Spooky Manor

For the BBC Microcomputer

ACORNS●FT

# *Spooky Manor*

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Introduction

For over 100 years the old manor house has been empty. During that time strange tales have been woven around it; it is said to be haunted and to contain hidden treasure.

People say they have seen smoke coming from its chimneys and mysterious green lights flitting around it at night. Most folk say 'Rubbish!' to these rumours, but they stay well away and call the house 'Spooky Manor' like everyone else.

One day you set out with some friends to solve the mystery. You enter the house and begin to explore. Suddenly there is a loud slam from the front door; you are shut inside Spooky Manor. Looking through a window, you notice that the sun is setting and night is approaching!

Loading the program

You will have bought your copy of the program on either a cassette or a disc. The procedure for getting started depends on which version you have. In this booklet, instructions which apply only to the cassette version of the program are shown by the symbol 🖭; instructions which apply only to the disc version are shown by the symbol 🕹. Instructions without a symbol apply to both versions.

🖭 To load and run the program place the cassette (fully rewound) in the cassette recorder, type

`CHAIN "SPOOKY"`

and press RETURN; the 'Searching' message should appear on the screen as you do this. Now press the PLAY button on the cassette recorder and wait for the program to load. The title page will load in less than one minute and the main program will take a further six minutes to load.

🕹 Place the disc in the disc drive. The program is loaded by means of an 'AUTO-BOOT' and this is executed as follows:

1. Press SHIFT
2. While holding down SHIFT, press and release BREAK
3. Release SHIFT
4. Close the hatch

Note that this disc will work in drive 0 of either 40 or 80 track disc drives.

When loading is complete pressing the Space Bar will allow you to select the normal or microwriter keyboard(s) and to turn the sound effects on or off. The program begins with the keyboard and sound options on; pressing M or Q will select the microwriter keyboards or switch the sound off. Pressing ESCAPE during a game will return you to this option page and an additional 'Continue game' option will become available. The 'New game' option may be used at any time to start a fresh game from the beginning.

Getting started

When you have made your selections, pressing N for 'New game' will cause the main playing screen to be displayed. The screen will contain four windows numbered 1, 2, 3 and 4 in which information relating to the players will appear as the game progresses. At the start of the game the windows all display a message telling the players what to do to begin playing. When you enter your name as instructed it will appear above your window. The number to the right of your name is your score, initially zero. When one of the players is typing in a name the others have to wait until that player has pressed RETURN.

Once a player's name has been entered that player may give instructions to the program in one of two ways. If the microcomputer keyboard is being used, the player should type his or her number before entering an instruction and pressing RETURN. If Quinkey keyboards are being used, the player simply types in the command, ending each instruction with RETURN.

With the normal keyboard the players decide among themselves who is to enter an instruction and whether the turns go by strict rotation or in groups of two or three 'moves' at a time for each player. If Quinkeys are being used, all the players may play simultaneously.

Playing Spooky Manor

Spooky Manor is an adventure game for one to four players. As in other adventures the computer is your eyes and hands. It will describe your immediate surroundings and any treasures or other objects which may be present. You must tell the computer what to do by giving it instructions in ordinary English. Your commands will usually consist of one or two words eg LOOK, INVENTORY, UNLOCK DOOR, TAKE BOOK. The program is also able to recognise the words in its vocabulary when they are embedded in a sentence. Thus HAVE A LOOK ROUND and PLEASE UNLOCK THE DOOR have the same effect as two of the shorter examples above. A partial list of the words recognised by the program is given on page 4. A list of objects is not given as this would give away too much information.

Instructions are entered using either the normal computer keyboard or between one and four Quinkey keyboards. When using the normal keyboard each instruction must be preceded by pressing key 1, 2, 3 or 4 to tell the computer which of the players is giving the instruction. With Quinkey keyboards the players may enter their commands at the same time and the program will automatically distinguish between them.

