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THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

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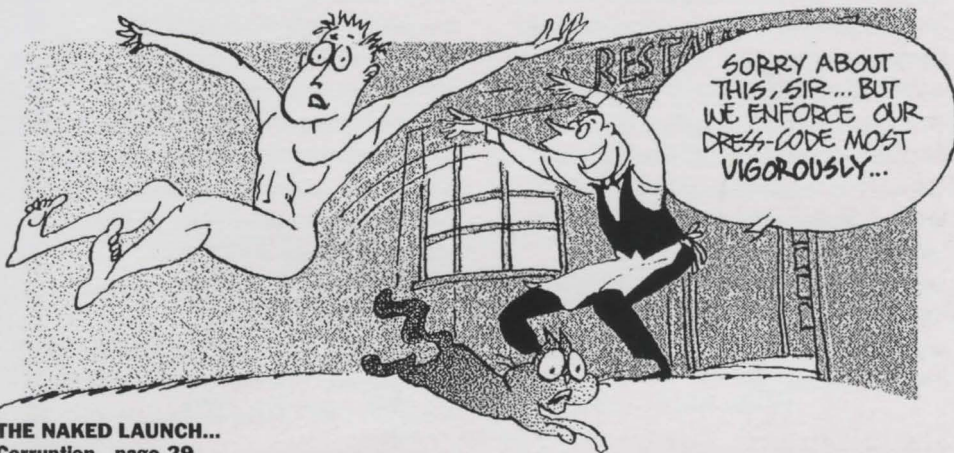
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THE ADVENTURE MAGAZINE   £4.00

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Contributions to Red Herring on any aspect of adventuring are welcome and can be either hand-written, typed or on disk in Atari ST, Macintosh or PC format (3.5 or 5.25 disks). The particular word-processing program used is not important - ASCII files are also suitable on any of these computers. Opinions expressed in reviews or elsewhere in the magazine are those of the writer and the editors do not necessarily agree with or approve of them. Contributors submitting articles on disk will have their disk returned. Closing date for copy is the 21st of the preceding month.

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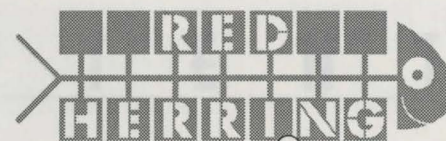
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Alice In Wonderland - author Robin Johnson - SynTax Library - PC - Disk 476

Black Crypt - Amiga - *Shop around for best price.*

CAW: Creative Adventure Writer - author Richard Hunt - SynTax Library - ST - Disk 660 (v2.7) / PC - Disk 661 (v1.2)

Cliff Diver: Purchased Sight Unseen - author Patrick Farley - SynTax Library - PC - Disk 555

Corruption - Magnetic Scrolls - Special Reserve Price - Amiga - £6.99 / Atari ST - £6.99 / PC (3.5 only) - £3.99

First Past The Post - author Gareth Pitchford - Adventure Workshop - Amstrad - Disk version needs CP/M or CM/M2.2 - Disk £4.00 / Tape £2.00

Gnome Ranger - Level 9 - ST/PC/Amiga..*Try advertising for a second-hand copy.*

Horror Of Rylvania - author Dave Leary - Adventions - Macintosh / PC 3.5 & 5.25 / ST / Falcon - $21.00. Order from High Energy Software, *(see General Information for details).*

Hurry! Hurry! Hurry! - by Dave Malmberg - SynTax Library - PC - Disk 594

Knight Orc - Level 9 - ST/PC/Amiga. *Try advertising for a second-hand copy.*

Larry The Lemming's Urge For Extinction - author Scott Denyer - Adventure Workshop (B side of First Past The Post).

Legend of Kyrandia - Virgin Games - Amiga/PC - RRP £35.99. Needs 286 PC or better.

Might and Magic IV:Clouds of Xeen - New World Computing - PC - RRP £49.99

Might and Magic V:Darkside of Xeen - New World Computing - PC - RRP £49.99. *Shop around, Sue got them for £25.00 each.*

Moraff's World - PC - available direct from the States but it is easier to register via their UK agents PDSL at Winscombe House, Beacon Road, Crowborough, East Sussex, TN6 1UL. Tel: 0892-668912 - £31.73 including VAT and P&P. State whether you want a 720K or high density disk. (Shareware version, the unregistered version of Moraff's World is called the beginner's version.)

Perils Of Darkest Africa - SynTax Library - PC - Disk 482. Compilation of four adventures, other three reviewed in last issue.

Quest For The Holy Snail - Adventure Workshop - Amstrad - Disk version requires CP/M or CM/M2.2 - Disk £4.00 / Tape £2.00

Seastalker - Infocom - all 16 bit formats - in Lost Treasures Of Infocom - Vol. 1 or try advertising for a second-hand copy.

Snow Joke - author - Scott Denyer - Adventure Workshop (B side of Get Me To The Church)

Test - Micronet - Spectrum. *Try advertising for a second-hand copy.*

World of Xeen - New World Computing double - PC, CD-Rom - RRP £50.00.

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If you write, a stamped, self-addressed envelope would be appreciated.

EDITORIAL

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Dave Barker

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Tim Lomas

William McCole

James Jillians

James Judge

Ron Rainbird

Phill Ramsay

Phill Ramsay who, as you all know writes the Amstrad reviews for Red Herring, has been having a rough time over the past year or so with health problems and I'm afraid they haven't been improving. For now, he's unable to write for us and his contributions will be very much missed and I personally, will miss the long letters he used to write to me. So from all of us at Red Herring and from all our readers... *Get Well Soon, Phill.*

The last issue of the Sam Adventure Club disk magazine went out in January and Phil Glover writes to tell me that they'll be producing occasional club disks as and when they get the time. Phil is offering help to anyone stuck on SAM adventures — call him on 021 777 7324, Monday-Thursday 6-10pm and Sundays 11am-6pm if you need some help or want to chat about SAM-related matters.

Commodore 64 readers may be interested in a disk magazine from the States called Alinet, published by Jack Vander White, PO Box 232115, Sacramento, CA 95823, USA. They also market PD, Shareware and original games and would be interested in hearing from those who have programs of that sort for 64/128 or PLUS/4. I'm unable to tell you any more about this disk magazine — no C64 — but if any of our C64 readers would like to review it, drop me a line.

Notice has just come in (too late for me to do anything but briefly mention it) of the Spring All Micro Show to be held on April 16 at Bingley Hall, Staffordshire County Showground, Weston Road, Stafford. For more detailed information contact Sharwood Services, Upland Centre, Ipswich IP4 5BT. Tel: 0473 272002. Fax: 0473 272008.

I apologise to Jean Childs for not having a review of her new graphic adventure, WYSIWYG, in this issue — the blame is all mine, I was *very, very* late in sending it out for review. Sorry, Jean. Apologies again for the late delivery of this issue. Our hardware problems have now (touch wood) been fixed.

Coming in the next issue — a Red Herring Exclusive Interview — Richard Hewison talks to the Ratt and Wyvern (Tony Crowther and Ross Goodley), the programmers of the award-winning RPG *CAPTIVE*.

Marion

PC owners, who are fans of Laurence Creighton's games on the Spectrum, will be pleased to hear that Laurence is working on his first PC adventure, written using AGT. It's at the playtesting stage so, with any luck, we shouldn't have long to wait before it's released. I don't have any information about the title or plot but will let you know as soon as more info comes our way from sunny South Africa. Laurence MAY still write one or two Spectrum adventures a year. He asked me to say that he knows he's reneging on what he said only a short while ago in his appeal to Jon Lemmon but he supposes there comes a time when all of us have to 'off with the old and on with the new…'

Jim Whittle of Ivysoft wrote recently to let us know that the competition linked to his Spectrum game, Peneless, has been won by a lady in Portsmouth. We can now give help on the game so please contact us by the usual route if you need a hint. A solution will be available on the Red Herring list as soon as I get it typed up!

Syndicate was one of the big hits of 1993 and there's already a data disk out for it — The American Revolt. The people are revolting, to coin a phrase, and you, as the leader of a controlling Syndicate, must bring them into line. There are 21 new missions on the disk and lots of new weapons and gadgets. One, a clone shield, allows you to disguise your agents as ordinary citizens. The game has network support too, so up to 8 players can take part in specially-designed multi-player missions.

Captive 2, Liberation, is still on its way. The good news is there will also be a CD-ROM version… or maybe there will ONLY be a CD-ROM version — it's hard to tell from the current write-ups. We'll find out in the summer when it will be released.

A Windows CD-ROM only game being advertised now is Iron Helix — an SF point and click adventure from MicroProse. Evidently it will feature cinematic 3D graphics with live actors and fully digitized voices, a crisp and atmospheric movie-quality music soundtrack, fast real-time action with no irritating gameplay-delaying loading times. Iron Helix is a virus which has attacked a space craft, altering the DNA of the crew and making them unrecognisable to The Defender, a robot that stalks the corridors of the ship. The ship is on a course which will make it crash into a heavily populated planet. You have just 90 minutes to stop it, by manoeuvring a probe through the ship to the computer which controls its course.

MicroProse are also working on another adventure to use their MADS system — as seen in Rex Nebular and Return of the Phantom. The third game will be Dragonsphere, set in a fantasy world of dragons, wizards and shapeshifters. It's due in February and is said to have a high difficulty level.

They also have a cyberpunk/Gothic horror adult RPG called Bloodnet which starts when you are bitten by a vampire and turn into one too, so will need to keep up your strength during the game by biting people periodically. The only thing that can save you is defeating not only the arch-vampire, Van Helsing (sound familiar?) but also a large corporations, TransTechnicals.

Silmarils, authors of Ishar 1 and 2, are working on a new RPG called Robinson's Requiem. You play an ex-government agent, the afore-mentioned Robinson, and are being held on a prison planet. Your aim is to escape. Locations vary from jungles and lunar volcanoes to alien villages; characters range from cyborg prison guards and fellow prisoners to aliens and monsters.

Sue

Flushed with success at finishing her second RPG (and it only took her 14 months!), Sue gathers up the old gang and heads off to a greater challenge…

MIGHT AND MAGIC IV: Clouds of Xeen — MIGHT AND MAGIC V: Darkside of Xeen — WORLD OF XEEN

Reviewed by Sue, played on the PC

Okay, I admit it! I really enjoy RPGs but I've only finished two. The first was Demon's Winter on the ST, that took 8 months. The second was Might and Magic III which took 14 months. By my estimation, that means M&M4 should take…erm… let's say about 2 years!

Just to make things even more complicated, at the same time as I got M&M4 I also bought Might and Magic V:Darkside of Xeen. When installed together, you'll need almost 35 Meg of hard disk space — not counting space needed for saves which run to about 300K each, saved in pairs, one for Clouds, one for Darkside. I can hear voices asking, why install both? The reason is that when you have both games in the same directory, they form a massive RPG called World of Xeen. Each game can be played individually and you can also move from one to the other on a separate quest which involves both worlds.

For Xeen is a two-sided world; Clouds on the top, Darkside underneath. In Clouds you'll find pyramids dotted about. If you try to enter one, without Darkside also being installed, you'll (so I'm told) be informed that *the moons aren't in alignment* or some such bit of lingo. But, if you're playing World, you'll be transported to a town on the Darkside and a pyramid THERE will transport you back to Clouds. I've been told

there is another way between the two worlds but I haven't found it yet.

Both worlds are in trouble. Well, they'd have to be, wouldn't they? Otherwise there'd be no point in playing the game. In the upper land of Xeen, the King's brother, Roland, had gone on a mission, searching for the fabled *land beneath the land* (yes, a route to the Darkside). Nothing was heard of him for many years, but suddenly he re-appeared, talking about various artefacts but mostly about one called the Sixth Mirror which, like the other five was a mirror of transportation, but unlike the others, was portable.

The King started a search for the Mirror, urged on by Roland, who was obsessed with it. Crodo, the King's advisor, was the one who discovered the truth… Roland wasn't who he seemed to be, he was in fact the evil Lord Xeen, one of the undead. Crodo was secretly whisked away and imprisoned in Darzog's Tower from which he sent you a message… create a weapon to destroy Lord Xeen and save the world!

Meanwhile, on the Darkside, their local baddie, Alamar, was trying to take over. The Queen was imprisoned in her Castle, turned into a vampire, some said. The Castle had been *moved out of phase*, making it impossible to enter. Meanwhile, her advisors were in hiding,

trying to escape the wrath of Alamar's forces. However, and to link the two tales neatly together, Alamar had also captured Roland and sent his own representative to the Land of Xeen (Lord Xeen, I assume). Again, who will stop him? Maybe you and your trusty band.

So, two fairly complicated stories and things don't get any clearer when you first start to play. So far, I have concentrated my own efforts on Clouds, partly because it seemed a bit easier (ahem) and partly because Alex van Kaam sent in a solution for SynTax and I want to keep ahead of his solution as I publish it each issue! So I'll concentrate on Clouds for this review. Like Darkside, it requires at least a 286 with 2 Meg of RAM and VGA.

Comparing Clouds with M&M3 which I reviewed in Issue 7, basically it's more of the same, but the emphasis is on the word MORE; more monsters— more spells — more quests. I thoroughly enjoyed M&M3, though sometimes I thought I'd never finish it, and though it was a more user-friendly game than M&M2 (which I gave up on), Clouds is more friendly still.

To start with, you have the choice between playing as a warrior or adventurer. I chose adventurer, which cuts down the number of wandering monsters. That may have been a slight mistake as sometimes the place seemed a tad empty. On the other hand, it is a relief not to have a fight every other step as in some games. Character creation is very similar to M&M3, as is the screen display. There are a few differences which improve the system, notably the separate inventories for armour, weapons, accessories and miscellaneous items, and the Quest menus which not only display Quest Items which you have collected but also list the quests you are on together with relevant co-ordinates (handy for sloppy note-takers) and keep notes on any useful messages and passwords etc. discovered by the party (ditto).

As well as the major quest in the game, there

are many secondary quests. Some of them will provide an item which will be useful in your struggle to beat Lord Xeen, others will link to another secondary quest, whereas a third group are just there for the fun of it. Unlike M&M3 where XP, gold and gems were gained in each fight, now you will sometimes get gold and gems that way, but XP are given to you for completing quests, another reason to be helpful to the inhabitants.

The Land of Xeen is very varied with hills, plains, snow and ice, desert, lakes, rivers and whatnot. As in M&M3, skills like mountain-eering and swimming are invaluable. The graphics are stupendous, with some truly horrendous monsters and good animation. The only thing I didn't like is that monsters often cringe when you hit them — werewolves, for example, open their eyes wide and curl one paw over their heads. I felt quite mean.

Sound effects are nothing much until you try to enter some of the areas such as the dwarven mines and towers, when an animated character will challenge or welcome you, complete with full speech through the sound card (all major cards are supported). The mines are another good source of gold which the characters can find in veins at the end of some corridors. Hacking away and excavating the gold can give great riches, or result in a cave-in. As in real life, sometimes you need to excavate a vein more than once to get all the gold, and the amount gained each time will drop.

Clouds is every bit as enjoyable as M&M3, if not more so, purely due to the depth of detail and atmosphere in the game. It is a game to savour and in which to get engrossed. It's a shame you can't port over characters from the previous games but you can, at least, create ones which are virtually identical. The new portraits take some getting used to, though! Highly recommended.

DEMON KNIGHT or MEDIEVAL ADVENTURE
Reviewed by William McCole, played on the Spectrum

This is an adventure written in basic. It was found on the Christmas issue 1984 (No.11) of Spectrum Computing published by Argos Press.

This *Golden?? Oldie* is very particular about input. Some of the phrases required are weird. Due to the very simple parser, the exact word held in the database has to be used or you will remain stuck.

A bug in the system caused the help clue to be printed instead of the message when READing the parchment. I had to LIST the program to read the message. The mystery message is written using a reversed alphabet and translates as :- *TO FREE THE PRINCESS, TO BE A SUCCESS YOU MUST READ THE PSALM, WEAR A CLOAK, CROSS AND A LUCKY CHARM AND STAB THE ONE WHOSE DOING THE HARM*. As is seen, the message is useful to show which articles are required to complete the game.

Do not waste time, as I did, trying to open, raise, lift or break the portcullis in the first location. It is only stage dressing and takes no part in the solution. You can search the dead king and get a rope but this appears to be a red herring as it is not required.

GO must be added to all directions and no abbreviation is allowed. However GO and ENTER are interchangeable and GO NORTH, ENTER NORTH are the same. You are allowed to carry six items.

As you will realise, you do not *play* this adventure, you pick your brains to try to sort out the correct input and , in fact, I was forced to read the database to get anywhere. Not that reading it gave much help as it only uses the
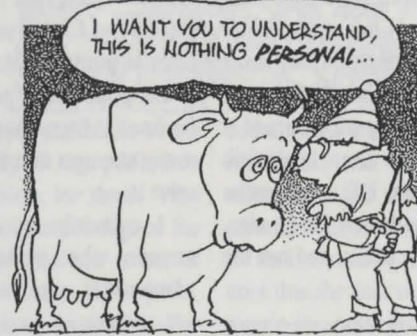
first three letters. In particular *SA* caused no end of trouble (*SACked?*).

In addition some of the hidden objects had no hint as to their location. Help on the hidden object locations was supplied by *Spellbreaker*, without which the game would never have been completed.

To try to give some indication of the difficulty involved -

1.) To Kill The Animated Skeleton. GO WEST (from skeleton), FILL BELLOWS (at alkali pool), GO EAST, BLOW SKELETON — An Animated Skeleton is now replaced with Parts of a Skeleton.

2.) The Dagger required to be *blooded* — The only living creature (apart from the smelly monster) was a cow. You can't KILL, STAB, KNIFE, CUT, or do anything else to the cow..... Then in comes SAC .... SAC COW results in a dead cow now replacing a cow but you have to check your inventory to see the *blooded dagger* (SAC I think must mean SACRIFICE.)

3.) The Signpost — There was no examine, only search or look. LOOK POST gave the report *"At the very top I see a key"*. You can't climb, shake, swing, jump or even use lance to get key (I was carrying a jousting lance at the time and it was the only thing I had which might reach the top of the signpost). Then I thought SAC COW... Let's LANCE KEY — *I've got it* and the inventory now shows *a rusty key*.

All the time I was playing the adventure, I kept waiting for the characters I met to react to me but this never happened. You could not pass Skelly till you killed him but he never attacked you. The monster was just there being so smelly

that you could not get near him *(why would you want to get near a monster?)* A wave of a flower and the monster became sweet smelling. He must also have been a very tolerant monster as he permitted me to search him and take away his talisman, without a word. The witch let me cut her hair and waited patiently till I burned it and the green gas killed her. Even Beelzebub allowed me to attempt to stab, kill or otherwise mutilate him without retaliation and, also, waited patiently as I read the psalm and cut the mandrake to see him off.

My overall assessment is that this poorly written adventure should have been *destroyed* ten years ago. It is only fit for giving to people you do not like or used by sadistic parents, as a form of punishment. The only reason I finished it was masochistic pride — *I was not going to be beat!!!* Even cheating, as I indicated, it took many attempts over the last six months to finally solve it.

I certainly would not recommend it to anyone who wished to enjoy playing an adventure.

A Look Back At…

GNOME RANGER

Reviewed by James Jillians, played on the ST

The star of this adventure is Ingrid the Gnome. After graduating from the Academy of Gnome Economics thirteen years early, she decides to go and visit her family who live on a small farm not too far away. When she gets there she discovers that the farm has been badly managed, and that her hopelessly incompetent family have let it fall to disrepair.

Immediately, Ingrid decides to use her newly learnt skills, including Animal Psychology, Resource Management, Enunciation, Fishing, Windmill Mechanics, Elemental Science, Self-defence and Orienteering (among others), to solve her family's problems.

Although she means well, things do not go according to plan. After accidentally causing her father to float off by solving his weight problem, nearly causing her gran to drown in a boating accident, making the windmill to go into overdrive and collapse, and by doing many other things that are intended to help but end in catastrophe, she brings her desperate family to the point where they all wish to get rid of her. They try many different ways of getting Ingrid to go away but, in blissful ignorance of their

malice, she manages to foil all their attempts.

Eventually, the family is visited by a travelling leprechaun who sells magic items. The other family members jump at the chance to buy a magic scroll of teleportation and give it to Ingrid as a reward for all her *help*. Later on, when she has retired to her room, Ingrid reads the scroll and vanishes…

Ingrid appears in a strange new land that she does not recognise. The local creatures are oppressed by an evil witch. It is your objective to guide Ingrid home back to her "loving" family, but, because Ingrid won't let a problem go unsolved, you must help her defeat the witch and clear up the other problems which she finds in the second and third parts of this three part adventure.

The game is a text-adventure, but with graphics for almost every location. Like the other Level 9 games I have played, Gnome Ranger incorporates many special movement commands which make the game incredibly user-friendly. As well as being able to move around the scenery with the NORTH, EAST, SOUTH, WEST and other direction commands

you can simply type in *GO TO* and then your desired destination, the game will choose the appropriate direction commands and take you there automatically.

There are many non-player characters in the game, who become friendly if you perform a small task or solve a problem for them. They range from talking animals, like the dogs or the eagle, to other mythical creatures such as nymphs, leprechauns and centaurs. At one point, you even encounter a talking treehouse! The NPCs all have distinct personalities and tend to wander off on their own at most inconvenient times. However, with the special *FIND* command, the game will take you to the same location as any character you choose automatically. There is no futile wandering about trying to find a lost person or place in this game!

The NPCs are very important because enlisting their help is often the only way to solve a puzzle. Sometimes you need a whole gang of friends to help. The characters can be commanded by typing the character's name and then giving him/her instructions as you would to Ingrid. The NPC's can do almost anything that Ingrid can do and can be controlled using the *WAIT* and *FOLLOW ME* commands.

The text is often very funny, with humorous messages if you do something wrong, for instance, *The management would like to apologise for not knowing what you are blathering on about*. There are lots of other jokes hidden in the text — enough to keep you amused throughout the whole game.

The characters too are very amusing. For instance, Ingrid has her own stroppy yet kind personality which frequently makes you laugh, especially when it gets her into trouble!

Gnome Ranger also comes with a really funny novella, which explains the plot of the

game and is also used in the protection check.

The game's puzzles are mostly logical, and are pitched at a medium difficulty level, but I did come across one puzzle which would have been unsolvable had I not looked at the game's solution. Ingrid buys a spade and must dig in a certain location (by the waterfall) in an attempt to find a some gold. Unfortunately, when she does this she does not find anything. To solve the puzzle she must give the spade to a nymph, tell her to dig and then retreat into another location while the nymph does it. There are no clues telling you that you should do this — personally I think that this is a ridiculously hard puzzle and unsolvable by anyone but the most lucky of adventurers.

Apart from this, the game was fun to play, and the other puzzles were solvable with a bit of thought. The game is very long, and in three parts — more than a few hours of entertainment here!

There are useful *RAM LOAD* and *RAM SAVE* commands as well as ways to take back foolish moves. I couldn't find any bugs or spelling mistakes.

The graphics are excellent and the text descriptions are flawless — all in all, Gnome Ranger is extremely well presented.

Gnome Ranger is one of the best adventures I have ever played. It is funny, challenging and should keep you absorbed for weeks. The special *FIND* and *GO TO* commands make playing the game really easy — no time is spent wandering lost around the countryside. Apart from the one annoying puzzle (which shouldn't be a problem now as I've told you the solution!) the game is pitched at a difficulty level that is not too easy, but allows you to complete the game if you concentrate hard enough.

KNIGHT ORC

Reviewed by James Jillians, played on the ST

Once upon a time, there was a band of orcs who lived inside a huge mountain. Their existence was relatively peaceful for a long time until a group of human adventurers decided that they would start guided tours of the mountain, the main attraction being bashing the poor orcs on the heads with clubs. As you can imagine, the orcs weren't to happy with this, so they decided to launch a raid against the inn where the adventurers found lodging between trips to the mountain.

Armed with weapons, the orcs marched out to the inn. There, they discovered that the adventurers had gone in search of the newly invented printing press, to mass produced guide books of the orc's mountain. The orcs were a bit disappointed, but brightened up when they discovered a huge amount of booze behind the bar and in the cellar of the inn.

