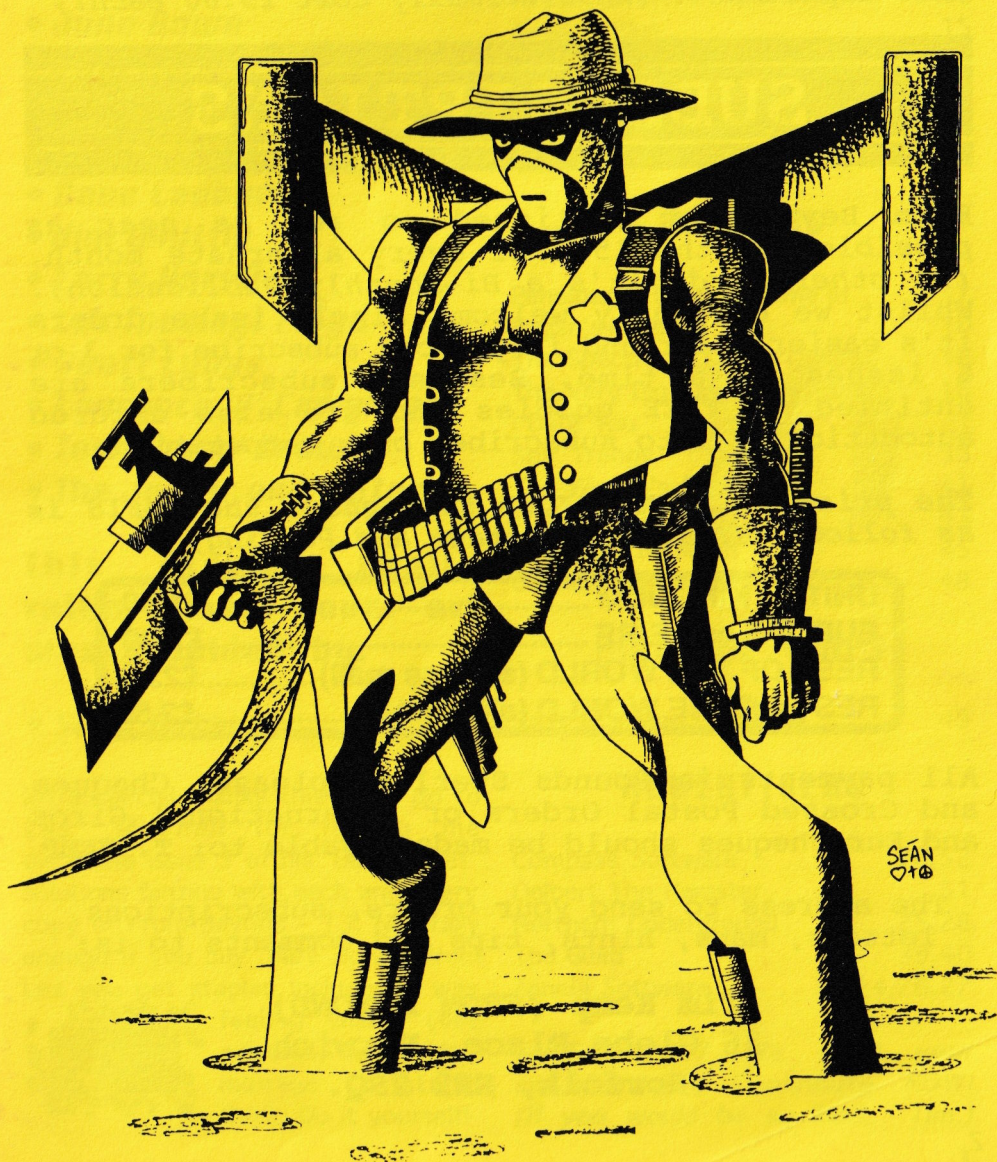


FROM BEYOND ISSUE No: 13

J U L Y / A U G U S T • 1 9 9 2



ADVERTISING RATES

If you are a subscriber to From Beyond then adverts are FREE! (Full or Half Page) If you are trying to sell a game, promote your wares or whatever then we are only too happy to help out in that department. (Ad's normally cost £5.00 each!)

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From Beyond is published on (or as near as possible to) the 15th of every alternate month. (In other words it's a Bi-Monthly Publication). Whilst we obviously welcome single issue orders it's easier all round if you can subscribe for 3 or 6 issues at a time. Besides, subscribers are entitled to FREE goodies and are also entered automatically into subscriber only competitions.

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The address to send your orders, subscriptions, letters, maps, hints, tips and comments to is:

Tim Kemp (FROM BEYOND)
36 Globe Place, Norwich,
Norfolk, NR2 2SQ.

C O N T E N T S

FB ISSUE 13 • JULY/AUGUST 1992

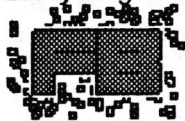
The people who helped produce this issue are:

- *John Wilson*
- *June Rowe*
- *Paul Cardin*
- *Jon Lemmon*
- *Tony Collins*
- *Dave Ledbury*
- *Jim Whittle*
- *Larry Horsfield*
- *Les (pesley) Floyd*
- *Geoff Lynas*
- *Laurence 'Q' Creighton*
- *Terry 'map' Brawls*
- *The Jester and • Storm*

This issues really rather smart cover art was provided by:

- *Sean Doran*

X-tra special thanks this issue go to *Les Mitchell* for letting me distribute issue 3 of his 'Bare Bones' solutions fanzine with each and every copy of From Beyond - 13. Naturally enough if you buy 'Bare Bones' from Les you get staples included! I was



feeling unwell (see editorial) so couldn't manage to staple them. Do it yourself!

GENERAL CONTENTS

News	05
Review System Explanation	06
News + Plus	15
An Interview With...	23
Readers Writes	29
P.A.W. P/T/M Overlay review	37
Loose Ends	50

REVIEWS

Peneless & Toot 'n' Come In	7
Zogan's Revenge	10
The Spectre of Castle Coris	16
The Very Big Cave Adventure	18
I Dare You	21
Spy Trilogy	35
The Wizard's Skull	41
The Soul Hunter	43
Tears Of The Moon	45
Conman The Barbaric Pt.1 (YS)	48

MAGICAL MAPS

Saga of a Mad Barbarian	49
-------------------------	----

ADVERTISERS

Compass Software	20,52
Delbert The Hamster	51
Northern Underground	25,28
The Guild	39,40
Zenobi Software	13,14,26,27

GUESS WOT? We want your contributions! Contribute NOW! (If you would be so kind. Tim.)

EDITORIAL

ADVENTURE PROBE - R.I.P.?

- 16/5/92 Welcome to FROM BEYOND issue 13! Only a 52 page issue this time I'm afraid, though with a FREE copy of Les Mitchell's 'Bare Bones' solutions fanzine (No.3) you shouldn't be grumbling too much. All in all this FB / Bare Bones combination issue is 76 pages long! (Oh, by the way, the date that precedes these editorial entries is the date on which they were written.)
- 10/7/92 Hmmm. To be perfectly honest there were 7 separate entries in this editorial... they dealt with the trials and tribulations encountered whilst getting this issue 'together'. There was news of my lack of activity for a while due to a virus I picked up, there was news about the FB 'patches' (now printed elsewhere in this issue), news of adventures received and the usual sort of idle chittle-chattle that I usually fill the editorial pages with. It was during my recent 'ill period' (in early July) that a couple of phone calls came through claiming the most outrageous things... they both intimated that Adventure Probe had ceased to be! As I was ill I thought I'd hallucinated the news, but no, it was indeed true. The full reasons for AP's demise are still unclear to me at the moment, though Mandy Rodrigues did say, when I phoned her, that her husband had lost his job and she'd lost her free banking facilities - both contributory elements in its downfall (see news pages for more details). I had a chat with Storm (the FB reviewer) and he said that maybe I should make clear the reasons why From Beyond will NOT suffer a similar fate, so here goes...

When I began From Beyond, a couple of years ago now, it was mostly for my own benefit. I was bored, wanted to contribute something to the adventure scene, didn't fancy writing an adventure so decided to have a go at doing a fanzine. The first few issues actually lost money - that was only to be expected as the customer database (i.e. subscribers) didn't exist. Only a few issue of From Beyond actually made any profit - those were the ones that were small, or didn't have a FREE gift. Lately, FB has been a non-profit making publication. I've said it before and I'll repeat it again: The reason From Beyond continues to appear issue after issue is not because it is profitable! It's produced because I enjoy producing it! Simple as that! I enjoy all the aspects associated with adventuring - writing the reviews, laying out the pages, trying to slot things in, adding the stupid little graphics, reading YOUR input - I enjoy the whole kit and kaboodle. Naturally enough if From Beyond isn't being appreciated by the people it's targetted at then they won't buy it and subscription numbers will dwindle. That hasn't been a problem I'm pleased to say, and even if the number of readers we have does become smaller it doesn't matter. Why? because FB's continued existence has nothing to do with subscriber numbers - it's published because I (and you, too) want to see it published! Nuff said!

Tim.

NEWS ROUNDUP

ADVENTURE NEWS AND STUFF!



• Hazel Miller of The Adventure & Strategy Club kindly sent me the latest issue of their loose leaf magazine, mainly to let me know the winners of their golden chalice adventure awards for 1991/92... They are:

Best overall game: KNIGHTMARE by Mindscape.

Best 16 bit adventure game: THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND by US Gold / Lucasfilm.

Best 8 bit adventure game: AXE OF KOLT by FSF.

Best role-playing game: EYE OF THE BEHOLDER by US Gold / SSI.

Best simulation game: RAILROAD TYCOON by Microprose.

Best strategy game: MIDWINTER II by Microprose / Rainbird.

Best utility: THE ADVENTURE GAME TOOLKIT by Softworks.

... and finally the software company of the year (according to The A&SC folk) was: MICROPROSE.

DELBERT IS NOT DEAD!

Despite last issues report that Delbert The Hamster Software was about to enjoy an enforced period of inactivity, due largely to Scott Denyer going to College, a rescue plan had been drawn up and the Delbert name apparently lives on and grows stronger by the day. The initial report was correct, but when the news changed the report was mistakenly left in. Oops. Sorry Delbert!

• Excuse me if things start sounding confused in the coming months. You see, Delbert The Hamster are releasing Dave Ledbury's double cassette version of "DOOMSDAY". It comes in a double cassette box too! One version is the original and the second version (you get both) is an edited version. The original being 'gory' hence the inclusion of the censored copy. You also get a free game called 'Cell of The Ridges'. It's a 128k only release, and while Scott Denyer is handling its distribution Dave Ledbury is taking care of the +D version. See, I told you things would get confusing. Other titles stuck up Delbert's pipe-line were mentioned last issue. There should be an ad for some Delbert stuff elsewhere in this issue. One Final Delbert mention is that 'Fateful Encounters', 'A Closed Community', 'The Valley of Beasts' & 'The Realm of Fear' are the collective titles of Delbert's magnum opus which he's still working on at this very moment.

• Saddest news of this issue is that the erstwhile doyen of the adventure scene, Mandy Rodrigues, has published her last issue of Adventure Probe fanzine! The reasons will hopefully be made 100% clear at a later date - as will the possibility of Probe's continued existence via the efforts of other 'interested' would-be editors / publishers. In one way it's the end of an era... perhaps the beginning of another? Time will tell!

THE REVIEWING SYSTEM

THE FB REVIEW SYSTEM EXPLAINED

Despite having a plethora of categories to take note of when you eventually come to the scores at the end of each review, the FB ratings system is quite simple to understand. It operates on a sliding scale of 0 to 10 - 0 being the lowest score, 10 being the highest. All categories use this scale and scoring system - except the difficulty level which has 4 possible entries...

- Beginner • Intermediate
- Experienced • Advanced

Those categories refer to the type of player that the game seems to be aimed at. The rest of the ratings all use the 0 - 10 system...

- **Storyline:** It's always nice to see the game come with a story which could detail important pre-adventure events, useful info., handy playing hints, or just something that sets the scene or helps create an atmosphere.
- **Packaging:** This rating is here to show how much effort has gone into the packaging side of the game, including Cassette Inlay design, do you get a separate info / storyline sheet etc.
- **Opening Play:** This category gives you an indication of the strength of the opening problems, the way the game starts. Has it got a well produced intro, or are things too tough to start with. We all know what it's like to be stuck in a game after only a few moves because it's far too difficult to play past the first few locations.
- **Problems:** This is worked out over the entire game and we mainly take into account the number of problems, the type, how original they were, etc.
- **Location Text:** How detailed was the location text, how imaginative was it, how lengthy etc.
- **Parser:** This one's important in that it shows you how easy it was to type in your

commands and how flexible it was.

- **Game Design:** How well was the game designed? Was it something new, did it flow, did it all come together nicely? (Or not?)
- **Difficulty Level:** Overall was the game suitable for - Beginner, Intermediate, Experienced or Advanced adventurers?
- **Playability:** This is also an important category. Low marks = you won't bother finishing, high marks = you won't want to stop playing!
- **Personal Rating:** This is where your impartial and friendly FB reviewer sums up their feelings about the game under review!

And there you have it... Quite simple when all is said and done! The following are lists of the resident FB reviewers fave games of all time.

- **Games We Like:** *This is the kind of thing the FB reviewing team like... Yes, what a normal bunch we are!*

THE JESTER:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. The Hobbit | 2. Aura-Scope |
| 3. Heavy on the Magik | 4. 5 on a Treasure Isl. |
| 5. Terrors of Trantoss | 6. The 'Bulbo' trilogy |
| 7. The Axe Of Kolt | 8. Captain Kook |
| 9. Phoenix | 10. Laurence C. games |

STORM:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Velnor's Lair | 2. Golden Apple |
| 3. Mutant (River) | 4. Mordon's Quest |
| 5. Lords Of Time | 6. Faerie |
| 7. Quann Tulla | 8. Earthshock |
| 9. A Harvesting Moon | 10. Magnetic Moon |

TIM:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The Hobbit | 2. Adventureland |
| 3. Dungeon Adventure | 4. Tower Of Despair |
| 5. The Golden Apple | 6. Colossal Adventure |
| 7. Impossible Mission | 8. Espionage Island |
| 9. Velnor's Lair | 10. Lords Of Time |

ADVENTURE REVIEW

PENELESS & TOOT 'N' COME IN

Reviewed By: Tim

In the dim and very distant past many a household name in the software world literally made their name by offering spectacular prizes for the first person to solve their adventures. Those days are certainly long gone... or are they? Ivysoft (run by Jim Whittle) have popped up with a smashing prize for the first person to complete their excellent adventure...

