESEUS AND THE MINOTAUR?
- A. Attempt to drink from the goblet in the Feast Hall. It is poisoned, and if Aegeus recognizes you he will knock it out of your hand, and then give you a golden key.
- Q. How do you make the bullet in NYTHYHEL/METHYHEL?
- A. First, BUY your KIT from the local store, then OFEN KIT. Inside should be a cup, mould and leaflet. READ the LEAFLET, then PLACE CRUCIFIX INTO CUP and LIGHT BUNSEN (match on the village green), HEAT CUP WITH FLAME and then POUR LIQUID INTO MOULD and OPEN MOULD (now have bullet!)
- Q. Where is the rope in MARIE CELESTE?
- A. In the brig. It is a metal one.
- Q. Where is the enemy hideout in VALKYRIE 17?
- A. Take a taxi from the taxi rank, and when asked for a destination, say SCHLOSS DRAKEN.
- Q. Where is the oil for the trunk in SHIPWRECK?
- A. In the oil stores which is D from the stern. You will need some protection from the fire!
- Q. I've found the drill, but where is the bit, in LOST TWILIGHT?
- A. Search the steps in the same location.
- Q. How do I get a torch for the battery in MICROFAIR MADNESS 128K Version?
- A. You have to solve the Great Caravan Caper mini-adventure first to get some airmiles to give to Myke.
- Q. How can I carry everything I need up the plant in LASKAR'S CRYSTALS?
- A. X PLANT (after you have watered it) and PICK and EAT BERRY.
- Q. I can't find a saddle in JESTER'S JAUNT.
- A. Given to you when you enter the stable, but you must have at least 13 items carried/worn for it to happen.

SERIALISED SOLUTIONS

THE GOLDEN PYRAMID

A walk-through by JACK LOCKERBY on a Spectrum

PART THREE

Here you find an urn which you pick up. After waiting a tribesman appears and after a little chat he offers you a lodestone in exchange for your knife warning you that he wants it back later. You sail back and land on the far shore. A quick look at the raft tells you that it is made out of a few small logs, so you decide to dismantle it and gathering up the logs you head for the granite slab. You insert the logs and then push the slab, it rolls over the spikes leaving the route safe to the east. Here you find a crate lying on the floor and suspended above it is an enormous rock held up by a rope, it doesn't look too secure! You hold up your torch and burn the rope and take a step backwards to a place of safety. The rope burns through and the rock crashes down onto the crate, ripping it open. Upon examination you find a map which should be useful in the quicksand area. You retrieve the logs and take them back to the lake because you will have to remake the raft if you are to return that lodestone. You remove the hair from the talisman and tie it onto the lodestone. Making sure that you also have the map and hook you head for the quicksand. With the lodestone and the map you have no problems finding a safe route through the quicksands. Finally you can progress no further so you throw the hook up and then climb up the snakeskin. You pick up a length of rope and continue travelling east, north, northwest and up you come to a room containing the elixir and a large wheel. Turning the wheel you feel the pyramid shake. Returning to the lakeside you make the raft, untie the hair and then thread the talisman which you then wear. You sail across to the far side and wait until the tribesman appears and when you return his lodestone he hands you a token. You examine the token and note its features, you then sail back again. You pick up the urn and fill it with water and then head for the room with burning coals. Throwing some water on the coals cools them long enough for you to cross over them. Here you find a box with a slot in the top, you insert the token and open the box to reveal a golden chalice. After cooling the coals again you travel back across them and travel back to the room containing the elixir, only this time avoiding the quicksand as you are no longer carrying the lodestone. You fill the chalice but before you can leave a voice asks you who is to receive the elixir. You say GOPO ZHIR of course and you are allowed to proceed. Further exploration brings you to a large lever which of course you pull. Retrieving the snakeskin you leave the pyramid and make your way back to the native village, making sure that you are wearing your hat as protection against the hot African sun. You give the elixir to the chief who drinks in one go. He then hands you the empty chalice to keep as a reward for prolonging his life thus bringing your adventure to a successful conclusion.

R.P.G. SECTION

CONQUESTS OF CAMELOT

A guide by *RON RAINBIRD* played on an Amiga 500

PART THREE

Once past the Riddle Stones, go up Glastonbury Tor and find the Well, North of the base of the Tor. In that area you will soon meet the Mad Monk. Get close to him without touching and ask him about the Grail. This will send him into a frenzy and he will run away. Follow him until he stops to attack you. Draw your Sword when he will cast a spell to produce two holograms of himself. By keeping your eye on his movements as he casts the spell, not allowing your attention to be diverted by the holograms, thwack him mightily with your sword until he dies. (It is a version of the pea under the shell trick). Go North and find the Altar, then "talk to Old Ones". Put five Silver coins on Altar to get a key. Go back to the Well, unlock and open the lid, then search the Well. Taking what you find, go back to the Ice Lake at Otley Moor and cross to the Ice Palace by using the Heart. Each time the Heart turns from Gold to Purple it means the ice is treacherous, so step back and proceed to firmer ground. There should be four sections to the Ice Maze; for the first head North, the next two are Westwards and the final screen by going up should take you into the Ice Palace. Give the Crystal Heart to the Ice Queen, However, she will not release Lancelot until you undergo the Test of the Flowers. The beginning of each answer is as follows:

FLOWER

SENTENCE

ANEMONE = Withered Hopes	If a dream is abandoned
CHRYSANTHEMUM (white) = Truth	Wise are they who seek it
DAFFODIL = Death	It alleviates all pains
LILY (yellow) = Falsehood	It can be sweet on the tongue....
SUNFLOWER = Haughtiness	Oh, it is splendid
ALMOND BLOSSOM = Hope	When light is dim
BUTTERCUP = Childhood	Surrounded by giants
CORNFLOWER = Celibacy	Known to the priest
FORGET-ME-NOT = True Love	For its sweet sake
POPPY (red) = Consolation	In time of grief

When successful, Lancelot is released and you are magically transported to firm land. Travel to Southampton Docks. Providing you haven't overspent in the course of your travels, see the Harbourmaster to arrange a passage. Ask him about fares and Ports of Destination. You should then be on your way to the Middle East

(to be continued)

R.P.G. FOR B-BITTERS - Number 2
By RON RAINBIRD on an Atari 800XL

In the earlier 8-bit days, it was planned by a Company, the name of which I cannot recall, to do a series of 7 games under the cover title of "Alternative Reality".

The first of these - "The City" - was not too popular and I for one could not get into it, though I knew of a couple of enthusiasts who begged to differ from my opinion. However, No.2 in the series - "The Dungeon" - was absolutely first class and was an early influence in putting my feet on the RPG path. Unfortunately, the producing Company disappeared and no further titles in the series were programmed so I never did find out the ultimate secret.

However, "The Dungeon" can be played on its own merits and they are many, with relatively easy mapping, lots of really good problems to solve, some extremely interesting characters to meet who can lie like the Devil and may or may not be foes, whilst the combat mode is excellent. I do not know whether or not this game is still available, but if you see it, grab it - but please pay for it first! (Watch out for No.3 in the series - Ed.)

MIGHT AND MAGIC II

Dear Litter Bugs,

I have just moved into Falcon Forest.

I used to live in Tundara but the Moonbeast put my property value down, but if you are looking for him look for a secret doorway in the east wall.

The reason I am wasting my valuable time writing this letter is because I found a copy of Adventure Probe dropped near my front gate near a pile of useless objects, these were just thrown away by thoughtless adventurers who have no consideration for others. Also passing adventurers keep asking me the same silly questions, so read on for some assistance and stop bothering me.

Before freeing Bishops of Battle from castles to gain extra points win the triple crown of that colour by winning one battle in each arena, e.g. green key and ticket Middlegate ... green bishop Woodhaven. Arenas are in Middlegate, Sandsofar and Atlantium. Triple crowns to win are green..yellow..red..black.... Mark has lost his keys, and the Death Spider has them.

The Shard and Skull are in the dungeons of Luxor Palace but leave Archers and Sorcerers at home, or in the nearest inn.

To get a farthing donate at all town temples, then flick it in the fountain at Middlegate. To lose years visit Murrays Resort, but don't go swimming in the pool. The Guardian is called Meenu, now you only have to find him.

Signed

MONGOOSE THE SNAKE EATER

STRATEGY SECTION

GENERAL MILITARY SIMULATOR

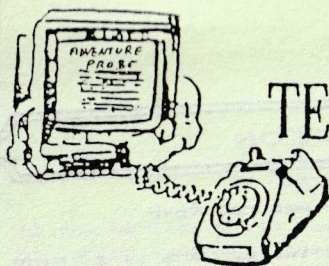
Reviewed by *SIMON AVERY* played on Amstrad 464D

This is what you call a serious bit of software. GMS is a nice offering. There are two parts on the tape/disc, the simulator and the creator.

I'll do the simulator first.

I've only played two strategy games before, Rommels Revenge on the Dragon, and Waterloo on the Amstrad so I won't pretend to be an authority on the subject. But to my untrained eye, this simulator would appear to be very professional. There are two simple simulations enclosed with the program, Tank Attack and the Italian Campaign. The gameplay is of the usual "select a unit and move it" type and if you want to enjoy a good game, make sure you have plenty of spare time. This is not to say the program is slow, it's not. It's just that the battlemap is very large, you have a lot of units and each team starts on either side. A large number of choices confront you at the first menu, you can have two people playing, one person and the computer (either side) or the computer playing itself! Another feature is one that lets you change sides half way through a battle! Not very sporting I agree, but you can be relatively sure of winning. All in all, the simulator is worth the money on it's own, but with the creator as well, all I can say is that if you like strategy games, get those cheque books out now! I only have two quibbles, the instructions on playing a game are pretty scarce, it assumes you already have a fair knowledge of this genre. The other is the keys defined, I would prefer to be given the choice of defining my own keys or at least be able to use a joystick (what's one of those?). The keys selected are all on the numerical keypad with CLR and DEL as well. This can get a bit tricky at times, but doesn't detract from the gameplay.

Now for the creator. GMS's wargame creator takes a little time to become fluent with, but does offer a very thorough way to make your own wargames. You can design your own icons for your units and your terrain. There is a wide variety of units types, such things as Infantry, Construction units, Paratroopers, Fixed and mobil short and long range missiles, long and short range bombers and such things as tanks (long or short range.) Provisions are given for the maximum number of turns to a game, different characters for each unit (the way each unit behaves when under computer control) and also a whole host of strengths, morale quality etc. I won't delve into too much detail over the creator except to say it is very detailed and also very flexible. The manual covering the creator is well written and lists a step by step description of each operation as chosen by the menus. Available from: SPM software who reside at 32a Albert St. Seaham. County Durham. SR7 7LJ Price: £14.95 on either tape or disc.



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