After a night of revelry, having drunk the last of the wine and ale, they were preparing to leave the inn to return to Orc Mountain. Unfortunately, at that moment, a small army of knights arrived and declared war on the now stupidly drunk orcs. The orcs, seeing that they were vastly out-numbered, invoked the Ancient and Honourable Rules of Chivalry, Sub-section 4, Paragraph C, insisting upon a *Fight of Champions*. This meant that, instead both armies fighting, a single representative was picked from each army to fight a duel (in this case a jousting tournament). The loser and his companions would have to surrender unconditionally to the opposing force. The *Fight of Champions* was scheduled for the next day.

Grok, the leader of the orcs, picked Grindleguts, an orc who was especially ugly (even less attractive than the others!) and who was not liked very much. The other orcs tied poor Grindleguts up so he couldn't escape and made a tactical retreat back home.

In Knight Orc you play the part of Grindleguts, your mission being, in the first part of the game, to reunite with your other orc *chums*. Apparently there are three parts to the game, but your mission in the other parts is unclear. The manual says one thing, and the back of the box says another. (When you reach Part 2 you are not given any further details). You must complete the game in order to discover what your objective is!

The game is a text adventure, which accepts all the normal VERB-NOUN inputs, as well as many other commands unique to Level 9 adventures.

Did I say three parts? Well, that's what it says on the box and in the manual, but in reality Parts 2 and 3 have been combined together to make a single Part. I certainly couldn't distinguish Part 2 from Part 3!

At the beginning of Part 2 you discover that you are wearing a visor. When you remove the visor the land changes from a magical world of sword and sorcery to a sci-fi futuristic one. You can swap between each *time zone* as often as you like, but the only things that change are the location descriptions and the names of the game's characters. The objects become *Hi-tech* but their properties remain the same. The solutions to the puzzles are identical in each *time zone*.

One of the first things you notice about the game is the large number of other characters wandering about the landscape. They have independent lives, going where they like, and having fights with each other. Unfortunately, they all despise orcs, so if you they recognise you (which happens frequently) they will attack you, and more often than not kill you. Instead of being able to deal with solving the puzzles you must spend a considerable amount of time escaping from the non-player characters.

The non-player characters do not have distinct personalities, as in Gnome Ranger, they are simply *names* wandering around the locations. Instead of livening up the game, they make it tedious, delaying the action by forcing you to read about their pointless escapades.

Dotted around the first part of the game there are many gold objects. If you try and collect them the NPCs steal them from you, and when you steal them back, they attack and kill you. You could have gone to a great deal of time and trouble hoarding the gold objects, and keeping them hidden from the NPCs, only to discover that they are in fact red herrings, and of no use whatsoever in completing the game!

On the other hand, the silver objects in Part 2 do need to be collected, and you can spend hours just finding the *%$@£!* things, reloading the game every time you get killed, all the while wondering whether you are on a fool's errand!

Some of the NPCs can be recruited and used to solve some of the puzzles. It is impossible to complete Part 2 without help from them. They can be commanded by typing in their name and then any command. They can more or less do anything you can.

The use of other characters in solving puzzles is an original idea and can be quite good fun, but in Knight Orc the idea has been overdone and makes the game frustrating rather than fun. You will find yourself dying time after time, even when you are solving a puzzle completely unrelated to the NPCs. Some adventurers may see this as a challenge — I see it as a complete waste of time!

The game is huge— there are hundreds of locations. Fortunately commands such as GO TO, RUN TO and FIND have been incorporated which allow you to travel directly to a person,object or place without having to type the appropriate compass directions. With these commands it is impossible to get lost.

The puzzles themselves mostly require you or other characters to use objects in the correct places, although in Part 2 you collect spells and use them. In Part 1 you must find bits of rope and tie them together to form a a longer rope with which you can swing across a huge chasm, to the location for Part 2 of the game. Part 1 is quite easy, but the next part is very nearly impossible...

I have to admit that I was forced to use the solution to complete this game because many of the puzzles would have been unsolvable to me without it. How anyone would be able to think of the solutions to some of the puzzles, and in the correct order, I cannot imagine! There are so many objects, so many characters and so many places, being able to link them together in the correct way is something that, in my opinion, only a real expert could do.

The game is meant to be humorous, but, unlike Gnome Ranger, it fails miserably. You do not feel involved in the story so the game relies entirely on puzzle solving to keep you entertained. The novelty of playing a disgusting orc soon wears off. There is a slightly funny novella included in the Knight Orc box, which is used in the protection check.

There is a nicely drawn picture for every location — the game comes on two disks to cater for this. As usual, sound is non-existent.

For most adventurers, Knight Orc will be seen as a ridiculously hard and thoroughly frustrating game which lacks playability and humour. However, if you find most adventures too easy, and require something more challenging, this game might be just your cup of tea...

A LOOK AT THE 'B' SIDE
Larry The Lemming's Urge For Extinction, Quest For The Holy Snail and Snow Joke

Reviewed by Phill Ramsay, played on the Amstrad

The three games in question are to be given away on the B side of the disk when you purchase certain full-priced games from Adventure Workshop.

I intend to review each game in turn and although I found two of the games less than interesting (B side games is a good term for them), it must be borne in mind that these games are being given away. Equally, playing adventures is a personal thing. A game I detest may well be enjoyed by another adventurer. We can't all have the same tastes or like and enjoy the same thing.

LARRY THE LEMMING'S URGE FOR EXTINCTION *by Scott Denyer*

I've haven't played Lemmings, the game never tempted me. Perhaps that's why I found this game to be, well, boring. I don't want to give you the wrong impression, there was nothing *wrong* with the game. It wasn't bug-ridden or riddled with spelling and grammatical errors, it just failed miserably to capture any vestige of interest.

In fact, when playtesting, it was hard work for me to force myself to play through this game, it is quite small (14 locations) and I felt a great sense of relief when I finally terminated Larry's existence.

The problems are not difficult, although I did find the solutions a bit illogical at times.

I don't like to be so negative about any adventure, but I can't really think of anything positive to say about Larry the Lemming. I would have been quite happy never to have had the misfortune of playing it.

Other adventurers might enjoy the game and find my comments a little too scathing. Be that as it may, the only recommendation I can make with regard to this game is to *give it a miss*.

Larry The Lemming's Urge For Extinction is on the B side of First Past The Post.

THE QUEST FOR THE HOLY SNAIL
by Gareth Pitchford

History has got it wrong. Apparently King Arthur was a lazy fat slob and left all the hard work to his knights. It was no surprise, therefore, that when Arthur decided that someone must undertake the Quest Of The Holy Snail he didn't volunteer himself (royal privilege, I suppose) but one of his knightly mates... you!

I have to confess that I didn't fancy this game. It just didn't appeal to me. The title alone was enough to put me off. However, when I played it, I didn't find it so bad. By the time I got to the castle I was quite enjoying it.

The aspect of the game that I found so good was the plays on words. They were absolutely awful. So bad, in fact, that they were good — if that doesn't sound too contradictory. I'd love to include a couple of examples here but I don't want to spoil the enjoyment of other people when the messages appear on the screen.

I did a lot of groaning when I saw some of the messages, but mostly they brought a smile to my face (something not easily accomplished).

The problems are (as in First Past The Post) not very difficult, but one or two need some

thinking about. It is a larger game (37 locations) with quite a few problems to solve. My favourites were *a sign pointing to certain death* and *a stamping foot*. The solutions weren't very difficult (some people might consider them too obvious) but were quite amusing.

One point to note is that you have to use the commands LOIN, LOUN and LOBE (no doubt familiar to Simon Avery fans...) fro Look In, Look Under and Look Behind respectively, although the inlay will document these instructions.

The game is very playable and enjoyable, and I can definitely recommend it.

Quest For The Holy Snail is on the B side of Life of a Lone Electron.

SNOW JOKE *by Scott Denyer*

The idea behind this game interested me. The whole adventure takes place in once location — fans of map-making will, of course, find this to be something of a disappointment. The story is quite simple. You are trapped inside your car in a snowstorm, the doors have frozen solid and your task is to escape from the car.

Sounds quite simple: and in fact it is. The game took me just twenty minutes to complete. There are one or two nice touches where objects have been cunningly hidden, or you have to think of how to obtain them.

Although the idea of having a one-location adventure is not a new one, I was quite looking forward to seeing how much of a challenge the game would be.

It has been converted to the Amstrad format by Simon Avery using Adlan. There is nothing

KEEP AN EYE OPEN FOR FALLING LEMMINGS...

wrong with Simon's conversion, but I might want to forget that he converted it.

Snow Joke didn't live up to my expectations. Writing a game of this nature cannot be easy because you don't want to make your problems unsolvable. Yet I got the distinct impression that the game could have been much better.

As an example of what I mean... there is a box of matches. The ignition key is frozen into the ignition, I EXAMined the box and was told *it is just an ordinary box of matches*. I tried OPEN BOX *(you can't)*. I tried to STRIKE MATCH *(you can't)*. I even tried GET MATCH on the chance that BOX and MATCH were defined as different nouns. I still couldn't get the match out of the box.

As it happens, heating the key with the match is not the way to free it. However, there was no trapping of input to allow you to make the attempt. With such a small game there must be oodles of free memory and using Adlan, which allows almost anything to be checked for, I would have expected more catering for whatever input the player might make in such circumstances.

I was left with the belief that, whatever the game might say to the contrary, this was *not* an ordinary box of matches.

Snow Joke didn't live up to my expectations but nevertheless it was different from most other games I've played. For that, if nothing else, I have to give it credit. It shouldn't take you too long to solve and is worth playing as a warm-up exercise before you load in a more challenging adventure.

Snow Joke is on the B side of Get Me To The Church.

PERILS OF DARKEST AFRICA
Reviewed by Marion, played on the PC

You have travelled across darkest Africa seeking some of the treasures from King Solomon's Mines. It is told that handfuls of sapphires, rubies and diamonds were given to a local tribe over one thousand years ago. Rumour has it that the descendants of this tribe still guard the treasure. You have come to a deserted British Trading Post and your task is to find the treasure and return here safely with it.

The first thing to catch your attention as you investigate the Trading Post is a notice which warns you to make sure that you always have enough water with you — and hanging conveniently underneath this notice is an empty plastic bag. Fortunately, outside the post, there is a trough filled to the brim with sparkling water. It's an oddity in the game that you don't actually have to drink the water in order to slake your thirst, putting the bag in any convenient source of water immediately stops your death from dehydration.

Also in the Trading Post is a revolver, but it's empty, so finding some bullets would seem to be your first priority. Having done that, and picked up a pair of climbing boots on the way you can now turn your attention to exploring the surrounding countryside. Unfortunately this means shooting most of the wildlife because they are in your way. Doing this requires no thought or skill, you simply *shoot rhino* or whatever and in most cases you kill it/them. You will find a pygmy village and if first, you manage to scare them off and then later placate them, they will be very helpful to you.

There's a whole lot of help in the game — from the notice in the Trading Post to hints at other locations, such as *I wonder what would happen if you dig around here'*, on returning to the Pygmy village you are told that *perhaps leaving something here will result in some help* and so on. In this way you are led through the game, with none of the puzzles being too difficult. There are a couple of slightly more complicated things to do near the end but those apart, and the constant and sometimes irritating search for water, this game is eminently suited to the beginner or not very experienced text adventurer.

This is a traditional text adventure of the type popular several years ago on 8 bit machines. It's nicely written, quite atmospheric and enjoyable to play. And there's not a maze to be seen!

CLIFF DIVER: Purchased Sight Unseen
Reviewed by Sue, played on the PC

While attending an art auction at a gallery in the Potero District of San Francisco, PI Cliff Diver pricks up his ears when he overhears an argument going on between the owner and a distraught young woman. Wishing to learn more, he invites her to a nearby coffee shop, where she tells him her tale.

It appears that the woman, Beverly Skapes, had a sister, Cynthia, who was a talented artist, despite the fact that she was blind. A few years ago, Beverly visited her sister at her studio, only to make a ghastly discovery; Cynthia was at her easel with a fine paintbrush plunged into her back. An investigation and a court battle over Cynthia's will followed, with Beverly accusing one Dennis Valeux, a somewhat shady Parisian

art dealer who had befriended the dead woman two years before her death.

Following a disagreement between Cynthia and Valeux, who had converted a suite in his mansion into a studio for her, Beverly took her sister from the mansion and settled her into a small studio apartment in Davenport. And there she stayed and worked until her untimely death.

It further transpired that Cynthia had rewritten her will only a month before her death, begging that Valeux should never be allowed to purchase any of her paintings, especially her (as it turned out) final work, *A Year of Coastlines*, a series of four paintings. But her studio had been turned over, the paintings and her files had gone. All that was left was a coded note which, Beverly believes, points to Valeux. She desperately needs you help to get proof against Valeux, by photographing the Artist's Certificates belonging to the paintings — which she believes he has — proving that he is selling them without authorisation.

And so Cliff's investigations begin, with you tagging along as he hops on and off buses around the streets of San Francisco, in search of the certificates… and justice.

Purchased Sight Unseen was written using the AGT Master Edition v1.0. This allows the author to customize the appearance of the game more than he could with the original utility and Patrick has made good use of this. The screen display is basic white on blue with a red status line incorporating yellow lettering (location, score, moves so far). Location titles in the text are also shown in yellow, as is a representation of the street layout, much of the game being played around the streets of San Francisco. So if you're on an east/west road, you'll get a double
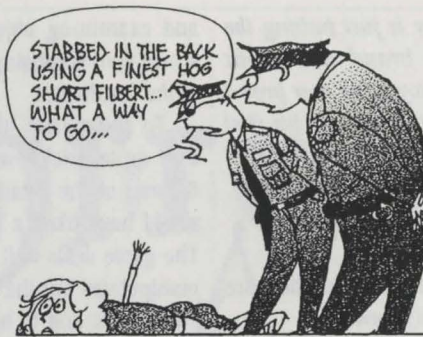
horizontal line symbol depicting this; similarly you'll get right angle symbols for corners etc. Exits are highlighted in green and the ubiquitous buses in red.

The buses! I must tell you about them because they play such a big part in the game. The streets are laid out in 3 by 3 location grids and in the four edge locations you'll (usually) find a bus, such as an RT-11. Boarding the bus will take you to another section of the game with more streets and four more buses. If you like mapping, you'll love it. If you don't… well, you may get a bit cheesed off, but at least each section is small and laid out logically. However, the use of buses to get from one section to another makes it somewhat maze-like to negotiate.

The neat and logical layout is extended to the centre location of each 3 by 3 grid. This centre, ninth, location is the important one — for example, one of Valeux's galleries, his warehouse, his home, Cliff's office block. The galleries are laid out in a fairly standard fashion and in each you'll find one of Cynthia's paintings, with a label in Braille. You'll also discover an office at each gallery, guarded by a big dog (of one breed or another) who will attempt to protect the desk in there from anyone who tries to open its drawer. As if that indignity weren't enough, you'll lose 5 points!

The important locations are well described and though the location descriptions of the streets aren't atmospheric in themselves, the author has created an excellent atmosphere by describing the characters you (and Cliff) can see. For instance:

"I'm at the corner of 17th (west) and Texas (south).

A fellow across the way is just putting the finishing touches on his brand new cabin cruiser — his first boat. Boy, is he ever proud of it. He wants everyone to know it's his first boat. How can I tell? He's leaning over the aft railing, painting TAOB TSRIF YM on the stern. <ahem.....> Was there ever any doubt?"

That one really appealed to me, but there are many more which are equally good.

As in Patrick's previous game, the adventure is seen through the eyes of Cliff Diver so all responses are in the first person, with a lot of humour, even in the instructions and on-disk documents which are quite lengthy. Cliff performs the actions with suitable comments e.g. "Ok... so I reach over and get the yellow paper (sigh...)" when you tell him to pick something up. If you read, say, a leaflet, the text will be displayed on the screen as it would on the leaflet, with Cliff's comments at the side as he reads it.

There are 128 locations to visit and 1000 points to score during the game. It is quite easy to score points in the early stages by simply travelling on buses, visiting different locations

and examining objects. Later, points will be scored (not surprisingly) for taking photographs of the Certificates.

To summarise, this game is well designed and quite tricky with very few bad points. Because of the detail in the text descriptions, I would have liked a better EXAMINE command. The game deals well with objects which can be manipulated but the scenery is just there to add atmosphere and to be enjoyed for its own sake. When I tried to walk off with one of the certificates, the game ended, but the message was erased from the screen before I could read it so I don't know exactly what happened. The scoring is erratic, in that I got 10 points every time I photographed a certificate, not just the first time.

You (and Cliff) will do a lot of running about before you feel you're getting anywhere and it's worth spending time mapping it thoroughly so as not to miss any locations. But, the game is addictive — even when you're stuck (as I am at the moment), it's definitely one of those just-30 mins-more adventures.

Registration is just $10; slightly more if you also want maps and hints.

SEASTALKER
Reviewed by James Judge, played on the STe

I didn't know that Infocom did *Junior* text adventures, just *Standard, Advanced* and *Expert.* To give you an idea of what the levels stand for here are a few examples of Infocom rated games: HHGTTG — Standard; Zork 2 — Advanced; Deadline — Expert

Seastalker is the only Junior game that I know of, so I was interested to see just how junior it was. In the manual it says that this is suitable for 9 year olds and above.

Anyway, on with the review...

There's something down there. It's big, terrifying and bulging. It is threatening to become uncontrollable and only you can do anything about it. What is the thing and where is it? Well, it is the Snark, a genetically engineered monster by an evil scientist and it inhabits the ocean. At the moment it is attacking an underwater dome called Aquadome and you are, at the start of the game, lounging in front of your videophone doing not a lot.

This is where the adventure starts. The videophone rings and you must tune into the

supply system which is very simple to do. Then you must attach certain pieces of kit to the Scimitar, in preparation for the final confrontation. Instead of being a series of puzzles characters just wander up to you and say, *"Do you want this attached to your sub?"* and you tell them, *"Yes"* and you are given five points.

Other puzzles are just as simplistic, with you being told what to do before you find out what you must do.

Another downfall in the game is that it lacks the depth of other Infocom adventures that I have played. If you examine certain characters (who don't really star in the game) you will be told to refer to the manual and the same thing happens for most things to do with the research station and Scimitar.

Also the game uses the Infocards as just another way to give you vital information. Well, sometimes, that is. If you ask someone where the Snark was last seen you will be told that if you want a hint, look at card no. X and clue Y, replacing the blank with Z. Luckily there are only a couple of times that the game hides vital info like this in the cards — the rest really are simplistic hints that you don't really need.

Upon opening the box you are presented with a manual (which is part of the box, to be truthful), the game disk, a badge, a small map of the bay and an Infocard set (plus all the usual Infocom bumpf for hints etc. which aren't useful these days).

Everything is as usual until you look at the manual. Not only does it include detailed instructions about most items you will come across in the game, it also maps all the areas that you will visit in detail (and that is not mentioning the supplied map of the bay).

Thinking about it, I didn't really enjoy playing this game. It felt as if I were being kept at arms length from the storyline and not allowed to frolic in the muck (as it were). If I were a nine year old I may find the whole thing great, being an inventor come James Bond, the computer calls me by my name and I don't have to think much. I pilot a sub and defeat a terrible sea monster, not to mention the mad scientist and (if I know anything about corny storylines) I'll be getting the girl pretty soon.

If you haven't played a single text adventure in your life try this one — it is a nice introduction into the world of Infocom. If you have played even one, move up to the Standard level — the games are far more enjoyable and involved with a greater sense of achievement and also humour.

Not my cup of tea and slice of cake at all.

H E L P   W A N T E D

THE HORROR OF RYLVANIA

Reviewed by Marion, played on the Macintosh LCIII

"The hiking trip across Europe has been a wonderful experience for two recent college graduates like yourself and Carolyn. From the mansions of England to the beaches of Greece, you've walked in the steps of the Crusaders and seen sights that few Americans have ever seen.

Carolyn had wanted to skip the Central European nation of Rylvania. "Why bother?" she'd said. "There's nothing but farmers there and creepy old castles — nothing we haven't seen already. The Rylvanians are living in the last century."

That, you'd insisted, was exactly why Rylvania was a must-see. The country was an intact piece of living history. A real treasure in this modern age.

If only you hadn't insisted! Night fell as you approached a small farming village in search of a quaint inn to spend the night, the howling began. A scant hundred yards from the village, and it happened... the wolves appeared from the black forest around you and attacked. Big, black wolves that leaped for Carolyn's throat before you could shout a warning, led by a great gray-black animal that easily stood four feet at the shoulder. Carolyn fell to the rocky path, blood gushing from her neck as the wolves faded back into the trees, unwilling, for some unknown reason, to press their attack.

If she dies, it will be your fault. You curse the darkening sky as you cradle Carolyn's head, knowing that you have little time to find help. Perhaps in the village to the north..."

What a great (shudder) way to start an adventure I thought, as I stared at the screen. There was I with my dying friend and not a soul in sight. After being dissuaded by the game from moving her, I set off towards the village in search of help. I charged on straight north which brought me to the village pub, but there was no help there. Although worrying all the time about Carolyn, I explored further. I soon found a Doctor's Office and peprsuaded the doctor to follow me back to the spot where I'd left her.

You're not going to believe this — but when we got back Carolyn had disappeared, leaving only bloodstains to show that she had been there. The doctor was none too pleased and after reading me a lecture about time-wasters, removed himself from the scene.

I searched the locations which led off to the east and west of the track to the village (not the best of ideas) but with no luck, so I wandered back to the village and picked up a few things and listened for a while to the chat from the pub regulars. I even went back to the doctor's office, but it was locked tight and he had gone.

I hadn't a clue what to do next and when I found that I was just repeating myself and landed back at the start, in desperation, I typed *help* — not expecting any. To my amazement, I didn't get a sarcastic reply. I was told that *if you can't get into the doctor's office, then you'd better start over*. In my hurry to get the doctor to follow me, I hadn't bothered trying to manipulate any of the objects there. So I followed the advice and *started over*.

Eventually I thought I'd solved all the problems in the village, so I wandered off in towards the moors. I made one move in that direction...

"You walk out of town, heading out into the moors. Your mind wanders to Carolyn, and the recent strange turn of events. Where could she have gone? Is she dead? Can you still save her? Where did Doctor Trolovitch go? The moors are dark and cold. A light rain is falling and the rumblings of far-distant thunder reach your ears. A flash of lightning, and suddenly, she is there. Carolyn — dressed in a white robe, standing before you on the fog- covered fen! Stunned, you run toward her, calling her name. She smiles, arms outstretched, reaching for you. And then you are there, hugging her, crying — and noticing how cold she is, how pale — how very dead. Her mouth opens in a jagged smile. Cold, bone-white pointed teeth reach for your neck. You cry out as her canines puncture your throat — and go limp as your lifeblood pumps into her mouth. The world turns black... You dream...

The dreams are endless and horrifying. You are alive, then dead, then floating in a formless void, then somehow alive again — but not alive. You have changed — you can tell. You are no longer human. You struggle out of blackness and find yourself enclosed in wood..."

Eeek... I'm a vampire and I'm buried underground somewhere in a coffin and I can't get out and I'm very, very hungry.

I wasn't sure that I was going to like the theme of Rylvania, but the Gothic Horror bit is well leavened by a lot of humour and I was too engrossed in the many and varied puzzles, ranging from *relatively easy* to *downright frustratingly difficult*, to bother about having to *bite* a few people in order to feed my hunger.

The text, although gory in places is well-written and does add to the atmosphere, just like a traditional Gothic novel. Adventions recommend it for the *mature* player, but I could find nothing offensive. A bit bloody in places... but then you are a vampire!

Unless I'm checking a map, it's my usual habit to play text adventures in the *Verbose* or *Wordy* mode and I recommend you also do this. There is just so much information in the text and if you don't, you do tend to miss things (or I do anyway). There's a fair amount of help from the footnotes, responses to some actions and also by listening to what other people are saying. Waiting around in the pub, eavesdropping on the chat is worthwhile as is following a ghost when you meet him. For fun, wait around in the Guest Bedroom, read the footnote and listen to the sounds outside the window and try sitting on the Oriental carpet in the hall. Author Dave Leary obviously sees some of the British comedies which have been transported across the Atlantic. There are references to Blackadder and Faulty Towers in the footnotes and also a reference to one of the Beatles' songs.