STORYLINE:

The game, in a nutshell, centres around your archaeological exploits. Hell, archaeology must be really important to you as you've dragged your new bride (well, you've actually been married 6 weeks), Lady Penelope Pendragon, along on your latest dig. Being so wrapped up in your work it's a wonder you ever notice that she's abducted by warriors from a tribe long presumed extinct. Throwing aside your passion for digging up the past, you take the time to track her abductors and

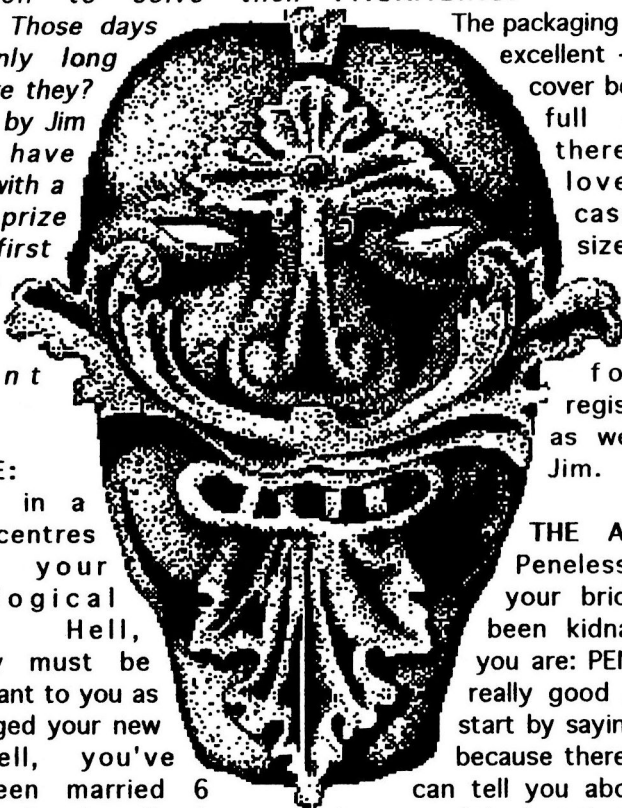
manage to follow them as far as a tunnel where, after a rock-fall, you end up trapped, lost and looking out into bright sunlight on an unfamiliar scene...

PACKAGING:

The packaging of the game is excellent - the cassette cover being printed in full colour and there's also a lovely little cassette inlay size instruction manual too! You also get a prize claim form / registration form as well. Nice one Jim.

THE ADVENTURE:

Peneless (Penny is your bride and she's been kidnapped, hence you are: PENELESS!?) is a really good game. I must start by saying that, mainly because there's very little I can tell you about the game because of the fact that the combined 14" Colour Television / Video (televideo) prize that awaits the first person to solve the quest must be earned, so I can't give any secrets away! Having said that I was pretty hopeless at the game anyway so what I can tell you is basically all I know.



PENELESS & TOOT 'N' COME IN

Exploration is the name of the game, and sudden deaths are a fact of life. I found the going (from the start onwards) really tough, though I certainly wouldn't say that things are unfair to the adventurer. Things are bound to be tough considering the stakes are so high. This shouldn't deter you from buying the game as it's a great challenge and makes a change from working to solve a game simply to see what the end message is going to be.

Graphics play a big part in the game, and they are displayed super-quick in the top third of the screen. Actually PENELESS is almost identical in style, layout and playability as the other game on the tape which I can tell you more about... (Yep, you get two games for the asking price of £4.99 - Toot 'N' Come in is not a prize game - that's just for solving PENELESS.)

TOOT 'N' COME IN: Toot is, as its slightly butchered name suggests, a game set in a Pyramid. The pyramid in question belongs to Seti IV - well to be more precise it's the tomb of Seti IV. You begin the adventure on the middle level of a three level complex. At the entrance (where you start the game) you find your bearer has been squashed by an enormous Indiana Jones size boulder! Needless to say he's of little help - or is he? His hands protrudes from under the rock... maybe he's going to be handy after all? Again, as in PENELESS, the graphics take up the top third of the screen and are of a decent enough

quality (pleasant, bright and lively I'd say). As the pyramid is made of tunnels, caves and rooms you'll need to make a map as you play. Fortunately it seems that things are reasonably logical as far as floor plans go so mapping will be reasonably straightforward. Keep an eye out for walls with levers, trapdoors, moving mummy cases and the like. Thorough examination of everything (and I do mean everything) is advisable. As you begin to explore you'll soon get the hang of things, and will know that certain situations call for certain actions. You'll see that to the right of the graphic display is a little silhouette of an adventurer holding a lamp. This lamp is what throws light on the locations - they draw almost instantly you'll be pleased to know! Text scrolls underneath the graphic display in a pleasing fashion, though it's from the pictures you'll get most clues.

About this time I think I'd better mention that there's a bit of monster bashing to be done. It's achieved in a simple R.P.G. way inasmuch as you get the chance, when confronted by a monster, to: FIGHT, CARRY ON THE FIGHT or RUN AWAY. Fighting is a good laugh as there are plenty of groins coming into contact with knees, eyes being gouged and ears being pulled! On the whole it's the graphics that I found appealing, and I think that even if you are not a fan of graphics in game then you'll possibly be won over to them after playing Toot 'N' Come In and the prize game PENELESS! Sudden deaths

PENELESS & TOOT 'N' COME IN

and mazes are an integral part of the structure of both games, S.D.S. not rearing its hideous head until it's carelessly invoked in one way or another. I must be going funny in the head as rather than messing the game play up, sudden deaths actually seem to add a bit of excitement to the proceedings. Which brings me back to the main game on the tape, PENELESS. It's very similar to TOOT and is even more enjoyable - especially when you know you have the chance to win a big (£400ish) prize if you are a first placed winner! The price that Iysoft are asking you to pay may seem a tad steep, but think of that lovely prize waiting for a brilliant adventurer. Anyway, each game if sold separately would be easily worth £1.99 so there's double value in this excellent two pack. For the cautious amongst you I'd like to add that I have it in writing from the author that the prize is NEW, FULLY GUARANTEED and will be delivered to the winner when the winner is crowned!

GOOD POINTS:

Great graphics & challenges and the thought that a good prize is dangling as bait for the winner! Both games are well programmed and although there are frustrating moments at times, your achievements in solving anything makes up for it.

BAD POINTS:

Considering the game has to be hard I'll not say 'it's hard' (but I would if there wasn't a prize waiting to be won)!

CONCLUSIONS:

All in all both games on one tape (available for Sam Coupe or Spectrum - state which) for a combined price of £4.99 makes for excellent value. The prize for the winner is an added bonus, but I'd still say that even without that extra incentive to buy the game it is still a tape worthy of buying on adventure merit alone. It's different, a bit on the hard side but a great challenge at the same time. Call yourself an adventurer? Solve this challenge and I'll hail you as the king!


• PENELESS and
TOOT 'N' COME IN •

*Jim Whittle (IVYSOFT)
17 Parkside, Ivybridge
Devon. PL21 0HU*

PRICE: £4.99 Spectrum or SAM
Coupe (tape) £5.99 Sam Coupe Disk.

• SPECIAL NOTICE •
PLEASE USE THE SEPARATE
ORDER FORM (ENCLOSED WITH
THIS ISSUE) WHEN ORDERING
THE GAME

RATINGS:

	PACKAGING	8
	STORYLINE	7
	OPENING PLAY	5
	PROBLEMS	6
	LOCATION TEXT	6
PARSER	6	
GAME DESIGN	7	
DIFFICULTY	EXP./ADVANCED	
PLAYABILITY	8	
PERSONAL RATING	8	

ADVENTURE REVIEW

ZOGAN ' S REVENGE

Reviewed By: Tim.

This is the first of two Compass games reviewed this issue. The other one is this games sequel, and, with Blood Of Bogmole, they form the Bogmole Trilogy.

STORYLINE:

Zogan and the remnants of his orc army retreated to the land of Freand after being wupped by the goodies at the battle of Bolimol. He made camp on the far side of Battle valley and made plans to rid this land of good. The mud monsters were his first targets as he believed that had they joined him in his last campaign he would have won. Zogan's powers were still strong and one by one the mud monsters dried and crumbled to dust. It was shortly after this that Bogmole arrived in Freand with prince Eldrin and a powerful Dwarf army. They had to defeat the Zogan menace once and for all. Bogmole (that's you - a swamp monster) made for the swamps that were once his home, only to find himself set about by orcs. Help was at hand as a bodyguard, Randor, had been sent by Eldrin to protect you as best he could - or lose his own life doing so. The Orc attackers were soon beaten off and your quest could now begin... Can you, with the help of Randor, Bernard the Beaver and Gregor, defeat Zogan?

THE ADVENTURE:

The loading screen showing Zogan's

twisted face disappears leaving you surveying the surroundings of the first location. You are standing in the valley of Freand. A cruel wind blows about you and ominous clouds scud across a stormy sky, casting long shadows on 'Black Hill' which lies due north. There's a myriad of directions in which you can initially go, though it's a good idea to examine your current location and also type VOCAB to see what special commands you have recourse to. Try out some of the two letter special command words, then see what you can do.

'CH' stands for Clap Hands. This is the rather inelegant but useful way in which to make Randor follow you or wait at the current location. 'CB' is another special command that Calls Bernard to you. Persevere with the big 'B' as, for a Beaver, he's a great guy! Don't forget that Randor is your bodyguard and as such will be useful to you on most occasions.

But what of the game? Well, initially going North (like I like to do) took me to the base of Black Hill. Some bushes shake ominously - good job Randor's close at hand! Soon after going north and exploring a bit further, some orcs passed close by. You can hear these creatures muttering to themselves, and occasionally they'll attack. When this happens you'll witness Randor in action. He may be small and knackered but he's got a big heart - and an even bigger sword! You may be attacked at

ZOGAN ' S REVENGE

any time, though the chances of Bogmole being hurt are slim. You've got a thick head anyway and can take some punishment before you succumb to the big black!

Exploration is best accompanied by mapping. Don't worry if you are a poor mapper, the game is so logically laid out, and hence so easy to map, that you'll have no problems. There are one hell of a lot of red herrings lying around, so you'll just have to see what looks to be useful and try out some stuff using all the objects.

After wandering around for a while, fending off attacks, finding unusual objects etc., your old pal Gregor can be found. He's inside a hut, not looking too well. The door of the hut lies flat on the floor, underneath there's a rope. naturally enough it's a heavy wooden door which you can't lift! Special command word time methinks! (Thank god for your friends) Anyway, getting back to Gregor... He's been fighting Zogan and he's in a right state. After a few words of wisdom you'll leave him alone - with something strange happening to him. Did he have a wand in his pocket or was he just pleased to see me? You'll See what I mean when you reach him!

On your travels you'll have to use a lot of different items (and help) in as many different ways as you can think of. There's straightforward object manipulation, searching, communication, fighting and all sorts of things to be done. Doors play a big

part in the game too! None need a key (I don't think?) though some are easier to open than others.

Nature plays a big part in the game. Most of the 'big' problems and tasks are centred round natural things, like the elements, animals and the like. Along with nature you'll find the unnatural too! Disgusting creatures whose names I'm frightened to mention. All of them need to be pleased, passed, slayed or bargained with. One piece of bargaining results in a hilarious death for the creature concerned.

A lot of the things you are supposed to do in the game are well sign-posted, either by messages, actions, situations, or occasionally by what other characters blatantly tell you to do. Yep, there sure is a fair mixture of things in this game. What makes it especially good is the character interaction. Jon's got just the right mix of questions and answers in the game, along with a rather wonderful method of leading you to believe that the other game characters are all doing their own little thing, having some effect on the game in various ways as you play along quite happily in your own little way. I don't think they are doing much to alter the game, but it seems like they are.

One or two times I noticed that the descriptive location descriptions were a bit too descriptive. At one stage you'll come up against a tree that thrusts its roots out of the ground

ZOGAN 'S REVENGE

to engulf a well close by. From the pit of the well comes an unholy shriek. Upon visiting this location a second time, and because it's a location description, you get the same thing, with a tree thrusting its roots - complete with shrieks etc. all over again. Something at the bottom of the well appears to be making all the noise - when you silence it and make your way back to the tree / roots/ well location again... yep, shrieks come from the well again. No bug - just a strange use of a location description.

Still, no matter. The rest of the game is excellent. Towards the end, when the climactic battle rages all around you, you really do feel like a helpless little swamp monster lost in the horrible depths of the war of Freand. Zogan can be defeated, believe me, it's just up to you to find out how - and that may take some time.

GOOD POINTS:

Great spot sound effects, screen wobbles, useful characters to meet and interact with, RAMSAVE and LOAD, lots of problems of all different styles and some nice descriptions to make you feel you really are in there! Some of the problems need a lateral, mental, physical and combined team effort (all in one) to overcome them which takes a bit of getting used to, though elevates the game beyond the usual 'GET THIS', 'DO THAT' affair.

BAD POINTS:

Too many doors to cope with if you ask me! You are quite often forced to

rely on luck when doing things in the right sequence on certain occasions. To be fair though if you work at solving problems one layer or step at a time then you should be okay. I missed the usual graphics, but not too much it has to be said!

CONCLUSIONS:

The right price, the right amount of interaction, plenty of problems and a good story. What more could you want? You also get the usual proliferation of dead bodies to examine and SEARCH! and if you are really lucky you'll get a couple of snogs off Bernard the beaver! Undoubtedly a better game than 'Blood of Bogmole' though that was pretty good too.

