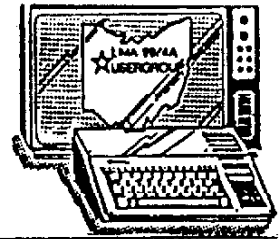


BITS, BYTES & PIXELS

LIMA 99/4A USERS GROUP



December 1996 Volume 12, #10

THE 1997 MULTI USER GROUP CONFERENCE an all TI and Geneve computer show

When? Friday/Saturday May 23/24. This is
memorial day weekend.

Where? The Ohio State University Lima Campus,
Lima Ohio.

Contact? Charles Good, P.O. Box 647, Venedocia
Ohio 45894. Phone 419-667-3131

Internet support? send email to good.6@osu.edu
web page at www.bright.net/~cgood/wug1007.html

***DONE**

FEST WEST 1997 an all 99/4A and Geneve computer show

When? April 5, 1997

Where? San Jose California Civic Auditorium

Contact? South Bay TI User Group.

---3297 Woody Lane

---San Jose CA 95132

Phone? 408-934-0352

***DONE**

REPORT FROM THE 14TH ANNUAL CHICAGO TI FAIRE. held November 9, 1997 by Charles Good

I just returned home from the Faire and thought I would put some of the show's highlights down on paper while they are still fresh in my mind. I think all of the following should be of interest to the TI99/4A and Geneve community.

Barry Miller of 9640 news was there. I haven't seen him at a TI show in several years. He was selling an IBM compatible CD ROM with lots of archived TI and Geneve software and text files. You can use this as the basis for a BBS download system or send the files over to your TI via a serial cable. Price is \$50. This is NOT the same product currently being sold by Kyle Crichton of Competition computer. Barry's and Kyle's CDs have different mixtures of software. Barry assures me that all the material on his CD is already in the public domain or that he has specific permission from the software authors to distribute the non public domain stuff on the CD. P.O. Box 752465, Memphis TN 38175. Phone 901-368-1169

Gerd Weissmann showed some PE Box cards for sale by Michael Becker and others in Germany. The card that interested me the most was the 80 column card. It produces, I think, 32K colors. You need a Geneve/Amega compatible monitor such as the no longer produced Magnavox BCM515 to see all the colors. Gerd showed some highly detailed GIF pictures of earth globes and a picture of a hamster with each hair showing. Using the same picture he switched back and forth between 256 colors (the resolution of all other 80 column cards for the TI and the Geneve's resolution) and the card's maximum resolution. The difference was dramatic. This card works with a regular 99/4A system or with the fast cpu/gram system that was also demonstrated.

The fast cpu/gram system consists of two cards that put the entire 99/4A inside the pbox. Gerd used a 99/4A keyboard (only) cabled to the fast cpu card and says that within a couple of weeks the eprom that allows one to use an AT keyboard with the fast cpu card will be ready. There is already a jack on the fast cpu card for an AT keyboard. The gram card, which must be used with the fast cpu card, has lots and lots of gram memory. There are, I think, 16 banks of gram and most of these banks are in flash eproms so they are very stable yet can be reprogrammed. Some of the gram memory is in ram so that you can make alterations to your gram modules before loading the module into a flash eprom.

These are expensive cards with unique features. As I recollect the price of the 80 column card is 380DM (\$1US=1.5DM). Don Walden of Secure electronics grabbed Gerd at the Chicago airport the day before the Faire and whisked him to Wisconsin to look over Gerd's hardware and probably to try and arrange to manufacture and sell the cards on this side of the Atlantic. Nothing at all definite had been worked out between these two when Gerd arrived at the Faire the next day. Gerd's address is Koenigstrasse 17-19, D-67655 Kaiserlautern, Germany.

Bud Mills was there. As some of you know Bud has done very little for the TI community in recent months and is way behind with repair and service work on products his company has sold in the past. The problem, as I understand it, is that Bud was making long daily drives to help his brother take care of their dying mother. This included construction of a new downstairs bathroom. Bud buried his mother last week and now promises to get caught up with everything. He told me that his back log of repairs will hopefully be cleared up by the end of November 1996. I hope so. Bud has the seed money for another production run of Horizon Ramdisk series 4000 boards. New Horizon Ramdisks will soon be

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available. Pyram cards and memex (for the Geneve) cards are now available. Bud said in his seminar, "I'm not running out on you guys. I am here for the duration. As long as there is interest in the 99/A and in my products I will be here." That is very good news.

Bruce Harrison demonstrated an AMS version of his TI Artist slide show program at his table. The software popped a TI Artist picture up on the screen, displayed it for 0.1 sec, then put another up. With this kind of speed you can produce animation. At his seminar Bruce showed off the NEW Loadmaster. This is greatly enhanced compared to the version of Loadmaster I reviewed in Micropendium just a month ago. I was very impressed! It is now FAST, with assembly language support. It identifies just about every kind of file there is in the 99/4A world (telling you that the file is an EA3 program, a TI Base data file, a Page prn font, etc. etc.). From a Loadmaster disk directory you can directly run Extended Basic, EAS, and EA3 software and you can view text files. Running EA3 software from the LoadMaster menu is particularly user friendly, more so than any other way of running EA3 software including Funnelweb and the EA module. AMS Artist slideshow is commercial. Bruce sells it for \$7. The new Loadmaster is shareware, with all donations shared equally between Bruce and Mickey Cendrowski, the two authors. Send me \$1 (P.O. Box 647, Venedocia OH 45894) and I will mail you the new Loadmaster. If you like it the title screen shows where to send your shareware donation. Bruce Harrison, 5705 40th Place, Hyattsville MD 20781. Phone 301-277-3467