You can die a lot in this game, but the Undo command lets you go back to a place of safety. I haven't actually counted how may times you can Undo, but it seems to be a lot. Oops lets you change a misspelt words by simply typing Oops and the correct spelling. You can scroll backwards through the text to see what you have done — the methods of doing this are different on the PC and the Mac, but both are equally effective. You can also use Script to write the game to a file as you play it. Unscript turns it off again.

Rylvania is, as are all of Advention's games, not huge insofar as the locations are concerned but it's packed with far more puzzles and things to amuse you than many a *huge* adventure I've played. The current commercial fashion seems to be for adventure games to need piles of

graphics and massive amounts of Ram and Disk space. The Rylvania application file takes up a mere 476k on my hard disk. No sound... no graphics... just you, your imagination and a great game.

There were a couple of things I thought significant which turned out be be *red herrings* and one set of circumstances which would have produced a completely different result and I won't tell you how long I side-tracked myself while not seeing the (*fairly*) obvious. Great game... thanks a lot, Dave.

So, finally, does good triump over evil, or is it the other way round? Do you save Carolyn, the doctor, yourself and also lift the curse from the citizens of Rylvania? Maybe you do, but then again — maybe you don't...

Notes: The marketing of Rylvania is handled by High Energy Software, not by Adventions themselves. High Energy Software's address and telephone number can be found in 'Useful Information' on page 2. I ordered it from them by telephone, using VISA and the $21 cost (including p&p) translated into £14.60 on the Barclaycard statement. Even although it was just before Christmas when I ordered it, it only took a week to arrive. It's a painless operation and the telephone call only took a few minutes.

Dave Leary has sent Sue a demo of Rylvania (PC only) for SynTax Library. It's disk no. 659. Hmmm... why PC only? What about ST and Mac demo disks?

FIRST PAST THE POST
Reviewed by Phill Ramsay, played on the Amstrad

The story line is that you have had a row with your fiancee (*Miss Rosie Cheeques*) and in a fit of temper you wrote a somewhat scathing letter to her.

The next day you realised just what you had done and decided to intercept your letter before it is delivered to her and she calls the wedding off.

This is quite a challenging game. You are working against a time limit since if the letter is delivered you have failed in your quest. It isn't a large game (*28 locations*) but a lot of problems have been crammed in. Many objects have been hidden in quite cunning ways.

The first time I played the game, I ran out of time before I had even left the house. The second time, I didn't even stop to think before trying to break into the sorting office — and that was that.

The game plays quite smoothly and there are some good touches of humour which add to the fun. The problems are all logical, although a couple of them do require a little thought. Remember, time is of the essence.

First Past The Post is not really difficult and I think most adventurers will manage to complete it without too many problems. It is bug-free and when I play-tested it I found very little wrong with it.

I can recommend this game as well worth playing.

HURRY! HURRY! HURRY!
Reviewed by Sue, played on the PC

The shareware text adventure writing utility AGT, The Adventure Game Toolkit, has been mentioned many times in Red Herring. Well, there's now a new commercial version of AGT about, the Master's Edition (MAGT). This has all the user-friendliness of AGT but, in addition, allows you to incorporate sound and graphics into your game. So far, only a few adventures have been produced using MAGT. *Hurry!* is a PD game written using v1.5 by Dave Malmberg, who programmed both AGT and MAGT, so you'd expect a game that showed just what you can do with the utility. What has *the boss* achieved with his own brainchild?

A trip to the circus is normally a time for enjoyment and relaxation. But as Buzz Crusher, Chief of Police of Midvale, Ohio, it's all part of your day's work. As you arrive at the county fair ground where Florian's Circus is giving its final performance for the people of Midvale, you are feeling pretty proud of the deductions you made that have brought you here.

Last night, two valuable paintings, a Wyeth and a Renoir, were stolen from the Midvale Art Gallery. Checking the FBI's computerised files, you realised that this was the most recent in a series of art thefts. Over the last four weeks, a Picasso was stolen from Washington DC, a painting by Seurat from Baltimore, a rare Egyptian tapestry from Philadelphia and a Van Gogh from Pittsburgh. It looks as though the thief is working his way across the country. But what could be the link?

Then, while drinking your morning coffee and reading the Midvale Gazette, you saw the advert for Florian's Circus. Where had it visited? Only the four places which had been hit! It's too much of a coincidence to be ignored. So, grabbing a pair of handcuffs and reference book of circus argot, pinning your official badge onto your shirt and calling your dog, Rex, you head off to the grounds to start your investigations.

Fans of Infocom's Zork will appreciate a wander round the surrounding fields where they'll find a small boarded-up house with a vandalised mailbox outside it. But, heading north to the tent itself, a clown, looking a lot like Colonel Sanders, greets you and, recognising you as a man of the law, generously gives you a free pass to the circus, which will admit you, free, to any of the shows and exhibits.

There's lots to see, including a shooting gallery, menagerie (complete with a gorilla, giraffe, several elephants and some large cats), an organ grinder, sword swallower and a fat lady (Tina — 827 pounds of feminine charm). The White Wagon, the main office for the circus, has a door bell but, when you ring it, there's no reply. The door's locked but maybe, just maybe, you could find a way in. Everything looks perfectly normal but you KNOW there's a thief close at hand... but who? Florian himself? The nervous-looking Boffo the clown? Surely not one of the belly dancers?!

The bulk of the adventure involves your search for the missing paintings, some of which are hidden in very unusual places, and unmasking the thief. As in all mysteries, every detective needs a good sidekick and your faithful dog, Rex, will prove invaluable in your investigations.

The screen display is white text on a black background with your input in yellow. The location titles are also in yellow and the status line, which shows the location, moves taken and time of day, are in yellow on red. However, you can customise the screen display of Hurry! by pressing ESC and bringing up an options box for screen size, colours etc. You can choose from a wide range of colour combinations — even, say,

black on black if you like, but I wouldn't recommend it. Your input can either be directly under the game text or on the bottom line of the screen. All changes made can be saved to disk for future sessions. Another option available is for a full menu system. Selecting this brings up a list of verbs along the bottom of the screen which can be selected using the cursor keys or, for speed, typing the first letter to jump to that section of the menu.
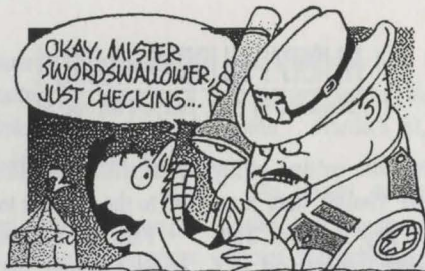
All the useful commands are supported — BRIEF or VERBOSE text, SCRIPTing the text to printer, LIST EXITS (for those times when you get completely lost) and OOPS (which recalls your last command, enabling you to edit it). You can also move round the game using ALT/cursor keys or, better, the key pad (e.g. ALT/4 is west, ALT/7 is northwest). The function keys can be programmed for frequently used verbs or commands, defaults are F1 GET, F2 DROP, F3 EXAMINE etc. You can refresh your memory and get a list of the definitions by pressing ? at any time.

I said at the start that MAGT will support sound and graphics and those used for Hurry! work well. The introductory music is of a calliope playing traditional circus music and a few locations away the organ grinder cranks out a range of tunes. A realistic touch is that the music cuts off once you're a few locations away from its source. Many of the tunes are recognisable but if you get bored with the music you can use the SOUND OFF command.

In each location you're given a list of graphics to view, so you might see on the screen *illustrations available: painting, Rex* and by typing VIEW PAINTING or VIEW REX will then see the relevant picture. These are static but FLI animated graphics are also supported; Hurry! doesn't have any, however. The graphics that

have been used are mostly of excellent quality though some, at least, appear to have been gleaned from several sources so the style varies from one to another.

Scoring is out of 450 points. Some are gained for solving puzzles, others for VIEWing graphics. SCORE will also tell you how many locations you have visited, but not the total number of locations. The location descriptions and responses are of a good length so the game is very atmospheric, especially if you take the time to VIEW and EXAMINE all the characters mentioned, watching their performances on the high wire, trapeze and other dangerous equipment. Not all objects are obvious and you will need to pay good attention to the text to find all the items needed.

What are the game's bad points? Surprisingly few, most of which I'd level at the AGT/MAGT utilities rather than Hurry! itself. You can't use the abbreviations X or EXAM for examine, only the full word or EX. Unlocking containers requires the full UNLOCK CHEST WITH KEY, rather than just UNLOCK CHEST. On the atmosphere side, I thought it rather unrealistic to be able to dump several valuable paintings in the main thoroughfare of a circus, wander off for a time, and find them still there when I returned, especially as in one location I had fallen foul of a pickpocket!

The game was inspired by several adventures and books including, not surprisingly, Infocom's Ballyhoo. I had a great sense of deja vu when playing Hurry! because there are strong similarities between the two games, even down to some of the names used such as Tina the Fat Lady and Chuckles the clown. However, that doesn't detract, in any way, from the game which has been well designed and shows what can be achieved using MAGT.

The Adventure Workshop
Adventures for the Amstrad

NEW RELEASES

RUN BRONWYNN RUN!!
from FSF SOFTWARE

In this three part adventure you play the part of Princess Bronwynn, only daughter of King Brendan and Queen Sophia of Alizon. While at the wedding of your brother, you are horrified to hear your father announce that he has promised your hand in marriage to Timothy, Prince of Karsten, a neighbouring kingdom. Timothy is middle-aged and a right twerp, and there is no way in the world that you are ever going to marry him. When you protest to your father, he has you confined to your chambers in the castle. You realise that the only way that you are going to avoid this detested marriage to Prince Timothy is to escape from the castle and run away - but to where? Then you remember your cousin Kelson, who is king of Hecate. He is one of your favourite relations, and hates your father for not sending help when the Xixon lizardmen invaded Hecate a year ago - surely he will give you sanctuary? Can you guide Bronwynn in her bid to escape from this very unwelcome marriage and find sanctuary with her cousin King Kelson?

AVAILABLE NOW ON DISC £6.00 FOR CP/M+ AND CP/M 2.2.

DEATH OR GLORY by MARTIN FREEMANTLE

You, Doug Thornton, having received your late father's legacy comprising solely of a letter describing a quest to recover the Medallion of Immortality and the return of it to the Circle of Nine warlocks at the village of Hayworth. In order to achieve this you had to kill the Silver Dragon that guards it. You set out on your quest and after many trials and tribulations finally arrived at the Dragons lair and succeeding in destroying it and recovering the Medallion. The above events have all been chronicled in 'Dragon Slayer' the first part of this saga.

Having recovered the Medallion, you set off back towards Hayworth and after a days travel through the mountains you come to a sheer rock face and with some difficulty managed to climb down to is base. Finding yourself amidst a clump of thick thorny bushes that adorned the base of the granite mountain and extremely tired from your days travel you decided that this would be as good a place as any to bed down for the night. Upon awakening you were greeted by the sight of a gap in the granite wall of the mountain closing and you soon discover that all of your possessions have been stolen. You must now it seems find a way to recover the stolen Medallion before you can continue your journey on to Hayworth.

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A Look Back At...

CORRUPTION

Reviewed by James Judge, played on the STe

Back to the history times, oh reader. This time I'm going to look at another MS game which is gracing my shelves (all three copies).

As with most MS games you're treated to a few little extras in the box, apart from the usual disk and manual. This time (in the stand alone version) you get an audio cassette and a gambling chip. The tape is of a conversation that COULD give you a few clues in the game and the chip is the for decoration.

The manual is slightly larger than other text adventures due to the versatility and complexity of the games parser. It also contains rules for various gambling games that you may encounter during your escapades. There is also an excerpt from your personal organiser (yuppie ahoy!).

After booting the game from the desktop (unfortunately it is impossible to install on either hard disk or ramdisk) you are treated to the obligatory loading screen (the box's cover picture) and then your start the game proper.

The game starts off with you in your new office, talking to a friend about your new position. After he leaves you can explore your office as well as the game's control system.

After picking up a few important objects from your office you can leave and see Maggie, your prim, pert secretary who even James Jillians would be hard-pressed to go out with (you should see David's secretary).

Gradually, as you explore the building, you will start to get the feeling that something fishy is going on. A visit to a certain office will put the final piece of the puzzle together and confirm your suspicion that David is a dodgy character.

If you are any good at detective investigations you should make a fleeting visit to Dave's office. If you can, sneak a look at the secretary's personal items, as well as the letter...

By now you should have noticed that the game has got a timer. One of the more controversial aspects of the game is the timer. It doesn't give you so many turns to complete the game, instead it gives you a time that you would get from any standard digital watch. If you look in your organiser, you'll find a list of times and dates which should give you a loose guideline as to how to go about the game.

Another different aspect to the game is that you are left totally on your own, to do what you want. Unlike more linear games which at least give you some clue that is noticeable as to what to do next, this one doesn't. Or it does but you have to search for them — you won't get a piece of text saying *"So, you find some drugs. Do such and such with them"*. You could tail a character all the time, nip down to the local park and kiss the tramp, enter the restaurant completely starkers and attack a waiter when you are thrown out (so you don't make the clientele feel inadequate, obviously).

Instead of channelling you down one route of the investigation, you can hop around from trail to trail until you get somewhere (or not as the case will be).

I must admit that I am not the best fan of detective things — whether they be a book, film or game. I tend to feel that I would prefer to

escape to a wholly different environment, killing aliens and talking with the ancient wizards of XWQYT.

With this in mind, I'm not too enthusiastic about the game itself. If I were into detective scenarios, though, this would be ideal as I can see that it is a great adventure with all the hallmarks of a MS game — great puzzles, text, graphics and a highly complex parser.

If it were a different style of game, I would probably have enjoyed it just as much as Jinxter, but as it is, no, I don't like it. as I said, if you like this kind of game, it'll be just right for you and have you glued to the computer for many, many hours, but I just don't like being given a time-limit, thrown in at the deep end (without water wings) and expected to progress from there — I was soon wandering (oh, what a nice tear in the manual).

Overall very good, just not my cuppa.

MORAFF'S WORLD

Reviewed by Sue, played on the PC

As you step from the Teleporter though which you entered Moraff's World, a little mouse asks you: *"Do you really think you can defeat the Shadow Dragon King on Level 16? Many have tried, but few have ever succeeded."* Then the mouse says, *"I'll be back"* and chuckles as he quickly scuttles away...

This is the start to *Moraff's World*, an RPG from Steve Moraff's Moraffware, a company who have been responsible for the creation of a wide range of programs — including arcade, strategy and educational.

The game can be played from a floppy disk, but for the sake of speed (more on that later) a hard disk is recommended. On loading, you are first asked to select which graphics display you want; there are 12 to choose from, starting with Hercules and CGA and going up to Super and Ultra High-Res VGA.

As with other RPGs, the first action you must perform is to create a character. Beginners are advised to select an ogre fighter as it is the easiest character to keep alive, but there are 9 races and 7 classes from which to choose, some of which can use a wide range of magic. Unfortunately, you can only run one character at a time.

Whichever race and class you select, you will soon find yourself in Moraff's World. The aim of the game is simple; to become as powerful as possible, and collect treasure and magical items. This is achieved by entering the dungeons below the town (25 levels deep, so they say) and slugging it out with as many monsters as you can find. At the start, these are relatively easy creatures such as puffballs, kobolds and ogres — which is fortunate for you, since you start off without armour or weapons, just your fists and skin. On lower levels you meet more dangerous creatures including ones which will poison you, cast spells at you or drain your levels.

Movement round the game is via the cursor keys, for step by step precision, or using the mouse on one of the four windows (showing views to north, south, east and west) to move either a short distance or up to the next wall. Once in the dungeon, which you enter using one of the downward ladders which are dotted about the floor, you will see monsters approaching from one of these directions. When they fill the window, it's combat time! Combat is merely a case of readying your weapon, equipping your armour, pressing F to (F)ight, and casting spells if appropriate, until one of you is the winner (hopefully it will be you!) and seeing what spoils are yours.

As in all RPGs, when you defeat a monster you may find treasure. This can be in the form of magical items, such as a cup of health to restore some of your health points, a paper with a spell on it, a weapon or some armour or a pile of stones of mixed value. When you find stones, you're told how many there are, and their weight, and can choose whether to take them all, or sort them and take just those of specific value.

There are other ladders in the game, which point upwards. It's by using these and pressing (U)p that you can return to the surface from the dungeons or, from the town itself, enter inns, banks, stores etc. These are shown on the main map which is displayed on the left hand side of the screen but can be expanded to fill the whole screen by pressing (E)xpand. Each is represented by a different coloured square (e.g. yellow for a temple). You must stay in an inn to gain a level (you'll be told when you're ready for advancement), convert stones into jewels (the currency on Moraff's World) at a bank, and so forth. It's pretty standard stuff.

There's an added complication when wandering around dungeons — chutes! You'll be happily wandering about when — uh-oh, a sinking feeling... down you slide to a lower level. You hunt for a ladder to the surface - and slide down another chute. Fortunately these chutes, once discovered, are shown as an asterisk on the map so you can avoid them in future but this isn't much consolation when you're down in the depths, being stalked by monsters, with your health points almost down to zero. It's at those times that you pray for a fight in which you gain a teleportation stone which will magically whisk you back up to the surface like a magical elevator.

THINK OF IT AS CHUTES AND LADDERS...

You'll also find trap-doors in the dungeon. Each is numbered and you'll need to find the correct key to open them. In fact, the little mouse (remember him from the start?) will tell you during play that there's a network of trapdoors leading round the dungeon and that, to use them, you must find one key on each of ten levels. The mouse is full of handy hints like this and will bob up from time to time with another snippet of info. If you need more help there's an adequate help system available using F1.

From the town you'll also find routes upwards into the wilderness where there are five continents to explore, each with dungeons, lakes and seas; you'll need a boat to cross water (more expense!). The wilderness itself is really just used for getting from A to B, the outdoor landscape being a rough fractal display, effective in a simple way, but tricky to cross as the cursor movement takes the topography into account so your movement can be somewhat erratic. Because of this, a fast computer is recommended for wilderness travel.

Considering the basic lack of plot and storyline for this game, I found it strangely addictive. There's a fair amount of atmosphere from the graphics and messages during play but obviously the lack of a purpose other than money and power (nice enough in their own way but I'd prefer a specific aim) detracts from the game.

There are several versions of this game about. The one that I have spent most time playing is version 5.1 but the latest version, 7.0, features even better textured SVGA graphics and clearer on-screen mapping. The downside is that the game runs much slower than v5.1, even if you pick one of the simpler patterns for the dungeon walls.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND
Reviewed by Jean Childs, played on the PC

This adventure is based on Lewis Carroll's novel and it helps to know the story as a lot of the puzzles are true to the original. The game is Shareware and the registration fee is $10. During the game you can alter your size, just like in the story, by eating or drinking substances. Your size will affect you ability to carry items and also your chance of survival.

You get points for places visited, charity points, power points and ingenuity points. Winning consists of finding a particular object and returning home with it. There is no maximum score but 200 is considered good, and you can get less and still win. You can get hints during the game, but points are deducted each time you ask.

There were a couple of things I particularly liked about *Alice In Wonderland*. One was the ability to *read book* providing you were carrying the book. The response to this input was a short passage from Lewis Carroll's novel, relevant to the current location. The other thing I liked about it was the way the player's inventory was handled. Typing *inventory* or *i* resulted in a small box appearing on the screen which listed what you were carrying, what you had in your pocket and also your current size.

There is a box at the top of the screen which displays the player's score, showing how many of each type of point has been won. It seems a shame that this is the only information available without asking for it. The current location would have helped as, when the description of the location has scrolled off the screen — it's a nuisance to have to type *look* if you have forgotten where you are.

The room descriptions are short and do not give all the exits available. It tells you that *you are on an east-west path,* but doesn't tell you that you can go north and south. This would be acceptable if it wasn't for the fact that you could go south and find a new location, or that you could go south and end up in the river.

You can't examine anything. It accepts the word *examine* but tells you each time that *everything is pretty much as it appears.* At each location anything of importance is written in a different colour, so the rooms descriptions are not hiding anything.

The program crashed no less than three times, which is pretty amazing considering this is an updated version. When you die, you have to reload the program.

The parser is not good. Let me give you an example:- There you are face to face with a *Gryphon* who tells you that he can take you somewhere. I tried *climb on gryphon* (no), *jump on gryphon* (no), so I threw away 5 points and asked for a hint. The information I was given said *he has a good strong back.* Oh, right! I tried *climb on back* (no), *jump on back* (no), *climb on gryphon's back* (no). It was quite simply *ride gryphon.*

At one place I found the queen, so I tried *talk to queen,* which resulted in my arrest. Held by guards, the prompt changed from *what now?* to *what shall we do?* I tried everything I could think of, to which the response was *do what? what shall we do?* I couldn't restore, look, use my inventory or even quit. I has to reset the computer. Obviously it was one of those one answer and one answer only situations. Having reload the game, I went back to see the queen. Another hint told me to try a game of croquet, so I picked up a bat (a flamingo) and hit the ball (a hedgehog). The hedgehog flew up in the air, hit the queen and got me arrested. *What shall we do?*, to which my response was *die. Do what? What shall we do?* That was the last I saw of it. If you can put up with all that then you will probably enjoy the game.

I can't and I didn't.

BLACK CRYPT
Reviewed by Steve Clay, played on the Amiga

I was not a fan of the 3D dungeon genre due, in the main, to poorly documented PD efforts and a couple of sad commercial games. I got hold of *Dungeons Of Avalon 2* (SynTax PD 581) and this showed me what atmospheric graphics could do. Then I saw a review of *Black Crypt* and given that the price was only £12.99 and HMV were giving away a joystick with most software purchases, I took the plunge!

The story behind *Black Crypt* is that Estoroth Paingiver (a bit of luck with the old surname, methinks!) was given the order of the boot from your country, Astera, for unspeakable acts — don't ask me, nobody ever speaks of them. This was 22 years ago. A year later Estoroth made a comeback and has Astera on the ropes until four brave heroes did a number on him and his mates and he was banished again. This time to another dimension.

Guess who is heading back through a dimension rift? You control the party of four heroes who will attempt to send back Estoroth and his chums once and for all! There are four Guilds in Astera, the fighters, the clerics, the magicians and the druids. One Guild member from each will go on this perilous quest.

The game comes on three disks and with a 60 page manual. It can be installed onto a hard drive and external drives are supported for floppy users. The manual is comprehensive and even includes a cluebook at the back which has the maps for each of the 28 levels. You can choose what each party member looks like from a selection of faces. The heroes are given stats by the computer and you have a pool of 25 per character to use as you like. Happy with your band of merry men/ women you click on the simple but scary *ENTER CRYPT* icon!

You can control your party via the keyboard or mouse and *Black Crypt* has, to my inexperienced eye, achieved a near perfect system. After just a short period of time all action become second nature. The graphics are excellent, from the sandstone walls of the dungeon to the monsters and objects littered around. Early on you'll meet a *floating eye* thing that sends a wave of *something* at your party and causes them no end of damage. When a player is hit, his face turns into a skull and the damage is given. Sound is excellent and the ensuing panic when you hear a rear-end attack is hilarious to any onlookers!

The maps included are, as far as I'm concerned, vital. They give you just enough information to set you off without giving everything away. This saves wandering around blindly and helps you get into the game.

Magic is used as you would guess with three of your party being magic users. A spell must be memorised before it can be used and once cast, must be memorised again. This becomes second nature very quickly, (normally once you've been killed a few times because you didn't have the correct spells readied!). One of my early attempts ended up in a massacre for exactly this reason and watching one of those *floating eye* things ripping your party to shreds ensures that you are prepared next time round.

When a party member bites the dust he/she leaves behind a red *Death Gem* which can be used with a *Raise Dead* spell to reincarnate the

hapless hero. You can tell when a hero is dead because instead of his/her stats on screen there is a picture of a warrior lying on a tomb. Very tastefully done, I'll add.