• ZOGAN'S REVENGE •

Compass Software

111 Mill Road


Cobholm Island, Gt. Yarmouth

Norfolk NR31 0BB

PRICE: £1.99 (tape)

Outside UK please add £1.00

RATINGS:

	PACKAGING	6
	STORYLINE	8
	OPENING PLAY	8
	PROBLEMS	8
	LOCATION TEXT	7
PARSER	8	
GAME DESIGN	9	
DIFFICULTY	INTERMEDIATE/EXP.	9
PLAYABILITY		9
PERSONAL RATING		9

THE MINES OF LITHIAD

Cavilan was upset! No she was more than that, she was livid!

Everybody ducked as a two-foot long flame issued from her mouth and turned a nearby table into glowing embers!

Cavilan, you see, was a dragon !!! A very big dragon and the sole survivor of the 'great war' that was started by the 'Master', who for his own evil designs had decided to wipe out the entire dragon population. This was very hard to figure out, as the dragons had served the nation well for many, many years.



Fortunately for Cavilan she had gone to her cave when the slaughter started, in order to lay her egg and had avoided being put to the sword. When the 'Master' learnt of this he set out at once, with an elite band of Orcs, to complete the job. However when he reached Silvertooth Mountain and located the cave, Cavilan was nowhere to be seen as she was out hunting for food. Incensed and frustrated, the first thought of the 'Master' was to destroy the egg, but after a moment or two of reflection, he decided to take the egg back with him in the hope that Cavilan would follow.

Cavilan was beside herself with worry when she returned to find her egg had gone and the marks of Orcs all over her cave. She knew that she would not be able to gain access to the many twisting passageways and tunnels that lay between her and her egg, so she called a meeting of the 'dragon-riders' (both past and present).

Glancing around the company her eyes settled on YOU! "Wait for me at my cave on the Silvertooth Mountain and I will take you down to 'Kalem Wood', that is as close as I can go without alerting the 'Master'. I have one or two things to do, so I will see you later!" and with a single beat of her huge wings she was soon airborne and out of sight.

"Why me?"... that thought kept repeating itself in your head. I have never gone up against the Orcs single-handed before! The rest of the 'dragon-riders' would do better than me."

The other 'dragon-riders' seemed envious of this as you left the gathering and headed for the cave on Silvertooth Mountain a meeting with Cavilan weighing heavily on your mind.

NOTES

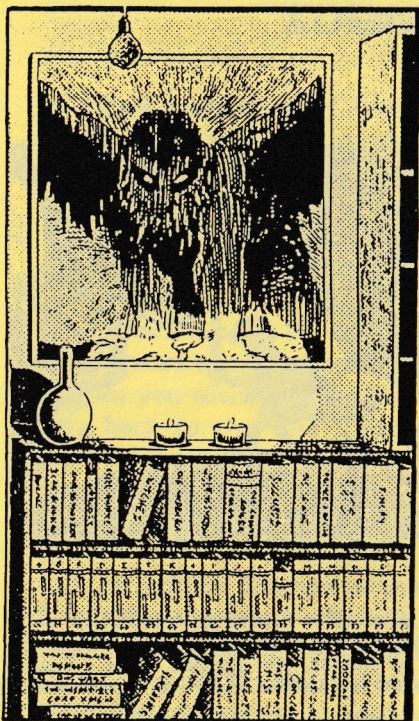
The game will end when you meet Cavilan and you are either carrying her egg or the egg is in a container that you have with you. Use RAMLOAD (RL) and RAMSAVE (RS) to store a game position to MEMORY. Useful abbreviations are ... LE (Leave), EN (Enter) SC (Score), Z (Wait).

To use containers just PUT OBJECT IN CONTAINER or GET OBJECT FROM CONTAINER, but you cannot use the commands PUT ALL or GET ALL with containers.



Zenobi Software

ADVENTURES



ADVENTURE

AURA-SCOPE

The twelve constellations of the Zodiac combine together to form the 'GREAT COSMIC WHEEL' and through their individual strengths they produce a 'force' that powers the Universe.

These constellations are grouped together in FOUR distinctly separate combinations ...

EARTH - which comprises Taurus, Virgo & Capricorn.
FIRE - which comprises Sagittarius, Aries & Leo.
AIR - which comprises Gemini, Libra & Aquarius.
WATER - which comprises Cancer, Scorpio & Pisces.

But together, as the 'GREAT COSMIC WHEEL', they control the very destiny of mankind and in an effort to control this destiny and to ensure that it was kept in safe hands, the Zodician Council decided to appoint a custodian of the wheel ... one who would be responsible for the maintenance and general up-keep of the 'GREAT COSMIC WHEEL' and one who would look after the balance of the forces that the wheel contained. This custodian would be the one who was known as ... THE CELESTIAL WHEELWRIGHT.

Spectrum 128K

THE STORY UNFOLDS

At the time of our story, the 'GREAT COSMIC WHEEL' was in the charge of a strange little gnome-like creature called NUB and he attended to its every need. He had performed this simple duty for as long as any of the ancient historians could care to recollect and had done so to the best of his ability. At the slightest deviation in the path of the wheel Nub would carefully adjust its alignment with a gentle blow with the 'HAMMER OF CRUCIAL ALIGNMENT', followed by a slightly more critical adjustment with the toe of his left boot. Up until now that had always been sufficient ... apart from the one occasion when a more than 'zealous' use of the hammer had led to the local astrologer being slightly out in his calculations for the horoscopes of the local gardening society ... and Nub saw no reason to change the system. That was up until now

For some unimaginable reason mankind had suddenly ceased to believe in the forces of the Universe and the results were devastating! An echo rippled through the heavens as the 'GREAT COSMIC WHEEL' slid dangerously out of place and the twelve constellations of the Zodiac were shattered. Nub had always been an emotional fellow and the destruction of the Zodiac sent him into a state of near panic. He needed a 'Great Hero' to gather twelve tokens in order that he may rebuild the Zodiac and set the wheel in motion once more

Unfortunately, 'GREAT HEROES' were in very short supply, so in desperation he took the only course open to him and chose a 'mortal' for the task. YOU are that mortal and your task is to rebuild the shattered Zodiac, armed only with your wits and your ingenuity ...

NOTES

Use RAMSAVE and RAMLOAD to store a game position to MEMORY and be wise and use them often!

Zenobi Software

NEWS + PLUS

MORE ADVENTURE NEWS...



• Yep, there was so much news this issue I've had to use another page. Some really great news for SAM Coupe owners comes in the form of a collaboration between Zenobi and The Sam Adventure Club. The upshot of this comes in the form of two compilations. 'Deep Waters' is a Jack Lockerby compilation featuring: Mammer of Grimmold, The Mutant, Davey Jones Locker, The Jade Necklace, The Lifeboat, Realm of Darkness, The Enchanted Cottage, Matchmaker, The Cup, Jack and the Beanstalk, The Challenge, and finally The Witch Hunt. All the above (except Lifeboat) have the ability to save and load game positions to and from disk + a host of other options accessed by typing DISK. Then there's another 3 game compilation called 'Marlin Magic' which consists of Linda Wright games. These are: Cloud 99, Agatha's Folly and The Jade Stone. The same DISK treatment as mentioned above has been given to these classic Spectrum titles too! If you belong to the **SAM ADVENTURE CLUB** 'Deep Waters' will cost you £5.99 and 'Marlin Magic' is £3.99. The really good news is that John Wilson looks like he'll be supporting the Coupe by bringing out more releases for it, as and when he can! Here's the address to send to:

Non members pay £2.00 more per disk! For more details send a s.a.e. to: **SAM ADVENTURE CLUB. 3 Pass Way, Carr Mill, St. Helens, Lancashire WA11 7HL**

• From Beyond PATCH news... The good news is that these much delayed collectors items will be making an appearance in either issue 14 or 15. Yes, they will be yet another FB fabulous Freebie. Naturally

Fanfare of trumpets... The new Spectrum PD librarian is none other than **Les Floyd** - he of the Northern Underground. All orders and enquires to be sent to him at: **The Northern Underground, Top Floor, 17 Fisher Street, Carlisle.** A s.a.e. will get you a new Spectrum PD price list!

they are costing me real money to be made, but once again due to our policy of ploughing back the small profits from each issue we can give them away rather than charging you for them. Good eh?

• **SQUARE ONE** is a new fanzine catering for the general science fiction, fantasy & adventure scene. It's pretty much 'embryonic' at the mo., so for more details send a s.a.e. to: **SQUARE ONE. 103 Chiltern Gardens, Dawley, Telford, Shropshire. TF4 2QJ.** All kinds of contributions are needed apparently!

ADVENTURE REVIEW

SPECTRE OF CASTLE CORIS (48k)



*Reviewed
By: Storm.*

*Hmmm! An
F.S.F. game to
get stuck into
for a change.
Didn't fancy going
out this week
anyway.*

STORYLINE:

In this, the second adventure featuring Alaric Blackmoon, hero of 'The Axe of Kolt', you enter the town of Corwyn. It's here that the Spectre is terrorising the people and has caused the disappearance of the Baron and Baroness who live

in the nearby castle. It's here that Duke Alaric uncovers the plot by the sorcerer Zalazar to wreak revenge on the vanquishers of the Xixon. (If that makes little sense then buy the first game - 'Axe of Kolt' for the full picture!)

THE ADVENTURE:

You begin in the main square of the town of Corwyn. The rubbish strewn

cobblestones are empty of life and many of the houses and shops that line the four sides are boarded up. Roads lead off east and west, while narrow lanes branch off north and south.

A quick look round and a bit of mapping seemed in order. The house of Iain the Mystic was visited but he wasn't very talkative. Bran Foscar the bronzesmith wasn't in his shop and Will the stonemason was elsewhere. The only person I was able to talk to initially was the landlord. By the way, speech plays a very important part and the format that worked for me was either: ask A, or ask B about A.

Anyway, a bit later on I learnt first hand about the Spectre. '**Suddenly the air around you goes icy cold and a mist starts to form in front of you.**' Soon afterwards icy fingers close round your heart and squeeze the life force from your soul. This happened several times until I found something that counteracted its appearance. This object should always be close at hand, or else...

With the Spectre under control, I was able to explore and meet some of the people previously absent. With their assistance, I eventually found my way into the castle grounds. A point worth mentioning here is that there is sometimes a need to be very thorough with your examination. Sometimes the need to examine 'object' - CLOSELY. At the end of part 1 you save your

SPECTRE OF CASTLE CORIS (48k)

position and reload it into part 2.

Part 2 is basically set inside the castle. Objects found in part 1 are used to good effect with items acquired here needed when you leave. Excuse the vagueness because I don't want to give too much away. Something else worth mentioning. You will need to ascertain the whereabouts of a person so make certain you bring everything in from part 1. Also you will find something that is 'closed' upstairs and to open it, you will need to examine something that is not listed in the location description near it, but is present in most locations in this part of Castle Coris. Hopefully you'll see what I'm getting at when you come to play the game yourself. This is a great section of the game, with lots to accomplish and super atmosphere. When this part is over it's save your position time again, load part 1 and reload your saved position for a further round of adventure action.

GOOD POINTS:

Very atmospheric, quality game from Larry Horsfield. All the usual PAW features are there - along with a good screen layout and masses of deep problems that should test most people to the full. Naturally enough the parser is good too.

BAD POINTS:

The need to use the word 'closely' when examining things is taking the whole search / examine / carefully examine convention a bit too far, but

when you get used to using 'closely' in your examination of objects etc., then it comes as second nature after a while.

CONCLUSIONS:

Normally space for reviews in FB is going begging each issue, however, this time space is at a premium and I'm a bit sad at not being able to unleash reams of game details and observations on you. Needless to say it's the sort of highly detailed game that will see you return to it time and time again. It'll take a good while to finish, but will give you heaps of pleasure all along the line! Buy it or you'll miss a great game!

• SPECTRE OF CASTLE CORIS •

F.S.F. Adventures


40 Harvey Gardens

Charlton, London SE7 8AJ

PRICE: £2.99 (48k or 128k tape - state which) £3.99 (+3 disk)

Postage: U.K. POST FREE. Add 50p if you live in Europe - £1.00 for the rest of the world.

RATINGS:

	PACKAGING	6
	STORYLINE	8
	OPENING PLAY	8
	PROBLEMS	9
	LOCATION TEXT	9
	PARSER	9
	GAME DESIGN	8
	DIFFICULTY	EXP./ADVANCED
	PLAYABILITY	9
	PERSONAL RATING	9

ADVENTURE REVIEW

THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE

Reviewed By: The Jester

Another of the St.Bride's collection being re-released through Zenobi on behalf of G.I. Games. I played this when it was initially released, and playing it again for review brought back old memories.

STORYLINE:

There can't be many adventures who, in the course of their "career", have never encountered either "Colossal Caves" or "Classic Adventures". Well, this game is basically the same - collect the various treasures and return them to the "depository"; but, at the same time, it is completely different!

THE ADVENTURE:

The game is played in two parts - as usual, with objects found in Part 1 being required in Part 2.

PART 1: The opening screen sees you being welcomed by Trixie Trinian, a prefect of the school, who is to be your guide - although she actually plays little part in the game, and seems to leave it all up to you.

To digress for a moment - if you find yourself bored with the game (which I doubt), or hopelessly stuck (which is likely), then try getting "fresh" with Trixie for some amusing responses. Try lifting her gymslip; then her petticoat; then - but this is a family magazine!!

Back to the game. You start outside the familiar small building, with the

stream flowing away south through the familiar gully. Examining the building tells you that it has a brass mechanism on the door, with a slot just large enough for an old penny - it also has the word "VACANT" on it (a good indication of what is to come!)

Finding the required penny is no problem - it is only one location away, but is guarded by a bull. This is the famous "gully bull" - I think most people have heard of this, and I'm not giving anything away by saying it. After "outwitting" the bull, and getting the penny, you can return and enter the building. Instead of the well-house of the original game, this is the wellie-house; inside you'll find a pair of wellies (naturally), a bomb, a log, a spring and a fence (neither of the last two being what you expect). Collect what goodies you can and leave. Having collected the other familiar objects (lamp, keys, food, bottle) from nearby, you can now proceed via the usual locked grate to the caves themselves - en route passing the bull again; and if you thought the pun last time was bad, this time it's absolutely abominable!