Mike Wright (dba CaDD Electronics) demonstrated PC99. In my opinion this is the best, most flexible of the IBM emulators that mimic a 99/4A. It should be the best because the others are free and PC99 costs \$50. But, you get support! For example, Mike offers to convert your TI disks (SSSD or DSSD) to PC99 format on an IBM disk for only \$0.25 per disk. You can of course cable your IBM and TI together to do this, but Mike's service is so convenient why bother. The most interesting thing to me about Mike's demo was the availability of original 99/4A manuals on disk. Almost all the command module manuals, including the EA manual are available. What you get is an executable file on an IBM disk. No additional cost software is needed. The file opens up to produce a facsimile of the original, complete with all original graphics. A table of contents has been added and any typos or known errors in the original manuals have been corrected. You can search for text strings and you can print the manual on your printer. These are legal copies of copyrighted TI products and part of the reason for the relatively high cost is that TI gets a cut. Most manuals cost \$2 (some \$3) if you supply the disk and return postage. If Mike supplies the disk and postage the cost is \$4 (some \$5) per manual. A list of what is available and exact costs is available from CaDD Electronics, 45 Centerville Dr., Salem NH 03079. Phone 603-895-0119.

Ken Gilliland was there with his bride. Ken talked about his plans for additional TI Casino games, including a version of poker in which one human player plays against three computer players. This isn't done yet but is will along. He also showed a new solitaire game that is available as a stand alone product or as an addition to TI Casino. I have a review of this game coming out in the next Micropendium.

Ramcharged Computers was there with lots of software from the old Asgard and Texaments companies. I purchased some oldies that I didn't have and thought I would be able to use. There has been some discussion recently on the internet newsgroup comp.sys.ti concerning the status of the old Asgard Software company and how this relates to Ramcharged Computers. As I understand it, this is how it works. Ramcharged, as a dealer, purchased from Harry Brashear all remaining Asgard software inventory. Harry still has the Asgard name with its rights and obligations. Ramcharged did not purchase any of the rights or obligations of Asgard, only a bunch of software packages with documentation. Ramcharged cannot manufacture additional copies of its Asgard products, but can sell what it has until its stock runs out. That is what Ron Markus of Ramcharged told me some time ago. So, Ramcharged is NOT Asgard, but they have a lot of Asgard stuff. If you want Spell It or other Asgard titles contact Ramcharged and see if what you want is in stock. Phone Ramcharged Computers at 216-243-1244. You will be talking to Ron or Ada Markus.

****DONE****

ALL ABOUT THE INFOCOM COMPANY

A strange little man in a long cloak appears suddenly in the room. He is wearing a high pointed hat embroidered with astrological signs. He has a long, stringy, and unkempt beard.

The Wizard draws forth his wand and waves it in your direction. It begins to glow with a faint blue glow. The Wizard, in a deep and resonant voice, speaks the word "FAQ!" He cackles gleefully.

This is part 2 of the Frequently Asked Questions list for the group rec.games.int-fiction, a Usenet newsgroup for the discussion of Interactive Fiction games and related topics.

Contents of this file:

- 2.0 Infocom
- 2.1 Whatever happened to Infocom, anyway?
- 2.2 Can I reach any of the original Infocommies?
- 2.3 Classic Infocom titles available now
- 2.4 Classic Infocom releases you might find used somewhere
- 2.5 Modern (i.e. Activision) releases
- 2.6 Infocom products not (yet) re-released
- 2.7 Missing or hard-to-find information in LToI packaging

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2.8 Z-machine interpreters, vocabulary lists, utilities, and Specification numbers.

2.9 Infocom copyrights and playing on other platforms

2.10 Creating your own (Infocom) adventure games

The current maintainer is Stephen Van Egmond. Questions and information should be mailed to svanegm@undergrad.math.uwaterloo.ca.

The dream dissolves around you as his last words echo through the void....

>AINFIZ FORD PREFECT

As you cast the spell, the soidy scroll vanishes!

After a momentary dizziness, you realize that your location has changed, although Ford Prefect is not in sight...

Dark

You can make out a shadow moving in the dark.

>LOOK AT SHADOW

The shadow is vaguely Ford Prefect-shaped.

Vogon Hold

This is a squalid room filled with grubby mattresses, unwashed cups, and unidentifiable bits of smelly alien underwear. A door lies to port, and an airlock lies to starboard.

Ford removes the bottle of Santraginean Mineral Water which he's been waving under your nose. He tells you that you are aboard a Vogon spaceship, and gives you some peanuts.

>ASK FORD ABOUT INFOCOM

A long silence tells you that Ford Prefect isn't interested in talking about Infocom.

Ford yawns. "Matter transference always tires me out. I'm going to take a nap." He places something on top of his satchel. "If you have any questions, here's The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" (Footnote 14). Ford lowers his voice to a whisper. "I'm not supposed to tell you this, but you'll never be able to finish the game without consulting the Guide about lots of stuff." As he curls up in a corner and begins snoring, you pick up the Guide.

>CONSULT GUIDE ABOUT INFOCOM

The Guide checks through its Sub-Etha-Net database and eventually comes up with the following entry:

"Whatever happened to Infocom, anyway?" (2.1)

This info is taken from [what was once] the comp.sys.ibm.pc.games FAQ, with thanks to Infocom's Stu Galley for passing it along: [Thanks to Dave Lebling (Infocom

co-founder) for the definitive info on this]

Infocom never went out of business. It went deeply into debt to develop a database product (named Cornerstone) that was a commercial flop. It went shopping for a merger and found Activision, which later changed its name to Mediagenic. What did happen is that in May of 1989 Mediagenic closed down the "real" Infocom in Cambridge, MA, and laid (almost) everyone off. All the releases up through Zork Zero, Shogun, Journey, and Arthur were developed in Cambridge.

