SLCC JOURNAL

SAN LEANDRO COMPUTER CLUB   July 1989
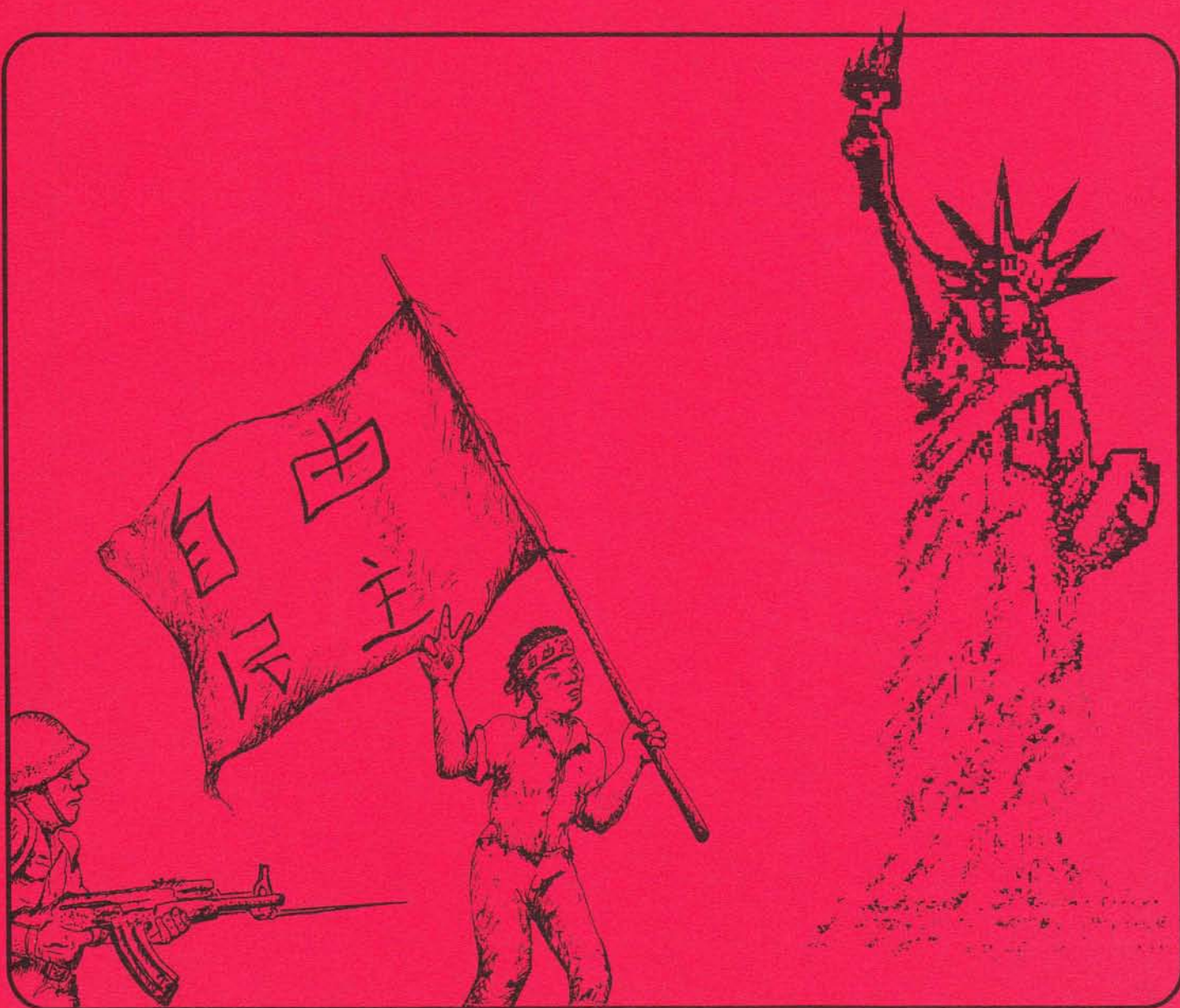
Cherish And Celebrate Our Freedom
Others Can Only Dream

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June, 1989

FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

SEE YOU AT THE MAIN MEETING
July 10th

OFFICIAL SLCC BBS
8/16--Key System (415) 352-5528,
16--STU'S PLACE (415) 782-4402
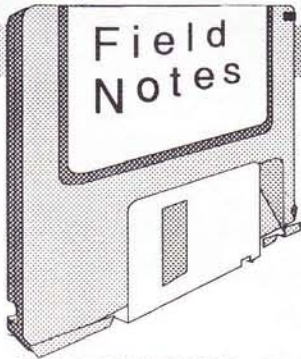
Update from Darryl May

CORRECTION: In the last issue I reported that "Color Burst II" was available from the author. Peter Berry, the author, has sold off his ST and has released "Color Burst II" with it's LASER C source into the public domain. A copy of the program has been given to the club's diskette library.

APPLE has started a large ad campaign estimated at $50 million comprised of TV spots and print ads. The ads follow two men who take an idea from a drawing on a napkin to a Desktop Video using the Mac. Their slogan "Apple desktop media".

In recent weeks ATARI stock has been in the AMEX top 10 most active stocks. The stock has risen to a high of 8 5/8 (6-23). Most likey this rise was caused by ATARI's recent announcements at CES.

Astra Systems, a long time hardware developer for all ATARI computers, has closed.