The object of the game is to explore Spooky Manor, collecting as much treasure as possible before escaping. Escape is possible only when the ghosts have been banished and this will not happen until a certain object has been removed from its hiding place. The bearer of this object may go anywhere, without fear of ghosts, and where that player goes the other players may follow. When all the players have escaped from the house the game ends. Pressing the Space Bar at this point will start a new game.

Player interaction is an important feature of Spooky Manor. Players may greet each other when they meet in the same room by typing HELLO PETER or whatever the other player is called, and Peter's window will respond suitably. If one player drops an object another may pick it up. One or two actions require the co-operation of two or more players.

Words recognised by the program

NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, WEST, UP, DOWN, IN, OUT, BEHIND, LOOK, INVENTORY, PUT OUT, QUIT, GET, DROP, LIGHT, OFF, FILL, EMPTY, OPEN, CUT, LIFT, UNLOCK, READ, CALL, HELLO, WAVE, plus of course the names of all the treasures and objects.

The first six of these are used often and can, for convenience, be abbreviated to their initial letter: N, S, E, W, U, and D. Many of the other words have alternatives which you may prefer to use, TAKE and LEAVE, for example, instead of GET and DROP. Since the program looks at only the first three letters of each word, all words may be shortened to their first three letters.

There is no SCORE command since players' scores are constantly updated in the four window headings. The small size of each player's window means that information is soon scrolled out of sight so the command LOOK is useful to reprint the current room description. INVENTORY (or LIST) lists the objects carried by a player; everyone has an electric torch to begin with, but nothing else.

A player may leave the game by typing QUIT and the window will continue to display the departed player's name and score until *either* the game ends *or* someone else takes up the vacant place in the usual way (by pressing RETURN on the appropriate Quinkey or typing the player number on the computer keyboard). If everyone playing the game QUITs then the game will end.

Spooky Manor can be played by just one person. It's much more fun with several people, but a single player can still obtain all the treasures and complete the game with the maximum score of 600. Those actions that require player co-operation are not possible for one player (unless one person acts out the parts of two or even four players!) but there are alternative ways of achieving the same results.

Spooky Manor is a gentle game as adventures go. You don't break your neck by falling out of windows or get eaten by monsters. In fact you won't get killed; just scared by ghosts! A short example game is given later in this booklet and there is also a complete map of the manor. However, players may find it more challenging to explore and to make their own maps as they go.

Learning with Spooky Manor

Spooky Manor is a game that encourages planning and logical thinking. It is especially suitable for children, but adults will enjoy it too! The game provides stimulus for discussion and decision-making, and, although it can be played competitively, the advantages of co-operation quickly become apparent.

The best educational approach may be to simply explore the manor, finding out which words the program will respond to and building up a map as each new place is visited. Then, after many voyages of discovery around the manor, players will be in a position to devise the most effective ways to collect the treasures and escape. A player's map may not be exactly like the one provided but it might be just as useful. There are no right answers, some approaches will work while others, which may seem just as sensible, will not. Players should feel encouraged to be flexible in their problem-solving and to be imaginative when an 'obvious' solution is not successful.

Spooky Manor is a learning environment, incorporating a series of problems to be solved. Players who become involved in the game are involved in learning, and extending their personal 'libraries' of techniques for dealing with the unfamiliar. But, most of all, people who play the Spooky Manor adventure game will learn that learning is fun!

Example game

Suppose we have just two players, Karen and Steven. When they enter their names and have their surroundings described they may find themselves in the following situations (it varies somewhat from game to game):

Karen is in a small room whose floor is covered in plaster. A large iron key can be seen. Karen will of course type GET KEY.

Steven on the other hand finds himself in an east-west passage with an archway to the south and a stairway down to the cellars. He decides to go south. This brings him to the foot of a wide staircase.