Once inside the caves, you'll find the old familiar locations from the original - Hall of the Mountain Kings, Hall of Mists etc; and also the old familiar objects - gilded cage, black rod, songbird. Most of you will know the layout, so I won't bore you with a guided tour. This, however, is where

THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE

the similarity to the original ends - the surroundings maybe the same; the solutions aren't!

For example - if you approach the songbird *without* the black rod (as you must in the original), it says "*No black rod, what? I see you've played this game before!*" You'll have to find another way to get the bird to remove the snake!

There are two main departures from the original game:- At some point, you will inevitably find yourself inside a "space invaders" game - this, quite frankly, is a pain in the proverbial! You have to keep moving LEFT, RIGHT and FIREing until you've destroyed them all - and, as far as I could see, the whole thing is random. You must go through it though, as one of the treasures only appears after you've finished. Best to save position when you've done it, then you don't have to suffer it again.

You will also have to undergo a journey to Gotham City (topical - Ed!), via the Bat Cave and Batmobile. Again, I found it advisable to save position before entering Gotham, as this whole section is "timed" - it takes a little trial and error to get things just right, and thereby get your lift back to the Bat Cave. Fail to do so; and you're stranded! Whilst there, you will meet a newsboy who declares "*Jester escapes*" (see, Tim, told you they'd never hold me!) - you must find what is necessary to help "THAT MAN" capture him before the news changes to "*Daring robbery*" (otherwise

you're too late); you then have to find the "goodies" and return to the centre of the city in time for your lift back, when you will find THAT MAN's utility belt (needed later perhaps?). Collect all the treasures, gain the maximum score, then proceed to...

PART 2: After two "false starts" - this is where Trixie is actually useful for once - you find yourself in Part 2 proper. Beware, though, there are treasures to be brought with you from these "false starts". The layout of Part 2 sticks, more or less, to that of the original, with no major "diversions" as in Part 1; so, again, I do not propose to go into great detail.

The only clue I'll give for Part 2 concerns the utility belt - it contains four items, all of which are anagrams of things which you will need to overcome various problems! You can work them out for yourselves.

The game is written with the Quill/Illustrator, with the odd Patched effect here and there. Most of the locations are accompanied by a graphic representation - although most tend to look basically the same, but a different colour. They are quickly drawn, however, and can be switched off if you wish by typing TEXT or GRAPHICS. The parser is quite good too. RAMSAVE and LOAD makes an appearance (and will be used frequently) - type SAVE and LOAD to access a menu asking what sort of save and load you require. Ultimately St.Bride's had come up with a goodie with this game.

THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE

GOOD POINTS:

A large, well-produced game with a good selection of problems - made more interesting, I feel, because you tend to think "Oh yes, I know what to do here", only to find out that you need to re-think! The humour throughout is good - ranging from the very witty to the "groan" variety.

BAD POINTS:

I hate that space invaders section! In fact, I hate any random elements - solving problems shouldn't be left to chance.

CONCLUSIONS:


A thoroughly enjoyable, though at times not-too-easy game. Should be a must for anyone who has never played it. *(Yep, seems like a fair enough appraisal to me. A blast from the near past that will prove pleasing. Tim)*

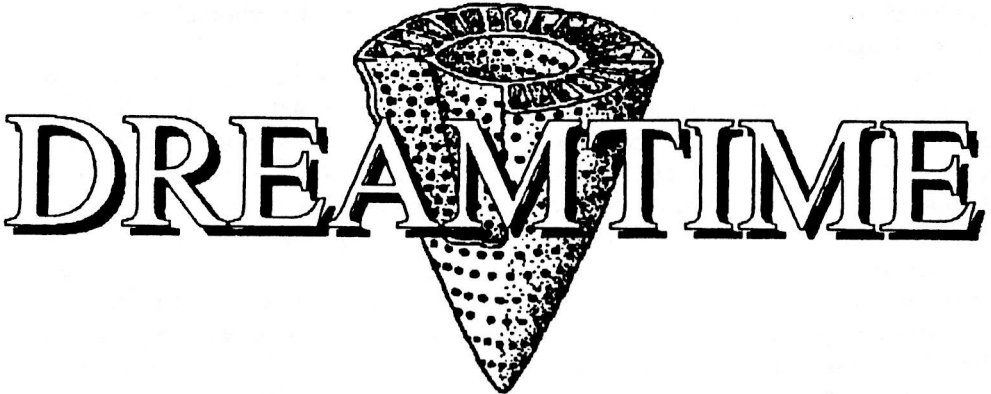
• THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE •

Zenobi Software
26 Spotland Tops
Cutgate, Rochdale
Lancashire OL12 7NX
PRICE: £1.99 (tape)

Outside UK please add 50p per order or £1.00 for airmail.

RATINGS:

	PACKAGING	2
	STORYLINE	5
	OPENING PLAY	6
	PROBLEMS	7
	LOCATION TEXT	6
	PARSER	6
GAME DESIGN	6	
DIFFICULTY	EXPERIENCED	7
PLAYABILITY		7
PERSONAL RATING		7



THE SEARCH FOR THE TOTAL CLOCK
COMING SOON
COMPASS SOFTWARE

ADVENTURE REVIEW

I DARE YOU

Reviewed By: Storm.

Louise Wenlock is a name I haven't encountered before, so her first (?) effort, published by The Guild, is a nice treat. Let's see what she has come up with shall we?...

STORYLINE:

At the local meeting of the Birmingham Adventure players Society, you discuss the usual adventure related topics as always. 'What I would like to play is a real adventure.' Your best friend says. 'Well maybe I can fix that. My aunt has a house nearby. How would you fancy playing a REAL adventure in it? She's on holiday for a couple of weeks. I'm sure I can put something together for you. I dare you.'

THE ADVENTURE:

Once past the 'winged horse' (Pegasus?) loading screen, you're straight into a good screen layout with a score and turns counter in the top right hand corner. It is a text adventure written using the PAW but various things have been done so you are not able to load the game as a PAW database. As it arrived help-sheetless I had a bit of phoning around to do in order to be able to play the game to the end. *(Note from the editor: Where possible could software houses / authors please include a detailed helpsheet with their games submitted for review. If the FB reviewers get stuck*

then at least we'll have help at hand! Thank you.)

You start the game at home in the hallway. The front door leads north to the outside world. Upon the mat lies the envelope you have been waiting for all week. There Are no other rooms in your home so I got the envelope and opened it. Inside was a key, my taxi fare and the first of three cards (pink). To explain you get 3 envelopes with the game (that are small enough to fit inside a cassette case), one pink, one yellow and one blue which you will need to open to decipher the cryptic information contained therein at certain points in the game.

Outside I find a taxi and give the appropriate destination and seconds later, open the door to a house and enter. From here it's either west into the study, north into the dining room, or east into a cubby hole. There are also some stairs but movement in that direction is not possible at present. Several turns later (and after much examination of things) I start to amass a large inventory - including a padlock key. Great. Problem of the stairs overcome! Nope. Spoke too soon as this key is for another lock. Back to examining things. Lo and behold, a model car but this won't work without finding the missing bits. In an empty room there's a section of floor that squeaks but resisted my attempts to remove it. In the kitchen I spot a tyre

I DARE YOU

beneath a cooker but can't move the cooker. The garage is used more as a storage area rather than for parking a car and in the back garden is a flimsy shed. In all of the downstairs locations you should find something. My problem at this stage was that I hadn't solved the floorboard problem. The help message (different at each location) gave nothing away. Even the contents of the other two envelopes didn't help but at least I'd worked out the meaning of the yellow card. A phone call to Tony Collins saw me back on the trail once again.

I had examined things, examined under and on things but I had not looked in them (LOOK is not a synonym of EXAMINE). Half an hour later I was upstairs and getting more and more objects, such as a 50 pence, a star, a chocolate and the blue card. Not easy this one. I kept thinking on the obvious wavelength instead of actually seeing what it contains. No I'm not going to help you. Once you've got it sussed though, the end is nigh.

GOOD POINTS:

'I Dare You' is good game for beginners played in a modern setting. There's lots of useful help thanks to all the useful help messages. The screen layout is attractive, there's lots of things to get, manipulate and examine - and the main section upstairs was completely unexpected. Then there's the unusual 'cards' that accompany the game. They are a nice little 'extra' that add a little something to the general proceedings.

BAD POINTS:

There's only about 20 locations in the game and it's probably too easy for those who have been around a bit. Though as I've mentioned before that's a good point for a beginners adventure!

CONCLUSIONS:

Yet another game from the prolific 'Guild' Cooperative by a new writer who is already working on a sequel provisionally titled 'I Dare You 2' with an interesting storyline. It's a worthy debut game which should be enjoyed by all who buy it.

• I DARE YOU •

The Guild
760 Tyburn Road
Edlington, Birmingham
B24 9NX

PRICE: £2.50 (tape) £4.50 (disk)
Overseas customers please add £1.00
per title to cover extra postage
incurred.

Make all cheques and PO's payable to:
GLEND A COLLINS.

RATINGS:

PACKAGING	7
STORYLINE	7
OPENING PLAY	7
PROBLEMS	5
LOCATION TEXT	6
PARSER	7
GAME DESIGN	6
DIFFICULTY	BEGINNER
PLAYABILITY	6

PERSONAL RATING 5

AN INTERVIEW WITH...

JON LEMMON OF COMPASS SOFTWARE

• *I did an interview with Jon Lemmon yonks ago. At that time he was producing a couple of games a year on average. Now it seems he's done two games in less than a month! The reason for doing a years worth of adventure releases in such a short space of time will hopefully be made clear in this mini interview...*

FB: *"With the release of 'Zogan's Revenge' and 'The Wizard's Skull' you have succeeded in doing a years worth of work in the space of one month. That's pretty good going. What's brought about this apparent speeding up of adventure releases?"*

JON: "Glad you asked me that! Firstly the reason that I'm writing games quicker now is that I have more time to commit to sitting down and getting on with the job, and also writing adventures ho-ho. Secondly, over the years I've built up folders of ideas on games and problems and just scribbled down notes full of all sorts of stuff to do with adventures. Thirdly, I now have (have had for a while actually) a Datel Plus D disk system which with a disk version of PAW allows access times to be cut down to just seconds for overlays and data bases etc. Also, I have the PTM overlays from Gilsoft which cuts down the hassle of finding awkward bugs. (See PTM review in this issue - Ed.) Another reason for being a bit quick on the programming front is that for some unknown reason my

enthusiasm for writing adventures has returned with a vengeance. It's like it was when I first started writing games. I'm now so keen to get stuck into it that I feel like I need to be tied down to keep my creative juices held in check! I also find I'm able to carry the enthusiasm right through to the end of the game, whereas I used to find it a real chore to do so - I used to get almost to the end and then get restless and want to work on my next project. I wonder if that's a problem for other authors too?

As I've now written 14 games I think I can call myself a fully fledged PAW user, and I find I have few problems using that utility to the full. If I had to go back to the start and learn it all over again then I'd still be writing 1 game every six months."

FB: *"As well as writing games quicker you did mention to me a while ago that from 'The Anttilis Mission' you would be dropping graphics. Why?"*

JON: "The change in format came about because of a questionnaire I sent out to my regular mail order customers. I quizzed 'em on the type of things they wanted to see in future Compass releases and the changes I've made so far are linked to their likes and dislikes. Those changes included doing away with graphics."

FB: *"Give us a few details of some of the other 'changes'."*

JON LEMMON OF COMPASS SOFTWARE

JON: "Okay, let me see... Well the first thing is that there are no more arcade elements in my games. Likewise I've dispensed with set time limits, i.e. you are more or less free to take whatever amount of time you like to solve the games. I've also put a VOCAB command in which, when invoked, lists the vocab! I've also cut down on the number of sudden deaths. There never were that many in my games, but there are even less now! This next change may be interesting to some people... I've gone for an option where you can turn off all machine code FX within my games! On the non programming side of things I've made the text bigger on the cassette inlays. *(Is that all? Ed?!)*

I knew from the results of the questionnaires that most people wanted text only adventures with good problems and a chance to explore and map instead of being trapped within a few locations, and to be faced with SDS at every turn. So, having done all the above, I hope I'm giving my customers what they wanted. If I'm not then do please let me know.

FB: "So you're a streamlined adventure producing machine now, are you? I have to say that both 'Zogan's Revenge' and 'The Wizard's Skull' are up to your usual standards so things must be operating smoothly down at Compass H.Q. Is there anything else you want to add to this mini-interview before we call it a day?"

JON: "Well, I've made a good few
24

'non' adventure writing (nuts and bolts) changes. My mail order customer list is now computerised, and my other customer information (preferences) lists have been updated and streamlined so I can process orders quicker and target my mailshots more accurately than before. Also, I now combine my adventure leaflets as the actual game inlay as well, that saves time and money. The main benefit of that is that it lets people know exactly what they will be buying as the leaflets they read will be a part of the games packaging. I've also had a lot of people ask how I do my screen\$ to match the pictures on my leaflets... Well, I cheat! It's a clever process of using some clip-art, which is digitised on an Amiga, then I digitise that image onto the Spectrum. After a little bit of cleaning up and spot colour application it's finished. This method was used on 'Zogan' and the 'Wizard's Skull'"

The last thing I want to say is that I was toying with the idea of dropping the prices of most of the Compass back catalogue to 99p a game - **INCLUSIVE! Yeah! I'll DO IT!** Have you got room for another compass advert in this issue Tim? This should shake things up a bit on the adventure scene! Good job the interview was drawing to a close... I'm off home to get this 99p back catalogue idea off the ground. See you later Tim...!"

FB: "Er...yes, see you Jon!"