As mentioned, maps to each level are provided but you'll also have on-screen mapping in the shape of *Wizard Sight*, a spell that when cast, enables you to press F5 to see your travels to date. The only spell the fighter has tells you the current co-ordinates of the party at that particular level. F1-F4 will give you the inventory of the particular character associated with that key, clicking on the face of the character does the same thing.

I am thoroughly enjoying my travels in the *Black Crypt* and expect to spend many hours within its walls. At £12.99 this is one of the Amiga bargains of the year. It is not an easy game, but it is easy to get into and in this type of game that is vital. Ten out of ten!

THE TEST (Downloaded from Micronet 800 in 1984)

Reviewed by William McCole, played on the Spectrum

I normally play Table-top Warhammer Battles or Computer Strategy/Roleplay games but now and then I play Text Adventures with Grandad on the Speccy or ST. Having played the Test, Marion suggested that I put in a review of the game — so here goes.

This adventure is not *The Test* where you want to join the *Elite Fighting Force* which was reviewed in RH number 10. This one was crafted by someone who wanted to give beginners the chance to play and learn about adventuring and the puzzles etc. to be expected. You have applied to join the *Adventurers*. A group of people who travel on many difficult quests all over the universe. To join the you must pass The Test. You are taken to a small, cigar-shaped, island and told you must find the Adventurers HQ and complete an additional task when you do.

This is an interesting Spectrum adventure, split into various sections which are complete in themselves. This keeps interest high even though there are death traps and a maze etc. The first set of 12 locations involve you trapping some glowflies and reflecting a forcefield to get a green key, needed to move to the next section. However as you get further into the game the puzzles get harder. Regular saving is necessary because of the death traps but as it was played with a +D disk drive attached saving and loading was not a problem.

The author had obviously spent his time in making room for all the various puzzles so the descriptions were not as good as the might have been. I also found a little bug in his Event Table.
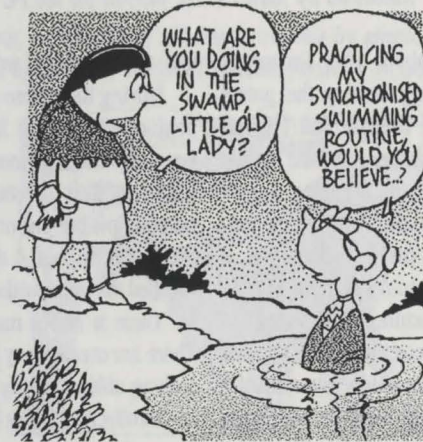
If you used the phrase *leave cottage* in location 23/24 all is well, trying to shortcut using *leave* results in the game jumping to location 56, with a dog behind you stopping your return and missing some items so you can't complete the adventure. Testing the adventure through this part it was found the *leave* had been used as an alternative to north, while *leave cottage* was the only command that you could use to get out of the cottage. A careful choice of words meant that the bug didn't show and the adventure played as it should. With mirrors reflecting forcefields, fires to be lit and dogs to feed you were kept occupied and I couldn't resist pulling a lever, even though the sign above warned me not to. Yes... the floor fell away and I fell to my death again.

While the game is obviously aimed at beginners (you even get a magic compass to help in the maze!) I feel that it would be worth anyone's time spent playing it because of the range of puzzles, even though they were relatively easy. The big fire-breathing dragon was the victim of a bucket of water being thrown at him... that put his gas at a peep!

The author also seems to have a large supply of *old ladies* available to him — you find them in the fireless cottage, starving in the blind canyon and up to the waist in a small marsh and all show their gratitude for your help.

I don't know if this adventure is P.D. but I hope so as it is well worth a play... *if you can find it.*

LEGEND OF KYRANDIA

Reviewed by Jean Childs, played on the PC

I had forgotten all about the Crossword Competition in Red Herring the day the parcel arrived. So it was with some surprise that I found myself in possession of this game, my prize. Inside the box were four disks containing the game, a news pamphlet from Westwood Studios and a manual. The manual contains a brief history of Kyrandia as well as the instructions for loading and playing the game. It also has a small picture at the bottom of each page used for copy protection. (What is the second word on the page containing this symbol?) Fortunately, this only crops up three or four times during the whole game.

There was a review of Kyrandia in the June '93 issue of Red Herring, but I thought you wouldn't mind another one. Besides, If I give a good description of the evil jester, Malcolm, I can really put Ken's cartoon drawing to the test. He has a pointed noise and a pointed chin and a mass of white hair sticking out from under his hat. His hat has three floppy points, each with a bell. He also has a real wicked grin. (I am talking about the jester.)

Now to the game. Having never played an animated point-and-click game before, it took me by surprise. Of course, that also means I have nothing to compare with it. There are some places in the game where you sit back and watch a sequence play out. These are very enjoyable, although it is a good idea to save your position after these, as you don't want to have to watch the same sequence time and time again having made a wrong move just after.

The story-line is not unique. You, the rightful prince of Kyrandia, must pursue the elusive Malcom and recover the Kyragem in order to reclaim your throne and restore harmony to the land. There are other characters who can help you attain your own magical powers. Each of these characters has something to tell you, which appears as text on the screen. There is a facility to speed this up, but I found even the fastest level was a bit too slow.

Moving the mouse to each edge of the screen will produce either a No Entry sign or an arrow, where you can click the mouse button to go to the next screen in that direction. The puzzles were mainly quite simple but one or two were, in my opinion, a bit hit'n'miss. In fact, I don't think I would ever have finished the game without some help.

There is also a maze, an enormous dark maze. There are over seventy locations within this maze, all looking alike and only a handful have a light source — a collection of fire berries. You need to take a fire berry with you as you move about, because if you need to enter a dark location and you have no light, you die horribly. Unfortunately, each berry only lasts three moves. The idea is to take a berry, move to the next dark cave, drop the berry (it will remain lit) and go back for another one. I think that mapping this part of the game gave me the most enjoyment. There are places, more than three moves away from the last collection of berries, where you have to enter and just hope you find more berries. Do I go north or east? Oops, wrong move! Obviously you have to save the game often here, but it was great fun. In fact if I ever decide to play the game again, some time in the future, I would re-draw my maps just for the fun of re-mapping the dark caves.

Another fun part was the collecting of ingredients to make your own magic potions. But on the whole, the puzzles were not the stars of this game. It has to be the animated sequence. That would be the main reason I would ever play it again. At one point you get bitten by a snake and, if you can't stop the poison, you turn a lovely shade of green before you die.

I can't say whether Kyrandia is good or bad compared to others of its kind, as it is the first I have played. Al I can say is that I enjoyed playing it, but for me this type of game will never replace the good old text adventure.

LATERAL THINKING
by James G. Johnston

Lateral Thinking — *A way of solving problems by employing unorthodox and apparently illogical means. (*Oxford Dictionary)

Adventurer or (fem.) Adventuress — A person who seeks adventure, especially one who seeks success or money through daring exploits.

I have been using this phrase for years, wrongly it seems. I have always presumed that *lateral thinking* was *logical thinking* — that is, if I find a spade in a location and I dig there (or in some other location) I will uncover an object which will assist towards the final solution.

What prompted me to look up the exact meaning of the phrase was to try and resolve, in my own mind, some of the illogical actions found in certain of our adventures. I don't mean the *gully bull* type of description as in St. Brides *Very Big Cave Adventure*. This type of humour is pleasant on the first occasion but soon bores the adventurer. I won't even object to the lavatorial joke type adventures or the lewd ones as they normally carry a health warning on the package. This permits you to play or not as you wish.

What I am referring to, is the way that this lateral thinking is used, by the writer, to make the player dream up and carry out various actions that he would normally never consider doing in real life, due to their unnatural or repugnant nature (I am excluding fantasy acts of flying etc.).

For example, in *Quest For The Golden Eggcup*, inputting a swear word is dealt with by the following message... *Suddenly a resonant voice booms down your ear, "Swear Not, In*
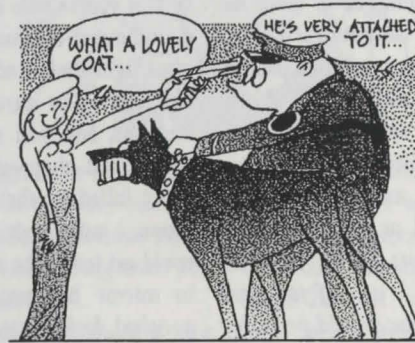
My Realm!" Then two large guards of hell capture you and throw you into a dungeon. Swearing in the dungeon will get the following message... *A key rattles in the lock, the door opens and a huge hairy arm reaches into the cell and clouts you.* (There was even one adventure I played which reset on such input and you had to wait another 20 mins. until the tape reloaded.

Now I chose to enter the swear word, the writer chose to put in these replies to cater for my bent mind. But here is the twist, you have to enter the dungeon to collect a key which is necessary to complete the adventure and there is no way to get into the dungeon other than by swearing. No Choice — No Swear — No Key — No Completed Adventure... That's Lateral Thinking?

By the way, don't swear again after getting the key and leaving the dungeon. This time when you are returned to the dungeon there is no way out and a restart is the only option... More Lateral Thinking?

In one adventure I played you were faced with a guard and a fierce Doberman dog stopping your escape to the Swiss Mountains. No Problem... SHOOT GUARD (done). The dog is now whimpering (with fear?) and you can now move onwards.

"And what is wrong with that?", you say, "it's only role playing and you don't really kill him!" In three moves I was frozen to death in *a freezing pass* in the Swiss mountains... I was

completely stuck. On asking for help, I was informed that I should SHOOT DOG, SKIN THE DOG then WEAR SKIN.

Now I have a very healthy imagination and I have also prepared poultry and rabbit for the table but lateral thinking could never make me visualise some pretty lady adventuress calmly slitting this dog up, skinning it and then picking up the bloody gungy skin and draping it over herself. To me that is not lateral thinking — more the product of a disturbed mind.

The way through the mountains is now available and you are told as you move from location to location... *How lucky you are wearing a warm dog skin*... or... *If you were not wearing the dog skin you would probably frozen to death.*

Rubbish!!! Next time there is a heavy frost along with a good wind, get yourself rigged out with nice wet blanket and go for a walk. If you don't freeze to death, you will certainly die of pneumonia. In order to try to dry, the blanket will use your body heat to try to raise its temperature. The chill factor of the wind will absorb this heat before the blanket can use it and will reduce the blanket temperature further. This process will rapidly produce a state in which you will have lost all your body heat and the blanket will be frozen to your body, helping to maintain your now dead body at wind chill factor level (which can be very low indeed) Well, best not to try it after all!!

Just think about coming out of the water when swimming on a lovely warm summer day. The first thing you notice is that you feel chilled. No, the temperature hasn't dropped, the water on your body and your swim suit is stealing your body heat to dry itself (with less drastic results than those above). As an example of Lateral Thinking it is distasteful, does not comply with the natural laws of physics and could have been completed simply by having the guard wearing a alpine fur coat. If the Doberman had to be killed

then he could be made to stop you taking the coat from the dead guard. Logical to me but maybe not lateral enough for some!

Another theme was introduced in an adventure where you were met, on a lonely road, by four youths who inform you that they are the guardians of the road and in order to pass you must fight their leader in unarmed combat and beat him. You agree so the leader drops his weapons and you start to fight. I punched, kicked and chopped and always found myself being killed by their leader after two or three moves. I put the adventure away for a while till I could get help. The solution to my problem was to mirror his actions — punch where he punched, kick where he kicked, but (now here is a nice bit of lateral thinking!!!!!) when he chops at your neck you CHOP NECK WITH SWORD (which you just happened to be still carrying during an UNARMED COMBAT) and cause his death. *Premeditated Murder* I think they call it!'

Now having watched you kill their leader, the other three youths melt away and let you get on with your adventure. A simple FIGHT LEADER — You engage the leader in a fist fight and win. The gang carry their leader away (thus leaving the way ahead clear) — was obviously never considered. You must hack an unarmed fellow human to death in order to satisfy the author's lateral thinking.

I can accept most of the fantasy worlds that adventure writers develop but there must be a level below which it is wrong to travel. Again I am not referring to condition changes brought on by time and events. I am referring to an adventure writer who sits and plans that he will force you carry out actions in his game that you would find unethical, unnatural or repulsive.

Recently, my grandson was playing a Golden Oldie *(Atlas Assignment)*. At the start of the adventure he picked up a bottle of sodium pentathol and later found a syringe in a dustbin.

He wasn't too keen to pick up the syringe but did when I pointed out that he would need it if he wanted to use the sodium pentathol. Sure enough *a bound man* was found who, when injected with sodium pentathol, gave the address of *Atlas* (the character you were seeking). As he moved to the next location, my grandson (age 14) remarked *"I would have told you where Atlas was before you got near me with a used syringe that you had picked up out of a dustbin!"*.

The adventure had been written at a time when used syringes were not potentially lethal in themselves. I would not have thought much about it but it was obvious that, even at his young age, he had a reluctance to handle and use a used syringe, even in an imaginary situation and was certainly fully aware of the dangers of its indiscriminate use. This I would regard as as a condition that has changed by time and events and as such is acceptable. After all, as an R.A.F. medic in the 50's it was standard practice, for me, to re-sterilise all syringes and needles for re-use. Some of the needles became so blunt that they bounced off the skin.

The great writers of the macabre knew how to tell their tales without the need to stoop to crude actions and descriptions to shock their readers. In *The Pit and The Pendulum* — the guillotine does not keep lowering until the damsel in distress is cut in half with her blood splattered all over the place! Just when it started to cut through her clothing (and the rope holding her), the mechanism jammed and she broke free (Hooray!!). The villain ran to see what had jammed the blade and just as he reached it the blade swung towards him. Did it slice him in half with blood all over the

place...? *Nooooo!* He clasped and clung to the shaft of the guillotine as it swung over the pit, then lost his grip and fell with a terrible scream into the dark pit. And was impaled on a dozen sharp stakes, with blood everywhere...? *Nooooo! Nooooo!*

We leave him falling to his death and return to the young lover who takes his obvious anxiety out on an innocent door, forces it open and clasps the swooning maiden in his arms. He swears his true love forever and promises that these awful things will never happen to her again. Thus completely reassured of her future, the story ends as they leave the dark foreboding house and walk hand in hand, down the path just as the sun breaks through the clouds. The golden rays paint the scene with beautiful fresh colours and the birds and bees go about doing what birds and bees do. No dead bodies!! No buckets of blood!!

I am willing to accept that this type of horror (using the tension to build up the atmosphere but concentrating on the rescue to bring you gently back to normality might not suit you and you might prefer to RAPE ANDROID in *Planet of Death* (Artic 1982) to be given the reply, *"She moans with pleasure and blows a fuse"*. I, however, reserve the right to question the author's and your state of mind since your lateral thinking leads you to contemplate, with some obvious pleasure, the sexual assault of an electromechanical machine.

Boy, have you got problems !!!!!!!!

You will notice that all along I have made my case against us males. This is because the female mind does not suffer from these defects. If you do not believe me then read the gripping horror story written by Mary Shelley (when just 18 years old) — *Frankenstein*. The story

revolves not around *A Monster* but round a poor creature who could not understand what had happened to him or what was going on. He knew he wanted love, beauty and friendship but was shunned and misunderstood, when not being attacked for being different. I found my sympathies were always on the side of the nameless monster and against Frankenstein whose endeavours had resulted in the creation of the monster. A monster without name, memory, language or training whom he immediately abandons because he finds the monster's appearance revolting. The story reaches its climax with Frankenstein dead on board Captain Walton's ship, stuck somewhere in the Arctic icefields. The monster somehow gets on board and visits his dead creator. I had a lump in my throat when he tried to explain his feelings to Captain Walton.

Mary Shelley, within the beliefs and customs of her time, tells a story of such stark horror — Man blaspheming against The Creator by attempting to create (or recreate) life — and yet gives us the pathos of the terrible loneliness, fear and confusion in this poor creature's mind and of its creator's own revulsion and horror of the being he had created. This showed to me that, just like all her gender, she understood the *mind* of her creation and had no need to resort to the crude or degrading to titillate her readers.

Footnote:

Frankenstein was not the creature's name. He is given no name at any time in the story other than monster. Victor Frankenstein was the person who created him. Mary wrote the story of Frankenstein's activities under his name and also refers to him, in the title, as *A Modern Prometheus* (he created life using fire from the heavens (lightning)) — both in the Greek sense as *the bringer of fire* and in the Roman myth of Prometheus who animates a figure of clay.

CAW — Creative Adventure Writer for the ST and PC
by Sue

There are a lot of text adventure creators available as PD and shareware. AGT and TADS get the most mentions but there's also GAGS, CAT, Adventure Writer, Adventure Compiler, ADVSYS, Adventure Maker, Gamescape, Gamescape Lite, Levy Adventure System, Figment and HIF.

Now there's another one for budding adventure writers — CAW: Creative Adventure Writer, which is available for the PC and ST. It was programmed by Red Herring reader Richard Hunt and he kindly sent copies in for the SynTax library, together with some sample adventures which he has written using the system. This review covers the PC version which was written using MicroSoft's Quickbasic 4.5 but the PC and ST versions are 100% compatible. The ST version can also have a window display and the addition of graphics in the form of compressed STOS screens.

The author has based CAW on a program called Imagen which was written by Peter Voke for the BBC and it is intended to be used to produce small, simple adventures — the sort that would take about 30 minutes to complete and would be ideal for the PD market. Essentially, it uses the concept of *triggers*, where a command or phrase is used to carry out an

action e.g. opening a door or getting an item. More on triggers in a moment.

When using CAW, you can switch between normal (play) mode and edit mode by typing the word edit. You can then add a new room, exits, objects and triggers, or edit data which has already been entered. This means it is easy to test out the game while writing it — no need to wait while it complies and so forth. Incidentally, you can also create a CAW adventure in ASCII format with a word processor, which explains its portability between the two systems.

All rooms are numbered and a new location is added in two parts by inputting !edit; type in the location description (the program takes care of the formatting), press ENTER, then add objects and triggers. These are in the form (Object 1:Object 2:Description 1:Description 2)Trigger 1:Trigger 2(End Game Object:End Game Message). Objects can be prefixed with the symbols & ^ # or @. Each of these gives a different effect e.g. #object means the object will be picked up automatically after the trigger, ^object results in the object being picked up automatically when the player enters the location.

Okay, let's look an example from one of the sample games given on the disk, Crown.

The location description for the first room is: You are in King George's throne room. He asks you to accept his offer of a reward if you find his crown.

The trigger string for this location is:
(@offer:#permit:#You are in King George's throne room. The king is here.:)accept offer`He thanks you and hands you a permit:@get permit(:)

Calm down! It isn't as complicated as it looks, honest!

In the above string there are two objects (offer and permit), one description (a replace-ment location description), an empty description slot (signified by the :) and two triggers. The final

bracket is empty showing that this isn't the end of the game... lucky really, as it's the first location!

The @ prefix means an object is invisible. So in that room, the parser knows the noun *offer* even though there's no such object mentioned in the text. If the player types *accept offer*, there's a short message (the ` in front of the text causes it to be printed on the screen), the permit is put in the room and the room description is changed to take away the bit about the King asking you to accept the offer. The player can then *get permit*.

Exits are added using the commands !n or !s etc. when in edit mode. You're then prompted for the (1) destination room number and (2) exit type - normal, visible, hidden, revealed after one or two triggers etc. ... 10 types in all, each of which has a number e.g. a normal, visible exit is 0 and a normal, hidden exit is 5.

There are other commands such as !go (jump to a location), !wipe (erase a location) and !bring or !remove (an object). There are limits of 200 movable objects and up to 200 locations depending on available memory. Prefixes are also allowed with triggers; in the above example *get permit* will only be allowed after you *accept offer*.

There are a few drawbacks with the system. You can't amend text. It's necessary to check it very carefully before pressing ENTER as, if you make a mistake, you'll have to retype the whole thing. You can only have two objects, descriptions and triggers per location so the system isn't suitable for a complex game. Generally you can also only carry out commands once as well. There's a good manual on the disk, almost 20K in length, though I would have preferred more examples for some aspects of the program.

All in all, though, CAW is a neat little program and ideal for the smaller, less complex adventure and, using it, you can certainly see your adventure taking shape quickly. The ease of testing is a bonus too.

PLAY-ACTING — It's a game. Isn't it?

By James G. Johnston

I recently visited a games night (table top miniature roleplay) at our local Games Work-shop. The scenario was a familiar one — The High Elves' advance guard had found a precious artifact and as they waited the arrival of the remaining troops of the rear guard, they were pinned down by a horde of evil Orcs and Goblins. The rear guard has now arrived and battle commences. The High Elves have to defend the artifact and preserve it. The Green armies have to destroy the elves and the artifact. As the game progressed, the atmosphere built up and soon the shouts of elation and groans of despair were as real as they would have been in real life. The final noisy victory demonstration by the green mob left everyone in no doubt of their belief that their victory was real and that they had derived great pleasure from their wholly destructive activities.

You may wonder why I have opened with the above scene, which really has nothing to do with computer adventuring (normally a single player). The reason is very simple, as all our *role play* activities have a basic theme and purpose. Generally this theme and purpose is educational but could, with careful manipulation, be used to brainwash to a mind condition suitable to the organiser.

Whoa!! Let's not get in too deep yet! Let's take an imaginary trip back to the origins of our *civilisation*. In the cave lived an extended family group. The women tended the precious fire, gathered edible roots and fruits, cooked, bred, etc. The men hunted, killed food and defended the group. The leader (strongest) of the

group takes a lump of marker (tattoo) clay and draws the outline of a food animal on the wall. He then surrounds it with man figures and draws a spear stuck in a vulner-able part of the animal. All the warriors growl in approval. Now they go outside and practice what they have learned. In this Role Play Game, the leader who is wearing an animal skin, acts the part of the animal being hunted and his group practice their skills, as hunters, by trying to surround him then kill him with their weapons.

Later, the hunters (led by their leader) set out on the real hunt. All that they have been taught in the play-acting is now put to use, as regular meat is required to sustain the group. The success of the leader (even his life) was closely linked to the success of the hunt. Should he fail to lead successfull hunting and the group become in danger of starving, the group will carry out the ritual practice hunt with the leader in his animal skin. On this occasion, the starving tribesmen will turn practice into reality, will *kill* the animal skin and eat its *meat* while chosing a new and, hopefully, more successfull leader.

This play-acting, as a form of teaching, has continued through the ages, down to our modern time. During early and medieval times when none of the peasant classes were able to read or write, the Christian Church had to resort to miracle plays and other *moral* displays (burning heretics and confiscating their property, etc.) to put their message across. They went further. In order to cater for the peasants natural tendency towards their traditional

beliefs, they allowed certain days in the year to celebrate high points of their calender. During these days the various work guilds put on religious plays and displays.

The real high point, however, was the Feast of Beltane (or Lord of Misrule). A King (or Lord) of Misrule was selected by the people, generally the village idiot. He was given a mock coronation and thereafter, for 24 hours, the people could indulge in every form of activity normally proscribed by the church (drunken-ness, gluttony, licentiousness, etc. etc.). By providing this play-acted loophole, they were able, for the rest of the year, to hold the peasants down in the drudgery of real life.

At school we were taught discipline and manners by the ritualism or play-acting of various functions. Each day at 11.00 a.m., one at a time (starting from the top of the class), we left our seat, went to the milk crate and too our bottle of milk. We made our way to the teacher's desk where she removed the top of the milk and handed us a straw. We each thanked her for her kindness before returning to our seat to drink our milk. Returning the bottles was carried out by two children from the bottom of the class carrying the crate round the class, from top to bottom, collecting the empty bottles. We then sang a children's hymn, thanking God for the good things we had received and were dismissed to play.

This taught more than discipline and respect. It also taught you to make sure that you kept as near the top of the class as you could, by diligent work and good behaviour. Well! Would you want to carry the milk crate?

Play-acting, using tabletop miniature layouts, has been used by the army since very early days, to teach battlefield manoeuvres to young trainee officers. In fact, play acting forms a large part of military training. During my air force conscription service, various marching and other military skills were achieved by dint of

constant repetition of the specific manoeuvre — regardless of time, meals or sleep. We charged, bayonets fixed, dummy figures of humans, screaming at the top of our voices. Repeatedly stabbing the dummies to the shouts of the drill sergeant that they had raped and killed our mothers and sisters. I confess that the play-acting did bring a degree of vicarious satisfaction for having avenged my imaginary family tragedy.