Karen leaves the plaster room by the only exit (east) and bumps into Steven! She types HELLO STEVEN and Steven's window responds with KAREN says HELLO! Both players decide to go north, back to the east-west passage, then through a door to the west.
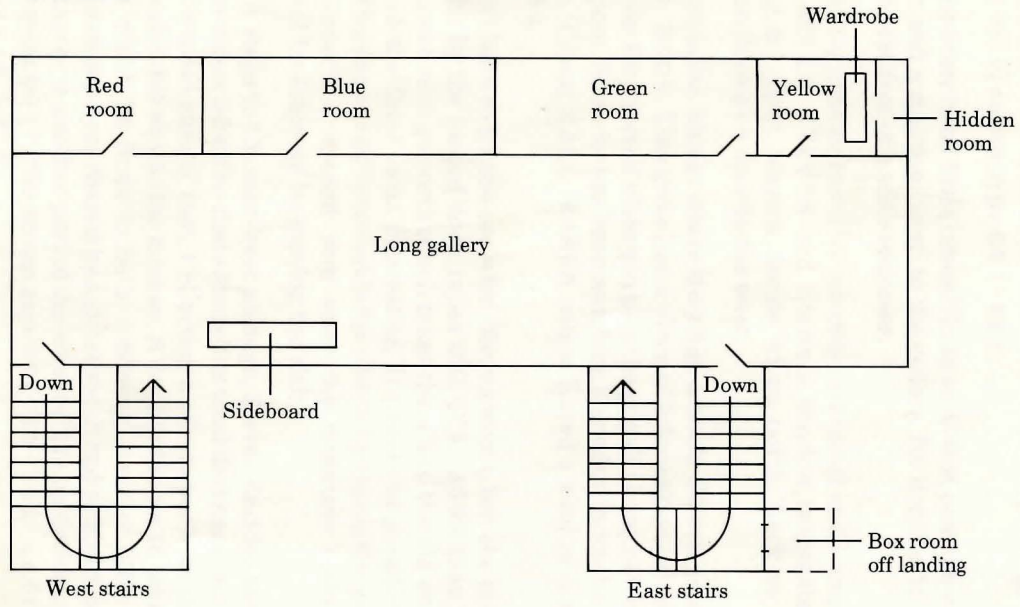
They are now in the library where they find a book. Steven gets the book and types READ BOOK. This gives him a piece of information (which we will leave you to discover for yourself when you play the game). Going north brings Steven to a locked door. Since he has been watching Karen's window he knows she has found a key. Typing CALL KAREN makes Karen's window display STEVEN wants you.

Karen doesn't have to go and see what Steven wants, but she decides to do so. She joins him by the locked door, types UNLOCK DOOR then OPEN DOOR. Both players can now go north which takes them into the old chapel. A slab in the middle of the floor looks interesting. It proves impossible for Karen to LIFT SLAB even when Steven adds his efforts by typing the same command. Another approach is needed here since the messages make it clear that something will be achieved by moving the slab.
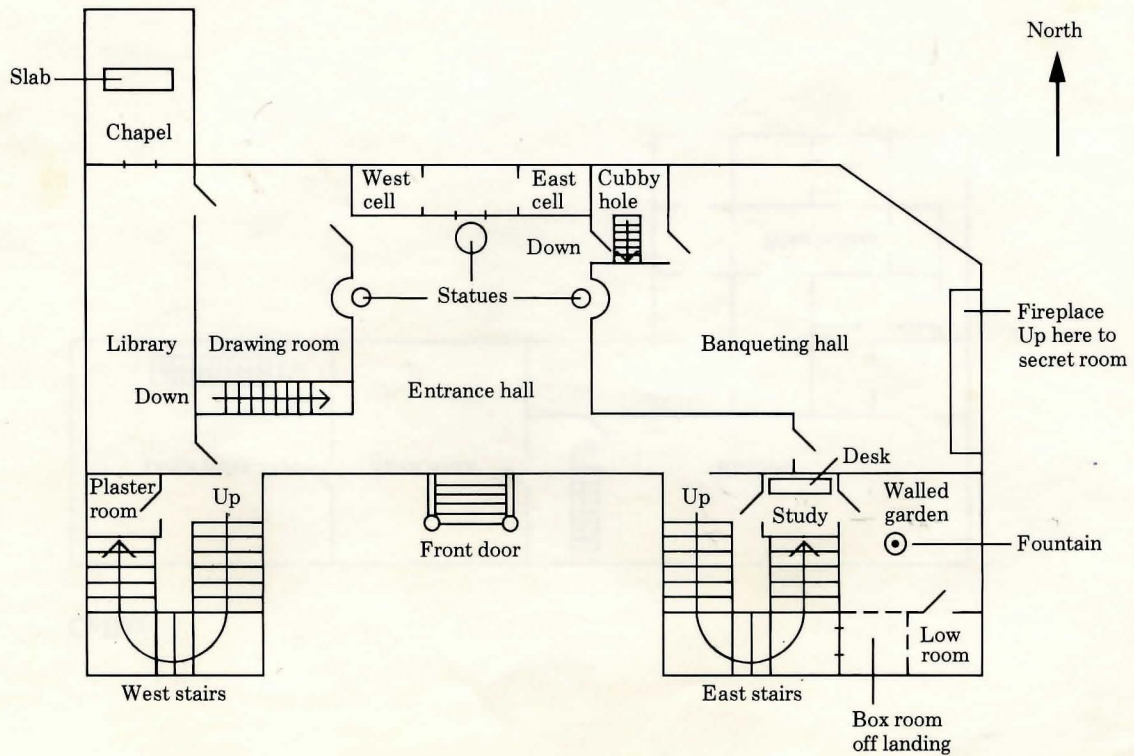
Retracing his steps to the east-west passage, Steven decides to try the cellars. As soon as he types DOWN he finds himself in total darkness, but SWITCH ON THE TORCH takes care of that. Collecting a silver spoon on the way, Steven eventually makes his way to the kitchen. A door to the south takes him into the wine-cellars, which he finds to be a confusing maze of little rooms. While exploring this region he is chased by a ghost which makes him drop his book and spoon. Ending up in another part of the wine-cellars he decides that enough is enough and types QUIT. His screen says STEVEN has left the game with a score of 0.