And with the 99p price breakthrough news ringing in my ears Jon left! •



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THE LOST TWILIGHT

This world in which we live is governed by many different sets of 'rules' and 'regulations' and even nature herself has her own laws. One such 'law of nature' is that between the bright sunlight of 'day' and the cold darkness of 'night' there is a period of flitting shadows and misty vagueness that is known as 'TWILIGHT'. Throughout the world this period varies in length quite considerably but it is always there ... be it for a brief minute or over a period of time. It spans the divide between light and dark, allowing us to adjust to oncoming night and the blanket of darkness that envelops us all. But for one poor lad that period of time was never to arrive. For him there was to be no intervening gap, no barrier of safety, no passageway to the dark unknown. For him there was only to be the step from brightness to dark, for he was to be the victim of the 'LOST TWILIGHT'



Spectrum 128K+2

The Story So Far

As the pale blue sky took on the first hint of fading, Curtis picked up his rod and his small wicker basket and rising to his feet turned to head for home. It had been a great day, apart from the fact that the ants had found their way into the beef-paste sandwiches and that there had been no sugar in the flask of coffee that now lay forgotten beside the large oak tree, and one that he would look forward to enjoying again in the near future. He had always loved fishing and even though all he had caught had been two small brown trout, both of which he had returned to the sparkling waters, the tranquillity of the day had more than made up for the relative lack of success with the worm and the rod.

Reaching the top of the hill Curtis turned east towards the haven of his front room and the comfort of his favourite armchair. There was a sudden chill in the air but he put that down to the approach of the 'end' of the day and pulling his jacket tighter around himself crunched off down the gravel path.

Suddenly there was a loud swishing noise and he felt a sharp prick on the side of his neck some while later when he opened his eyes all was in darkness!!! Reaching up to his neck he touched the area where he had felt the pain but there was nothing to be felt and when he examined his finger-tips there was no sign of blood on them. Rising groggily to his feet he glanced about him but could see very little in the surrounding blackness ... night had fallen and for him there had been no twilight.

NOTES

Use the commands RAMSAVE and RAMLOAD to store a game position to MEMORY but always resort to the more standard LOAD and SAVE to store a position to TAPE or DISK for a more stable and permanent record.

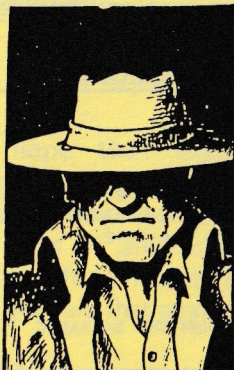


Zenobi Software

ADVENTURES

THE AZTEC ASSAULT

Twice before PHOENIX was sent forth to do battle against the 'Abomination' and twice before PHOENIX had been successful ... albeit at great cost to others, others who had laid down their life in order that mankind may survive. How sad that their sacrifices should only have been a mere 'hiccup' in the bitter struggle between the 'Time Crusaders of Chronos' and the evil minions of the 'Abomination'. The deaths of these poor unfortunate souls had only served to delay the march of time and the outcome of the mighty battle known as the 'Great Temporal Struggle' for once again the 'Abomination' had arisen to wreak havoc on some poor unsuspecting civilisation



In the year 1519 A.D., death is an integral part of everyday life for the people of the AZTEC EMPIRE. Unlike some other cultures that fear or try to avoid death, the Aztecs welcome it with open arms. Human sacrifice is the alchemy by which life is made from death, and the sun provided with the energy to continue its movement across the heavens. Without it, the end of the world, the fifth sun, will occur. The whole planet will be devastated by earthquakes and the 'Apocalypse' will take place ... at this time also the TZITZIMIME, the monsters of the twilight, will swarm out and hurl themselves on the few survivors. So it is written and so it has been told.

Spectrum 48K/128K+2

THE BATTLE CONTINUES

It is the year 1519 A.D. and the 'Primal Darkness' launch their latest attack at the very heart of the Aztec Empire. The ancient city of Tenochtitlan is laid to siege and in a matter of hours they control the entire city and with it the Aztec Empire. Motecuhzoma flees, the sacred ashes of the past rulers are stolen, Cuicoatl (the Snake-Woman) is either possessed or transformed and demons roam the religious centres, killing as and when they please. But more importantly, human sacrifices are no longer possible and without them the fifth Sun will surely occur!



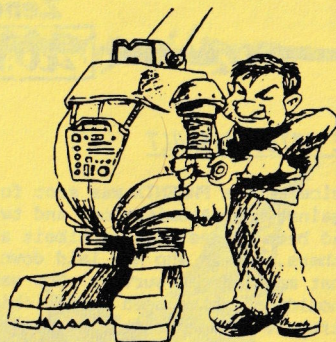
At Finvarra the threat was initially just to one village. At Santa Barbaro the threat was to one island but at Tenochtitlan the whole Empire is at risk ... not only that but possibly the very existence of the planet itself that is if the Aztec's belief in the fifth Sun is to be believed and proves correct.

PHOENIX was successful against the 'Abomination' TWICE before but there is a new evil entity commanding this assault ... can PHOENIX defeat the demons of the AZTEC ASSAULT?

THE NORTHERN UNDERGROUND '92

CURRENT CATALOGUE AND ORDER FORM...

This catalogue lists all games available from THE NORTHERN UNDERGROUND on 21st May 1992...



CONMAN THE BARBARIC

This adventure comes in three parts, all of which are independantly playable and include stunning digitised graphics and an on-screen information panel...

PRICE: £2.99

DREAMARE

Your little sister is being tormented in her sleep by evil nightmares, dominated by a fearful incarnation of the devil himself. She confides in you and tells that she can't continue for much longer... You have to save her by delving into the murkiest recesses of your mind to challenge this unnatural beast...

PRICE: £2.49

THE HAUNTING

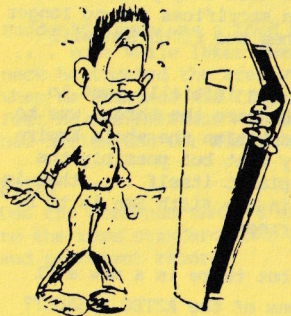
A friend wagers you £10 that you couldn't spend the night in a haunted house, but you courageously accept and soon find yourself standing at the gates of Damned House with the ominous words... ENTER IF YOU DARE written on the gate! A chill runs up your spine as you walk up the path wondering... is it really worth £10..?

PRICE: £1.99

DEADLY SILENCE

This unique adventure allows two players to battle it out against each other in an game illustrated with stunning digitised graphics and an atmosphere you couldn't cut with a knife...!

PRICE: £2.25



Please rush me, by first class post, the following titles...:

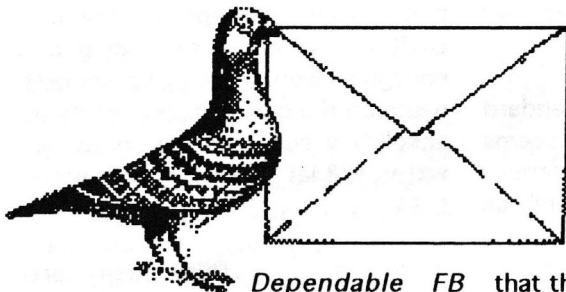
.....
I enclose a cheque or postal order to the value of £.....
which has been made payable to THE NORTHERN UNDERGROUND and
has been crossed for my protection.

Overseas customers, please add 50p per title (surface) or £1
for airmail...

THE NORTHERN UNDERGROUND, Top Floor, 17 Fisher St. CARLISLE

READERS WRITES

FB READERS LETTERS



Dependable FB provider of letters and stuff, June Rowe, has the dubious privilege of kicking off this issues 'Readers Writes' section...

course, an entirely different game.

I just hope that the TV programme won't cause John Wilson any embarrassment, by causing lots of amateurs to flood him with games, thinking

that they might get paid that amount of money for it!

**June Rowe,
Launceston, Cornwall.**

• Dear Tim, I would be pleased if you would print this letter in the next FB, just in case anyone in the Television South West area saw the bit about Jester's Jaunt on Thursday the 7th May and ended up being confused, as Joan Pancott did.

Joan phoned me on Saturday about it - she couldn't figure out why a photocopy of a cheque for £1,000.00 was shown, together with a Zenobi tape, but no explanation. Having video'd the programme, and looked at it again, she saw that the cheque was from Level 9 and was dated 1984.

(The article in the Western Morning News was misleading, too - that gave the impression that I had sold the game twice!)

The cheque was one I received for the design of a game called 'Trouble In Store' which was never published by Level 9, and Jester's Jaunt is, of

I can just see it now, June, dozens of irate Zenobi authors wondering where the balance of their royalties has gone. Apart from that, it's a shame the game never saw the light of day. Shrewd business sense by Level 9 - to pay a grand for a game that never got released. Nice one! Moving on, here's a letter from Geoff Lynas mainly concerning the review his game got (April the 7th) in FB 12...

• Dear Tim, Well that was good timing! No sooner do I send you maps and things for the next issue than you send me (almost by return of post) the next issue of FB. It's always great to receive 'FROM BEYOND' and a great shame it isn't a monthly publication. Of particular interest to me in this issue, of course, is the review of 'April 7th'. It seems that my offer of a help-line phone number was superfluous!

Thanks to storm for the detailed and

FB READERS LETTERS

largely encouraging review. He/she (pardon my ignorance!) directed one or two questions at me so I'll take that as an invitation to respond.

As a beginner/intermediate standard player of adventure games, it seems to me that the level of problems I create, when writing, are as tough as I would want to handle! Perhaps a player of my standard can't write an advanced level of problem. I don't know. It still surprises me that completion of the game was such a breeze to Storm. Two questions are left unanswered by the review which I am personally very interested in. The first is, 'how long did the game take to finish?' (i.e. what is "a reasonable time") and secondly, 'what was the final score?'

The second question has a bearing on the difficulty level of the problems. This is only intended to be one problem in 'April 7th' and that is solved when you appear on the surface with ALL of the equipment that you need for your continued survival, i.e. a score of 100%. Anyone can eventually leave the shelter **no matter what they score**, so the challenge is meant to be to do it with full marks! (if you want to test the truth of this statement, go to the Freight Lift and repeatedly REDEscribe the scene. After a very long time, level 4 will flood (as mentioned by Storm). keep pressing R and after a shorter period of time, level 3 will flood. Continue and just as your finger starts to swell, level 2 will flood. Finally, use a different

30

finger and keep pressing. very soon level 1 will start to flood. at this point make your attempt to leave the shelter. The computer, being clever enough to work out that almost certain death on the outside is preferable to an absolutely certain death in the flood water, will let you out with a score of 0%)

If you go for 100% then certain features of the game which weren't a problem, become a problem. You must then collect all of the scoring items, including the one in the bacteriological laboratory, and overcome the problems that that presents. Despite being generous with the number of items I allow the character to carry, there is a limit. You can't carry all that you need for maximum points. That's what the cube was all about, by the way, Storm. It was intended to be an attractive red herring which the player was loath to drop whilst trying to manipulate the necessary items to the outside. Sorry! If Storm scored 100% then fair enough.

I'm afraid that the way the game was written necessitated an economy of stock answers and so "You can't" was unavoidable. At least I didn't succumb to the dreaded "You can't, **Just yet!**" Yes, I know there's a maze. And I know they are dire but there is ample warning of its presence, the means exist to navigate it without even being aware that you are in one and it's only there as an alternative penalty to a lock-in (if you get it wrong). Oh yes and another

FB READERS LETTERS

thing, once you enter it you can only stay in it for about 12 moves! Try It!

Just to wind up, Storm had it dead right in the GOOD POINTS. The game was playtested by the best, namely June Rowe and Barbara Gibb. I think John Wilson used other playtesters but I found the comments made by the aforementioned ladies very useful and encouraging. So thanks to all the others involved in testing, big thanks to John for publishing it and a great big thanks to June and Barbara for their assistance. I hope they will be kind enough to do a similar job on part two.

Storm was also astute enough to spot the potential sequel. There is one on the drawing board, waiting to be coded, once I get the hang of PAWS. In the meantime (I sent 'April 7th' in to Zenobi, initially in July 1991) I have been writing a version of the game for the Archimedes. It is, I hasten to add, MUCH more sophisticated and illustrated. What a luxury it is to work with almost unlimited storage! It isn't finished yet (ready by August!) and even without the graphics it has cracked the 400k barrier.

Thanks again to Storm for the review. It is always very useful to get another perspective and as a new writer I am always willing to take advise etc.

Finally, I had the radio on while I typed this and by some strange coincidence there was an item about computer software turning all us spotty oyks

into anti-social, obsessive semi-recluses with mush for brains but nimble fingers. So in answer to your question Tim. Yes, according to PAT (Teachers' Union), we do come to harm. Best wishes to all spotty oyk recluses everywhere.

Geoff Lynas,
Cleveland.

I would have certainly rated your game a bit higher than Storms personal rating of 6! Mind you, that's why it is a personal rating! I was going to pass your comments on to him for him to have his say, but what the flip... I can't be bothered. (That's the heat of the summer sun talking!) Actually, I can make one excuse on Storms behalf simply by saying that I didn't have a help-sheet to pass on to him at the time, and his review was done without knowing where all the subtle bits lay in the game. This is often a problem with adventures when reviewing them. Occasionally when we are playing games with a view to producing a fully fledged and balanced review we need to play quite considerable 'chunks' of a game by referring to help-sheets. Sometimes the point of a problem, the subtleties and intricate twists and turns may be overlooked when doing just that. I can tell you here and now that I'm not good enough to review more than one game a month without a helpsheet. I dare say that's the same for Storm and The Jester too. Three reviews per FB is a few too few if you ask me. But I digress, all your points are valid

FB READERS LETTERS

ones, Geoff. I've just reviewed 'April 7th' for Your Sinclair and gave it 7 out of 10 which is very good indeed - especially as it's your first attempt at writing an adventure. I'm looking forward to seeing your next Speccy game too! (so get yer finger out!)

Moving along. Laurence Creighton has got some words of wisdom to pass on to would be adventure authors...

- Some people have asked me what I use to assist me in writing my games. I make no secret that the two main ingredients are a fertile imagination and a lot of poetic licence! Those two are not available in the shops and we all have oodles. The first and main item is to be able to spell correctly (typing errors excepted). It really bothers me when I play a game and seemingly easy words are hopelessly wrong. Always have a good dictionary at hand. I use the CHAMBERS 20th Century dictionary for ANY word I'm even vaguely unsure of. What I find even better than this august book is a copy of COMPLETE WORD GAME DICTIONARY. The beauty of this book is that it lists about a quarter of a million words in colloquial usage WITHOUT having to plough your way through explanations or definitions; it's words only, so you reach your word quickly and without fuss. Many words which were hyphenated in the past, and the Chambers still lists them as so, are shown as one word in this book eg ICE-CREAM is now given in the word game dictionary as ICECREAM. As words

fall into popular usage, the hyphen is dropped.