Mediagenic licensed the UK rights to the games to Virgin Mastertronic about two years ago.

Mediagenic went nearly bankrupt, was taken over by outside investors, and taken through a so-called "pre-packaged Chapter 11 bankruptcy" in January, 1992. As part of that process, they changed their name back to Activision, moved from Silicon Valley down to LA, and recently merged with a company owned by the investors (called The Disc Company).

Activision continues to release new products under the Infocom label, all of which so far have been CD-ROM graphical adventures which have been met with dour grunts of disapproval from rec.&.int-fiction denizens. The original text adventures can still be purchased.

You begin to feel distinctly groggy.

> LOOK UNDER MATTRESS FOR IMPLEMENTOR

"Hey, anybody know how I can reach Steve Meretzky?" (2.2)

The original Infocom crew has moved on to other positions. Any kind of "where are they now" would probably be wrong, out of date, and almost certainly unwelcome. David Lebling has recently surfaced on rec.&.int-fiction to comment from time to time, and so has Liz Cyr Jones. Other implementors may be lurking; nobody knows.

You see nothing else interesting.

> CONSULT GUIDE ABOUT CLASSIC INFOCOM PRODUCTS (2.3)

The Guide checks through its Sub-Etha-Net database and eventually comes up with the following entry:

Classic Infocom is generally defined to be anything before Return to Zork. Activision owns the rights to all the Infocom games and trademarks, and occasionally releases them in some repackaged form or another.

Activision is currently [footnote 42] selling a compilation of classic Infocom called "Classic Text Adventure Masterpieces". This CD (which works on PC or Mac) meets practically every wish of the rec.games.int-fiction

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readership, except for wide availability. There is little Activision can do to force stores to carry their product.

The CD includes the following games:

A Mind Forever Voyaging; Arthur: The Quest For Excalibur; Ballyhoo; Border Zone; Bureaucracy; Cutthroat; Deadline; Enchanter; Hollywood Hijinx; Infidel; Journey; Leather Goddesses Of Phobos; Lurking Horror; Moonmist; Nord And Bert Couldn't Make Head Or Tail Of It; Planetfall; Plundered Hearts; Seastalker; Sherlock; Sorcerer; Spellbreaker; Starcross; Stationfall; Suspect; Suspended; Trinity; Wishbringer; Witness; Zork Zero; Zork I; Zork II; Zork III; Beyond Zork.

Notable by their absence are Hitch Hikers' and Shogun, which are not included since the rights to distribute those games have reverted back to the original authors.

Also included is the top 6 winning entries from the 1995 Interactive Fiction authorship competition, a "Very Lost Treasures of Infocom" section containing old game ideas, statements of principle, and e-mail archives from Infocom's heyday. All maps and documentation are provided in Adobe Acrobat format which can be printed out.

The packaging bears little resemblance to the originals; notably absent are the plastic or metal trinkets that were included in packages (for example, The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy included peril-sensitive sunglasses, a "Don't Panic" button, a zip-lock baggie containing a microscopic space fleet, and printed orders for the destruction of your home and planet). Infocom's original packaging is legendary in the software industry.

Cos0: about \$20 US, it has been seen in reasonable quantity at Best Buy stores and should be at Babbages', Software Plus and others. It can also be ordered direct from Activision (visit www.activision.com; they will "shortly" be having online ordering but you can get their 1-800 number there).

If you are looking for pirated copies of classic products, don't bother asking on this newsgroup. In fact, don't bother at all. Many of the games rely on materials in the game package for copy protection, either in the form of knowledge you would have by reading it, or data that you need to look up.

Ford is curled up on the bed, snoring loudly.

> FOOTNOTE 42

"Previous Infocom compilations you still might find" (2.4)

Infocom, in its pre-Activision days released trilogies

(The Zork Trilogy, for example, or the Enchanter trilogy containing Enchanter, Sorcerer and Wishbringer) containing a subset of the trinkets found in the original packages. Like almost all other original Infocom packages, these are now collectors' items.

Activision has released its own series of compilations:

"The Lost Treasures of Infocom I" is a collection of 20 Infocom games. You may be able to obtain it through mail-order outlets or used from someone who doesn't want it anymore. The package was available for the IBM PC, the Apple Macintosh and the Commodore Amiga. The CD and floppy editions were identical.

The games in LToI I were:

Zork I	Enchanter	Deadline	Starcross
Zork II	Sorcerer	Witness	Suspended
Zork III	Spellbreaker	Suspect	Planetfall
Zork Zero	Ballyhoo	Infidel	Stationfall
Beyond Zork	Moonmist	Lurking Horror	Hitchhiker's

The LToI 1 package was available for the Apple IIGs through the Big Red Computer Club, which sought and received permission from Activision to port the games to the IIGs.

The package includes a manual which contains photocopies of all the original manuals and game pieces (such as the trading cards from "Spellbreaker", which are needed to solve a puzzle in the game), but some information is missing -- see section 2.7 below.

The package also contains a hint book, which looks like somebody took all the Invisiclues booklets and typed them into a text file. The hint book is riddled with spelling mistakes, formatting errors and other problems, but in most cases the mistakes are not serious enough to keep you from using it.