These *minor* details, however were overshadowed by the final act of the play — *The Passing Out Parade*. The whole of the junior airmen in the wing assembled on the parade ground. The space nearest the saluting dais was kept clear for *The Elite*. In a special area behind the saluting dais but across the road from it, were our families. The band played suitable music to entertain while they waited. Outside our billet, we lined up in full dress uniform, white webbing and highly polished boots and buttons. We were checked and rechecked by our N.C.O's 'til they were satisfied that not a hair was out of place. The flight escort marched up and took up position at the head of our flight, colours at the carry, escorting our flight officer. We waited...

Suddenly the band, at the parade ground, struck up a military march to indicate that the Commanding Officer was on the dais waiting to receive us. The colour party came to order, officers drew swords to the carry, we shouldered our rifles and our Warrant Officer commanded us to march. We *swept* down the road to the parade ground, passed our families and swung on to the parade ground taking our rightful place as senior flight (*The Elite!!*).

After showing our paces in drill movements, being inspected and receiving the flight baton and sword, *The Whole Parade* was called to attention and we marched completely round the parade ground, out and passed our families, colours flying, fixed bayonets, led by the R.A.F. band playing the Royal Air Force March Past.

The herd feeling developed was so strong that if they had ordered the elimination of my family immediately, I would have carried out the order with enthusiasm and gratitude for being chosen. So much for emotional conditioning by play-acting.

This use of play-acting has continued into the *computer age* and now takes the form of *hands-on experience*. The idea is that if the operator uses the computer to *play games* (adventures or shoot-em-up's, etc.) he is interacting with it and is loosing his fear of the *animal* and getting to know and predict its actions under certain circumstances. Creating programs and allowing others to play-act your adventure is giving them training to interact with the computer as well as furthering your computer literacy.

I could never understand my enthusiasm for Cave Adventure (Crowther and Woods) until I read that the writer's work involved him in the geological mapping of cave networks in his area. Suddenly it clicked! His descriptions were accurate. My training and occupation involved me underground in collieries and mines (i.e. man made caves) and I have walked down tunnels where water poured from the roof like a tropical rain storm. I have travelled roadways where the water oozed *blood red* from the roof and sides (Iron oxide). Gazed in wonder at the weird shapes of various fungi growing from the wooden supports and watched the gray net fungus glistening like millions of small chandeliers as they reflected, from the water drops they held in their structure, the light of the lamps. I had been fortunate to have interacted with someone with a similar background and this had given the added bonus.

Now to conclude and bring this playability up to date, I will cite the use of interactive computer setups for the training in various disciplines. To chose just one, the use of a flight simulator in pilot training. The original pilot training aid consisted of the use of a bicycle with a metal screen bolted to the handle bars. A slot in the metal similar in size to the cockpit view allowed trainee pilots to cycle the runway lines and practice straight landing. This is now superseded by a computer-controlled flightdeck with all instruments active and able to simulate any circumstance in aviation. It will record pilot action, pilot reaction and plane response. These records can be examined in detail and any correction discussed. So complex is the flight simulator that plane movement and crash shock can be simulated. This means that dangerous manoeuvres like stall and engine failure which had to be carried out in *real conditions* with all the inherent dangers can be play-acted in safety yet in *real and genuine situation*. If a mistake is made the program will allow the crash but not kill the crew.

So it is true to say that all our computer adventuring and gaming along with all the other play-acting activities have a high educational factor. However they also have a high conditioning factor and care must be exercised that we do not substitute false values for real life thus devaluing it. It is perfectly all right to enjoy a good shoot-em-up on your computer but to then carry this into real life, would be tragic. I am not going to sit in judgment but I often wonder if the people who play *Real Time Adventures* using those paint balls would, in the heat of the game, notice if I substituted live ammunition or would they just go on, happily shooting down their opponents. You say that it can't happen and that you would never *copycat* in real life but I remember when, for Queen and Country, I repeatedly stabbed those dummies under the enthusiastic direction of the sergeant instructor. Thank God I was never asked to carry it out in reality but if instructed — *AT THAT TIME* — I would have done so without conscience or remorse.

PLAY BY MAIL
by Tim Lomas

BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS ON A THREE AND A HALF INCH FLOPPY... THE HOPES, DREAMS, INSPIRATION, FRUSTRATION...

OH, GET ON WITH TESTING IT...

Welcome to the first thing I've written in 1994, that of course means it's time for news of this year's PBM convention.

This time we're back at the Old Baths in Bethnal Green, tickets are available in advance from Peter Thornhill c/o The BPBMA 23 Aragon Place, Kimbolton, Huntingdon, Cambs. PE18 0JD. The price for the advance tickets is £2.50, at the door they'll be £3.50. Cheques or Postal Orders (no cash) payable to BPBMA.

There's been a fair bit of controversy this year about the con (mainly because it changed its date fairly late), it appears that this was because of a lot of illness and accidents on the committee which put planning back, thus this year it's on Saturday May 5th.

Anyone interested in PBM should make an effort to get to this event, it's the premier PBM con in the UK and gets the best attendance from GMs and players alike. Rumours suggest that the Sheffield con is not going to take place this year so this is possibly your only chance to see as many GMs assembled together. Fiasco (the name of a convention, not its description!) and Manorcon PBM tend be smaller events altogether.

I'll be there as usual, at the moment I'm in the middle of programming a new game for Pagoda Games so I'll probably be found in one of four places — the Pagoda stand chatting to Keith and anyone else who's about, the Timepatterns stand who I always give a hand to, the Flagship stand where I've been known to take over to give the poor besieged editor a rest or in the bar! If I'm not to be found there ask either at the Timepatterns or Pagoda stand, one of them will probably know where I'm to be found.
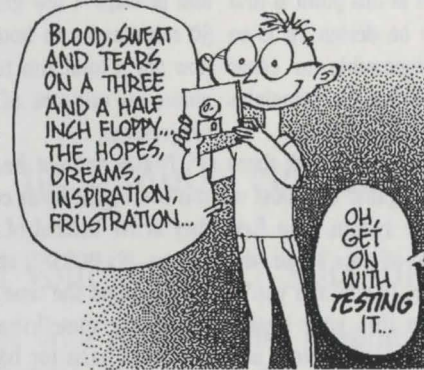
The other news is that I'm now on Internet as well as Compuserve so all you students at colleges all over the country can now get hold of me by electronic mail (provided your system administrators allow you to access Internet that is!). I know many of you at Greenwich can use it as I talk to one of you that way. I shall be expecting thousands of Internet messages winging their way to me in the next few weeks, just send them to tim@antsnest.demon.co.uk

So, having dispensed with the news it's time for part two of the guide to designing your very own PBM game. Last time we went through the basic design concept, we arrived at the point where we had a game which we thought was worth going on with and which looked feasible. That leaves only two things to do, design the game and get it tested!

Naturally what's left are the two longest and most difficult parts of the whole process, that being so we'll take the plunge and talk about the design again.

What you have at the moment is an idea in your head and a pile of notes, either on scraps of paper, in some sort of notebook or if you're really organised (and have one) on computer. In my case it'll be in a loose leaf pad as I tend to have 3 of these lying round at strategic spots where I can jot down notes as they come to me. The first things to do, if you haven't already done so, is to collect all these together and arrange them in a coherent order — make

sure your notes make sense to you now or you'll be in a lot of trouble at a later date.

The main problem I have at this point is that the type of game you may be designing is so varied that it's almost impossible to cover everything. Fortunately there are the principles which are relevant whatever you're up to.

As always it's time to start at the end, there are two logjams in any PBM game (or most of them), one at each end the system. The first labour intensive area is that of data input, the players will be sending orders to you and you're going to have to type them into your system (assuming it's computer moderated) or read and make sense of them if not. The second jam is at the other end of the process when you have to produce the printouts (or type the turnsheet for a hand moderated game If you're doing this by writing your turnsheets in longhand it'll take even longer in which case you need legible handwriting!). As an example the game I'm currently writing manipulates a large quantity of data every turn and takes about 2 minutes to do so on my system. On the system of the people who'll be running it, it takes a little longer, 5-10 minutes. That's fine, at that point they have a great big pile of printouts sitting on their hard disc. To get to that point they had to enter the orders, about an hour's work at a rough guess, update a pile of global data which takes about half an hour (but only gets done once which covers all games) and check that they've got all the turnsheets in, taking whatever action is appropriate for any that didn't arrive. Before the run they've already spent far more time on entering data than the run will take. Afterwards the printouts have to be done, assuming you've splashed out on a fast laser printer (8 pages per minute? It may do that in manufacturers tests, try it on real data) you've still got a lot of paper to print. Assume a 12 player game with 5 pages per player (a low estimate), that's 60 pages, if it's all text you may well get 4 pages per minute

out of a fast printer, that's still 10-15 minutes printing time. Add in more players, more pages and perhaps a few graphics and you're talking 30 minutes to an hour of printing time. We've now got a total run time of 2 hours or so with about 10 minutes of it actually running the programme.

That's not too bad actually, printouts can run overnight, turns can be entered bit by bit as they arrive instead of in bulk (it's much easier on you, it's BORING entering turns) and you can always spend the time that printouts are coming out doing something else useful. Ignore the irrelevant parts for hand moderated games and multiply the time taken to run the game by quite a lot.

So, your design is taking all this into account, minimise input if possible, maximise general data on the turnsheet so you can throw it onto separate sheets and photocopy them (much quicker than printing) and leave yourself time to enjoy the process.

The next thing to bear in mind as your design continues is that a game is meant to be fun, you may well be enjoying designing it but your players (and bear in mind that they're the ones who make or break a game, without players you've got a pretty design and nothing else) have to enjoy playing it. If they're paying for the privilege then they're the people you're designing for. If it's to run as a free game then they still won't play if it's no fun. Take your basic design and split it down into elements. There will be some elements which are inherent in the design, if you're designing a space warfare game then you need planets, stars and suchlike, a middle earth type game needs a middle earth background and half a dozen races of beings, that's fine, they must exist although the exact form can be fiddled with to get it right. The rest are a list of elements of the game which are not inherent but which you put in, probably on the premise of *that sounds like a good idea*. Fine, it

probably was, all ideas need considering, now take them one by one and reconsider them, are they still a good idea? Would it make the slightest difference to the game if they were removed? You may have to link elements together during this process as many of them will be linked, if one of a closely linked group is discarded then the rest may have to be as well, in which case the one which is not required may be better left in.

The other thing to consider among all these elements of the game are the counters, it's like Newton's law, every tactic must have a counter of some sort, every magical artefact must have something which can counter it in some way, it may in fact be itself, a magical artefact which can backfire on its user comes into this category. In very rare cases it may be necessary to have an artefact or similar which has no counter but this is normally only true when that artefact is the raison d'être of the game (or one of them). If you've got something like this then think about it very carefully. If you have this type of artefact or tactic then it can lead to a player getting an unassailable position, as soon as the rest of the players realise this they may well decide that it's not worth carrying on. More to the point if it happens and gets known it may deter players from playing in the first place.

The last two things I want to cover before I get onto testing are related. The first is the problem of missing orders, known as an NMR (No Move Received) it happens to every player at some time, orders posted in plenty of time which get lost in the post, a delay in delivery which stops them arriving on time, holidays, illness (theirs or in the family) etc. etc., it'll happen and you need to be prepared for it. It's no good if

> DOES THIS MEAN YOU WON'T BE PLAYING ANY MORE?
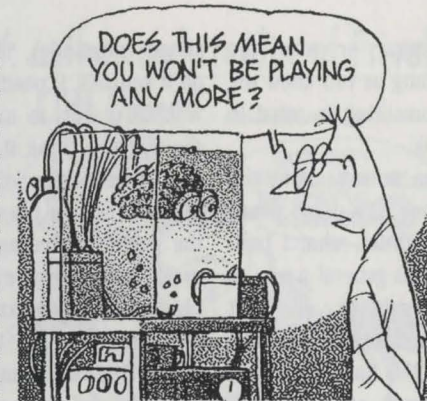
a player who's put in a year or two without missing a turn can have their position decimated by one turn going astray. You need to have some process for the eventuality, it may be a simple one such as all un-ordered armies going to a defensive status or more complex such as allowing standing orders which are executed when required. The second thing is similar but requires a different method of solving it, this is the dropout. Again this is something that you'll get, players will stop playing, no matter how good your game is. They may be posted abroad, lose their job, fall seriously ill, you'd be amazed at the ways people can find themselves unable to carry on. They may also decide it's a rotten game and just stop sending in orders. You should have some sort of procedure which decides when a player is deemed to have dropped if they stop sending in orders without telling you and you must have some way of dealing with the positions which are now vacant. Some games just leave things as they are, this is not a particularly good idea as it leads to what we know as *the dropout vacuum*, this is caused by a player dropping and the fact becoming known (and it will), the players round that position descend on it like a flock of vultures, grabbing what they can before anyone else gets there. It gives an unfair advantage to the positions around the dropout. This used to be common but is less so now as designers get better and equipment gets better, it's easier to avoid. Methods of dealing with this vary, some games put other players into the position, others have it played by the computer or GM (the GM playing the position is not a good idea). If you're running an RPG which is ongoing then it may not be so much of a problem, you can

simply reassign the position or turn the characters into NPCs. Sop long as you know the problem exists and have something in mind to deal with it you should be OK.

That's about all I plan to say about the actual design, I haven't gone into much detail as there are so many possibilities, what I have tried to do is deal with it in as general a way as possible and hopefully remain at least moderately interesting. If anyone actually plans to do any design work on PBMs then feel free to drop me a line if you want advice, I can probably tell you if there's already a similar game on the market, I can point out possible and probable pitfalls and pass on any other advice I feel is appropriate. Don't worry about me nicking your idea, I don't have the time even if it was something I do (which I don't). I'm working on a game at the moment which I expect to take me another 3 or 4 months at the least, after that I've got at least a couple of months work on my mapping programme and when that's over I've already got a request to do the programming on another game sometime later in the year (and a possible project in line for early/mid 1995).

A final word before I go on the subject of testing, do it! To be serious, new games need to be thoroughly playtested, this should be in two

stages (normally), in-house which means you do it yourself, if possible run at least a few turns without players to make sure it actually works the way you think it does. The most important part comes afterwards, you need to run a full playtest, get the players together, let them play the game for free and listen to what they say, most games get extensively changed in a playtest, the players spot loopholes in rules which need closing, they tell you it's boring, or maybe it just doesn't work. Listen to EVERY comment and make sure they know you want to hear everything that have to say. If you think they're wrong then tell them so politely and explain why, if you need to change things in the middle they'll understand, that's why you're letting them play for free, they're doing you a favour and not the other way round.

I don't plan to write much about playtesting, it's a subject which needs an article in its own right and I think we've had enough of design articles for a few issues. I may come back to that later on in the year, next issue I'll get back to basics and run through some of the games which have appeared in the last year or so with a splattering of news. I won't get any news of the convention as the deadline is before the con, that'll be in two issues time.

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PATRICK FARLEY: author and creator of Private Investigator, Cliff Diver — *Interviewed by Sue*

I'd like to introduce you to American author Patrick Farley. He has won AGT's annual Adventure Writing Contest twice — in 1990 with Crime to the Ninth Power and, more recently, this year with Purchased Sight Unseen. Each game features private investigator, Cliff Diver, who lives and works in San Francisco and is one of the traditional PIs like Sam Spade.

I buttoned up my trenchcoat, grabbed my notebook and headed off into the mist to find out more about Patrick and his alter ego, Cliff…

Hello, Miss Medley, and, through the magic of text adventuring, welcome to San Francisco. I apologize for not meeting your boat, and I'm glad you were able to flag that Market Street bus from the ferry terminal. Drops folks off right in front of Cliff's office building (the city council's working to get the drivers to slow down to 10 mph before they do). Seeing as how it's close to noon and we're less than a block from Leonard's (Cliff's second office), let me buy you one of the best burgers in the bay area.

Right over… ah, here, let me get the door for you. Nice trenchcoat. We'll take a booth right over… there now, that better? Now, what can be said about Cliff Diver.

First things first … would you like to tell us a bit about yourself?

Me? Of course oh, don't wait for me. Go
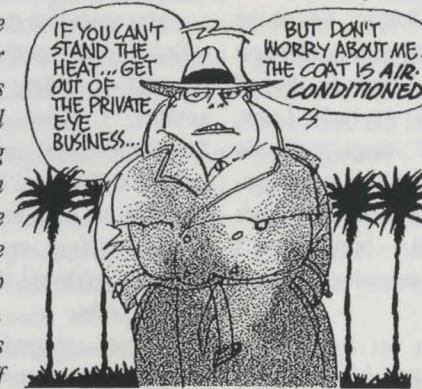
ahead and start in. Whatever you do, don't give Allen's guacamole a chance to set up.

Excuse me <cough>. I'm a 40-year old former jazz-radio personality, producing computer games in a day and age when I should be showing you — on one screen — what's down a hallway, instead of describing it in two or three paragraphs (I love it). Never was an artist. Couldn't draw a cinderblock, let alone a flight-dragon, to save me. Irish are descriptive by nature, gesturing with their hands two-thirds of the time they're saying something. See, I'm doing it already! I chose to put my constantly-active hands down on a keyboard and record what I was describing. Like a weaver at a loom, I weave words.

My great-grandfather was the thespian in the family line, sending his acting talents along to my branch of the tree. I developed, from him, a talent for elaboration. Today I can never carry an intimate conversation without taking the *long word* around it. <hah> there, I just did it! Boy, this is a great burger (Allen must have scraped the grill for three days).

My office is a four-hour drive, south, from the bay area; a quiet village on California's Central Coast, called Los Osos (Spanish, The Bears). The only thing between me and the outside world is my computerized dinosaur of a computer (a 286) — that does impersonations, really! Every time I fire it up it impersonates an old lady… *"I don't feel like accessing your hard drive this morning. Balance your checkbook manually. I'm going to switch off*

now!" I'd love a studio apartments, with those bay windows overlooking the park. Well, writers can't be choosy, can they?

My writer's day begins at 8:00am. I sit at the keyboard and write like crazy, getting wired on hot coffee and toast. At 9:00, I begin to edit and re-shape what I've entered. At 10:00 I say, *"That's it. I HAVE to get away from the screen."* I usually go downtown. Window-shopping provides hundreds of ideas. Noon finds me back at work till after 3:00 — business hours are OVER. Oh, I put in few retouches here and there, but nothing extensive.

When did you first get interested in computers and adventure games?

Computers came first, not the chicken or the egg as is believed. As a child of the late 50s/early 60s, I was introduced to computers that were giant mainframes; noisy beasts that resided in air-conditioned dens the length of football fields. My brother sat me down in front of a printout terminal (no monitors then) across the room from this... huge thing. Looking over at me he said, *"Type NO and hit the enter key."* I did, and a few seconds later, an answer was printed. The thought of all those parts doing all that thinking, and waiting for me to interact with, was — dare I say — awesome. I was hooked on computers.

I had no trouble interacting with these creatures. Programming them, THAT was another story. I was introduced to IBM's BASIC and BASICA shortly after the Personal Computer Revolution, and *toyed* with the language. My college life coincided with the premiere of Apple II, and later, Apple IIe. There my language knowledge increased and I began collecting magazines — those that published programming sourcecode. I learned how GOTOs and GOSUBs worked in regards to plotting adventures; BASIC adventures.

Who are your favourite authors and games?

I was never that much of a reader. I could be called a *late reader*. Only recently have I returned to reading on a novel scale. As for authors, I enjoy Alan Dean Foster (the SpellSinger saga) and, most recently, Simon Brett (The Christmas Murders) Pooh's A.A. Milne surprised me as a mystery writer. I prize three *physical clue* mysteries (reproductions), originally published in 1939 by Dennis Wheatley and J.G. Links.

I never grasped the game concept of *Something just moved there — SHOOT IT!* If I tell my computer, *Ok, let's play something* it's usually Scrabble, Gin Rummy, Cribbage, or some other form of intellectual play (Solitaire's wasted effort). Cosmo's Cosmic Adventure (Apogee) has been the only graphic game I've invested in — all three episodes. The main character is interesting and well produced.

What made you decide to write your own adventures? A literary agent — oooh here... take a sip of water. There. Easy does it... try taking smaller bites in the future. While still dabbling in BASIC games I chose to explore the world of real novels. I sent a manuscript of a SciFi novel to an agent in New York who said, *Novels of the type you wish to pen move with the speed of a rocket. This story of yours moves with the speed of an iceberg.* Not very much of a push for a young writer, but pushing enough to make me say, *"Hah, I'll show them. I'll write — and publish — my own work!"*

The major stumbling block against BASIC adventures was that unless you were smart — knew the secret coding characters to encode the BASIC listing — anyone with a BASIC interpreter could open your listing and jump to the, so called, *final chapter* to see your solution. I was in the market for a system that encoded the final product into non-human-under-standable text (ok, machine-understandable). AGT did just that. This was what I was looking for. When I learned that AGT-produced mysteries could be distributed as stand-alone games — Shareware games — that was what I bought! Essentially, I had bought myself a revolutionary — albeit manual — typewriter.

Cliff's sourcecode was produced with a text editor that provided paragraph revision/wordwrap in addition to Cut and Paste functions. I only had to produce the text (well, that and the compiler commands). The AGT compiler did the sweatwork. After the story's layout was developed, writing became Edit... Submit to Complier... Study Report... Re-Edit... ReSubmit to... well, you get the idea. What I was attempting to produce was not so much a game that you switched on, played for a while, and switched off (that's depressing). I wanted to produce a *book*, waiting on your electronic book shelf for you to take down and open up.

After reading the opening segment (the first four or five screens; the intro to the case) Cliff appeared, saying, *"That's enough reading. Let's go"*. The *book* would fade away and you would off on the case with Cliff.

Where did the character of Cliff Diver come from?

The best way to describe Cliff would be, *"He's a vegetable soup."* In Cliff are segments from every PI ever seen (keyword: visual); just enough to make him unique, not so much as to make him a carbon copy (I want him to have his weak points). Like Captain Marvel, I wanted him to have the determination of Mike Hammer, the street attitude of Jim Rockford, the taste in clothes of Sam Spade, the drop-dead good looks of Thomas Magnum, and the deductive powers of Jessica Fletcher — I heard that! The ability to sift through clues is NOT gender-proprietary (get a dictionary quick. I want to know what I just said!).

The only thing I defined about Cliff was his outfit; it can be 102° in the shade and Cliff will go outside in a trenchcoat! When you *read* the story, you can shape Cliff any way you wish. Short, tall, well-built, able to stop a clock with a single glance — whatever. Text adventures call on the Graphics of the Mind (not unlike radio's Golden Age dramas). I designed a private investigator. You get to make Cliff as good-looking as you wish.

Though the two Cliff Diver games are, basically, detective stories, there's humour in them too. Does the humour come easily?

Without being too philosophical, humor flows from everyone. Learning when to open the spigot, how full to fill the bucket, and when to close the spigot takes time. People waste what little time they have trying to locate a comic class, when they should be out looking around them, saying, *"Now that's funny."* My comic mentor would had to have been *the one, the only, Groucho!* The man had comedy/theater background and a sense of timing that couldn't be impersonated. None of today's comics come close.

I was never *class clown*, but looking back over my shoulder today, I would have had to take up residence in the principle's office (do they still refer to him as *head master* in England?). I didn't want Cliff to be a bumbling, slapschtick kind of PI, nor a hard-nosed *"I said FREEZE, dirtbag!"* justice-fighter."

Purchased Sight Unseen is being marketed as shareware. Do you find the shareware system works?

Through distribution groups, BBSs, national on-line services, and such, I can make

Shareware function. The people who can make it work are the people who pick up Shareware programs AND register them. The beauty of Shareware is that, before you ever *buy* anything, you can try it; see if it even shakes hands with your system. That's the most important thing. Commercial programs cost so much in fancy packaging — sealed fancy packaging — never giving you the chance to ask, *"Yeah, but will it work with MY computer?"* You open the box, put it in your drive...no luck... *"Oh we're sorry"*, the man at Customer Service says. *"You opened it. We'll take it back for a $5 return fee, plus this, plus that..."* These rare cases — I won't say all commercial programs are this way — are a real 3-aspirin headache.