A book I couldn't be without is "A GUIDE TO GOOD ENGLISH in the 1980's" by Godfrey Howard. It is written dictionary-style, and lists those hair-scratchers like dreamed or dreamt, while or whilst, boat or ship, -able or -ible, etc. It even has a monograph on hyphens. It is written very humorously and is worth its weight in gold. I also make use of the OXFORD ILLUSTRATED DICTIONARY. It is basically a dictionary, but the illustrations give you more detail. For example one of my new games features a chisel. I referred to this book to find out that the "blade" part of a chisel is called the bevel (nicely drawn too). One word to new writers: to save our eyesight: please chooses BLACK paper with white or whatever colour ink on it. Please don't use black ink on a white screen - it gives eyestrain and hurts the eyes. I personally can't play games if I have to gawk at a white screen. Test each "segment" of the game as you go along, don't wait till the game is complete. It is simple to "carry" the relevant object/s and see everything works, and replace them where they belong. And remember presentation: it must look good on screen. And one final word:- Because YOU know what puzzles you've put in, it doesn't mean the player can read your mind. Don't make a puzzle so obscure as to be unplayable. That's A word never to be out of your mind. If a puzzle is tricky, the objects carried should be

FB READERS LETTERS

descriptive enough to lend a hint, or failing that, typing HELP should elicit a few words to get back on track. Have as much fun as I do in writing; good luck.

**Laurence Creighton,
CapeTown, SA.**

One of my favourite books is Hutchinson's FACTFINDER which has loads of information about everything in it. There are sections on Hieroglyphics, sign language, in fact you name it it's covered! I know a lot of people use electronic spelling checkers to check their text. We even ran a review of one in a past FB.

The final letter this issue comes from Dave Ledbury who has quite a bit to add to the letter from The Mystical Magician that appeared last issue dealing with the 'upgrade dilemma'...

- Adding my own points to the comments in the letters page, from the Mystical Magician, I would like to say the following: I can certainly see the logic in anyone wanting to upgrade their system from the Spectrum, to a more powerful micro. Whether their interests are arcade games, music, graphics or as in this case adventures, there is something to be said for doing this.

However, the problem at the end of the day is cost: in the sense of money for a new system, losing the software already built up (in some cases over many years), loss of knowledge of the system, and so on. This is exactly

what went through my mind when I first planned to upgrade my computer a few years back. (*Hang on, here comes a 'hard-sell sales pitch' - Ed!*)

I first started upgrading my computer in 87, by upgrading to disks. For me, this was always the big fault with my Spectrum 128. So, by replacing the bulk tape loading with the MGT +D disk system, a new breath of life was given to my computer. My first investment to go with this, the PCG Desk Top Publisher, still remains my favourite utility!

The drive was also pretty useful when I decided to turn my hand to adventure writing. No hassle with tapes for my DATA files! But, although this helped me out, I still ran into limitations. So, in 1990, I treated myself to a tape based 256k SAM Coupe, for £180. I also decided at this point that the time was right to relaunch my fanzine, ZAT. As ZAT and SAM proved to be a success, in their own ways, a disk drive, 256k memory upgrade, 1 megabyte pack, etc. have followed!

Because I went for a SAM, instead of a PC (I personally don't think much of the ST and Amiga! Give me a PC or Mac anyday!) I could keep my entire games library, transfer my Spectrum games to disk for fast loading, use +D disks - including the DTP, have a DECENT keyboard (that doesn't hurt your fingers after too much typing!), NO COLOUR CLASH and 8 times the number of colours. I could also learn SAM Basic with few problems

FB READERS LETTERS

(similar, but miles better than ZX Basic!) but still had a more powerful computer!

Anyway, my point is this: I bought my SAM on a whim, the price dropped and the specs of the basic SAM rose, but I'm still as happy as I was when I got the computer. I'm an ET trainee, currently on ET placement with SAMco, and in my spare time run a new software label - converting Delbert The Hamster Software games to disk, converting some to SAM, programming a couple of titles etc. One adventure title I hope to publish this year will feature full six channel stereo music, slightly better than the ST or whatever can manage. Then there's the £30 (ish) colour enhancer to be bough which gives you 32768 colours, with 20,000 (approx.) that can be displayed on screen at any one time. Or how about buying PRO-DOS - a CP/M compatible system which puts the likes of WordStar, some Infocom titles, FORTH, PROLOG in your grasp!

Then there's the video digitiser and even a hard disk on the cards too! But the best news of all is that now everyone can own the basic system that cost £180.00 a couple of years ago for just £99.99! The SAM GameStar pack is a bargain, though to correct what you said last issue Tim, it comes with a Spectrum Emulator so you can load a good majority of the 48k games you already own. All the 48k DTHS adventures work on SAM, for example. To upgrade the 256k tape based GameStar pack SAM to 512k

costs £29.99 for the memory upgrade, and £79.99 for the slot-in disk drive. As far as changing and upgrading you computer goes, do you really need look further than the SAM Coupe? (Especially if Spectrum compatibility is the thing you really want to retain?)

**Dave Ledbury.
Shropshire.**

There are some good points made in Dave's letter. However, there is still a BIG problem with the SAM and that's the lack of good quality software. Prince Of Persia is one of the best platform games on any computer, Manic Miner is also a classic re-working of the classic Mathew Smith platform game - both are available on the Coupe and both show off some of the computers best points. Where's the other blockbusters that no self respecting computer should be without? Where's Kick Off II, Interceptor, Super Hang On II, Eye Of The Beholder, Strider I and II? A handful of the best games are what's needed to kickstart the SAM.

On the other hand the Spectrum compatibility gives the machine a boost in other directions. I easily got Halls Of The Things (a classic Spectrum maze game) up and running on the SAM. Now it takes 4 seconds to load from SAM disk! Almost every 48k Spectrum adventure I've tried over the last year has loaded on the SAM too. So, there you have it. It hasn't cleared up the 'upgrade' debate, but it may have swayed your decision somewhat.

Tim.

ADVENTURE REVIEW

SPY TRILOGY

Reviewed By: Storm.

It's a re-released oldie (1984 vintage) from Tom Frost! Will it be able to hold its own against the other games reviewed this issue?...

STORYLINE:

You have decided to apply for entrance into the Secret Service. At your initial interview, you are invited to attempt a suitability test which examines your intelligence, aptitude and application of logic. You are placed in a simulated situation of having to collect 5 items of a potential agent's armoury from the agent training school.

THE ADVENTURE:

According to the loading screen, this was written by Tom Frost in 1984 in the early days of Spectrum adventuring. Many experienced adventurers have tried or even completed it. I had done neither when it dropped through the letter box for review... so

Prior to the first location there are some general instructions and a suggestion where to start mapping. In other words no need to redraw your map when it goes off the edge. nice one, Tom. There is also the facility to play the first and second parts with the clock off in the practise mode which makes things much easier. By the way, the third part is played with the clock running.

You start with a token in a room with a mat, a locked door and a mean rat that is determined to ruin your day. Once past it, though, you find a coin in the second location, a hammer in the third and then soon you also have some nails and wood. There is also a dark location above you. Providing the light to it is fairly easy. Getting the means to go up into it is likewise easy. The problem though is finding the correct wording to enable you to make your ascent. If there is one thing that caused me irritation/frustration, it was this wording. On three occasions, I switched off, had a cup of coffee and then loaded another game. Therefore for those who want to get past this very early problem think about CRETE. Okay? Good. (*What? Oh, I see, It's an anagram! Ed.*)

Further on, you will find various items including a knife. When I got it, I read the message 'You now have a piece of fish.' A bug surely? No. Other items have similar messages. perhaps the title of this part of the trilogy (A Dream of an Adventure) explains things. Later there is Mr. Spooner to bypass and an interesting challenge from the fool involving an 8 x 8 grid and a piece that moves like a knight in chess. There is also a couple of riddles. I'm sure most of you will overcome the one regarding the dead man and if your nearest and dearest is good at lateral thinking, you'll bypass the one regarding the occupant of a lift.

SPY TRILOGY

Once you complete the first part, you then have to complete the real initiation test, where you have to steal the latest device from the premises where atomic devices are produced. This is quite a bit trickier than the previous part but not as bad as the last part which requires you to find a code book in an enemy detention camp and throw it out of a window to a fellow agent at a specific time. This is made harder by the fact that there is no practise mode. The clock runs. After completing the third part of the trilogy there is then a bonus game. I thoroughly enjoyed it until my daughter beat my score straight afterwards.

GOOD POINTS:

A well presented game from the depths of time (1984) from the experienced Tom Frost. Part 1 isn't too hard but the subsequent parts are definitely harder. The 8 x 8 grid with the knight went down very well. There is a ramsave, lots of locations and problems, a freebie game and even tips where to start mapping.

BAD POINTS:

The one problem early in part 1 that needs precise wording is a major stumbling block if you cannot think of the one word that seems to be the only word that works. The need for passwords to enable you to play each part is a bit of a turn-off, though trying traditional 'espionage' passwords might help. One last grumble is that locations don't list exits so quite often a lot of trial and

error is needed to move around.

CONCLUSIONS:

In 1984 I'm sure that this trilogy would have been considered a classic, definitely superior to most of the games then available. Today there are many more writers producing quality games. Things are much tougher at the top. Having said that, I still think that if you haven't tried it, then give Tom's golden oldie a go and see why he has such a loyal following.


• *Just a quick word... Did you know that Mel Gibson is odds on favourite to become the next James Bond? Yeuch! Bond movies might be highly spoof-ish, but they benefit from having someone with charisma and acting ability in the lead role! Mel Gibson! No thanks!* **Tim.**

• SPY TRILOGY •

Tartan Software

61 Baillie Norrie Crescent
Montrose, Angus DD10 9DT
PRICE: £2.50 (tape)

RATINGS:

	PACKAGING	6
	STORYLINE	7
	OPENING PLAY	6
	PROBLEMS	8
	LOCATION TEXT	6
PARSER	5	
GAME DESIGN	8	
DIFFICULTY	EXPERIENCED	
PLAYABILITY	6	
PERSONAL RATING	8	

ADVENTURE WRITING

JON LEMMON DISCOVERS P.T.M.!

• *Bloody hell! What's going on? here's another contribution by Jon Lemmon of Compass Software (2 games reviewed this issue plus a mini interview)... this time it's all about Gilsoft's user overlays, Phosis, Tel and Mega (PTM)...*

A few months ago I sent for the PTM (Phosis, Tel and Mega), user overlays from Gilsoft. When I received them, I transferred them onto Datel Plus D disk using the tape provided. I then loaded up the PAW and then the Tel overlay. As the manual which accompanies it says: "Experimentation is the best way of learning anything." I started to experiment!

The commands in TEL are: MAP: HUNT: LIST: SEARCH... I first had a look at hunt. Hunt as the name suggests enables you to hunt down particular entries within particular process tables. Imagine you are playing your own adventure looking for bugs when suddenly a Troll leaps on you and the message 'The Dwarf looks tired and falls asleep.' pops up! Why has the wrong message appeared? and how long will it take to find the bug that caused it to do so? Well, if you are using HUNT, about one second! If you enter line:_ H ? MESSAGE 28 and Enter - this translates to Hunt ALL through the database for the message 38, which is the offending message. it will then show on screen all the process tables where you have put message 38. It not

only shows you which tables but how far down the table and what you have put it under, like - TROLL etc. Hunt is even more powerful than that... If I assume that you are a very organised adventure writer and you keep trace of what flags you have placed within your game, imagine you have found a bug, where flag 100 is not triggering off, a Dragon which should be dead is not... Dead Dragon = EQ 100 3! Type in: H ? EQ 100 3 and Enter, and on screen you'll see the places where you may have a problem. It shows all the entries of where you got EQ 100 3... brilliant or what? Next I had a look at LIST! List is very similar to hunt, inasmuch as you can LIST entire entries and be more wide ranging in your bug-hunt. First of all I'd better explain what these letters mean, ? = a wildcard, e.g. I am not sure what I'm looking for so look through everything. Others are, M = message and F = flag.

Some very useful things in LIST are: Type in L ? A M ? and Enter. This will list (on screen) all the message numbers and where they are in the process tables etc. So, you can soon see what messages you have got but have not used, hence you can delete those 'unused' messages and save some memory. Another one is L ? E F ? (enter), this does the same as before but shows all the flags. The ability of finding out flags, messages, objects, etc., in all or any of the process and response tables is invaluable when debugging or just

JON LEMMON DISCOVERS P.T.M!

keeping track of things.

Next we have SEARCH. Search is much the same as hunt. It works in the same fashion but is better at handling single Conducts unlike hunt. e.g. S ? SWAP 4 ? means, search everywhere for a swap between object 4 and any other object! Search is less fussy about the exact entry, hence this may help when you are not sure which flag/object is causing the problem.

Finally, the last bit to mention about the TEL overlay is MAP... very simple this one. Type in M ? 24 (enter), and you'll see a pop up map of the exits to and from location 24. Useful for checking that you haven't missed out a connection entry.

Next up on the overlay scene comes PHOSIS! Commands are: COPY: TRANSFER: DELETE: PRINT: SAVE: VERIFY: LOAD and INFO. Copy basically lets you copy individual entries to and from process and response tables. It can also copy an entry at the bottom of a process table and move it to the top or into another process table. Handy when things stop working because you have put too much data in a very full process table! Transfer is the same as Copy, but it moves the whole entry without making a copy of it. Delete lets you delete an entry. Info just shows you how many message, flags, locations, process tables etc., that you are using. Print... yes, you can print them out too! Now we come to the best bit! SAVE: LOAD: VERIFY. These commands may be familiar to you, but in PAW with Phosis they do something rather excellent! They enable you to

save and load individual process tables! Now, speaking for myself, this is what I have been waiting for for a long time. Almost all the programming you do to make your adventure come to life, lies in then process tables. Imagine having a library of process tables on disk or tape, full of weird and wonderful problems... then imagine how great it would be if you could just load these into a blank database, link them to different messages for variation and you find that you have a third of the hard work done in minutes. With this kind of power to load process tables between different adventures, it just moves the PAW closer to being THE most powerful adventure writing system ever!