"Lost Treasures of Infocom II" contained most (but not all) of the remaining Infocom text adventure games, and retailed for \$29.95 through retail and mail order outlets.

The games in the 3.5 disk version were:

Seastalker	Wishbringer	A Mind Forever Voyaging
Trinity	Cutthroats	Hollywood Hijinx
Bureaucracy	Border Zone	Plundered Hearts
Sherlock	Nord and Bert	(Couldn't Make Head or Tail of It)

The CD-ROM version contained Shogun, Arthur and Journey in addition.

LToI2 was produced for the Macintosh and PC only. Users of other platforms can play the non-graphical games by transferring the files to their machine and playing them with a ZIP. (See question 2.9.)

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This package contains photocopies of the original packaging, but does NOT contain a hint book: Instead it contains a 1-900 number which you can call to receive hints which is probably dead by now. Some information is missing for Bueaucracy. See question 2.7.

After Lost Treasures, Infocom released its topical Collections. These are considered inferior to just about every other collection:

Mystery Collection: Ballyhoo, Deadline, Witness, Moonmist, Sherlock

Adventure Collection: Border Zone, Plundered Hearts, Cutthroats, Trinity, Infidel

Comedy Collection: Bureaucracy, Hollywood Hijinx, Nord Bert

Fantasy Collection: Enchanter, Sorcerer, Spellbreaker, Seastalker, Wishbringer

Science Fiction Collection: Hitchhiker's, Suspended, AMFY, Starcross, Stationfall

There is also the Zork Anthology, published by Activision in 1994 as a CD companion to the pseudo-Infocom title "Return to Zork". It contains Zork I, Zork II, Zork III, Beyond Zork, Zork Zero, and oddly, Planetfall.

You begin to feel indistinctly groggy.

>CONSULT GUIDE ABOUT ANCIENT COMPILATIONS (2.5)

The Guide checks through its Sub-Etha-Net database and eventually comes up with the following entry:

You begin to feel very indistinct.

>EAT PEANUTS

You feel stronger as the peanuts replace some of the protein you lost in the matter transference beam.

An announcement is coming over the ship's intercom. "Ed tgyrkonx jcaavlou nx jchotha otoyefli ltruvupirbi swrotruetft ochoollzitchogrya rd tfudeftd t ow ctrufudx jp wkonvuhvd te h oulpkonz zollcava ri li lo ti l oe hfudx jirbtrugrys gvupp work oo sthaquio ta btogr gkonr ga r or gz zr gi skwazitz zkmaa rerl ow cfluirbwroorktoyfiathad tulp oe he hfluo siabchogryr gu ni s."

>CONSULT GUIDE ABOUT RECENT INFOCOM PRODUCTS (2.5)

The Guide checks through its Sub-Etha-Net database and eventually comes up with the following entry:

Activision is working to build a following for Infocom's universes based on the modern trend to humongous games

sprawling across hundreds of megabytes. Their offerings to date:

Return to Zork_ A mid-1993 entry for the IBM PC, set far in the "future" of the Zork series. Difficult, hunt-the-pixels, graphical interface. A Macintosh version was released in mid-1994. PC Demo is available. <ftp://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/infocom/demos/zorkdemo.zip>

Zork: Nemesis_ A graphical CD-ROM adventure released in 1995. The interface has improved somewhat; the game includes amusing references to the Zork universe, but the plot is said to be irregular and the puzzles somewhat inconsistent. Said to be a huge improvement over RTZ.

Planetfall: The Search for Floyd_ Due out in 1995, a graphical adventure written by Steve Meretzky, Richard Manning and Hans Beimler. Infocom has reportedly learned their lesson with Return to Zork's interface and will be improving it considerably for their 1995 games.

There is also another Zork adventure coming perhaps early next year.

>CONSULT GUIDE ABOUT OTHER INFOCOM PRODUCTS (2.6)

The Guide checks through its Sub-Etha-Net database and eventually comes up with the following entry:

There are a handful of games and other Infocom products that are not included in any of the compilations. These products range from hard-to-find early Infocom products to non-IF games made by other companies and marketed under the Infocom brand name.

For more information about Infocom products, version numbers and Infocom products that were never released, see Paul David's Doherty's "Infocom Fact Sheet", which is periodically posted on rec.games.int-fiction and is also available at <ftp://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/infocom/info/fact-sheet.txt>.

Hard-to-find and early products:

The Infocom Sampler (pre-1984?)

This was the first of three demo products written by Infocom, containing (we think) excerpts from Zork I. The existence of this sampler is deduced mainly because a later version of the Sampler has serial number "ID2", suggesting an earlier "ID1".

The Infocom Sampler (1984, 1985)

This was the second of three samplers, containing excerpts from Zork I, Planetfall, Infidel and The Witness, and also containing a unique two-room puzzle that involved catching a butterfly. Available for virtually every computer on the market in 1985 (including the Osborne, Kaypro II,

TRS-80 Color Computer, etc.) Superseded in 1987 by the third and final Infocom Sampler.

ftp://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/infocom/demos/sampler1_R55.z3

The Infocom Sampler (Fall 1987)

Third and final sampler containing puzzles from Zork I, Trinity, Leather Goddesses of Phobos and Wishbringer. IBM PC, Apple II and Commodore 64.
<ftp://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/infocom/demos/sampler2.z3>

Fooblitzky (Summer 1985)

A graphical game involving deductive logic, by Marc Blank, Michael Berlyn, Brian Cody, Poh C. Lim and Paula Maxwell. IBM PC, Apple II, Atari XL/XE series.