Karen is now left to continue her explorations alone. Entering HELLO STEVEN and CALL STEVEN elicit the information that she is alone in the house. This gives her the creeps so she QUITs too! The game has now ended (inconclusively in this case) and the players have the option of starting again by pressing the Space Bar.
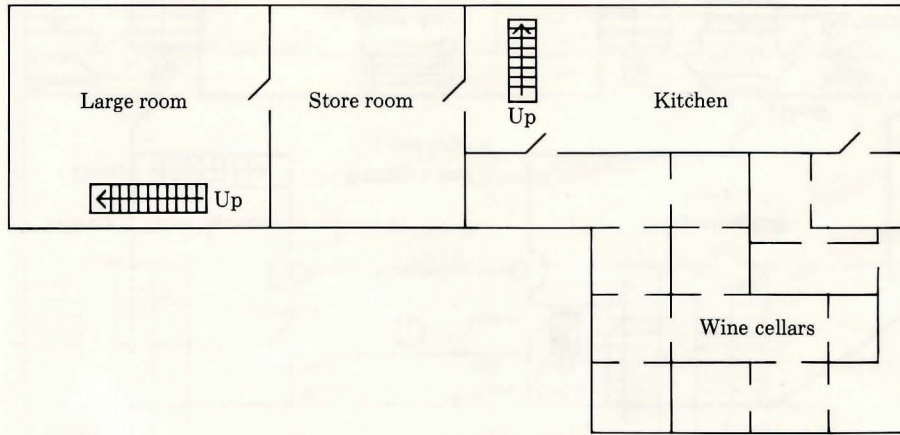
First floor

Wardrobe

| Red room | Blue room | Green room | Yellow room | Hidden room |

Long gallery

Down   ↑

Sideboard

West stairs

↑   Down

East stairs

Box room off landing

Ground floor

North ↑

Slab

Chapel

West cell   East cell   Cubby hole

Down

Statues

Library   Drawing room   Banqueting hall   Fireplace Up here to secret room

Down →

Entrance hall

Desk

Plaster room   Up   Up   Study   Walled garden

Front door   Fountain

East stairs

West stairs   Low room

Box room off landing

Cellar

Spooky Manor