Well, that's it! All I can add is that Mega combines the functions of overlay 4 and 5 in one! This saves time switching between response and messages etc. When I think back to the hours spent tracking down little bugs, having to list every process table searching for one little flag which usually has me pulling my hair out, (not a problem for Tim I hear) in frustration. I can only say that the PTM overlays are the best thing ever!

Jon Lemmon.

*You can get the PTM overlays from:
Gilsoft International Ltd.
2 Park Crescent, Barry,
South Glamorgan CF6 8HD
Make Cheques etc. payable to Gilsoft
for £7.95 incl. P&P. You get a FREE
PAW upgrade too.*

THE GUILD ADVENTURE SOFTWARE

TITLE:	AUTHOR:	TAPE:	DISC:
<u>SPECTRUM</u>		£	£
<u>48K ADVENTURES</u>			
THE GLADIATOR	ALEX GOUGH	2.00	----
THE PROPHECY	ALEX GOUGH	2.00	----
THE GUARDIAN	JOHN BETTERIDGE	2.00	----
TALISMAN OF LOST SOULS	TONY KINGSMILL	2.00	----
ALIEN PLANET/LORDS OF MAGIC	TONY KINGSMILL	2.50	----
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CURSED BE THE CITY	INCANTATIONS	2.00	----
TIME WARRIOR (4 PARTS)	FRANK OLIYER	3.00	----
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HOUSE OUT OF TOWN/ROUGE MIDGET	SIMON AVERY	2.50	----
MAGICIANS APPRENTICE	SIMON AVERY	2.00	----
TOTAL REALITY DELUSION	SIMON AVERY	2.00	----
PRISON BLUES	SIMON AVERY	2.00	----
DANGER!ADVENTURER AT WORK!	SIMON AVERY	2.00	----
THE BASE (2 PARTS)	KEN BOND	3.00	5.00
I DARE YOU	PEGASUS SOFTWARE	2.50	4.50
METHYHEL (2 PARTS)	PEGASUS SOFTWARE	2.50	4.50
THESEUS AND THE MINOTAUR (2 PARTS)	PEGASUS SOFTWARE	2.50	4.50
TEACHER TROUBLE	PEGASUS SOFTWARE	2.00	4.00
DRAGON: CORYA 1 (2 PARTS)	PEGASUS SOFTWARE	2.50	4.50
THE LAST BELIEVER	PAUL LUCAS	2.00	4.00
ALSTRAD	PAUL GILL	2.00	4.00
CRASH LANDING	SIMON LANGDAN	2.00	----
JOURNEY TO DEATH	SIMON LANGDAN	2.00	----
DUNGEON OF TORGAR	SIMON LANGDAN	2.00	4.00
JHOTHAMMA 6	DAVID EDGAR	2.00	----
PUZZLED	TONY MARSH	2.00	----
DEATHBRINGER	TREVOR WHITSEY	2.00	4.00
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THE FORGOTTEN PAST	TREVOR WHITSEY	2.00	----
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THE GUILD ADVENTURE SOFTWARE

TITLE: <u>SPECTRUM</u>	AUTHOR:	TAPE: £	DISC: £
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ADVENTURE REVIEW

THE WIZARD'S SKULL

Reviewed By: Tim.

Quick as a flash Jon Lemmon of Compass has brought out the final part of the 'Bogmole' Trilogy! Will it prove as good as the previous two games featuring 'Bogmole' the lovable (?) swamp monster?...

STORYLINE:

Once again Zogan has been destroyed! Peace reigns, until an elf called Danark pops up, enters your hut, tells you of future events in the land of Freand, tells you that Zogan lives and is more powerful than ever, chucks a letter on your fire and disappears in a puff of smoke (so to speak)! You suddenly feel drowsy and conk out...

THE ADVENTURE:

When you come round you are in your hut. There's plenty to explore from the word go, so the best thing to do is examine everything. Heed the storyline and you'll be off to a good start. Don't forget to also type VOCAB to see what new vocabulary has been included to help you out. Glad to see 'CB' is left-over as a special command word from the previous game. (See the review on page 10 if you don't know what I'm on about.) The letter that Danark had can be found (in the logical place) and is extremely useful inasmuch as it fills you in as to what's going on! Quite a lot of action takes place in and around the first couple of locations. It shows you much of what to expect in the

coming weeks, months or years of adventuring that lies ahead. Once the challenges that lie inside your hut have been overcome, it's time to go out and about - exploring! You'll see from even these early stages that quite a lot of the game is familiar - especially if you have recently played 'Zogan's Revenge'. Much of the structure of the game is the same, many of the characters are the same type though the problems are entirely different - even if some of the objects are the same!

After you've traversed a few rocky passes, crossed some paths and generally had a good old root around you'll see that there are plenty of screen wobbles and sound warbles to accompany your actions. They can become a bit too frequent towards the latter stages so you can turn them all off (and on again) with a single command (check your VOCABulary).

On more than the odd occasion you'll undoubtedly have to die to discover what to do. You'll know when you are going to die so RAMSAVE and RAMLOAD (STORE and RECALL) come in handy. Many of the obstacles you encounter will hinder your progress in the game, so you'll also know that you need to do some sort of action to make progress. There are the usual giants, ogres and the like - as well as more obstinate inanimate objects to deal with. 'CB' will be used more than once (again) and as in 'Zogan's Revenge'

THE WIZARD'S SKULL

you'll be obstructed by a lot of doors. They end up presenting little, if any, problem to you! (Thanks to Bernie!)

Everything's reasonably easy to achieve in the game until, that is, you come to a turning point. I found that 'Gronta' the Elf had something to say that was a bit of a turning point (and a shock) in its self. From this point on things became quite intense. Most everything you find in the game will usually have a use, and novel uses to boot, forcing you to think about what they might be used for. Messages and object descriptions, as well as location descriptions, also play their part in creating an atmosphere in the game, and they lead you on in the right (or wrong) direction. Getting actions done in the right way usually sees lot's of info come your way!

It ends up not being a big game, but there's plenty to do in it, and you don't have to travel miles backwards and forwards in order to pick up the thread of the game. The end game is nice - it starts from about 50% score and, like 'Zogan's Revenge' it keeps you on your toes. When you've finished a session and are about to shut down, try typing CRASH and see what happens!

GOOD POINTS:

Pretty much the same as 'Zogan' (see P.10) Perhaps a bit easier and needing a bit less of the seasoned adventurers 'intuition' to help overcome certain things. Plenty of helpful messages and object descriptions also keep things

'chugging' along nicely!

BAD POINTS:

Well, a bit of a trip back to the same type of locations used in the previous game in the series means that if you were unimpressed first time round you'll remain so. (I wasn't unimpressed so that's okay!) Also, there's a bit of a 'disjointed' feel to a few of the messages attached to objects or events. Apart from that, that's it!

CONCLUSIONS:

You can sum it up by saying it's a good game and a nice way to end the 'Bogmole' trilogy. Does it all end happily ever after? Play it and see - bet you'll blush at the final message!

• THE WIZARD'S SKULL •

Compass Software

111 Mill Road


Cobholm Island, Gt. Yarmouth

Norfolk NR31 0EB

PRICE: £1.99 (tape)

Outside UK please add £1.00

RATINGS:

	PACKAGING	6
	STORYLINE	7
	OPENING PLAY	8
	PROBLEMS	8
	LOCATION TEXT	7
	PARSER	8
GAME DESIGN		9
DIFFICULTY	INTERMEDIATE	
PLAYABILITY		8
PERSONAL RATING		8

ADVENTURE REVIEW

THE SOUL HUNTER

Reviewed By: Tim.

This two-part game's been screaming out for a review for a while now, so here goes...

STORYLINE:

A plan is afoot by the Sorcerer of the Western marshes to lead a mighty army of the soulless against the Free people. The stranger who unravels this tale tells of deadly dangers that lie ahead, passes over a map and urges you, as a brave warrior, to reunite the souls with their bodies and thus stop the Sorcerer in his tracks. Good luck, SOUL HUNTER.

THE ADVENTURE:

This game was written by Trevor Whitsey using Incentive's Graphic Adventure Creator. It's a nice change to play something with a different style to the usual PAW and QUILL-ed efforts, and this game gets off to a good start. The storyline as detailed above says it all really. You begin in your dingy room in a tavern. (Where all the best adventures begin) From there it's only a short journey to the outside world - passing the main room of the tavern as you go. It's populated with plenty of fantasy characters having a booze-up though they appear to be scenery rather than useful allies. The first place to visit is the general store run by a genial dwarf. It's here that you can spend some of your 20 coins (or all of them). But beware! I'd advise you to have a scout

around the other locations first as you'll get an idea of some of the goods you need buy. If past history is anything to go by I'll buy all the wrong goods, and I guess that you will too!

Once you decide on what to purchase you can move on to solving the first of a few early problems and marvel at the graphics. Er, well maybe 'marvel' is a bit of an over exaggeration but they are quite nice. Naturally you can turn them off (type TEXT or GRAPHICS), but I thought they were good enough to keep them on.

One early problem to be sorted out comes when you reach the woodcutters cabin. There's something to be crafted (little Clue there!) involving logs, an axe and an item from the general store. After you achieve the desired effect at this location you'll sort of get carried along with the action, so make sure you've done everything you needed to before trying to make progress.

From here on in the action is all pretty logical and one dimensional. Most of the items you find will have a use. Most of them have a use in the immediate vicinity. That's not because the game is poorly designed, it's just because each of the two parts is relatively small. It was about this time that I stumbled across the first maze in the game. Trees and saplings all around! Arrghh. it's not big, but is confusing. (Aren't they all!?) A bit

THE SOUL HUNTER

more simple object manipulation and examination brought me to a castle containing some more good graphics and another maze. (Gnash!) Not long after exploring the possibilities that lie within the castle walls I found that the end of part one had arrived - a bit suddenly. Now it was "SAVE DATA" time and RESET in order to load part two...

Part two is much the same in feel to part one, the graphics, if anything, are a bit better and the problems a bit more intricate. The later graphics really are excellent - atmospheric even! There's a bit of character interaction (or rather character / object manipulation) and everything is more or less straightforward - i.e. laid out for you to discover, uncover and solve in sequence. It's another small part but is still entertaining enough. The end game however is a tad weak and the final 'congratulatory' message is very unsatisfactory. Apart from that though I rather enjoyed myself on the whole.

GOOD POINTS:

I don't want to sound predictable but this is a great game for beginners. It's bright, colourful, has good graphics, isn't overly hard or unfriendly (parser wise) and is just generally playable and enjoyable right the way through to the end!

BAD POINTS:

Two mazes in part one is a bit much for me, even if they are easy-ish. The problems you encounter are less than

complex (rather one dimensional in fact) and should be overcome in no time at all by even moderately good players. I'm not happy about the 'load saved game' idea to play part two. A simple password would have sufficed.

OVERALL:

As I said, an enjoyable game - one that needs a few more problems added (hard ones) to complement the ones that are already there! On the whole it gets a thumbs up from me. I've given it an 8 out of 10 personal score as it should be worth that to novice adventurers and will get them off to a pleasant, winning start. (Very important if you are a beginner!) Remember - a game's not bad just because it's easy!

• THE SOUL HUNTER •

The Guild

760 Tyburn Road


Erdington, Birmingham B24 9NX

PRICE: £2.50 (tape)

Overseas orders please add £1.00

Cheques & PO's to: Glenda Collins

RATINGS:

	PACKAGING	6
	STORYLINE	3
	OPENING PLAY	4
	PROBLEMS	4
	LOCATION TEXT	5
	PARSER	7
	GAME DESIGN	8
	DIFFICULTY	BEGINNER
	PLAYABILITY	7
	PERSONAL RATING	8

ADVENTURE REVIEW

THE TEARS OF THE MOON

Reviewed By: Tim.

Another Clive Wilson game - this time breaking away from his recent 'Unborn One / Darkest Road / Time of Dread' saga...

STORYLINE:

The storyline is really rather simple - a warp in time and space opens up, and somehow you find yourself tumbling through, flying down the twisting time tunnels, heading towards what seems to be the distant future and an uncertain future at that! Eventually you are spewed out into this alternate reality which winds up being a familiar, yet far from happy looking place. And so it begins...

THE ADVENTURE:

You begin the game standing on a dusty pathway surrounded by fetid undergrowth that once was lush vegetation tumbling over rolling hills. Unfamiliar looking animals dart nervously across your path, while far in the distance you hear eerie shrieks - made by god knows what?

The first thing you'll be pleased to see is a nice clear screen display. Black background, white location descriptions, a splash of purple and blue here and there - along with directional arrows (u.d.g's - a la Compass Software / compass pointers) to show the possible directions in which you can move. At the top of the screen there's a curious

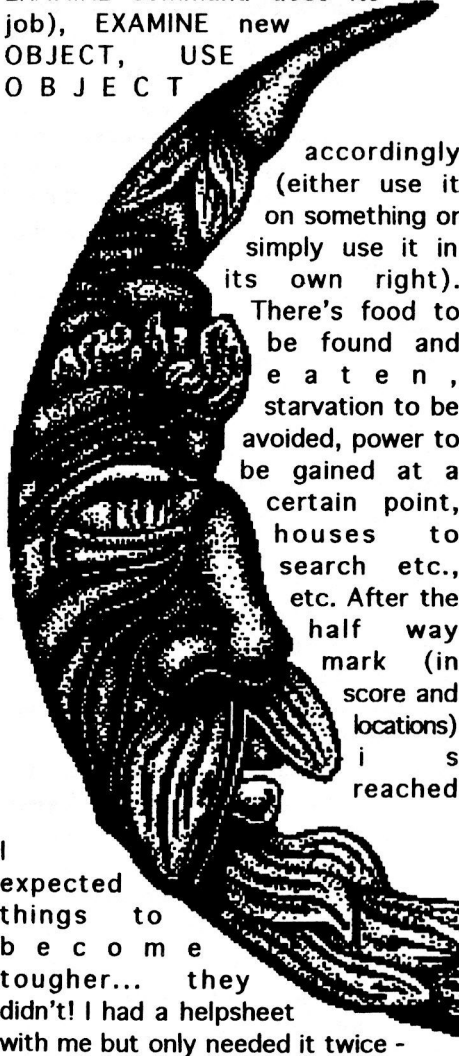
double-line of lurid lime green and putrid purple elongated checkerboard patterns. What do they do? I'll tell you right at the end of this review!