Shogun Journey Arthur: The Quest for Excalibur Versions for the Apple IIe and Amiga were produced, but are now rare. IBM and Mac versions are on LToI 2 CD-ROMs as well as Masterpieces.

Leather Goddesses of Phobos (Summer 1986) Activision chose not to include the original LGoP in either of the Lost Treasures packages, possibly to prevent confusion with the inferior sequel (see below) that was published at about the same time. A coupon in the LToI II package offered the IBM PC version of this game for an additional \$10; versions for other machines, including the Apple II, Macintosh, Atari and Amiga, are difficult to obtain.

Leather Goddesses of Phobos II: Gas Pump Girls Meet the Pulsating Inconvenience from Planet X This 1992 offering from "Infocom" had more in common with Leisure Suit Larry than with the original Leather Goddesses. Available for the IBM PC.

The New Zork Times / The Status Line (1983? - 1988) The legendary Infocom newsletter. The name was changed in mid-1986 due to threatened legal action by a lesser-known newspaper serving a smaller area (Infocom promptly began using old newspapers for packing material when shipping games to their customers; by coincidence the NYT was the paper of choice for this purpose). Thirteen issues were published under the name 'NZT'; one issue (Spring 1986) was titled '####' and the remaining ten were published as 'TSL'. The newsletters are now collector's items, and a complete set is rare. Some articles are archived at <ftp://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/infocom/info> and at <http://www.csd.uwo.ca/~pate/Infocom>

There is an effort underway on rec.games.int-fiction to create complete electronic editions of these newsletters.

Cornerstone (Fall 1984) Infocom's one and only attempt at a commercial business product (see section 2.1, above); probably of interest only to purists. IBM PC version only; description in Winter 1985 NZT.

Non-Infocom "Infocom" offerings:

Infocomics (1988) Many believe that this is the point where Infocom-as-a-publisher ended and Infocom-as-a-brand-name-for-lesser-products began. IBM PC, Apple II, Commodore 64/128. At least four of these \$12 'comic books' were published: Lane Mastodon vs. The Blubbermen Gamma Force in Pit of a Thousand Screams ZorkQuest I: Assault on Egreth Castle ZorkQuest II: The Crystal of Doom

Quarterstaff: The Tomb of Setoath (Fall 1988) Activision purchased the rights to this Macintosh game from Simulated Environment Systems in late 1988, and reworked the text and user interface. The game is a graphical RPG similar to a number of D&D-type games on the market. Infocom planned to release this game for the Apple IIs and IBM, but only the Macintosh version was ever published.

BattleTech: The Crescent Hawk's Inception (Fall 1988) Activision now sells this game and its sequel (BattleTech: The Crescent Hawk's Revenge) as part of a three-game package of BattleTech-related games. Developed by Westwood Associates. "Available in November [1988] for the IBM, in February [1989] for the Commodore 64/128, and in [Spring 1989] for the Apple II series and the Amiga." The IBM, Amiga and Commodore 64 versions have been sighted; the status of the Apple II version is unknown.

Simon The Sorcerer Infocom was used as the label for IBM and Mac distribution for this Sierra style graphical adventure. Amiga distribution was by Adventure Soft.

Circuit's Edge IBM, Amiga, and "other 8-bit platforms". A science-fiction RPG based on Effinger's world in the story "When Gravity Fails".

Mines of Titan IBM, Amiga, Apple IIe and "other 8-bit platforms". A science-fiction RPG set on the moon Titan. Originally released as The Mars Saga on the 64. Written by Westwood Associates.

Guards burst in and grab you and Ford, who comes slowly awake. They drag you down the corridor to a large cabin, where they strap you into large, menacing chairs...

Captain's Quarters, in the poetry appreciation chair This is the cabin of the Vogon Captain. You and Ford are strapped into poetry appreciation chairs. The Captain is indescribably hideous, indescribably blubbery, and indescribably mid-to-dark green. He is holding samples of his favourite poetry.

>ASK THE CAPTAIN ABOUT MISSING GAME PIECES (2.7)

One of the guards lightly bashes your skull with the butt of his weapon and says (Ford translates for you):

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Here is a list of missing or hard-to-find info in the Lost Treasures game packages. All have been typed in and are available at the ftp site in the directory infocom/shipped-documentation.

Ballyhoo The original packaging included an advertisement for a radio station, WPDL AM at 1170 KHz. You will need to tune the radio to this frequency (or TUNE RADIO TD WPDL) to get a vital clue.

Lurking Horror Your Login ID, an important part of one of the early puzzles, is ~~not~~ missing from the LTOI manual. It's just hard to find. (Hint: It's written somewhere on your Student ID Card.)

Bureaucracy Some important information from the Popular Paranoia advertisement is missing, as well as the Beezer card application in triplicate is absent from the LTOI 2 package.

Moonmist Your friend Tamara will make frequent references to the letters she wrote asking for your help; unfortunately, these letters are not included in the LTOI package. The full text of these two letters is available from the ftp.gmd.de archive, with many thanks to Mark Howell for typing in these letters from the original package.

The Vagon Captain says, "Ofudgrythafudo tw cchoe ho tz z ocavtrup wvroz zl afluz ztruqui." A guard grabs you and Ford, and drags you toward the hold. Ford whispers, "Don't worry, I'll think of something!"

Vagon Hold

In the corner is a glass case with a switch and a keyboard. It looks like the glass case contains: an atomic vector plotter

Ford begins trying to talk the guard into a sudden career change.