Shareware won't pay the bills or afford you that 386 *dream system* you've wanted, but then, I never wanted that. I wanted people to enjoy my stories.

One last point about Shareware (I'm not good at keeping it short, am I?). If you pick up on a Shareware program, use it and say, *"Pay for it? Why should I?"*, the author could be out there, taking the pins out of his design board and thinking, *"Well, so much for that idea."* Let him know that you picked up his program, if not with a check for the registration, then a letter telling him what you thought of his work. I know of at least one author who would love to hear from you.

You have used the new Master's Edition of AGT for Purchased Sight Unseen. How much of an improvement do you find in it over the original program?

The return messages (what you heard from AGT based on what you did) for the first system were *etched in stone*, so to speak; unalterable, unchangeable. V1.19 introduced the Standard file; a collection of responses that were sent to the runtime engine at compilation (along the lines of a boilerplate format). The author could rewrite this file, shaping the system to reflect his character's attitude. Now the character was more able to interact, instead of saying, *"Ok, now let's step back and see what the system thinks of your idea."*

The system is undergoing constant change. Graphics, sound, and music are being adapted. I see text adventures in the future, vastly improved!

What about your future plans? Is there another adventure in the pipeline?

Before heading across Market street (for some lunch) Cliff handed me a file folder, saying, *"Here, copyboy, try to make some sense out of this."* That was over six months ago and I'm only a third of the way through it. After this case, Cliff has told me he's going to take an extended vacation in, I think he said, the Big Sur area. At any rate, he's going to close up his office... for a while.

I'm playing with the idea of a fantasy adventure on a complex scale; a logic twisting escapade where, somewhere in the course of the game, you discover not so much who you are, but what you are. Think about that.

Whoa, look at the time! You have to be on that ocean liner heading west in an hour and I have to be on a Greyhound headed south in less than twenty minutes. Oh no, don't do that... it's my treat. Just leave the dishes on the end of bar. Allen started mopping five minutes ago — yeah, we're going, Allen... thanks for the chow! (He likes to hear that. Makes him think the food is halfway decent, the big dreamer).

It was nice talking with you, Miss Medley. If I ever find myself in London, I'll — don't look at me like that... I was joking! Thank you, again, for talking with me.

Bye...

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68000 AMIGA + 3D CONSTRUCTION KIT = ?

by Terry Brawls
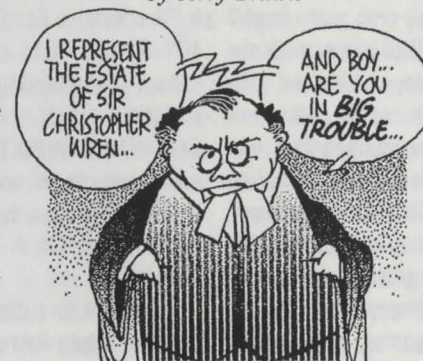
Poor old 3D Construction Kit. Of all the reviled examples of potentially creative software available for the Amiga (and, let's face it, most of which is a port-over of some degree or other from the PC, ST and even 8-bit world) it must rank as one of the most ill-thought of, by an astonishingly diverse cross-section of users.

Graphic artists don't like it because of its remarkable inability to render unto the user anything resembling a hi-resolution, multi-coloured, snappy masterpiece that'll make awestruck viewers want to have its babies. In other words, it makes crap piccies. Dammit, who cares if an attempt to reproduce St. Paul's Cathedral turns out to look like a teabag-box with half-an-orange stuck on the roof? At least you can walk through it, and view it from any angle!

Arcade gamers certainly don't like it as games written with it tend to be mouse or even keyboard-controlled. There also tends to be not enough explosions and aliens, and the *fire* function, even to a non-arcader, is laughable. They also tend to be wrapped-up in lousy Castle-Egyptian-Atlantis type scenarios that those *adventurers* like, and are therefore WEIRD! And so dreadfully slow and boring... (2 genuine letter excerpts from old Spectrum magazines — SINCLAIR USER, from approx.'85... "How do I get the *Hobbit* to work with my joystick?", ...CRASH or YS, from approx.'91/92..."I'm fed up with that adventure-page. I hate it, all those N's and S's and W's and E's, it doesn't mean anything..."). Paraphrased, but genuine.

Owners of the SIM CITY / POPULOUS compilation pack might not like the 3D Kit itself, but they certainly like the box... I know, because I've discussed the subject with them. *We had a meeting.* The boxes are the same size, you see, and you can have lots of stacking-them-on-shelves-in-amusing-patterns-type fun. For instance, one day you could have *The Kit*, as we call it round these parts, on the left, with all the really BIG boxes in the middle and, teasingly, *Sim&Pop* on the right, creating a sort of *synchronitic* effect. Or, of course, you could go for a sort of random, chaos-style setting, or even a minimalist, meditational look, like that Zen garden in Japan. The possibilities are endless. *We had a meeting.*

Well, that leaves US, the adventurers! We seem to be the last hope for the system, the final depository before bargain-basket hell creeps in. The creation of arcade-adventures seems to be all it's good for, after all, and it's in that capacity that we must surely judge it, and NOT in its ability to simulate St. Paul's. After all, your Amiga probably came packaged with DELUXE PAINT III, or similar.

So, do we like it? I think it's a foregone conclusion that we all know, deep inside, that we generally don't. Why? I think it's for a variety of reasons, not at all dissimilar to the objections of the example groups above. Which is a shame, really, because I think that the games generated by it can, and sometimes (?) do, contain elements of all the genres that make up the adventure-scene as a whole.

Text-fans don't like them because, er, they don't contain any text, and they're probably

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reminded too much about the terrible experiences they had with arcade games when they were lickle, and couldn't even get to level 2 of ALIEN LASER HELL CYBORGS even with the force field on, in the training mode, and with infinite lives!! RPG freaks, as we all know ('course we do!) are raging agoraphobics and don't feel at all happy unless they're crawling around in some dark, smelly old linear cave-system. Some of the action in 3D-Kit games takes place ABOVE ground! Megafear! Point-and-Clicker's don't like the element of decision-making inherent in these games, or any other kind of game for that matter. If some course of action or other has more than about 6 choices, forget it. Where's the sand — he wants to stick his head in it. And Play-by-Mailers? Attention-spans measured in weeks rather than the traditional hours/minutes tend to be a strict disadvantage in these circumstances. Besides, what would they do with their stamps? And — Gods forbid — there'd be no time to attend those psychotic receptions they all go to, when they get crazed on cheap lager and evil vibes and lurch dementedly across the room at each other screaming, "EVIL WAZIR — THY TWISTED SOUL SHALL FEEL THE STING OF MY DICE, ETC.". *Allegedly*.

But I don't know. In the interests of research, I warmed-up the old Speccy and hunted through my cryogenically-stored tapes to see what I had on the subject, and I found no less than 6 3D-Kit games — TOTAL ECLIPSE and sequel, CASTLE MASTER and sequel, DRILLER, and DARK SIDE. Upon loading, the memories came flooding back — surprisingly (why?), most of them really quite pleasant. Yes, I can honestly say that this was a type of graphically-based adventuring that I enjoyed on the Spectrum, far more than I enjoyed, say, the FAIRLIGHT, LORDS OF MIDNIGHT/ DOOMDARK'S REVENGE or TIR NA NOG/DUN DARACH/MARSPORT series.

However, that's then, and this is now. Amiga-wise, I believe some of the Spectrum titles were translated over, but I haven't seen them. Sue has 6 PD efforts in her library — 511: MOUNTAIN ADVENTURE, 512: ATLANTIS, 513: DARKNESS CALLS, 514:PLANET OF THE DALEKS, 515: ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE CARDBOARD MONSTERS, 577: WASTELANDS, and 3 new, as yet unnumbered ones - CAR, DIY and OXO. All are typical 3D-Kit games, apart from OXO, which is an attempt at noughts and crosses!

What are they like? I've got an Amiga, right? A 16-bit ratpig-Rottweiler of a machine with a million billion colours, 8-channel stereo sound and a wee bit of a speed advantage over the Speccy! It would be logical to assume, therefore, that 3D-Kit games should be exponentially far better than Speccy ones. But it ain't necessarily so, and this is what it all boils down to. It's expectations, innit? When you play a game, any game, on the Amiga, you automatically assume that it MUST be better than a similar Spectrum game simply because it's an Amiga.

Maybe I'm being a bit unfair, comparing professionally-produced 8-bit games against 16-bit home-made ones, but I don't think so — surely part of the reason why people buy game-creation packages is to make the difference between their masterpiece and what a software savant could produce only a question of degree. You may be a better artist/musician than me, tell a better story, wrap it all up in fantastic packaging, but my effort runs at just the same speed and calls the same routines!

Ah, speed — we've touched on *expectations* again. Generally, the 3D-Kit games worked nicely on the Spectrum. Speed was OK, especially when there was nothing much going on screenwise. Key-response was great (I only had the keyboard in those days!). The famous colour-clashes were sidestepped by the simple expedient of using a system of monochromatic shades and stipples, which didn't look as bad as it sounds. Sounds! The usual bleeps and bloops, but read on!

There's more colour on the Amiga games, but that's about it. On my A600, they run a tiny bit slower than on the Spectrum, but I believe they pick up a bit of speed on the A1200. I should hope so! Mouse/key-responses are sluggish, to say the least, resulting in these programs becoming what I call *Swearing Games*. I'm sure you've all got your own ideas on what constitutes an *SG*! And sounds? Bleeps and bloops, just like the Spectrum!

It's a quality (?) that the 3D-Kit shares with the likes of the AGT system, I think — that of downgrading the Commodore Amiga to a much lesser, lower-common-denominator kind of machine upon loading, and pretending that the wonderful operating-system and hardware isn't there. Like buying a Porsche and being made to run it on lighter-fuel!

I also have to mention the fact that most of the Amiga 3D-Kit games contain one or two *endearing, undocumented traits* (bugs), which, I think, is the fault of the editor rather than that of the author's. None of these faults produce system-resets or other dangerous pyrotechnics, but one is very annoying — you can't seem to save any weaponry when you store a position on disk. In PLANET OF THE DALEKS, for instance, there's a laser you can pick up in the Tardis which comes in useful for shooting out guard-beams and, naturally, Daleks, but you'll have to save a position relating to just before you pick it up. Mind you, this game has another bug, that could help you in this respect — most of the time (it varies) you find that you're still alive LONG after (sometimes forever) the energy indicator has run out!
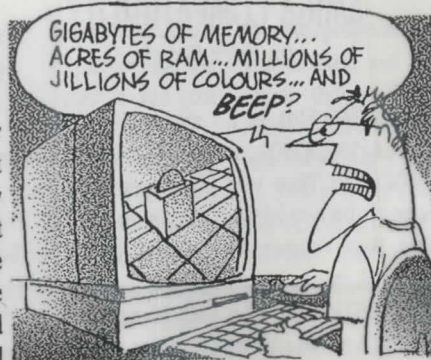
Having said all that, though, I have to admit that there were times when I found myself actually enjoying some of these games, particularly the game mentioned above. It may be heresy to suggest, and it may sound daft to say, but these games can, at times, give you a sort of *text-adventurey* experience, the feeling of not knowing what's around the next corner, that all-important illusion of *infinite possibilities* that is the mark of a playable game of any kind. Just imagine what it would be like if it had graphics, sound and controls that DIDN'T make you laugh. And no bugs!

Most reports from people who've come across 3D-Kit games seem to agree on one point — the difficulty of trying to map them. I agree, up to a point, but once you've mastered the art of realizing that it's just a question of scale, you begin to produce good results. 3D worlds tend to be a bit *out-of-synch* in their internal, spatial relationships; like the Tardis, some places are bigger inside than outside, and vice versa. You should therefore think in terms of *London Underground* map, rather than Ordnance Survey!

If you've never played a 3D-Kit game before, your best bet is probably disk 515, in that it's so simple to complete. Good for the ego! The next best 2 are numbers 513 and 514; I know because I've managed to complete them as well. I haven't really got stuck into the others yet, but my initial impression is that no. 577 is the most professional-looking. Why not do yourselves a favour, lose some prejudices and try a couple for size? At least you'll get a good laugh, AND you can walk through them with alacrity, viewing them from all angles!

AMIGA COMPATIBILITY

by Terry Brawls

Right. Is your Amiga an A500, A500 Plus, or a cute wee A600? Or maybe it's an A1500, A2000, or that former flagship, the A3000? No? Then you must be the proud owner of one of the new breed, those denizens of computerdom, those usurpers of operating-system sanity, the A1200 or, dream of dreams, the A4000 (68030 or 68040 — who cares?). Of course, maybe you've still got one of the old, original models, the primal progenitor and great Grand-Dad of Amiga's, the A1000. Ne'er was a computer so superseded as this one!

Now, let's scrape right down to the bottom of the barrel and separate the wotsits from the wotchamaycallems (the Devil made me do it!). Do you run or struggle under Workbench 1.0, 1.2, 1.3, 2.0 (naughty — available only from those evil piratical-types), 2.04, 2.05, 2.10, 3.0, or even 4.0 (again, naughty. They're still working on it. But everything's for sale in this world, allegedly). Let's not even begin to talk about Kickstart versions and memory configurations, OK?

Apparently, there should be no such phenomenon as *compatibility problems*, as official Commodore programming guidelines are supposed to exist to help programmers develop software able to work across ANY operating system at all. However, rumour is that they're a bit of a nightmare to get hold of and comprehend, let alone implement, which makes software developers take the easy way out and produce code that eventually only works on whatever machine it was written on. Result — you can't play your fave game when you decide to ditch your old Amiga and upgrade to a new one.

The latest bombshell to hit the Amiga world is, of course, the A1200. Let's forget about the wildly esoteric and rather-expensive A4000 for now. In fact, for good. Does anyone actually own one? Yes, the A1200. Now that the A500 and A500 Plus have finally bitten the dust, and the A1500 and A2000

are, to all intents and purposes, in limbo awaiting death, this machine can be considered THE all-new base machine, the foundation of Commodore's empire in Europe. This role was, for a few glorious months, played by the A600, but you can be sure that it'll go down the road as well. Make way for 68020 progress! Mind you, I was fascinated to discover that a friend who bought an A600 this Christmas had his machine packed with an all-new Workbench 2.10 (my A600's on 2.05), Locale library-disk, and new-look mouse (plug too small!). The last gasp?

Commodore's own figures for A1200 compatibility at the time of its release were refreshingly honest, if a bit scary — they reckoned that only 50-60% of titles would load in OK. In fact, it was said in some quarters that the correct way of looking at the A1200 was to consider it as a completely new machine, a radically revamped pseudo-Amiga that JUST HAPPENED to run a wide variety (over half!) of older material. What luck, eh? As it happens, I believe the actual figure turned out to be around 75%.

Of course, all this doesn't do much for any feelings of respect or loyalty one may feel for Commodore, who are generally regarded anyway as a rather cold and uncaring, even contemptuous at times, company. I'm always very amused at the spectacle of watching whatever bland, corporate *suit* that claws his way to the top of the company pyramid for his brief stab at power squirming when he attempts to answer the complaints put by the readers of some of the monthly magazines! (The company are, naturally, safe from any displays of *awkwardness* or deep investigatism by any of the line-toeing, sycophantic journo's that staff the rags. The thought!).

So where does all this leave us, the software-buying punters? Do we simply lie down and just take it? No! An excellent variety of solutions to

these problems exists, all of which are in the public domain, too! With a bit of adroit knowhow, the canny Amiga owner should be able to run just about anything he or she wants to.

Let's start from the bottom and work our way up. I believe a utility is available for Workbench 1.x owners that can make their A500's emulate the Workbench 2.x series; but as I'm already running 2.05 I don't need it and therefore haven't seen it, so I can't comment. However, I HAVE heard that it performs surprisingly well, so you may consider hunting it down.

For nearly a year now, Workbench 2.x and some 3.0 owners have been amazed by the truly awesome 1.x emulator, RELOKICK. Sue handles this in her Syntax PD library on disk 510, so if you don't have a copy yet, get one, as there are still lots of 1.x disks out there. It's worked every time for me, AND it gives you some idea of how Workbench has improved! Two other programs on disk 510 help in the fight. There is a new, A1200-specific version of RELOKICK which disables CPU caches, something that the original didn't do, but again I can't comment. You've also got DEGRADER (2 versions), the original 1.x emulator which allows you to disable chunks of memory, select NTSC/PAL modes and generally make you master of your own machine!

Finally, an interesting, if ultimately pointless, piece of software recently came my way. It's a Workbench 3.0 emulator for my A600, called S-KICK. Naturally, it doesn't give me the ability to display AGA graphics or anything like that, but the gumph claims that it'll give me *a better Workbench, etc*. It certainly displays text-files more quickly, and has the authentic ages-long reset, but that's about all. I've also managed to load a program I believe the real A1200 doesn't like, so it can't be much of an emulator.

I've compiled and donated a few disks to Sue's library, and to make sure that they work on as many machines as possible, I always check them with RELOKICK. You get to know which system-

files and programs each version of Workbench likes and dislikes, and the ones they ALL like. To my regret, though, I just CAN'T check 3.0 compatibility (S-KICK being such a big disappointment, and not having a real A1200).

This is where YOU come in. A1200 owners — if you find that a Syntax disk, or any other PD disk that you may review or want to contribute to Syntax, doesn't work and you manage to make it work — tell us how you did it, and send in your corrected version, making sure, of course, that the correction hasn't affected its performance on the *lesser* machines! If you're into mucking about with AmigaDOS and the system in general, I would love a list of material that the A1200 doesn't like - most problems, I would imagine, come from the C-directory programs being called from the startup-sequence. If I had such a list, I could avoid using the guilty parties and find suitable alternatives.

I have reason to believe, for instance, that the A1200 doesn't like Syntax disk 580 - R.O.L.T.A. Why, and can you sort it? Do tell! I see absolutely no reason why ANY program written on a Work-bench 1.x machine shouldn't also run under 2.x and 3.0, or one written on 2.x under 1.x. Unless an A1200 program specifically addresses the new AGA architecture, it should also be able to run on the older machines. If we all know just what system-files and programs run across ALL formats, then there shouldn't be any need for RELOKICK and cousins. Obviously, there ARE going to be programs that are Workbench-specific, but that's life.

So there you have it. The Amiga PD adventure scene could be made into an island of sanity 'midst chaos, if we really wanted it that way! Remember — as the A1200 becomes the new base-machine and, cuckoo-like, slowly nudges out the remaining 68000 A600, these problems are going to continue. People with little, or no, knowledge of Amigas will suffer the most (bear in mind that Sue herself doesn't own one) so we've all got to contribute.

Let's get OUT there and do it!

SPY TRILOGY: Part 1

Solution by Dave Barker, played on the Spectrum
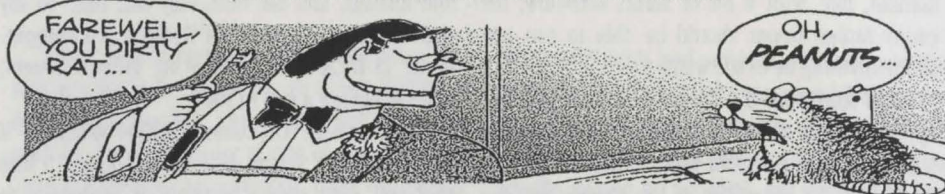
These are three linked adventures which must be completed in the correct sequence. At the end of each you will be given a code word which will enable you to proceed to the next adventure. As time is an important factor of each adventure, you will be given the opportunity of exploring the first two adventures with the clock off. When you reach approximately 90% of the adventure in the practice mode you will be required to start again for real. Useful commands are:- LOOK or L, INV or I, TIME, QUIT or STOP, WAIT, HELP, SAVE and LOAD. There is a ram save option.

You have decide to apply for entrance to the Secret Service. At your initial interview you are invited to attempt the suitability test which examines your intelligence, aptitude and application of logic. You are placed in a situation of having to collect five items of a potential agent's armoury from the agent training school. It is 17.00 hours on 31st of December when you commence the test. It must be completed in less than 8 hours. For graphics enter OFF or ON.

You start in a tidy office, there is a mat on the floor and a locked door to the east.
There is also a rather large, nasty rat here, you must avoid it quickly or else.

MOVE MAT - you find a key. GET KEY, UNLOCK DOOR, E - you are in an old-fashioned room, there is a bronze coin here. CLOSE DOOR - you are now safe from the rat. I - you find that you have a silver token. GET COIN, E - you are in a plain room, a trapdoor in the ceiling leads into darkness. There is a claw hammer here. GET HAMMER, E - you are in a control room, there is a meter on one wall with a lever protruding from one side. There are also some nails here. GET NAILS.

E - you are in the boiler room, there is a bunker in one corner. There are some lengths of wood here. GET WOOD, OPEN BUNKER - you take the lump of coal you find inside. W - you are back in the control room. EXAMINE METER - it has a slot in it. INSERT TOKEN, PULL LEVER - the lights upstairs are now on. W - you are back in the plain room, there is now light beyond the trapdoor. MAKE LADDER - you have one short piece of wood left over. DROP HAMMER, ERECT LADDER - the ladder now leads up through the trapdoor. U - you are in a kitchen, a ladder leads down through a hole in the floor. There is a cup of coffee here.

W - you are in a store room, there is a peeled banana here. GET BANANA, W - you are in a hardware shop, there is an oil can here. GET CAN, E, E, E - you are standing on the stage of a theatre beside the cord which opens the curtains. The curtains are closed. PULL CORD - the curtains open to reveal a door. OPEN DOOR, E - you are in the auditorium, there is a sharp knife here. GET KNIFE - you now have a piece of fish.

W - you are back on the stage by the open curtains. PULL CORD - as the curtains close you find a glass of whisky which you take. W, N - you are in a strange room, to the north there is a door. EXAMINE DOOR - it looks

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SynTax

SynTax is a bi-monthly disk magazine, running in colour, and it's the only diskmag dedicated to adventures, RPGs and related software and books. It contains information sections, articles, reviews, maps, solutions and hints including the popular SynTax 3-in-1 hints where you can pick subtle or sledgehammer hints. The disks build up into a useful reference collection and specially labelled disk boxes are available to keep them organised.

Originally produced for the ST, the first issue was in July '89 and an Amiga version, which runs using an emulator in an external drive (but not on the Amiga 500 Plus or the Amiga 2000, sorry) is now available. The emulator is provided free with your first disk. The ST and Amiga versions are colour-coded issue by issue. The new PC version, programmed by Graham Cluley, runs in a similar range of colours and includes Bumblebee Red and Cheese and Onion flavour!

The SynTax PD Library of adventure games, solutions and demos contains disks for the ST, Amiga and PC. They can be bought or traded one for one for contributions to the magazine on disk.

Finally, what is Brainchild? It's an innovation in adventuring brought to you by High Voltage Software, authors of Cortizone, in association with SynTax, and exclusive to SynTax readers. To find out more, order Issue 15; it's just £3.50 or £20.00 for a year's sub in the UK/Europe (£5.25/£30.00 rest of world by airmail).

Send cheques or POs payable to S. Medley to SynTax, 9 Warwick Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6LJ. Don't forget to say whether you want the ST or Amiga version.

like a door found in a public loo. INSERT COIN - the spring-loaded door is now open. PROP DOOR - you use the pieces of wood to prop the door open. E - you are in a room which gives the appearance of being an electrical shop. There is a door to the east which is closed and a chunk of meat here also. GET MEAT, EXAMINE DOOR - the hinges look rusty and very stiff. OIL HINGES, DROP CAN, OPEN DOOR, E - you are in what appears to be a gun shop, there is a long rifle here. GET RIFLE - you now have a juicy bone.

W, W - you are back outside the loo, the door is still propped open. N - you are in a long corridor with an ornamental archway to the north. The door to the south is open. DROP COAL, DROP WHISKEY, S, W - you are in the dairy, there is a saucer of milk here. GET MILK - you are told that Mr. Spooner doesn't understand that command. So... MET GILK - you now have the milk. W - you are told that initially Spooner's requirements are rather different! So... WO GEST - you are in the dressing room of the star of the winter pantomime. He plays the part of Arthur Scargill, i.e. a fool. The Fool thinks he is a Knight and he will not allow you to see what is in the room until you beat him! He has devised a game using a chess board and his best score is 54! The object of the game is to visit as many squares as possible using the knight's movement pattern. Do you accept the challenge?