But on with the game. You have in your possession a sparkly ring - examine it and see how it might be useful (later!). Exploring the strange, yet somehow familiar surroundings is a piece of cake, mainly because you are free to wander without too many worries - just how it should be at the start of any game. There are a few objects that appear in the location descriptions which need to be examined if they are to prove ultimately useful to you. Here's a quick gripe: When you examine something and are told you find something else, there's this irritating 'screen freeze' while the 'You've found something' message is displayed. How much better it would have been if you could press a key to skip the message. As there are a lot of 'hidden' objects this 'screen freeze' will become more irritating as the game progresses, or will become highly irritating if you should die. Yep, here's grip number two: Sudden Death Syndrome! This happens occasionally, though is sign-posted quite well from within locations. i.e. if you are told that there's something a tad odd about something then steer well clear, or at least use the RAMSAVE (RS) facility. (Thank god there is one!)

Okay, gripes out of the way, what about the rest of the game? It seems

THE TEARS OF THE MOON

that 50% of the game (the early section) is very easy. It's EXAMINE OBJECT, GET new OBJECT (after the EXAMINE command does its job), EXAMINE new OBJECT, USE OBJECT



accordingly (either use it on something or simply use it in its own right). There's food to be found and eaten, starvation to be avoided, power to be gained at a certain point, houses to search etc., etc. After the half way mark (in score and locations) it's reached

I expected things to become tougher... they didn't! I had a helpsheet with me but only needed it twice - both times for obscure input problems. So you can take it by that fact that it's an easy game with a couple of moderately hard inputs to work out. So is that all there is? No!

There's more than enough to see and do whilst making a map - or whatever you do when playing the game. It's only after half way that you find out just what the game objectives really are, so you at least have a reason for being in this strange place. There are a lot of secret little rooms, passages, tunnels and the like, and these only come to light if you carefully read the wording of certain messages and the location descriptions themselves. EXAMINE is used for just about everything, though the odd variation on the EXAMINE theme will be necessary on some occasions. Most of the text for the descriptions fills 8 or more lines of the screen, with the lime green and purple band (remember that?) at the top of the screen. By the time I'd reached 75% (three 'real' days adventuring time) it had just sat there, doing nothing. What does it do? (I told you to wait till the end of the review, then I'll tell you!)

Most everything you do will be in a sort of sequence. It's more often a case of finding an object that has an effect on something a few locations away. The object carried allowance is less than generous, but it seems that nothing has a use

after using it, so drop what you have already used. (God, I hope that's right!?). By the 75% mark I was impatiently waiting for things to get tougher, but they didn't. However, the end game is rather unusual and

THE TEARS OF THE MOON

deals with a final mission / confrontation and the struggle to get back to wherever you came from. Weird stuff this end-game, it might throw you a wobbler - it did me!

GOOD POINTS:

Will I sound predictable if I say it's a good beginners game? Well it is, but may be a little bit tougher than an out and out beginners game. The descriptions of locations, objects, encounters etc., are all very good (up to the usual Clive Wilson standard), though the problems and their associated solutions are a bit one dimensional. Some nice sound effects and screen changes (colours and type styles) keep things interesting from start to finish.

BAD POINTS:

Clive's last three or four games have been a bit more substantial in all ways, (that is the problems have been meatier and better paced, and the status bar thingy that resides at the top of the screen in his other games has also been a worthy inclusion) so this seems like a bit of a let down. As I said, beginners will find it a nice place to start, though experienced gamer's will find it too easy. Sudden deaths do happen (gnashing of teeth), not too many times though, and the screen freeze experienced while even the shortest of messages appears is a bit of a pain.

CONCLUSIONS:

When, after the halfway mark had come and gone, I saw that things didn't

get harder my enthusiasm waned somewhat. Nevertheless, the unusual way that the end-game is implemented means that it was worth persevering with if only to get to the end (Though the very end section was a disappointment). Overall it's a sort of stop and start game... good in sections, average in others, but it just never really finds a positive direction in which to go. Okay for beginners, or for those of you who want to solve another game. Pleasant enough in the final analysis, cheap (ish) 'n' cheerful. Oh yes... the mysterious green / purple bar that occupies the top section of the screen... it does, wait for it... NOTHING! (as far as I could see)

• TEARS OF THE MOON •

Zenobi Software

26 Spotland Tops

Cutgate, Rochdale

Lancashire OL12 7NX

PRICE: £2.49 (tape) £3.49 (+3 disk)

Outside UK please add 50p per order
or £1.00 for airmail.

RATINGS:

PACKAGING	6
STORYLINE	6
OPENING PLAY	8
PROBLEMS	4
LOCATION TEXT	8
PARSER	9
GAME DESIGN	7
DIFFICULTY	BEGINNER
PLAYABILITY	6
PERSONAL RATING	6

ADVENTURE REVIEW

CONMAN THE BARBARIC (Pt. 1)

Reviewed By: Pea-Pod.

- *Another quick preview of a new game - this time from The Northern Underground, and this 1st part of the three part 'Conman' saga is available on August's Your Sinclair (issue 80) Cover Tape...*

THE ADVENTURE:

So what's it all about then? Well, Conman the Barbaric (that's you) is a blacksmith by trade, though he's a good candidate for the village idiot if you ask me. Anyway, after umpteen years of blacksmithery he's gotten bored and has decided to explore the mysterious surroundings. Actually, the surroundings are about as mysterious as a not very mysterious thing - in fact they are mundane, everyday sort of surroundings, which is curious as Conman is a Barbarian!? Still, no matter, this is a very interesting game, one that, because of its design, will hook a new lot of non-adventure players. Why? Okay, let's examine the things that this adventure has going for it...

First of all there's the great graphic display that occupies the top third of the screen. From left to right there's: 1: A graphic 'character' window that displays a graphic of a character - if one's present at the location. If there isn't one present then a picture of Conman (you) appears there. 2: The central portion of the graphic display is filled with location graphics.

3: The far right side is a window showing several 'clustered' u.d.g's of directional indicators, in and out doors, up and down arrows. These, believe it or not, are highlighted at each location to show the directions in which you can move. Finally, right at the top of the screen you have the score and game name. The location text, objects, messages etc., appear (and scroll) underneath this top-third display area. It's a very neat graphic system and is a bonus to players like me who are not sure about directions, and who like graphics. The graphics are uniformly very good too! There's plenty to see and do in this initial 'getting to know you' part of the game. There's objects a plenty, chuckles by the armpit-full, things to see and do (examine and manipulate) and some glorious spelling mistakes which I don't think are too intentional, but they make the game feel just like the way you'd expect a dimwit barbarian to think - if you get my drift?

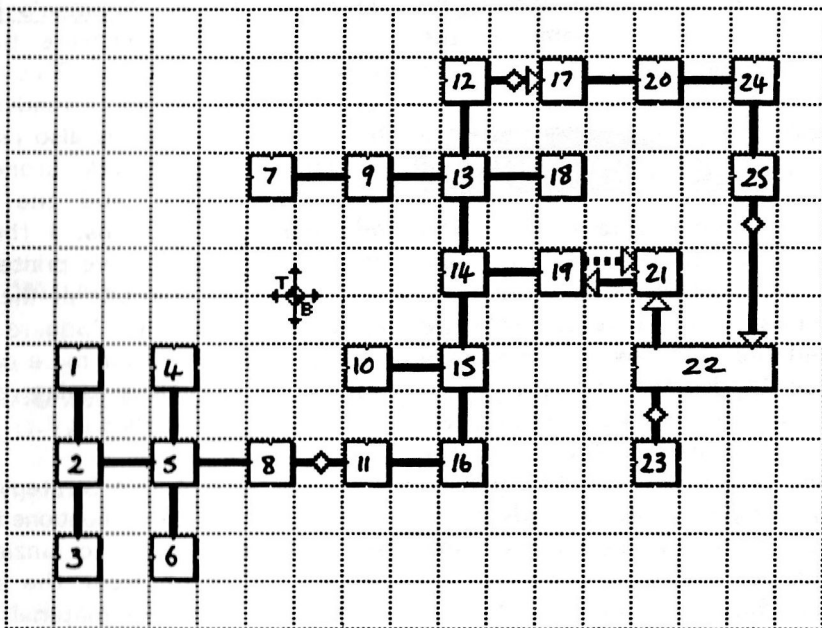
As I said, it's a game that should hook those people who want more than just a straightforward adventure romp. Some of the descriptions (check out the toilet) are stomach turning, and may be too nauseating for you, but for me, well, I liked it and will certainly order the full three parts! What, you want a rating? Well, PERSONAL 9/10

CONMAN THE BARBARIC: £2.99

From: The Northern Underground
Top Floor, 17 Fisher St., Carlisle.
Overseas: add extra £1.00 (Airmail)

MAGICAL MAPS

SAGA OF A MAD BARBARIAN



"Saga of A Mad Barbarian" I hear you cry. Whatever's that? Well, if you were in the vicinity of Sinclair User's February 1992 cover-tape then you'll know exactly what it is.

• Map and hacking information supplied by Terry Brawls - with special thanks to Don for the tape!

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 01 Perv. Pony | 02 Street |
| 03 Ethel's Shop | 04 Museum |
| 05 • START • | 06 Weapon Shop |
| 07 Tunnel | 08 East Gate |
| 09 Cave | |
| 10 Gypsy Haggis | |
| 11 Road | 12 Mount Dif |
| 13 Crossroads | 14 More Roads |
| 15 Road Fork | 16 Road Turn |
| 17 In Mount | 18 Robins Camp |

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| 19 Aracoma Estate | 20 Valley |
| 21 Back-Room | |
| 22 Fortress Gate | |
| 23 Main Hall | 24 Road |
| 25 Iced Lake | |

• **HACKING INFORMATION:**
 GAC owners extract the database by:
 1 Merge the Loader. Stop Tape.
 2 Enter this: POKE 23995,3:POKE 23996,19:GOTO 0
 3 Restart tape & load it all in. (it won't start!)
 4 Insert a blank tape and type: SAVE "DATA" CODE 42271, 14230
 5 If you want a TURBO-FREE runnable adventure to back up your tape, save out "ADV" CODE 24000, 32500. Precede this with your own Basic loader. RAND USR VAL = 34104

LOOSE ENDS

WHERE THE MISC. STUFF LIVES!

- No issue of FB would be complete without the names of the previous issues competition winners, so here they are:

Dave Ledbury, Shropshire

Okay, it's more of a case of the WINNER as there was only one competition last issue. Can you remember what it was? Well, we printed the first few moves from a famous old adventure and asked you to guess what game it was... the answer was ESPIONAGE ISLAND and the winner, Dave Ledbury, will be getting every Compass Software adventure released from now till the end of time. (or till Jon Lemmon stops writing them - whichever comes first.)

- With the extra news page (p.15) this issue, there's not a lot left over to fill the rest of this column with. So, in the interests of those who are interested, here's a bit of A & SC info that may prove useful, and a little more info on the 'Square One' fanzine... 'Square One' first I think...

Categories that will appear in this rather interesting sounding publication include: **Total Rewind** - Video, film, radio, television and music reviews and news. **Folio** - Books and assorted literature. **Still Life** - Comics, graphic novels and artwork. **Live Action** - Live Role-Playing adventure games. **Loaded Dice** - Board, computer & book based

adventure games. **Postman's Knock** - Play By Mail Adventure Games. **Trivial Disputes** - This is a 'Soapbox' section where readers can have their say. What is also planned for inclusion is artwork, stories by 'budding' authors and the usual editorial type sections. I think it sounds rather good! I've printed the address already (on one of the news pages) so write to 'Square One' (enclosing an s.a.e) for more details. Sounds like there's going to be something for everyone in it.

- The Adventure & Strategy Club. I think it's about time I mentioned them again. Their approach to fanzines is slightly different from the norm, what with 'packs' of material being produced that are loose-leaf in format and slip into an official (or unofficial) binder. The latest advert I've seen states that there's an increasing emphasis on 16-bit machines, so it may not be what 8 bit users need - however, if you've got some spare cash and need more adventure coverage then why not try for the £4.00 introductory issue which will undoubtedly give you a good idea of whether or not it's the fanzine for you. Contact: Hazel Miller, The Adventure & Strategy Club, 17 Sheridan Road, London W12 6QT. Full subscription rates for this bi-monthly, A5 publication are: £14.00 (half yearly) £24.00 (yearly) with the optional binder coming in at an extra £7.95.

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All three are £1.99 each on cassette. Only "VIRUS" is available on +3 Disc, at £2.99

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THE WIZARDS SKULL

After Zogan was destroyed in Freand and the final battle had left the orcs defeated & virtually wiped out, Bogmole settled back in his swamp and dared to rest and think of more pleasant things. Several years had passed by, it was midsummers night and the sound of heavy rain was hitting the roof of Bogmoles hut. Then he heard a loud knocking at his door, Bogmole opened the door and was confronted by a strangely dressed old elf! The old elf introduced himself:- "My name is Danark, may I come in?". Bogmole let the elf in, he was soaking wet, so Bogmole made him comfortable in a chair by the fire. Danark, now warmed by the fire began to tell Bogmole tales of evil, and of Freand in a different time! They sat up half the night, or maybe more, and Danark began to tell Bogmole what it was all for:- "Zogan's powers have lived on! A race of goblins called the Kranad had found Zogan's skull in the talons of a dead eagle. They had used the power within..." Danark fell silent... Suddenly, an intense bright light engulfed Bogmoles hut! Danark pulled a letter out from his cloak and threw it into the fire. He then rose to his feet and ran out of the hut. Bogmole now found himself uncontrollably falling asleep, as he slept, Danark's words echoed in his head:- "Zogan's powers have lived on!"....

You are Bogmole, the last of the swamp monsters. As you wake from a deep sleep, you begin to wonder if what had happened was real, or just a dream?

AND SO IT BEGINS...

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