"MasterLink" from Intersect is currently in BETA test and is expected to be released as a upgrade to "Interlink" in the middle of July. Upgrades to "InterLink" and "Revolver" are expected this summer. "War of the Warriors" an action packed combat game is being worked on for a pre-Christmas release.

Spectrum-Holobyte is working on version 1.1 of "Falcon" and several missions diskettes.

Nintendo sues TENGEN (ATARI Games) while TENGEN sues Nintendo over the rights for the game "Tetris". The "Tetris" game is owned by ELORG, an agency of the Soviet government. It seems that ELORG licensed the rights to MirrorSoft in England. MirrorSoft created "Tetris" for a wide number of personal computers including the ST and sold the game in the US through Spectrum Holobyte their US company. Then Nintendo obtained an "exclusive license" from ELORG to create a Nintendo "Tetris" game cartridge. Meanwhile MirrorSoft had made a deal with TENGEN to share its license. TENGEN has produced and sold a "Tetris" Nintendo game cartridge. Nintendo is also suing TENGEN for making Nintendo compatible cartridges, while TENGEN is suing Nintendo for a Monopoly and I think ATARI Corp. is suing Nintendo for the same reasons. Nintendo's "Tetris" cartridge is due out soon. Nintendo and TENGEN meet in court June 15 in San Francisco. I don't understand all this hype over "Tetris" since it is basically a rip-off of "Ernie's Magic Shapes".

ShareData (NASDAQ symbol: SHRD) is producing a video game based on the movie "A Nightmare on Elm Street". Hopefully(?) an ST version will be produced.

"Hillsfar", and "Pool of Radiance" are being worked on by SSI. "Pool of Radiance" is the second in the TSR Advanced Dungeon & Dragons computer series. "Red Lightning", a WW III, operational, at brig/div level, is scheduled for release in June. SSI codes their games in Turbo PASCAL, C and assembly (where needed) on an IBM.

Intersel is expected to release "DRAGON Force" in early August.

Robert Morris, 23, a Cornell University Graduate Student and creator of the computer virus that swept through the "Internet" network last november will most likely be suspended for a year. A federal grand jury has forwarded recommendations to the Justice Department, which has taken no action against Robert.

"THE A EXCHANGE" a newsletter is expected to premiere soon featuring reviews of new games, game hints and tips, and a classified ad section. The Premiere issue intends to focus on the World of Atari Show at DisneyLand with articles and pictures. A one year subscription goes for $12 (12 issues). A free issue and/or free classified ad (up to 45 words) is available. "The A Exchange" can be reached at P.O. Box 25852; Fresno, CA 93729. I sent away for my "free

issue" and received it about 2 weeks later. The first issue is rather slim at two double side pages; the producer of the newsletter promises to double the number of pages in the next issue. The coverage of the WOA is rather light but hits the main points. One full side of a page was devoted to classified ads and a press release about the Stacy Laptop from ATARI was reprinted.

Atari at CES in Chicago announced and displayed a new portable game system (5 were on hand at the show) which was co-developed with Epyx. This new game system measures about the same size as a VHS video tape and includes a built in 3 1/2 inch color LCD screen, a joypad, 4 buttons, 4 channel sound, a headphone jack and a "ComLink" port to allow for 8 game systems to be daisy-chained together. The game system runs on 6 AA batteries lasting about 6 to 8 hours or a AC adaptor. A 16 Mhz 65c02 microprocessor is the heart of this unit and the screen supports 16 colors out of a pallete of 4096 colors at a resolution of 106 x 102. The screen image can be rotated 180 degrees for left-handed players. The whole unit weighs about 1 pound and should be priced at $150. A September release date is hoped for.

Atari at CES also showed an 80285 8 MHz PC clone, the Portfolio, and versions of "MIDIMAZE" and "TOWER TOPPLER" for the XEGS. More than a half dozen "PORTFOLIO's were being carried around by various Atari representatives.

Nintendo was also showing a portable game system called "GameBoy". GameBoy is Black & White and measures a little larger than an audio cassette. NEC introduced a game system called "TurboGrafix-16" also known as "PC-Engine". I have seen the NEC game system in operation and it blows away all the other dedicated game systems. The NEC unit is extremely small; about the size of a portable CD player. SEGA also introduced a 16-bit game system called "Genesis" which is not compatible with the older SEGA 8-bit game system.

There is an updated version of "King's Quest II" available directly from Sierra for $10. I can't load my version on my hard drive and when I take a directory of the diskette all I get is a loud noise from the disk drive so I'm sending in my version for the update.

Paradise Computers and SGS software have produced a networking system for the ST using the MIDI ports. Up to 32 STs can be connected to the network. Files travel at 31,500 bits per second (3.9K per second). The starter kit has a retail price of $159.95 which includes two connector boxes. Additional connector boxes go for $109.95. Basically the network allows 2 to 32 STs to share files on a hard drive or RAMdisk. Paradise Computer Systems can be reached at 3485B Sacramento Street; San Luis Obispo, CA 93401; (805) 544-7127. Their BBS number is (805) 544-3165.

Toad Computer beats ATARI to the market for a removeable cartridge hard disk drive. The "TOADFILE 44," functioning just like ATARI's "MEGAFILE 44," is now available for a limited time at $899. The "TOADFILE 44" comes in ICD's FAST hard drive box with or without a standard hard drive. The FAST hard drive box comes with an extra DMA connector, built in clock, and an expansion port. Toad Computers is located at P.O. Box 1315; Severna Park, MD 21146; (301) 544-6943 (ask for Dave). BBS numbers: (301) 544-6999 or (301) 544-4640 or (301) 974-4369.