Y - you are presented with an 8 by 8 grid. The axes are numbered from 8 through to 1. You must enter co-ordinates in the form of a two digit number. The first number represents the y-axis and the second digit the x-axis —

88, 76, 68, 56, 48, 36, 28, 16, 24, 12, 31, 43, 51, 63, 71, 83, 75, 87, 66, 58, 77, 65, 57, 78, 86, 67, 55, 47, 26, 18, 37, 25, 17, 38, 46, 27, 15, 34, 53, 72, 64, 85, 73, 81, 62, 74, 82, 61, 42, 54, 35, 23, 44, 52, 33 —

The Fool congratulates you and some bullets are revealed.

GET BULLETS - you have some peanuts. E - you are back in the dairy. E - you are told that initially Spooner's requirements are rather different! So... EO GAST - you are back in the strange room. N, N - you appear to be in a butcher's shop, there is a large dog in a cage here. GIVE MEAT - the dog scoffs the meat but he still looks hungry. GIVE BONE - the dog savagely attacks the bone. It suddenly becomes a rifle which flies into your hands. S, W, N - this shop appears to be a fishmonger's. There is a cat in a cage here. GIVE MILK - the cat laps up the milk with a fishy smile. GIVE FISH - the cat devours the fish, smacks his lips, and throws you a knife. S, W, N - this shop is decorated like a Brazilian fruit shop. There is a monkey in a cage here. GIVE BANANA - the monkey gobbles it down and then says NUTS, to you. GIVE PEANUTS - the monkey eats them and sprays a stream of bullets at you! You catch them! S, E, E - you are in the long corridor standing by the coal and whisky you dropped earlier. GET COAL, GET WHISKEY, E, E - you are at the end of a corridor.

To the north a wizard stands blocking the way through an archway. You are asked the following question, 'A dead body is lying in the middle of a freshly ploughed field. There is no sign of foul play or any footmarks anywhere in the field. Near the body is an unopened package. What is in the package?' SAY PARACHUTE - the wizard disappears and a Scotsman now bars the way north. He asks the following riddle. 'A man descends from the 20th floor of a building by pressing the ground floor button in the lift. To go up he presses the button for the 15th floor then takes the stairs'. You are asked to describe this man. SAY SMALL - the Scotsman stays in the archway and growls that you are too early and that you will have to wait. TIME - the time should be well before midnight, midnight on New Year's Eve! WAIT - it's midnight, the Scotsman takes the whisky, wishes you a happy new year, and leaves.

[I believe that you are randomly presented with two of a possible four riddles. I don't know the context of the other two riddles but I believe the answers are in the case of the phone, SAY ANGLING and in the case of the train, SAY BOND.]

N - you are in a room where literally everything is coloured red. There is a torch and a hand gun here. GET TORCH, GET GUN - you get a message, 'With four of the weapons GIANT STEPS should lead'. S, W - you are in a corridor, a giant stands guard in front of an archway that leads north. As you approach the giant takes your rifle, knife, gun, and bullets . He then asks 'To which common items does the following sequence refer: 1, 2, 5, 10, 50?' SAY COINS - the giant smiles and disappears in a puff of smoke leaving your weapons behind. You pick them up but one of them drops to the floor. LOOK (this is random) - GET weapon.

LIGHT TORCH - the light is weak, N - the door slams shut behind you. You are in a garish room with red and blue walls, in the floor is a trapdoor which is closed. There is a grenade here. GET GRENADE, LIFT TRAPDOOR - the final exit would appear to be down. D - you tumble through the darkness to awaken in your own bed! It was all a nightmare! Your appointment is tomorrow.

The code word for the next part is:- SECRET.

N E W   S O L U T I O N S

Alone In The Dark — Battune Becomes An Actor — Battune Goes On Safari — Battune Meets Sleeping Beauty — Bill And Ted's Excellent Adventure — Blood Of Bogmole — Castle Of The Alchemists — Day Of The Tentacle — Days of Sorcery — Demon Knight — Dragon's Lair — Dune 2 (Hints) — Escape From The Planet Of The Cardboard Monsters — Fleece Quest — Humbug — Hysula — In Search of Atlantis — Jacaranda Jim — Les Manley: Lost In LA — Maze — Mega Traveller 2 — Might And Magic II — Nebula — Pools Of Darkness — Return Of The Phantom — Rimworld — Robin Hood (Millenium) — Shadow Of The Beast I — Shadow Of The Beast II — Shadow Of The Beast III — Simon The Sorcerer — Sinbad — Space Quest V — Space Rogue — Spellcasting 301 — Spiro Legacy — Supernova — Suspicious Cargo — Test (Micronet) — Unnkulia One Half.
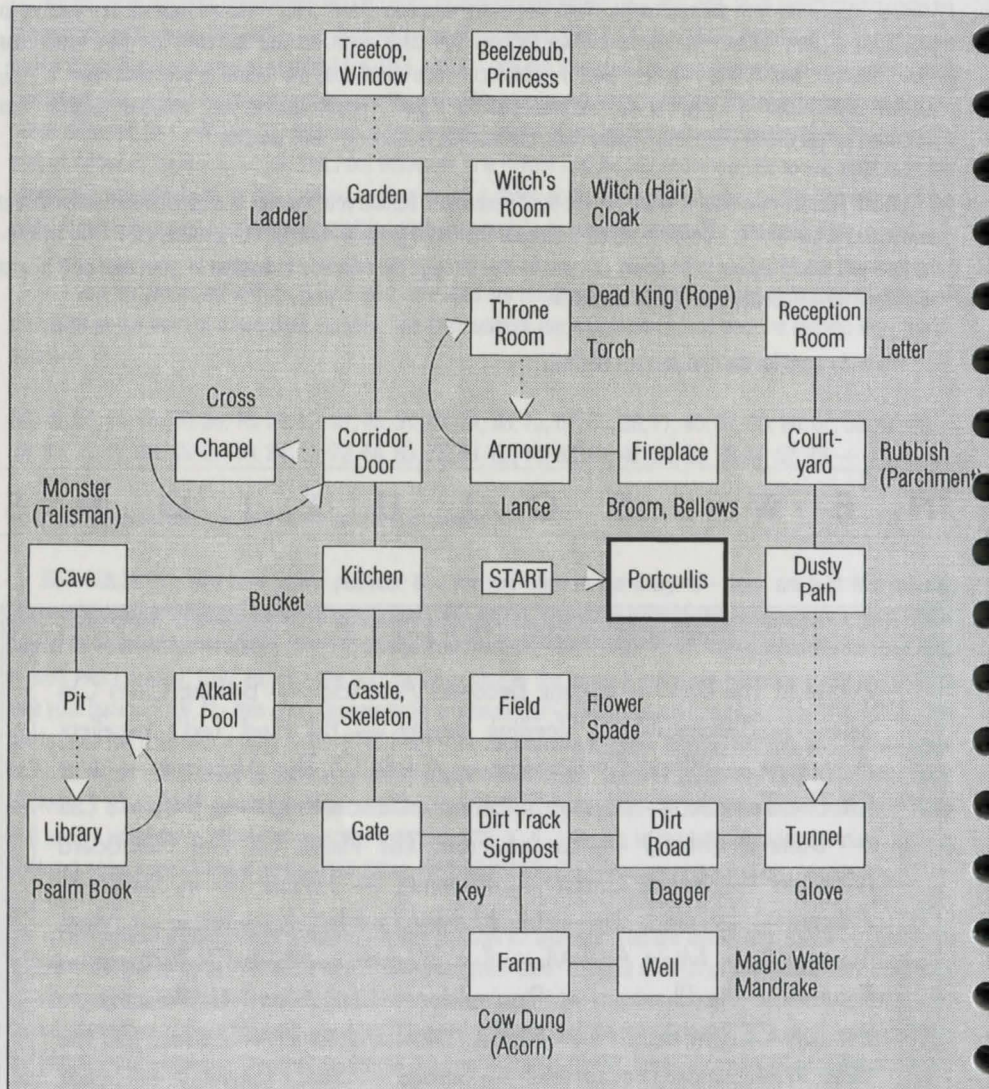
Map (room diagram)

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Treetop,        Beelzebub,
Window          Princess

         Garden      Witch's        Witch (Hair)
  Ladder             Room           Cloak

         Throne      Dead King (Rope)   Reception
         Room                           Room        Letter
  Cross              Torch
         Corridor,
  Chapel  Door       Armoury    Fireplace    Court-
                                             yard      Rubbish
  Monster                                              (Parchment)
  (Talisman)         Lance      Broom, Bellows

  Cave      Kitchen                          Dusty
       Bucket         START    Portcullis    Path

  Pit    Alkali    Castle,     Field      Flower
         Pool      Skeleton               Spade

  Library          Gate   Dirt Track   Dirt      Tunnel
                          Signpost     Road
  Psalm Book                                      Glove
                          Key          Dagger