>TYPE "HELLO"

The hold of the Vagon ship is virtually undamaged by the explosion of the glass case. You, however, are blasted into tiny bits and smeared all over the room. Several cleaning robots fly in and wipe you neatly off the walls.

*** You have died ***

Your guardian angel, draped in white, appears floating in the nothingness before you. "Gotten in a bit of a scrape, eh?" he asks, writing frantically in a notebook. "I'd love to chat, but we're so busy this month." The angel twitches his nose, and the nothingness is replaced by...

Darkness

It is pitch black. You could be eaten by a zachine.

>WHAT IS A ZMACHINE? (2.8)

A zachine or ZIP (Z-machine Interpreter Program) is a

program that interprets and runs Infocom game data files. Infocom used a way-ahead-of-their-time implementation scheme that allowed them to develop one game that would run on any of 26 different computers, using a ZIP program specific to that computer and a data file common to all machines.

The Z-machine specification underwent several extensions at Infocom. The first two versions are obscure and you aren't very likely to encounter them. Version 3 ("Standard") is the format for the majority of the files in the Lost Treasures of Infocom series. Version 4 ("Plus") was a brief experiment that quickly led to version 5 ("Advanced"), a size suitable for creating fairly large adventures of the magnitude of Curses or Trinity (about 256K). Version 6 ("Graphical") has recently been deciphered and can handle story files about twice as large as version 5.

Until version 6 arrived, all the Z-machines were text-only. Version 6 added some graphics primitives and is the format used in Arthur, Journey, Shogun, and Zork Zero.

With the release of Inform 5.5, the public-domain compiler for Infocom format files (see below), Graham Nelson has proposed two new versions (7 and 8), the first non-Infocom "extensions" to the standard. Version 8 is identical to version 5 but with twice the storage (512K). Version 7 has not yet been used in any released game.

Mark Howell, author of Zip, has made available "ztools", a collection of C source files for dumping vocabulary, version, font, graphic and other information from Infocom games, for converting IBM bootable disks into story files, and for disassembly of story files to Z-code assembly language. There are also numerous other "tool" programs for Infocom files available by other authors for other platforms. (<ftp://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/infocom/tools>)

As a point of history, Infocom generated their Z-code files by compiling the Zork Implementation Language (ZIL) with a compiler named ZILCM. ZIL is a dialect of a Lisp-like language called MDL. MDL is ancient history, and ZIL seems to have disappeared entirely, though some code fragments can be found in back issues of the New York Times.

The ftp site has a considerable collection of Z-machine interpreters. Frotz is the most accurate implementation, but other interpreters may have more bells and whistles for your particular platform. They are at (<ftp://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/infocom/interpreters>).

Gareth Rees maintains a mini-FAQ with information on which interpreters are recommended for which platforms, and what to do if you can't find an interpreter for your computer. (<ftp://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/games/infocom/how-to-play-these-games>)

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There are some other ZIP programs at GMD that are not listed in Gareth's mini-FAQ. They range in quality, but some are fairly portable and have interesting source code.

>NE

Oh, no! A lurking Z-machine slithered into the room and devoured you!

You have died

Now, let's take a look here... Well, you probably deserve another chance. I can't quite fix you up completely, but you can't have everything.

Planting Room

This light room is full of pot plants, flowers, seeds, ornamental trowels and other miscellaneous garden implements.

A pair of yellow rubber gloves hangs from a hook on one wall.

Aunt Jemima, who has for years collected varieties of daisy, is engaged in her regular annual pastime of deciding which species make the best chains.

>ASK JEMIMA ABOUT COPYRIGHTS

Jemima screeches with irritation.

"Copyrights on Infocom products / using other platforms" (2.9)

Since Activision bought Infocom, Activision now owns the copyrights and trademarks on Infocom's products.

This means it's illegal to have a copy of any Infocom product you didn't pay for. This may make owners of non-PC, non-Mac computers despair since the only products shipping are for those two platforms, but there are options available. You can purchase one of the anthologies listed above, transfer the data files to your computer somehow, and use one of the available interpreters to run it. This is the inherent beauty of Infocom's Z-machine idea. See question 2.8 for information on interpreters.

Your interpreter should support at least v3 files. Some of the larger games (Trinity) are version 4 or 5. Zork Zero, Arthur, Journey and Shogun are v6 games, for which no interpreter is available. There probably will never be one, since v6 games incorporate lots of graphics which make them difficult to port to other operating systems.

There probably isn't a legal problem with doing this. Of course, if you sell your package, you should destroy the copies you've made.

Copyright issues with respect to samplers, invisiclues, New York Times issues, and other things which Activision, in

practice, will never want to redistribute, have not been resolved.

Activision can be reached at: Activision/Infocom P.O. Box 67001 Los Angeles, CA, USA 90067 Order line: 800-477-3650 (US) [anybody have one for Europe?] Tech support: 310-207-4500 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm PST)

People have had mixed and inconsistent results with Activision. Many have been told that the Lost Treasures aren't shipping anymore but after calling back and getting a different operator they were able to order one. This may have changed with the appearance of the 5 new collections.

>E.E.S.E.LIE DOWN.SLEEP.

You sleep unexpectedly deeply, but just as you think you are starting to wake up, you experience a sudden...

Premonition

It is a frosty, clear night, but there is a scent of camp-fires burning in the distance. You are passing through the landscape as if a ghost, and all seems faintly unreal. To the east is one side of an animal-hide tent, but there is no way in from here. To southwest, some soldiers sit around the embers of a fire. There is a terrible sense of something about to happen.