DENVER, COLORADO, June 15, 1989: Personal MicroCosms announces the release of The Astronomy Lab, the most versatile and comprehensive astronomy program available for Atari 520ST, 1040 ST,and Mega ST computers. The Astronomy Lab can produce movies that simulate a host of astronomical phenomena and charts that illustrate many important concepts of astronomy, and printed reports that contain predictions of the most important astronomical events. All movies, charts, and reports are customized for a user's location and time zone.

The Astronomy Lab includes an extensive 101 page User's Guide which describes all of the features of the program, as well as the fundamental astronomical concepts required to make full use of The Astronomy Lab. The Astronomy Lab is not copy-protected.

A printer is optional, and can be used to print the reports generated by The Astronomy Lab. An EPSON compatible printer is required to print charts and other graphical images.

To receive a 12 page product description of The Astronomy Lab, send your name and address via E-mail to TERRELL-E on GEnie, or contact Personal MicroCosms at the following address: Personal MicroCosms; Product Information; P. O. Box 33927; Northglenn, CO 80233; (303) 753-3268.

Computer Gaming According to Chris Crawford

By Don Safer

At the 1989 West Coast Computer Faire game designer Chris Crawford gave a seminar on the future of computer games. This is a summary of that seminar.

According to Chris, the future of games has always been exciting, until now. Chris says the next five years will have no revolutionary improvements. Hardware will not be a major issue. A major plateau of hardware has been reached consisting of a 16 bit machine with 1/2 to 1 meg of RAM and a hard disk. EIGHT BIT IS DEAD! No game projects are being initiated on eight bit machines, however, there still are ports being made from 16 bit machines. The primary target for game design is the IBM and clones. The Mac and Amiga are tied for second place with the ST a close third. This is great news since until now 16 bit games had to be "brain dead" enough to also work on the C64. Not any more.

Chris indicated the bright spot in computer games over the next five years will be software technology. Chris says the strong point of computer games (or more properly computer entertainment) is interaction, not graphics, sound or text. If you want graphics or sound, see a movie. If you want text, read a book. The interaction between characters will be improved with advancements in the field of artificial personality, not to be confused with artificial intelligence. Artificial personality is, at this time, in its very early stages with the the best example so far being Trust and Betrayal by Chris Crawford. Not very good, but a noble effort according to Chris.

The following are some miscellaneous points made by Chris in response to questions asked at the end of the presentation.

Network games may be great for interactive gaming but they will not become popular until an evening on the network will cost no more than going to a movie, perhaps ten years from now. Another problem is that most people are intimidated by networks.

Chris feels there is no real need for a new high level language in game design.

Publishers are beginning to realize that there are two game markets; the video games for the 14 year olds and computer games for adults. This should lead to improvements in computer games.

The Journal of Computer Game Design, edited by Chris Crawford should be of interest to any serious game designer interested in theoretical discussions. $30 a year for six issues.

The hardware bottle neck is processing power, not internal or mass memory size. This is why the death of 8 bit is such good news for game design. Chris's favorite game until recently has been Strategic Conquest, a Mac clone of Empire. He says "until recently" because it trashed his hard disk.

Piracy is a serious problem in game software. It holds the industry back an awful lot. Profit margins are not good enough to finance more expensive game development so inferior products are developed instead. To insure the development of higher quality software say no, not only to pirating, but also to second rate software. Be an informed and paying consumer.
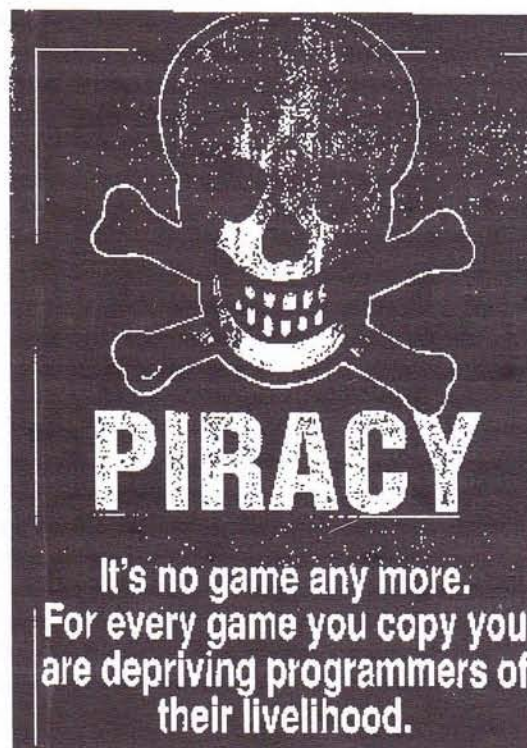
Loom

SAN RAFAEL, CA -- MAY 19, 1989 -- Lucasfilm Games today announced the forthcoming release of its first fantasy adventure game, called LOOM.

A unique feature of LOOM is a graphical interface which dispenses entirely with text commands and menus, relying instead on icons and music, according to Stephen D. Arnold, Vice President and General Manager of Lucasfilm Games.

The setting for LOOM is the Age of Great Guilds, a mythical time when Shepherds, Blacksmiths and Glassmakers ruled the world. Its unlikely hero is Bobbin, a young member of the mysterious Guild of Weavers, who finds himself playing the pivotal role in a mighty conflict between good and evil.