                   Farm         Well    Magic Water
                                        Mandrake
                   Cow Dung
                   (Acorn)
```

This is an adventure written in basic. It was found in the Christmas issue,1984 (No.11) of Spectrum Computing published by Argos Press. This "Golden Oldie" is very particular about input. Some of the phrases required are weird. Do not waste time trying to enter the first location. It is only the start position and cannot be entered. The mystery message is written using a reversed alphabet and translates as... TO FREE THE PRINCESS, TO BE A SUCCESS YOU MUST READ THE PSALM, WEAR A CLOAK, CROSS AND A LUCKY CHARM AND STAB THE ONE WHOSE DOING THE HARM You can search the dead king and get a rope but this appears to be a red herring as it is not required. GO must be added to all directions and no abbreviation is allowed. However GO and ENTER are interchangeable and GO NORTH, ENTER NORTH are the same.

You are allowed to carry six items

From the start outside the portcullis —

GO EAST, GO NORTH, GO NORTH, GET LETTER, READ LETTER (King's Will), DROP LETTER, GO WEST, PULL TORCH (Room appears), ENTER ROOM, GET LANCE, GO EAST, GET BELLOWS, GET BROOM, GO WEST, GO WEST, SEARCH KING (to see rope), GET TORCH, GO EAST, GO SOUTH, SWEEP RUBBISH (Parchment appears), GET PARCHMENT, READ PARCHMENT, DROP PARCHMENT, GO SOUTH, LOOK PATH, SWEEP PATH, DROP BROOM, GO TUNNEL, GET GLOVE, GO WEST, GO WEST, LOOK POST (to see key), LANCE KEY, DROP LANCE, GO WEST, OPEN GATE, GO GATE, GO WEST, FILL BELLOWS, GO EAST, BLOW SKELETON (becomes a pile of bones), DROP BELLOWS.

GO CASTLE, DROP TORCH, DROP GLOVE, DROP KEY, GET BUCKET, GO SOUTH, GO SOUTH, GO EAST, GO NORTH, GET SPADE, PICK FLOWER, GO SOUTH, GO EAST, DIG ROAD (to reveal jewelled dagger), GET DAGGER, GO WEST, GO WEST, GO GATE, GO CASTLE, DROP SPADE, DROP FLOWER, GO SOUTH, GO SOUTH, GO EAST, GO SOUTH, SEARCH DUNG (to reveal acorn), GET ACORN, SACRIFICE COW (Check inventory — dagger is now blooded), GO EAST, FILL BUCKET, PICK MANDRAKE, GO WEST, GO NORTH, GO WEST, GO GATE.

GO CASTLE, GET SPADE, GO NORTH, GO NORTH, DIG GARDEN (Small hole appears), DROP SPADE, PLANT ACORN (small shoot appears), WATER GARDEN (Oak tree appears), DROP BUCKET, DROP MANDRAKE, DROP KNIFE, GET LADDER, GO SOUTH, GO SOUTH, GET FLOWER, GO WEST, WAVE FLOWER (smelly monster becomes sweet smelling), DROP FLOWER, SEARCH MONSTER (to reveal Talisman), GET TALISMAN, WEAR TALISMAN, GO SOUTH, LAY LADDER, CROSS LADDER, GET PSALMS, GO EAST, GO NORTH, GO EAST, GET KEY, GET TORCH, GET GLOVE, WEAR GLOVE, GO NORTH, TAP WALLS (to reveal small door), GO DOOR, GET CROSS, DROP GLOVE, WEAR CROSS, GO WEST GO NORTH, CLIMB TREE, UNLOCK WINDOW, GO DOWN, DROP KEY, GET DAGGER, GO EAST, CUT HAIR, GET HAIR, BURN HAIR (Witch dies), GET CLOAK, WEAR CLOAK, GO WEST, GET MANDRAKE.

Now check that you are wearing Cross, Talisman and Cloak and carrying Dagger, Mandrake and Book of Psalms. CLIMB TREE, OPEN WINDOW, GO WINDOW (to find Princess and Beelzabub), LOOK MANDRAKE (It's like the devil himself), READ PSALM, CUT MANDRAKE... WELL DONE MESSAGE and offer of replay.

Part 17: THE UNDERGROUND AREA

Here, after many battles, the Party must escape from their Cell when given a respite. Then snatch the Statuette from the office of the Commandant and get back to the Overland. No easy task! Arrive here via one of the traps in LLorkh.

MAP REF

7 - 11	Entrance to the Arena.
1 - 7	Barracks.
3 - 7	Barracks.
5 - 7	Barracks.
10 - 6	Barracks.
12 - 6	Barracks.
14 - 6	Barracks.
1 - 5	Barracks.
3 - 5	Barracks.
7 - 5	Fighting Area.
12 - 4	Cell.
13 - 4	Imprisoned Ogres — release them.
9 - 3	Griffins — will rland.
4 - 1	Griffins will attack you.
12 - 2	Imprisoned Hellhounds — release *after* Ogres freed.
13 - 1	Griffins — do *not* release.
10 - 0	Zhentil fighters.
7 - 0	Secret door.

PART 18 — THE STAR MOUNTS

We are now approaching the final stage of this adventure; only two more places to visit after this one. The Star Mounts are (is?) a fortress, the home of Ceptienne, a magic-user who has thrown in her lot with the Zhentarim. Here you must find and get the Statuette of the South. Have your Mirrors ready for defence against Medusae.

MAP REF

8 - 0	A phantom figure appears. Pointless to try to fight it.
2 - 1	Group of Dragons.
8 - 2	Griffons.
15 - 2	You start here. A good resting place.
2 - 3	Hellhound and Griffons.
4 - 3	Secret door leading towards inner sanctum.
7 - 3	Phantom re-appears.
13 - 3	Hellhound and Harpies.
5 - 4	Griffons and Hellhounds.
10 - 6	Ogres and Hellhounds.
7 - 7	Ready your Mirrors — Hellhounds and Medusae.
10 - 7	Phantom again.
14 - 7	Two Dragons — one is personal steed of Ceptienne.
3 - 8	Ceptienne's chamber. Big fight against Medusae, Harpies and Ceptienne. Treasure includes Bracers AC6, Dagger + 1, Necklace of Missiles, Wand of Defoliation and Statuette of the South.
11 - 9	Ogres and Medusae.
7 - 11	Ogres and Harpies.
2 - 14	Griffons and Medusae.
13 - 13	Ogres and Griffons.
14 - 7	Griffons.
15 - 7	Phantom appears (this is really a projection of Ceptienne).

PART 19 — THE TOWN OF SUNDABAR

To get to Ascore, the home of Vaalgamon, you 'must' go through this town. You should by now be in possession of the necessary four Statuettes, which will decidedly reduce the number of monsters you have to fight in this location.

MAP REF

1 - 0	Hellhound and Medusae.
12 - 0	Harpies.
2 - 2	Temple.
13 - 2	Voice of Harpy.
15 - 2	Exit — a desperate attempt to stop you will be made by Hellhound, Harpies and Zhentil Fighters.
7 - 3	Hellhounds and Ogres.
14 - 3	3 Illusion of a chasm. Ogres and Zhentil fighters await you.
15 - 3	Residence. Information available.
13 - 4	Illusion again *(see 14 - 3 above)*.
15 - 4	More Information.
15 - 5	Yet more information.
15 - 7	Hellhounds and Zhentil Fighters.
4 - 8	Training Hall.
9 - 9	Tavern.
1 - 9	Inn.
3 - 9	Training Hall.
13 - 9	Fountain. Do *NOT* agree to the Magic Mouth's offer.
6 - 10	Illusion.
7 - 10	Illusion.
0 - 11	Armoury.
1 - 11	Store.
3 - 11	Boat Rentals.
10 - 11	Residence. Information available.
10 - 13	Residence. Information available.
14 - 14	Residence. Information available.
14 - 15	Residence. Information available.
14 - 11	Temple.
6 - 14	Griffons.

The sequel —
Treasure of the Savage Frontier should be covered by a Guide soon.

Ron

PART 20 — ASCORE (Conclusion)

This, the final area, must not be entered until all four statuettes have been found. It must be borne in mind that once the party has entered Vaalgamon's Gate, there is no respite and spells cannot be replenished. You can, however, return through the Gate if you so desire, but you will still have to return and face the same amount of encounters.

MAP REF

0 - 0	Defeat the Ettin to get details of secret doors, plus a Dwarven Battle Axe +2 which is more effective of used by a Dwarf, a Healing Potion and some Gems.
1 - 0	Put out the fire to bring down upon you Skeletons, Mummies, Hobgoblins and a Troll.
0 - 1	
7 - 2	Skeletons and Mummies at any of these
7 - 5	locations appear at random
3 - 10	
7 - 13	
9 - 3	Vines lead to Overland after beating Shambling Mound.
1 - 6	Souvenir Shops. Possible attacks
1 - 9	by Skeletons.
1 - 13	Use *Knock* spell to enter. Information may be obtained if the party behaves truthfully. Fight the Magician for Bracers AC4.
8 - 14	Fight a few Mummies. Find a booby-trapped Chest. Inside Chest is a Longbow +2 with a set of arrows +2. Also two spells *Cure Light Wounds*.
15 - 13	Vaalgamon's Gate. From here you move from combat area to combat area. Reading your Combat Map will help. One of the best routes is East, North, North, North then West. Exit that combat area to win the adventure!

Note: Only one character need get through the exit for the game to be won.'
THE END

ISHAR 2: A Partial Exploration Of Some Of The Islands — Part 2

by Ron Rainbird, played on the Amiga 500 (1 Meg)

STAY AWAY FROM THE BLUE VELVET... IF YOU VALUE YOUR FREEDOM...

After the initial roam around Irvan's Island, the majority of the game requires considerable travelling to and from between the various islands once you have the relative Maps, so that there are many problems which cannot be solved without visiting another island first. For example, just when you think that you have finished with Irvan's Island, you discover that to get the Map of Jon's Island, you have to obtain an Eagle and 10,000 pieces of gold and visit a Magician who wanders rather haphazardly along the eastern coast of Irvan's. To get the Eagle and the money you have to roam around Zach's Island. *Get the picture?* This also means that there are several ways of completing this adventure. So from here on, I intend to give known details of each Island, regardless of whether or not visits to other places are necessary, although where they are, I will try to indicate which place to visit. *Confused? You will be!* So, on to the next port of call after Irvan's.

ZACH'S ISLAND

This is the main shopping centre. A fairly large area, although the auto-map facility comes in very handy. There is also a Library, Town Hall, Bank and Temple spread out a long way from the Harbour. I visited this island so many times, I began to think of it as home. My first object was to roam about the town at night, killing all who stood in my way, thereby collecting a substantial amount of gold. This enabled me to get better armour and weapons. *Most essential this.* I then visited the Library where I got the map to Akeer's Island. A later visit to this Home of Learning will give you a list of essential potions. When you think your party is strong enough, go to the back entrance of the Bank and fight about fifteen guards. Beat them, and the doors will open to let you take 100,000 gold pieces. If you go to the front entrance afterwards, you may deposit some of this and earn some healthy interest, but the most important thing is to find the Magic Armour Shop and buy your fighters some really expensive armour and magic swords. Have some money in reserve though for the next purchase! Not far from the Harbour is a Clothes Shop. Here you must buy Monk's Homespun Garb for each member. The go to the Eastern part if the town to find a Pet Shop. Buy a Magpie, a Parrot, a Monkey and an Eagle. Find an Apothecary's Shop. Look at your list of potions and buy the ingredients for the Humbolg and Jablou spells. *Now for some fun.* In the Eastern part of the city there is a Night Club — 'The Blue Velvet' — which you should visit when dusk falls. You will be immediately incarcerated *(I've always wanted to use that word, but I'll refrain from the obvious observation).* Change into your Monk's Habits, release the Magpie and it will bring you back the key to the cell door. Open the door as soon as it is midnight and walk out into a passage that only remains open until 4 a.m. You will soon encounter a Monk who tells you to "Hurry up or you'll miss the Ceremony". Walk past him into a Sacrificial Hall. One of the Monks has a key hanging from his belt. Get it and then get out. You will need it for use on another island. Leaving the Hall, wander along the passage until one of your characters says that he can feel some fresh air. This means a secret passage nearby, so find it and walk out into a group of city guards. You should by now be fully able to deal with them. Head for the Harbour but before you board your ship, make sure that you have 10,000 pieces of gold with you and an Iron Shield.

Next stop, Irvan's Island, but we'll be returning to Zach's, never fear!

SynTax Public Domain Software Library

ST DISKS

STAC
Text/graphics unless stated

6: Wizard's Tower V1.65
8: The Payoff
89: Snatch and Crunch. Adult, text-only
94: Treasure of the New Kingdom
130: The Grimoire
175: Trials and Tribulations of an Apprentice Wizard
437: Operation Blue Sunrise. Shareware
438: Slayer
439: Black Dawn
463: Mysterious Realm
464: Escape From Cygnus Alpha
499: Hack. NOT the RPG
503: Obscure Naturalist. Shareware
539: Black Dawn. Adult

AGT
Text-only

38: The Adventure Game Toolkit - shareware v1.3
39: AGT Source Code 1 - 10 AGT adventures. Requires AGT disk.
   Buy both PD 38 & PD 39 for *£3.50*
245: AGTBIG - write larger games
41: A Dudley Dilemma
42: Tark
64: Star Portal
65: Susan. Adult
66: Tamoret
67: Pork
68: Son of Stagefright
72: Pork II
73: Pyramid of Muna
74: Quest for the Holy Grail
75: Sir Ramic Hobbs
76: The Battle of Philip
146: Dragon Slayer - adult
183: Disenchanted
218: Magic Mansion
223: Pyramid
225: Storms
261: Deena of Kolini and Lottery - adult
262: Betty Carlson's Big Date + Christian Text Adventure

269: Elf's Adventure
308: Ghost Town
314: Castle of the Alchemists
318: Colossal Cave (D. Malmberg)
319: Apprentice
321: Colossal Cave (D. Gasior)
332: Fleece Quest
333: Hotel Notell
335: Rescue Of Princess Priscilla
337: Deadly Labyrinth
339: Library
341: The Lost Stone Mansion
345: The Spelunker's Tremendous Cave Adventure (spoof Colossal)
347: Tales of Tavisa
350: The Tomb of the Ancient Pharaohs
364: New England Gothic
365: Mop and Murder
418: Crusade
440: Droolig and the King's Gold
442: Christian Text Adventure
465: Jubilee Road
500: Oklib's Revenge. Cutback PD version
551: Helvira. Cutback PD version
572: The Detective
568: TimeSquared
569: What Personal Computer
570: What! No Low Alcohol Mineral Water
571: Murder Of Jane Krabz
572: The Detective
573: Zim Greenleaf's Laboratory
574: Space Aliens...

TADS: These TADS games, and TADS itself, need 1 meg.

77: TADS + Ditch Day Drifter. Shareware
178: Deep Space Drifter
378: Unnkulian Underworld: the Unknown Unventure
379: Unnkulian Unventure II: the Secret of Acme
534: Alice source code

CAT
C AdventureToolkit for text games

248: CAT. Shareware, ST and PC versions. Needs C compiler
249: Awe-chasm. Adult
356: Everyday Adventure

STOS

93: Treasure Search + source code. Treasure hunt for kids.
441: Grandad and the Quest for the Holey Vest. Shareware. 1 meg

RPGs and STRATEGY

5: Hack! v1.03, with ramdisk
37: DDST
127: Nethack v2.3 1 Meg
258: Mystic Well. Shareware. No save facility
466: Dungeonlord. 3 levels. DM-type game. Shareware. USA
467: Cailynvorn.
468: Omega. 1 Meg
489: Conquest. Strategy
504: Dungeon Lord
547: Caesar. Strategy
549: Chaoes. 1 Meg

ALEX VAN KAAM'S Map Disks
All D/S with slideshow program.
(AM+Em in low res.)

61: Bloodwych maps
129: Bloodwych Data Disk maps
131: Xenomorph maps
362: Knightmare maps/solution

JOHN BARNSLEY'S Game Help Disks
(AM+Em)

59: Bard's Tale 1 Game Help Disk, maps and text

Other RPG Help

11: Dungeon Master maps and demo of the DM cheat
60: Chaos Strikes Back. Maps
156: Chaos Editor and Bloodwych Editor
162: Chaos editor, Chaos hints/pix, Populous editor
180: A new DM dungeon
251: Five Chaos dungeons
252: Five more Chaos dungeons
253: SimCity editor, terraformer, cheat program and printer option
310: Captive help, maps, text. (AM+Em)
368: Sim City extra cities vol. 1 D/S
370: Sim City extra cities vol. 2 D/S
425: Captive Maps by Ivan Broad. (AM+Em)

TALESPIN

176: Mountain, SDI and Mansion - written by children for children
181: The Wolf and the Seven Kids - aimed at 5-9 year olds
381: Wizard's Dungeon

UNCLASSIFIABLE!

158: Mapper - draw, save and print maps for RPGs and text games (AM+Em)

UTILITIES

33: ST Writer Elite now v4.5. Excellent PD word processor , saves as ASCII
403: Intro Maker - write intros for your adventure games.

3D CONSTRUCTION KIT GAMES

461: The Maze
462: Hysula
517: Speilraum
518: West One
519: Infiltration

PC DISKS

To simplify things from now on, it will be assumed that PC Owners use 3.5" disks and have a hard disk. If you don't, please check whether or not the disks will run on your machine.

TEXT ADVENTURES

53: Crime, Island of Mystery, The Haunted Mission, Nuclear Submarine Adventure, Terror in the Ice Caverns
57: Golden Wombat of Destiny
62: Quest for Kukulklan, Under the Ice
153: Jacaranda Jim now v 4.03
157: Humbug now v 4.5, saves to disk as well as RAM.
170: Advanced Xoru - evaluation copy.
174: Nirvana
196: McMurphy's Mansion
197: Four With Battune (Museum, Caverns City, Battune in Wonderland and Battune the Sailor
264: Another Lifeless Planet (and Me with No Beer...)
273: Four More With Battune (Battune Becomes an Actor, Crime-fighter, Goes on Safari and Meets Sleeping Beauty)
274: Supernova by Scott Miller
283: Pirate Island, Castle of Hornadette and Stoneville Manor
285: Fifi's Whorehouse, Softporn Adventure (both adult only), Basic Adventure and FunCity Adventure.
286: T-Zero. Time travel adventure

295: Alien, Dark Continent and Nebula
298: Masquerade, Escape from Maya's Kingdom and The Thief's Adventure
375: Dunjin
414: Pork, original vers. not AGT version
417: CIA, Escape from New York (both need Basic), IBM Adventure and Dungeon, the original Lebling/Blank et al adventure!
446: Mutant Invasion, Intercept and Red Planet
469: Geneva Adventure
476: Alice in Wonderland
479: Melita Adventure
482: Perils Of Darkest Africa, Revenge Of The Moon Goddess, Eye Of The Inca, Explorer
520: Starship Columbus, Crypt, LBSS, Maroon, The Adventurer's Museum.
522: Nectar Of The Gods, Paul's First Journey.
528: Return To Colossal Cave, Rimworld and Silver Cloud.
529: Revenge Of Xoff, Orbital Observatory Adventure and The Other World.
530: Skylands Star
597: Secret Quest 2010, Raspion, Drawplus, Werewolf Howls At Dawn, Wizard's Castle (needs BASIC).
598: Deathworld, Diamond Quest, Revenge Of The Balog, Kidnapped, (needs BASIC)
599: Raiders, Time Traveller
600: Ghastly Manor, The Abbey, Destiny, Derelict, Hampton Manor, Trouble At The Quatt Wunkery.
601: Kquest, KquestII, Keys Of The Kingdom, Yggdrasil.
602: Pizza Quest, Kingsley's Mansion.
603: Adventure Of Captain Bane, Bones Mansion, Fellowship Of The Ring.
604: Brainscape, Wade Wars 3.

GRAPHIC ADVENTURES

385: Hugo's House Of Horrors I. Hard Disk
430: Hugo II. Hard Disk
436: Hugo III. Hard Disk
472: Hogbear
474: One Night In Sweden. 2 disks. £3.50
477: Mystery Of The Java Star. 2 disks. £3.50
486: Drock 1

TADS
Text Adventures

288: TADS plus Ditch Day Drifter. V 1.2
289: Deep Space Drifter

329: Uunkulian Unventure I - The Unknown Unventure
330: Uunkulian Unventure II - The Secret of Acme
526: High Tech Drifter and Source Code
527: The Great Archeological Race
533: Save Princeton
534: Alice Source Code
540: TADS v2.1
546: Unnkulia One-Half plus Unnkulia Zero demo. Freeware.
605: Four Symbols (Cutback PD version)

CAT
C Adventure Toolkit

266: CAT - write your own text adventures, needs C compiler.
357: Everyday Adventure

AGT
Text Adventures

198: AGT - write your own text adventures. £3.50 (multiple disks)
230: Humongous Cave. Expanded AGT Colossal. Hard Disk
237: AGT Utilities - AGTBIG, POPHINT, PRETTY, SCRIPTER
167: Betty Carlson's Big Date
168: Deena of Kolini - adult
195: Andkara
219: Magic Mansion
224: Pyramid
226: Storms
229: Crime to the Ninth Power
265: Crusade
267: Son of Stagefright
268: Elf's Adventure
278: Quest for the Holy Grail
287: What? No Low Alcohol Mineral Water
291: Space Aliens Laughed At My Cardigan
307: Ghost Town
309: A Dudley Dilemma
315: Castle of the Alchemists
320: Apprentice, the Testing of a Magical Novice
322: Colossal Cave (D. Gasior)
324: Escape From Prison Island
326: Sanity Clause
327: Cosmoserve. AGT
328: Disenchanted
338: Deadly Labyrinth
331: Fleece Quest
334: Hotel Notell
336: Rescue Of Princess Priscilla
340: Library
342: The Lost Stone Mansion

344: Sherwood. AGT. Hard Disk
346: The Spelunker's Tremendous Cave Adventure (spoof Colossal)
348: Tales of Tavisa
349: The Multi-dimensional Thief
351: Tomb of the Ancient Pharaohs
352: Mop and Murder
363: New England Gothic
447: Pyramid Of Muna
448: Love's Fiery Rapture
449: Tark
450: Battle of Philip...
451: Der Ring Des Nibelungen
452: Susan (Adult)
453: Sir Ramic Hobbs...
454: Pork
455: Pork II
456: House of the Os
457: Star Portal
458: The Pilot
459: Fast Lane
460: Easter Egg Hunt
470: AGTAID. Easier to write AGT adventures.
495: Odieus' Quest
496: Squynchia Adventure
497: Jubilee Road
498: Darkest Road (shareware)
501: Oklib's Revenge - cutback PD vers.
525: AGT Adventure Author
531: Wraith Blaster
535: Shades Of Grey
552: Helvera. Cutback PD version
553: The Murder Of Jane Kranz
554: The Detective
555: Cliff Diver 2: Purchased Sight Unseen
556: The Caves Of Dyanty
556: The Lady In Green
558: Time Squared
559: The Quest For The Black Pearl
560: The Tempest
561: Reruns Again
562: A Journey Into Xanth
563: Zim Greenleaf's Laboratory
575: The Unborn One
595: 'Twas A Time Of Dread
611: Tamoret
612: The Spatent Obstruction
613: Cruising The Strip

OTHER ADVENTURE WRITING UTILITIES

394: Adventure Writer
521: Adventure Compiler/Interpreter and game, Mugger, plus ADVSYS and Adventure Maker.

523: Gamescape and Levy adventure writing systems.
524: Figment
607: HIF
608: Gamescape. Version C.4
609: Gamescape Life. Version C.1

AGT MASTER ADVENTURES

594: Hurry! Hurry! Hurry!
620: Sherlock Holmes

RPGs

171: Moraff's Revenge
173: Dungeons and Dragons
290: NetHack v 3
296: Vampyr - Ultima-style colour
305: PC Hack v 3.6
407: Lorrinitron. Hard Disk
408: Maze Quest
432: Realm of Harkom Vol 1, The Axe of Fargrim. Written using the Bard's Tale Construction Kit, needs 2MB hard disk space. 4 disks! £5.00
471: Ranadinn
473: Moraff's World
475: Camelot, RPG-ish 'board' game for 2 players.
478: Fall Through. Text
480: Avaricus
485: Bandor, The Search for the Storm Giant King. First in a series, 4 x 3.5" disks, £5.00. Hard Disk
487: Ancients 1: Deathwatch. VGA/Mouse
516: Moria
541: The Land
542: Dragon's Shard

MISCELLANEOUS

292: Questmaster - design your own Sierra-style adventures.
299: Editors for Pools of Radiance and Bard's Tale 2 plus fixer for Bloodwych
367: SimCity extra cities volume 1
369: SimCity extra cities volume 2
422: Character editor for Eye of the Beholder II by Hartman Game Utilities

AMIGA DISKS

TEXT and TEXT/GRAPHIC ADVENTURES

192: The Golden Fleece. Text
193: The Holy Grail. Text, 1 meg
275: Midnight Thief. Text or text/graphics adventure by D. Thomas. 1 meg. Works on A500+/600 but better with PD510
429: Catacombs. Icon-driven graphic adv.
508: Thrallbound. Text/graphics
509: A Night At The Top. Text

564: 6 Amigabasic adventures + World. Text
565: Life After Death + Zut Alors! Text
566: Dark Staff + Jungle Quest. Text/Graphics
578: Frustration. Text.
580: Rolta. Text/Graphics. 2 disks. £3.50
585: Talisman. Text/Graphics. Needs 2MB, 2 disks. £3.50

AGT
Text Adventures

Unless stated otherwise, AGT games need two drives to run, but they are gradually being replaced with one-drive versions.

353: AGT text adventure writing utility. 2 drives recommended.
359: Battle of Philip...
360: Tark
361: Quest for the Holy Grail
366: Andkara
371: Pork
372: Pork 2
396: Star Portal (1 drive)
397: Dudley Dilemma
398: Love's Fiery Rapture
419: Disenchanted
420: Lost Stone Mansion
421: Tomb of the Ancient Pharaohs
426: AGTBIG for the Amiga
443: Castle of the Alchemists (1 drive)
444: Apprentice (1 drive)
445: New England Gothic (1 drive)
490: Sir Ramic Hobbs (1 drive)
491: House Of The Os (1 drive)
492: Easter Egg Hunt (1 drive)
493: Fast Lane (1 drive)
494: The Pilot (1 drive)
502: Oklib's Revenge. Cutback PD version (1 drive)
544: Fleece Quest (1 drive)
545: Tales Of Tavisa (1 drive)
582: The Detective
586: Helvera (Cut-back PD Version)
587: Space Aliens...
588: Lady In Green
589: Murder Of Jane Kranz
590: What Personal Computer
591: What! No Alcohol Miner Water?
592: Time Squared
593: Zim Greenleaf's Laboratory
615: Storms. 2 Drives.
616: Pyramid Of Muna. 2 Drives.

RPGs

377: Moria

390: Survivor. Needs 1 meg

392: Hack! Rudimentary graphics.

393: Return to Earth. Strategy/ trading game, icon driven, English docs.

399: Legend of Lothian. Single character RPG with Ultima style top down view. Works on A500+/600 but even better with PD510.

567: Antep + Larn

579: Dungeons Of Avalon 1

581: Dungeons Of Avalon 2

583: Dragon Cave

RPG Help

270: Eye of the Beholder maps and playing guide by Geoff Atkinson.

3D CONSTRUCTION KIT GAMES

511: Mountain Adventure

512: Atlantis

513: Darkness Calls. Needs ReloKick from Disk510 to run on 500+/600.

514: Planet Of The Daleks

515: Escape From The Planet Of The Cardboard Monsters.

577: Wastelands (550+ and 600).

WARGAMES

536: Iron Clads. Needs 1 meg

OTHER ADVENTURE CREATORS

400: TACL. Contains interpreter plus 4 example adventures.

427: FRAC. Autoboots, A600 compatible verb/noun entry. Manual on disk.

537: Adventure Bank Creator. For graphic adventures. Needs AMOS

576: CAG . Create Adventure Games. (500+ and 600).

UNCLASSIFIABLE!

401: AmiGraph III. Dungeon mapping utility

UTILITIES

182: ST emulator for Amiga, contains several other useful utilities. A500 only.

510: ReloKick and ST emulator for all Amigas

543: PC Task. PC emulator for Amiga. Needs DOS. Shareware.

584: T-Bench (550+ and 600).

If you have any disks suitable for inclusion in the list, please contact me. Sue.

Solutions

Send a First Class Stamp for each solution requested and a SAE. This isn't the full list, so if you don't see what you need… ask!

A.R.E.N.A.
Adult II
Adultia
Adventure 100
Adventure 200
Adventure 550
Adventure In Atlantis
Adventure In Time And Space
Adventure Quest
Adventure Without A Name
Adventureland
Aftershock
Agatha's Folly
Alice (AGT)
Alice In Wonderland
Alien
Alien Research Centre
Alstrad
Alter-Earth
Altered Destiny
Amazon
American Suds
Amity's Vile
Amulet Of Darath
Andkara
Andromeda III
Angelique

Another Bloody Adventure
Another World
Antidote
Antilliss Mission
Appleton
April 7th
Arazok's Tomb
Arlene
Arnold Goes To Somewhere Else
Arnold The Adventurer
Arrow Of Death. Part 1
Arrow Of Death. Part 2
Arthur
Ashes Of Alucard
Ashby Manor
Ashkeron
Assignment East Berlin
Astrodus Affair
Atalan Adventure
Atlantis
Atlas Assignment
Aunt Velma Is Coming To Dinner
Aural Quest
Aura-Scope

Aussie Assault
Avior
Avon
Axe Of Kolt
Aztec - Hunt For The Sun God
Aztec Tomb
Aztec Tomb Revisited
B.A.T.
Back To The Present
Ballyhoo
Balrog And The Cat
Bard's Tale I
Bard's Tale II
Barsak The Dwarf
Base, The
Basque Terrorists In Dartmouth
Battle Of Philip
Battletech
Battune In Wonderland
Battune The Sailor
Beatle Quest
Beautiful Dreamer
Beer Hunter
Behind Closed Doors 1, 2 & 3
Behind The Lines

Behold Atlantis
Beneath Folly
Bermuda Triangle
Bestiary
Betty Carlson's Big Date
Bew Bews
Beyond Zork
Big Sleaze
Billy Barker In TV Hell
Billy Barker In Walesville
Bimble's Adventure
Bite Of The Sorority Vampires
Black Cauldron
Black Crypt
Black Dawn
Black Fountain
Black Knight
Blackpool Tower
Blackscar Mountain
Blade Of Blackpoole
Blade The Warrior
Blag, The
Blizzard Pass
Blood Of The Mutineers
Blue Raider

Boggit, The
Bomb Threat
Book Of The Dead
Border Harrier
Border Warfare
Border Zone
Bored Of The Rings
Boredom
Borrowed Time
Bounty Hunter
Brataccas
Brawn Free
Breakers
Brian And The Dishonest Politician
Brian The Bold
Brimstone
Buckaroo Banzai
Buffer Adventure
Bugsy
Bulbo And Lizard King
Bungo's Quest For Gold
Bureaucracy
Burlough Castle
Buttons

Caco Demon
Cadaver

Cadaver: The Last Supper
Cadaver: The Payoff
Calling, The
Camelot
Can I Cheat Death?
Canasto Rebellion
Captain Kook I
Captain Kook II
Case Of The Beheaded Smuggler
Case Of The Missing Adventure
Case Of The Mixed-up Shymer
Castle Adventure (W. Pooley)
Castle Blackstar
Castle Colditz (K-Tel)
Castle Eerie
Castle Master I
Castle Master II
Castle Of Dreams
Castle Of Mydor
Castle Of Riddles
Castle Of Terror
Castle Of the Skull Lord
Castle Thade
Castle Thade Revisited
Castle Warlock
Cave Capers
Cave Explorer
Cavern Of Riches
Caves of Silver
Celtic Carnage
Challenge
Challenge Of Iythus
Chambers Of Xenobia
Changeling
Chaos Strikes Back
Chips Are Forever
Chiropodist In Hell
Christian Text Adventure
Chrono Quest I
Chrono Quest II
Circus
Citadel
Citadel Of Chaos
Citadel Of Yah-Mon
City For Ransom
City Out of Bounds
Civilization
Classic Adventure (Abersoft)
Claws Of Despair
Cleric's Quest
Cloak Of Death
Cloud 99
Codename - Iceman
Colditz (Phipps)
Colonel's Bequest
Colorado

Colossal Adventure (Level 9)
Colour Of Magic
Commando
Complex
Computer Adventure
Conman The Barbaric
Conch
Confidential
Conquest Of Camelot
Conquests Of The Longbow
Cornwall Enigma
Corruption
Cortizone
Corya I: The Dragon
Cosmic Capers
Count, The
Country Capers
Countdown To Doom
Coveted Mirror
Crack City
Cranmore Diamond Caper
Cranston Manor
Crash Garrett
Cricket Crazy
Crime Adventure
Crimson Crown
Crisis At Christmas
Crispin Crunchie
Critical Mass
Crom
Crown Jewels
Crown of Ramhotep
Cruise For A Corpse
Crusade
Crystal Cavern
Crystal Frog
Crystal Kingdom Dizzy
Crystal Of Chantie
Crystal Quest
Crystals Of Carus
Crystals Of Doom
Cuddles
Cup, The (River)
Cup Final Frenzy
Curse, The
Curse Of Calutha
Curse Of Crowley Manor
Curse Of Enchantia
Curse Of Shaleth
Curse Of The Seven Faces
Cursed Be The City
Custard's Quest
Cutthroats
Cyborg

Dallas Quest
Dagger Of Amon Ra: Laura Bow II
Damsels In Distress

Damocles
Dance Of The Vampires
Dances With Bunny Rabbits
Danger, Adventurer at Work I
Danger, Adventurer at Work II
Dangermouse In The Black Forest Chateau
Dare, The
Dargon's Crypt
Dark Crystal, The
Dark Forest
Dark Lord
Dark Lore
Dark Planet
Dark Seed
Dark Side (Incentive)
Dark Sky Over Paradise
Dark Storm
Dark Tower
Darkest Road
Darkness Is Forever
Darkwars
Daze Aster
Dead End
Deadenders
Deadline
Death In The Caribbean
Deathbringer
Deathship
Deeds Of Glengarry Hall
Deek's Deeds
Deena Of Kolini
Deja Vu I
Deja Vu II
Demigod
Demon From The Darkside
Demon's Tomb
Demon's Winter
Denis Through Drinking Glass
Der Ring Des Nibellungen
Desert Island
Desmond and Gertrude
Detective (M. Eltringham)
Devil's Hand
Devil's Island
Diablo
Diamond Trail
Diplomat's Dilemma
Disenchanted
Ditch Day Drifter
Dizzy - Prince Of The Yoke Folk
Doctor Goo And The Samorans

Doctor Wot And The Time Lords
Doctor's Demise
Dodgy Geezers
Dog Star Adventure
Dogboy
Dollars In The Dust
Dome Trooper
Domes Of Sha
Dondra
Doomlords I - III
Doomsday Papers
Double Agent
Dracula
Dracula II (PD/C64)
Dracula's Castle
Dracula's Island
Dragon of Notacare
Dragon Slayer
Dragon's Breath
Dragon's Tooth
Dragonslayer (AGT)
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Well, Amanda Jane, admit it, you've made a mistake. You *never* should have offered to baby-sit that persuasive rascal Fanshaw's budgie.

Why didn't you stop to question the fact that the boxes of Trill left to feed the wretched creature were of the half-hundredweight variety and that he left *over three hundred* of them.

How you chuckled when he quipped, *'Trill makes budgies bounce with health'*. He has such a gift of understatement.

Only when his pet's wildly vigorous antics caused the ceiling to fall down and burst some large water pipes, thoroughly drenching your exquisite designer frock and elegant coiffure, did you question the wisdom of feeding birds so extravagently. Especially when their diet is being supplemented with *steroids*.


The only dry clothing which fitted was his nephew's sailor suit which, although very snug, *does* look rather dashing.

In retrospect, the decision to clean the cage was *ill-considered*. However, looking on the bright side, the *view* from this height is splendid. The lack of in-flight entertainment is regrettable. If *only* I had my copy of *Red Herring*. But, it is *useless* to repine. Onward and upward, Amanda Jane...
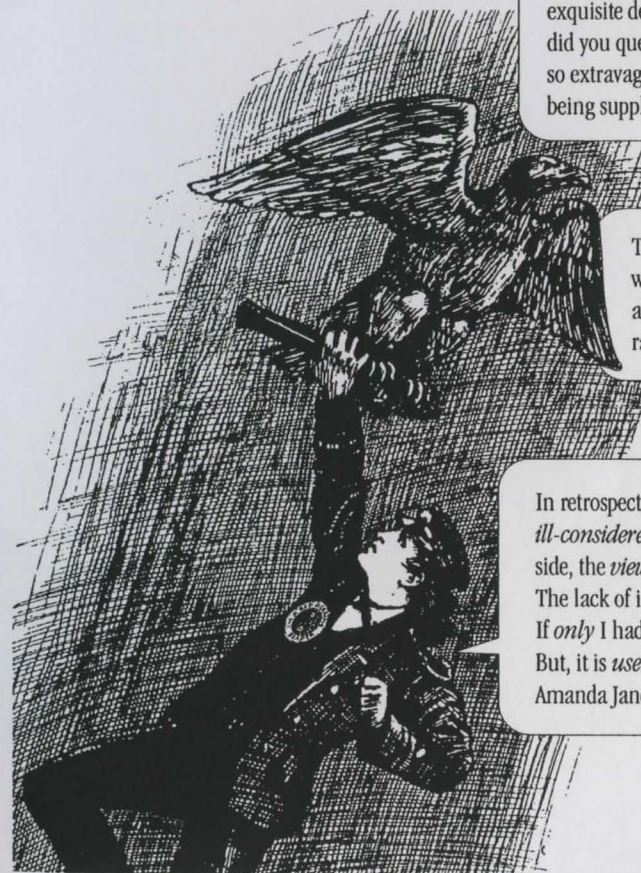
Red Herring and Syntax Adventure Helpline

Stuck in an adventure?
Want a hint, but not the solution?
Call Sue on 081 302 6598 or write to her at
9 Warwick Road, Sidcup,
Kent DA14 6LJ
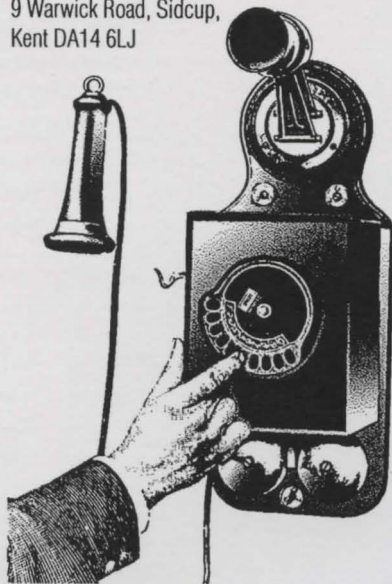
Red Herring has a number of keen adventurers
on its Helpline Team.
Your request for help will be passed
over to them for instant action
If you are writing, don't forget to enclose a SAE