>SW

Camp Fire

A sentry platoon of soldiers are sitting about the embers of a fire.

>LISTEN

"Creating your own adventure games" (2.10)

Since this part of the FAQ is Infocom-oriented I will tell you that there is a freely distributable compiler available called Inform which allows you to generate Infocom-format story files that can be played with any Z-machine interpreter.

The Inform language and libraries are excellent. They were modelled based on the requirements for a Zork I-style game and provide the means to modify the parser, manage timers and daemons, change personalities and much more. It has C-ish syntax. This system does require a certain degree of programming knowledge. The documentation (in 3 parts) is pretty good; the 220-page Designers' Manual should be read even if you don't want to use Inform in favour of a different system, as it provides an interesting insight into what goes into developing a game.
<<http://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/infocom/compiler/inform>>

There are many other IF development systems available, and some background and information on them will appear in

NEXT PAGE

the next section. For the best information on the subject, visit rec.arts.int-fiction and read its FAQ. <<http://ftp.gmd.de/if-archive/rec.arts.int-fiction/FAQ>>

>ME. E. N. TAKE IRON MASCOT

The Druid catches sight of your ghostly hand taking the mascot, and immediately begins her occultations, cursing you and your ill-gotten gains. But she is unable to make contact with you, and turns furiously to the tapestry, hissing "lagach" to the Bear. At once a sudden swirl of wind seems to pull her into the rough cloth, dissolving her to nothing.

You wake up, shivering with dread.

>WAIT

Something feels very wrong indeed. Your hand begins to burn.

In an astonishing freak accident, a meteorite hurtles through the Earth's atmosphere and then straight through your head. Anyone would think you had a curse on you (anyone, that is, still able to think).

*** You have died ***

Press any key to continue.

***DONE**

ASSEMBLY LOADERS TUTORIAL
BY Merle Vogt

This tutorial is continued here from previous issues of BB&P. The entire tutorial is available on Lima disk 1195.

SECTION 3.4.. HERE IS THE ENTIRE X-BASIC PROGRAM.

```

100 REM X-BASIC DYNAMIC SUBROUTINE EXECUTION.
110 DISPLAY "THIS PROGRAM WILL INPUT A STRING, THEN ADD
01 TO EACH CHARACTER, THEN DISPLAY RESULTS." : : :
500 CALL INIT
510 CALL LOAD("DSK1.XB/PT3/DRJ")
600 INPUT "TYPE IN A STRING, NOT OVER 31 CHARACTERS ":IN$
610 IF SEG$(IN$,1,3) = "ZZZ" THEN 1000
890 REM
900 CALL LINK("SUBRT1",IN$,OUT$).
910 REM COMES BACK TO HERE
920 DISPLAY IN$ : OUT$ : "TYPE ZZZ TO HALT" : : :

930 GOTO 600
940 REM
1000 DISPLAY " END OF JOB" : : :
1010 FOR QQ = 1 TO 1000
1020 NEXT QQ
1030 STOP
1040 END
    
```

SECTION 3.5.. SUMMARY.

I HAVE TRIED TO DEMONSTRATE HOW TO APPROACH A DYNAMIC PROGRAM OPERATION. ONLY ONE SUBROUTINE WAS USED. YOU CAN HAVE MORE BUT THERE IS A MAJOR OBSTACLE WHEN X-BASIC IS USED. IT EATS UP ALL OF HIGH RAM, >A000 THRU >FFFF. THE UTILITIES OCCUPY LOW RAM SPACE >2000 THRU >24F3. SO YOU ARE LEFT ONLY THE AREA OF >24F4 THRU >3FXX, WHICH IS NOT SPACE TO DO LARGE PROJECTS. ALSO, THE X-BASIC LOADER PUTS YOUR DEF'S INTO A LOW RAM REF / DEF, STARTING AT >3FF8 AND DOWNWARDS. THE ONLY DEF'S IN THIS TABLE ARE THOSE FROM YOUR MODULES. X-BASIC DOES NOT HAVE ANY OF ITS OWN. THAT IS WHY YOU MUST CODE ALL THOSE "EQUATES" TO GET ACCESS TO THE X-BASIC UTILITIES.

SECTION 3.6.. DYNAMIC MODULAR PROGRAMMING WITH MINI MEMORY.

YOU CAN ALSO DO DYNAMIC RUNS WITH FACILITIES PROVIDED BY THE MINI MEMORY CARTRIDGE. THE CONTROL PROGRAM MUST BE IN REGULAR TI BASIC. THE "CALL INIT", "CALL LOAD", AND "CALL LINK" COMMANDS WORK AS ALREADY DETAILED. YOU CAN USE ALL THOSE UTILITIES IN ROM >6000 FROM THE ASSEMBLY MODULES. AS BEFORE, YOU USE "EDITOR" TO CREATE "SOURCE" MODULES AND "ASSEMBLER" TO MAKE "OBJECT" MODULES. BE CAREFUL TO CONFORM TO THE SLIGHT DIFFERENCES OF THE MINI MEM LOADER.