As the game opens, Bobbin is alone in his Weaver village. The Elders of the Guild have mysteriously disappeared, swept away by an unknown force. All Bobbin can do is search for clues.

When Bobbin finds a Weaver's distaff, the magic of LOOM begins. The distaff is the Weavers' "magic wand." It is also the key to LOOM's unique interface.

The distaff, resembling a rough walking stick, appears under the graphics window of the game. Divided into eight segments, each related to a musical note, the distaff both detects and weaves magic spells.

When Bobbin is in the presence of magic, his distaff glows and resonates. For example, Bobbin encounters a flock of owls in a dark forest. The hooting of the owls is a musical sequence that triggers four notes on the distaff. When Bobbin repeats the four notes -- by pointing and clicking on the distaff -- he is able to see in the dark. As this and other spells are learned, the player records them in the included "Book of Patterns."

"So many actions in most fantasy games are mundane," explained Brian Moriarty, LOOM Project Leader. "A lot of time is spent managing inventories, juggling statistics and resolving ambiguities in the interface. What fantasy gamers really enjoy is Power. They want to stride fearlessly across vast, exotic landscapes, casting magic on things to see what happens. So I distilled the LOOM interface to just three operations: moving from one place to another, selecting objects and weaving magic spells."

Complementing the graphical interface are high resolution 3D graphics drawn by award-winning fantasy artist Mark Ferrari. Rich, moody environments have been created for each of the many Guilds that Bobbin visits, with scrolling panoramas and detailed animation to give LOOM a distinctly cinematic look.

Moriarty, creator (at Infocom) of highly-praised fantasy games such as WISHBRINGER(R) and BEYOND ZORK(R), set himself the task of developing a genuinely fresh fantasy environment. "I, for one, am tired of dealing with orcs, trolls and glowing rings of power. I wanted to create a world that didn't rely on these stereotypes. The problem with avoiding stereotypes is that you have to offer a substitute for the rich literary context which they inhabit. You might have to ask players to read a novella before they turn on the computer."

The problem was solved by creating a 30-minute audio drama to establish the fantasy world of LOOM. Produced in conjunction with Lucasfilm's Academy Award-winning Sprocket Systems, the drama boasts a cast of seven professional actors, original Jerry Gerber musical score, and CD-quality digital mastering.

A Dolby(R) Stereo cassette of the drama is included with the game. Not only does the cassette set up the background of the story, it also immerses the player in the environment, imparting a vivid sense of the characters' personalities.

LOOM is scheduled for release September, 1989 for IBM-compatible computers, and in October for Atari ST and Amiga. All versions have a suggested list price of $59.95.

LOOM, as well as other Lucasfilm Games products, are distributed by Electronic Arts.

Lucasfilm Games P.O. Box 10307, San Rafael, CA 94912. Tel: 415/662-1800.

Flash!

Indiana Jones
Coming Soon to a Computer Near You!

SAN RAFAEL, CA -- MAY 19, 1989 -- Lucasfilm Games today announced the forthcoming release of a matched pair of computer games, both based on Lucasfilm Ltd's new film INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE. The action game captures many of the film's best chase and fighting sequences. The graphic adventure parallels Indy's modern-day quest for the most precious and magical artifact in the Western world, the HolyGrail. Both games are faithful to the plot, look and personality of the film, according to Stephen Arnold, Vice President and General Manager of Lucasfilm Games.

"We started out intending to build just one game," said Arnold. "But since some players prefer wall-to-wall action, while others prefer intellectually-challenging adventures, there couldn't be one 'best' game. So rather than compromise, we designed two very different game experiences."

And in both cases, as one of the bad guys in the film points out, it seems that Nazi Germany has just declared war on the Jones boys.

THE GRAPHIC ADVENTURE

The game opens in 1938, just as Dr. Indiana Jones, mild-mannered college professor, walks up the steps of the archeology building at Barnett College in Connecticut. Students clamor for attention. Colleagues offer small talk in the hall. Everything appears safe and normal.

But since this is an Indiana Jones game, things are neither safe nor normal. Indy's dad's house has been ransacked. And Henry Jones is nowhere to be found. As it turns out Henry has been kidnapped by Gestapo agents in the hope that he'll lead them to the Holy Grail. And if Hitler gets the Grail, the world may be in for a very bleak millennium. Thus the stage is set for a merry chase through Italy, Austria, Germany and Turkey.

In dank catacombs beneath Venice, Indy searches for an ancient tomb which holds clues to the location of the Grail Temple. Through the maze-like halls of Schloss Brunwald, Indy dodges -- and decks --assorted Nazis while searching for his dad. In Berlin, Indy and his dad take on Hitler himself to recover Henry's precious Grail Diary. Once they have it, they hitch a ride on a zeppelin, only to find it crawling with SS guards and Gestapo spies.

If they survive all the above, Indy faces the greatest challenge of all -- the "trials of lethal cunning" of the Grail Temple.

Players take on the role of Indiana Jones, and occasionally of Henry, through an evolved version of Lucasfilm's acclaimed story game interface. As with Maniac Mansion and Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders, there's no typing, ever; players simply "click" on the desired combination of verbs, objects, and locations.

New features have been added to the interface for the Indiana Jones game. Since Indy is a clever talker, the game wouldn't have been complete unless he could talk his way in and out of trouble. By choosing remarks for Indy that are clever, sarcastic, charming, or infuriating, the plot changes course in various intriguing directions.

Also new to the interface is the ability to "fight." When "fight" is selected, players use the numeric keypad to advance, retreat, jab and punch. Colored bars replace the command lines and indicate the punch power and stamina of Indy and his opponent.

Scoring is in terms of Indy Quotient, or "IQ Points." The higher the IQ score, the more successful an Indy the player is. The highest scores are earned by discovering unusually subtle and ingenious solutions to Indy's problems. "You can actually be a more perfect Indy than the one in the film," according to Noah Falstein, project leader for the game. "The movie Indy overlooks quite a few interesting opportunities that game players will discover."

Although the graphic adventure parallels the movie, it encompasses considerably more than the film. "The design team saw what George Lucas and Steven Spielberg cut from the original screenplay. We also listened to their suggestions for alternative subplots," observed Falstein. "So when you play the game, you can visit places and meet characters who were left out of the movie."

Like the other Lucasfilm graphic adventures, INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE has a distinct cinematic look and feel. Animated cut scenes let players know what's going on "back at the ranch." Movie-inspired camera angles and horizontal scrolling add scope and variety to the high resolution 3D graphics. Special case animation lets characters navigate around complex "sets." Dozens of different sound effects add to the realism of the game, and the theme music is guaranteed to stir the senses of any Indy fan.

Included in the game package is a handwritten, 60+ page version of Henry Jones' Grail Diary. The diary chronicles the key discoveries and observations of the famous Grail scholar. Full of clippings, sketches, and notes, it is a valuable source of clues. Also included, for off-disk copy protection, is a code sheet whose hieroglyphic markings can be seen only through a red gel wand.

The graphic adventure ships in July (IBM) and September (Amiga, Atari ST). All versions carry a suggested list price of $49.95.

THE ACTION GAME

Developed as a co-venture with US Gold in the United Kingdom, this is a classic, two-fisted arcade game. Three levels, each with two different action events, deliver the high energy mayhem that Indy fans love so much.

Like the film, the action starts in 1912 in Utah. Young Indy, the Boy Scout, is searching a giant cavern in hope of rescuing the precious Cross of Coronado from a gang of murderous grave robbers. After he retrieves the cross, Indy makes his getaway by jumping from car to car of a rumbling circus train, dodging knives, fists, and assorted circus animal parts.

Indy's breathless quest escalates in level two, where he finds himself deep in the Venetian catacombs. Assorted perils include searing fireballs, savage rats, and crumbling masonry. If he doesn't get burned, flattened, or gnawed to death, he just might find the Grail Knight's shield. Then he gets to scale the grim ramparts Schloss Brunwald.

Dodging searchlights, lightning bolts and falling rocks, Indy makes his way up the walls of the castle. Flicking his whip around strategically-located gargoyles, he swings from ledge to narrow ledge, searching for his dad. Once he rescues him, it's on to level three.

There, Indy prowls the catwalks of a giant zeppelin, looking for a crucial key to the Grail

puzzle and decking Nazis right and left. If Indy can find his way through the maze, sabotage the alarm system, and use his fists and whip effectively, he'll move on to his final challenge: the Grail Temple.

The Temple's three trials are familiar to anyone who has seen the movie, but very tricky nonetheless. Indy's challenge is not just to survive, but to reach the Holy Grail before Henry's heart beats its last.

Scores increase with every hazard dodged, valuable object found, and enemy dispatched.

Like the graphic adventure, the action game features: movie theme music, outstanding sound effects and high resolution graphics. Off-disk copy protection comes in the form of a hieroglyph table in the "Byzantine Crusader" newspaper.

The action game ships in June (Commodore 64, SRP $29.95; Amiga andAtari ST, SRP $39.95) and September (IBM, SRP $39.95).

TRUE TO THE MOVIE

The Lucasfilm Game development team had the unique advantage of working with the people making the movie. "The game designers worked from movie scripts, set designs, effects sequences, and props," according to Arnold. "And we had opportunities to brainstorm with George Lucas and Steven Spielberg, who participated both in basic game design and in creative 'fine tuning'."

The game graphics are based on movie stills and on (special effects) matte paintings from Industrial Light and Magic. Character animation is tuned to the way Indy and the other characters actually move. "It was really important that Indy had the proper swagger," pointed out Falstein. "If he walks like a robot or a cowboy, it spoils the fantasy."

Sound effects, too, are true to the film. Many of the game sounds were patterned after the sound effects created for the movie by Lucasfilm's Sprockets Systems. The game music follows the John Williams original score.

Both INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE games, as well as other Lucasfilm Games products, are distributed by Electronic Arts.

Lucasfilm Games is a division of Lucasfilm Ltd., a leading entertainment and feature film production company. In addition to entertainment software, Lucasfilm Games develops interactive applications for education, training and location-based entertainment. Lucasfilm Games P.O. Box 10307, San Rafael, CA 94912. Tel:415/662-1800.
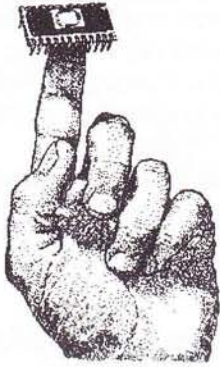
The Care and Feeding of Electronic Equipment

Electronic Answers
By DeWayne Stuart

We will try to give advice on maintaining your equipment in the best possible condition, with the least expenditure of hard-earned cash. Since this is the first installment in this series, we will start with some basic information.