SECTION 3.7.. THE ASSEMBLY CODE LOOKS RATHER DIFFERENT THAN THAT IN SECTION 3.2. SEE BELOW:::~::~:

1	DEF	SUBRT1	
2	REF	NUMAS6,NUMREF,XMLLNK	
3	FAC	EQU	>B34A
4	ARG	EQU	>B35C
5	STAT	EQU	>B37C
6	IN	EQU	FAC
7	MYWS	BSS	32
8	SUBRT1	BLWP	@SB4
9		B	#R11
10	SB4	DATA	MYWS
11		DATA	SUB60

12	SUB60	CLR	R0
13		LI	R1,1
14		BLWP	@NUMREF

15		LI	R4,4
16		LI	R5,IN
17		LI	R6,ARG
18	MOVE4	MOV	#R5+,#R6+
19		DEC	R4
20		JNE	MOVE4

21		BLWP	@XMLLNK
22		DATA	>0600

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```

23 CLR R0
24 LI R1,2
25 BLWP @NUMASG
-----
26 CLR @STAT
27 RTWP
28 END
    
```

SECTION 3.8. COMMENTS.

... LINE 1 DEFINES THE MODULE NAME. LINE 2 SPECIFIES THE REF'S USED IN THIS MODULE. LINES 3, 4, 5, 6 SET UP THE THE NEEDED EQUATES. LINES 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 MAKE THE SETUP TO START THE MODULE EXECUTING. LINES 12, 13, 14 GET THE DATA FIELD "IN" (FLOATING POINT NUMBER) INTO WORK AREA "FAC". LINES 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 PLACE A COPY OF "FAC" INTO A WORK AREA NAMED " ARG ". LINES 21, 22 EXECUTE A FLOATING POINT ADD ROUTINE WHICH IS IN THE XMLNK ROUTINES. "ARG" IS ADDED TO "FAC", SO FAC BECOMES IN + IN. LINES 23, 24, 25 MOVE FAC TO DATA FIELD "OUT" IN THE BASIC. LINE 26 CLEARS STATUS TO AVOID A FALSE ERROR FLAG. LINE 27 RETURNS BACK TO BASIC, THRU LINE 9.

SECTION 3.9.. HERE IS THE CORRESPONDING BASIC PROGRAM.

```

100 REM MINI MEM DYNAMIC SUBROUTINE RUN.
110 DISPLAY " THIS PROGRAM WILL INPUT A NUMBER, THEN USE
ASSEMBLY TO ADD IT TO ITSELF."
120 DISPLAY " THEN DISPLAY RESULT, THEN LOOP UNTIL YOU
HALT." 130 REM
500 CALL INIT
510 CALL LOAD("DSK1.SUBRT1OBJT")
600 INPUT "TYPE A NUMBER ":KEYPUT
610 IF KEYPUT = 0 THEN 1000
620 REM
890 IN = KEYPUT
900 CALL LINK("SUBRT1",IN,OUT)
910 REM
920 DISPLAY "IN = ";IN;"IN + IN = ";OUT;"TYPE 0 TO
HALT":;;;
930 GOTO 600
940 REM
1000 DISPLAY " END OF JOB":;;;;
1010 FOR QQ = 1 TO 1000
1020 NEXT QQ
1030 STOP
1040 END
    
```

SECTION 3.10.. I HAVE TRIED TO DEMONSTRATE HOW TO USE MINI MEMORY TO DO DYNAMIC ROUTINE RUNS. IN THIS CONTEXT, NOTE THAT THERE IS ONE LARGE ADVANTAGE IN USING MINI MEM. SINCE IT DOES NOT EAT UP HIGH OR LOW RAM YOU HAVE >A000 THRU >FFE0 AND LOW RAM >2000 THRU >3FFF; YOU GET NEARLY 32-K SPACE FOR PROGRAMS. SO YOU CAN SHOOT BIGGER IN THIS ENVIRONMENT.

SECTION 3.11.. NOTICE - NOTICE....

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO RUN PROGRAMS DYNAMICALLY WITH MINI MEMORY. IT IS AN OPTION. I WILL ENLARGE ON DYNAMIC PROGRAMS IN PART 4 OF THIS SERIES, " " OVERLAYS " "....

YOU CAN DO REGULAR " " STATIC " ", LIKE IN THE E / A SYSTEM. YOU WOULD CREATE AND ASSEMBLE MODULES WITH THE E / A SYSTEM; THEN TRANSFER TO MINI MEM AND DO THE " " LOAD AND RUN " " AND/OR " " RUN " " STEPS FOR THE EXECUTION PHASE OF THE JOB. PART 4. OVERLAYS.

SECTION 4.1.. THIS IS FINALLY SOME REAL RAW MEAT THAT WE HAVE BEEN LEADING UP TO IN THIS SERIES. I HAD MENTIONED SOME VERY LARGE PROGRAMS; SUCH AS "LEGENDS", OR "OLD DARK CAVES"; WHICH ARE 4 OR 5 TIMES LARGER THAN CAN BE FITTED INTO 99/4A RAM.

SO WHAT WE DO IS CREATE A SERIES OF MODULES IN ASSEMBLY LANGUAGE. EACH IS A SUBTASK, PERHAPS IN A GAME IT WOULD BE ONE MONSTER. THEN AS THE JOB PROGRESSES WE LOAD AND RUN THESE MODULES. IN THE EASIEST SCHEME WE COULD LOAD MODULES SEQUENTIALLY AND PLOW THRU THE PROGRAM STEP BY STEP. BUT IT IS NOT ABSOLUTELY REQUIRED THAT WE DO IT THAT WAY, MORE ON THIS LATER. IT IS CLEAR THAT WE CANNOT JUST BLINDLY USE A LONG CHAIN OF " CALL LOAD " COMMANDS TO MAKE A RUN. MEMORY GETS FILLED UP VERY FAST AND ALSO THE " REF / DEF " TABLE. SO WE HAVE TO PLAY SOME " SNEAKY TRICKS " ON THE " BLIND SIDE " OF THE LOADER.

continued next month

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