Home entertainment:

Proper care of your VCR can help keep it going for many years. One way to keep it internally clean is to use quality brands of tape. This doesn't mean you need to use "Hi Grade" or "Hi Fi" or whatever. It just means that the better brands, Scotch, Sony, TDK, Maxell, etc., are less likely to shed tape particles inside your machine, or jam up the mechanism.

The "Off brands" that you never heard of, while costing a bit less, often cause more problems than they are worth. Fry's, Wherehouse Records, Tower Records and others have good sales on name brands that make the "off brands" even less reasonable.

Another thing about video tape is the profusion of "Grades". Some manufacturers may have upwards of 6 grades of tape for your machine, priced all over the place. The designation "Hi Fi" doesn't mean much, as the way Hi Fi works, any good tape will sound fine.

I use the standard grade tape as a general rule, mainly for time-shifting purposes. Try different tapes from different manufacturers, to see which give you the best picture quality for the price, keeping in mind the different requirements you might have. Time shifting, a wedding you want to keep forever, etc.

Another note on time shifting: If you use a tape repeatedly, keep an eye on its quality. If it starts getting "snowy", or the picture jumps around, changes color, etc., TOSS IT! It is starting to wear out.

A good practice is to start your recordings a minute or more into the tape, not using the beginning where it has the splices, and sits exposed. You'll get better picture quality and a bit less wear.

Now, the bad news:

Rental tapes can be a major disaster to your machine. If a rental tape has been abused, one pass through your machine may mean a trip to the repair shop. Examine a rental tape before taking it home. Open the little flip-down cover on the front of the tape by pressing in the little latch on one side of the cover while lifting gently. (Practice at home on an old tape!) The black tape beyond the splice should be clean, with no major wrinkles or creases along the top and bottom edges of the tape. You should also note if any sticky or oily looking substances are visible. People have been known to spray WD-40 into a tape for ??? reason. If you see anything unusual, don't rent it!

You can examine your home tapes, a new one, and an older one, to see examples of a good tape, and whether or not your machine has any problems with tape handling.

This is just a start to this series.

Enjoy,
DRS
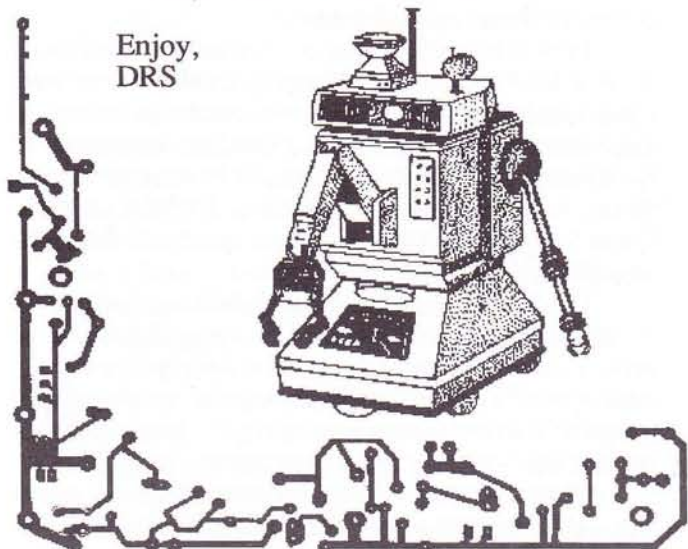
Battle Chess

By Tom Hayslett President, STar Users' Group

Several months ago I was at a meeting and we had an Amiga there that was running a new program called Battle Chess. I tried the program for a few minutes and loved it. First thing I did was get the name and address of the company that put out the game and promptly wrote them a lett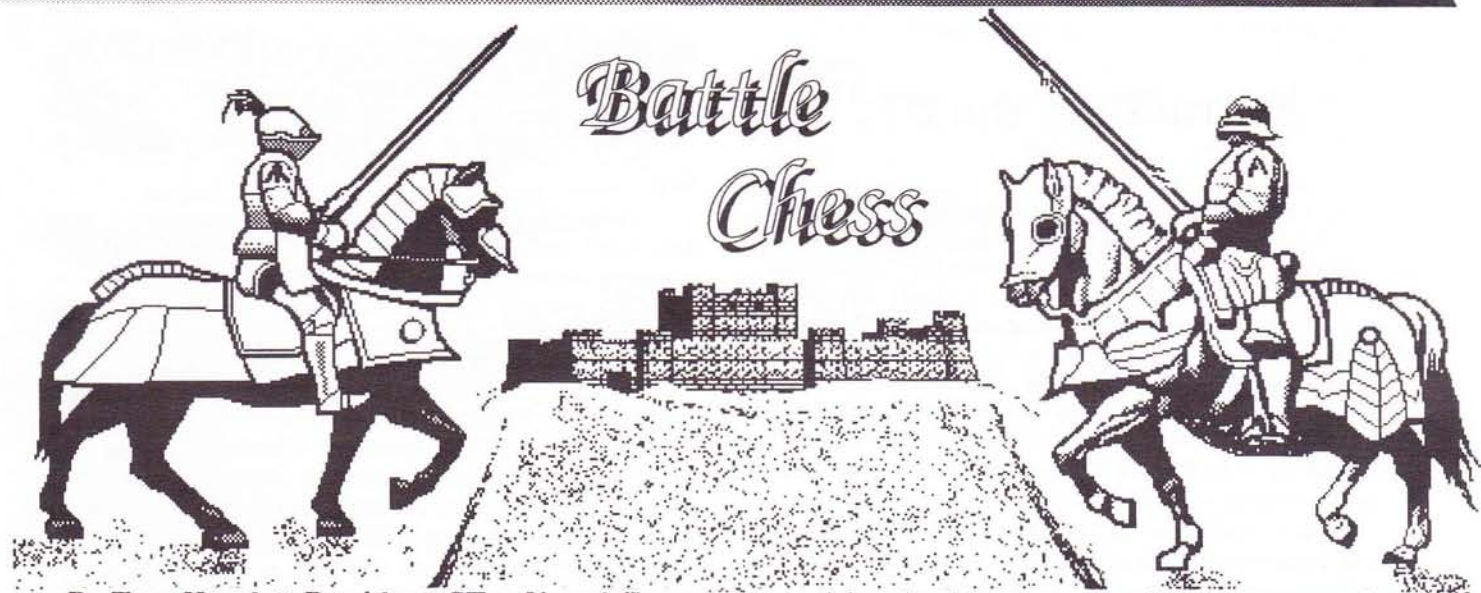er requesting an ST version of the game. I don't know if my letter helped or not but I just received Battle Chess for the ST by Interplay .

What is it? Well, it's basically a chess game but with a twist. The board and pieces are in 3D graphics and each piece is animated in its own special way. When you move the piece it walks (or waddles, scoots, etc) to the square you designated. If the square is occupied, an animated "battle" sequence follows. The outcome is always as it would be in a chess game but watching the animated battles (and listening to the digitized sound effects) is very captivating. Each piece fights and moves differently making it interesting to watch the different battles.

Now that you know what it is, let me explain the other important things. The game comes on 2 single sided unprotected disks. There is a backup program included but not just for backup purposes, it helps you set your backup disks up for either a 520 (512K) or 1040 (or MEGA). With a 1040 or MEGA you can put the game on 1 double sided disk or as I did, on a hard drive. I put it two folders deep on a hard drive and it works great. You can run the program from either low or medium resolution and it runs perfectly. I even left all my hard drive "AUTO" folder programs active (and accessories) and nothing conflicted with Battle Chess.

After the title screen, it asks for a move to be entered from a table in an appendix in the manual. I prefer this type of copy protection and commend Interplay for it. It's great having it on the hard drive and available at all times.

Moving a piece is simple, point at the piece you want to move and the square becomes highlighted, click the left mouse button and then any square you point the mouse at that is a legal move will also become highlighted. Pressing and holding the right mouse button brings up the animated scrolls (drop down menus) from which you may select many options including load/save a game, turn sound on or off, change from 3D to 2D, set the level of play anywhere between the 10 available levels, and (ready for this?), set up and play via modem or null modem cable! I haven't tried the modem option but it looks similar to Falcon or Jet as far as setting it up and playing. All the menu options have keyboard equivalents that are shown in the menus themselves.

I'd really like to tell you how good a game of chess it plays but I can't. It seems every time I play a game I can't resist seeing a new "Battle Scene" and I force a move that I ordinarily wouldn't make just to watch and hear the fight. Some of these sequences are absolutely hilarious and Interplay has done VERY well with the graphics and sound (by the way, I think the ST version looks better than the Amiga version!). If you're a chess player and would enjoy a new "twist" to the game or even if you're one of those graphic animation collecting folks, you will love this program. Thanks Interplay, for the great program and for allowing us to back it up and install it on hard drives. It's great!

Hotrodding the ST
Jim Hood

As I mentioned in the May *Journal*, John Russell Innovations has two more products for the Atari ST computers, in addition to their GenLock for the MEGA.

One, the ST4096C Board, expands the color palette of any ST or MEGA computer from 512 colors to 4096 colors and comes with sample software.

The other, the J.A.T.O. Board, is a unique 8/16 MHz 68000 processor board which accelerates data processing within the 68000 CPU to 16 MHz while maintaining standard 8 MHz timing with the other computer processing chips.

Both boards go on the computer motherboard which means tearing the computer apart. Doing this may void the computer warranty, you know.

No cutting of traces and no jumpers are required in the installation of either of these products; however John Russell characterizes the J.A.T.O. Board as a "hacker product" since it requires unsoldering and removal of the existing 68000 chip from the Atari motherboard and soldering in a 64 pin socket for the replacement 16 MHz 68000 chip and custom board.

To install the ST4096C Board doesn't require any unsoldering, unless you have an ST with the outer RF shield tack soldered in place. The Shifter chip, which is found beneath the inner, smaller RF shield, is simply pried from its socket and replaced with the ST4096C Board. The Shifter chip is then plugged into the ST4096 Board along with an additional Shifter chip, which can be purchased from your Atari dealer.

As mentioned, the J.A.T.O. Board is harder to install because the old 64 pin 68000 chip has to be unsoldered and removed, a socket soldered in its place on the motherboard and the J.A.T.O. Board, containing the 16 MHz 68000, plugged into the new socket. A good job for your friendly dealer's service department. John Russell warns that if you try removing the 68000 chip yourself, gently test pry it loose, since you might rip out some printed circuitry from the motherboard if you haven't removed all the solder.

A switch is provided with the J.A.T.O. Board to select between accelerated and standard processing for those applications where the increased speed might not be wanted and an indicator light shows when processing is being done at 16 MHz. The switch and light can be installed by drilling or reaming a couple of small holes most anywhere you find some room on the outer plastic case. Just make sure they don't bump into something when the computer is put back together.

The J.A.T.O. Board is priced at $99.95, including the replacement 16 MHz 68000 chip and socket. The ST4096C Board is $44.95 without the extra Shifter chip.

BUT WILL THEY MAKE ME POPULAR WITH GIRLS?

Let's face it, girls know that people buy Atari computers because they're cheap dorks who won't spring for the price of an Amiga 2000 or a Macintosh IIx.

However for the more mundane questions "Do they work and are they compatible with my existing software?" Yes, at least with whatever I've tried. But the 16 MHz option has to be switched off for some programs with tricky timing requirements, like Spectrum 512 and the Union Demo Main Menu.

Of course if your existing software only looks for a palette of 512 colors, you'll still have only 512 colors until it is rewritten. JRI provides some sample software written by Dan Filner that includes a patch to Neochrome which allows you to choose 16 colors from 4096. This gives you the choice of an honest 16 shades of gray and a more precise selection of colors.

I get an occasional screen jitter with Neochrome (both the 512 and 4096 color versions) when the J.A.T.O. Board is on and a flickery, miscolored scan line at the bottom of the last two color selection boxes, evidently from the interrupts that set up the control panel screen. John Russell says he hasn't seen this in other systems and suspects a faulty Shifter chip.

I also seemed to be getting some flaky bombing until I removed the MMU and GLU chips and buffed off their contacts with a wooden stick.

SO IS J.A.T.O. FASTER AND WILL IT SAVE ME TIME?

Yes it is and no it won't. Darryl May and I timed some different operations and found speed increases ranging from 30% (filling the screen with GEM fill patterns in Atari BASIC) to 0% (loading files in LDW Power). Most things, like scrolling through LDW files, zooming in and out on Easw-Draw or redrawing pages in PageStream, improved about 10 to 15%.

So its pretty much like hotrodding a car. You'll end up with a piece of machinery that is a bit faster but not enough so that it will make up for the time lost in making the modifications. If your goal is to optimize the way you spend your time, don't bother; but if your goal is to squeeze a bit more out of your equipment, do it.

I am using the J.A.T.O. Board, TubroST, G+Plus, and Fatspeed, so I guess I'm a squeezer.

For more information contact your dealer or:
John Russell
John Russell Innovations
P.O. Box 5277
Pittsburg, CA 94565
(415)458-9577

Moran's Minutes

General Meeting - June 6, 1989

The meeting was called to order by Secretary Jim Moran. (the last surviving officer) Roll Call of Officers: Present; Moran. Absent; Barton & Abbott (working) Hood (visiting relatives in lower Slobovia).

The first order of business was the completion of the annual election of officers, there were no further nominations so ballots were distributed to members and tallied by members Stuart and Hinton. Those elected were;

President	---	Keith Sammons
Vice President	---	Bob Woolley
Treasurer	---	Jim Hood
Secretary	---	Jim Moran

In accordance with the club bylaws the new officers will take over their offices on July 1st 1989.

Program Director Keith Sammons introduced Margo Demas from TIMEWORKS INC. who proceeded to give a short talk and demonstration of the TIMEWORKS DESKTOP PUBLISHING program.
The main features of the program are ease of use and simple but powerful commands that allow publishing of a document in less than an hour. While this program does not have as many features as other desktop programs they feel it is well suited to the average user who is more concerned with speed and ease of use. This program will run on all ST computers from 520 to MEGAs.

After a short break Bob Woolley demonstrated some of his latest hardware hacking on that ten year old antique of his called, affectionately, an 8 Bit. This time he has decided that ATARI didn't know what they were doing when they only supplied four screen colors soooo he twisted and turned this and that and now the dumb thing has sixteen colors. Rumor has it that the next modification will be an 8 Bit that runs at 50 megahertz. On alternate Tuesdays this modification will allow 90 megahertz and 4096 colors.

The evening's raffle and the auction of the club's two surplus TV sets completed the business of the evening and the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted - Jim Moran - Secretary

No Meeting, Tuesday, July 4th...Main
Meeting and ST Sig Monday, July 10th

Atari Fest by ST World coming the end of Aug.
or beginning of Sept. in San Jose...Stay Tuned!

Membership Application for San Leandro Computer Club
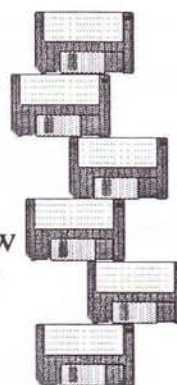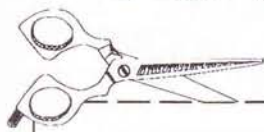
Yes, I would like to receive 12 months of the SLCC JOURNAL along with other membership benefits, including software discounts, training, technical assistance and much, much more, for one low, low price. Just fill out this application,) and mail it with a check for $20.00 ($40.00 outside the US or Canada) to: **SLCC, P.O. Box 1506, San Leandro, CA 94577-0374.** Do it today and join in on the coming excitement.

Name:_____ Date:_____

Address:_____
(Street)   (City)   (State)   (ZIP)

Home Phone:_____ **Membership No.**
(Optional)

Computer(s)_____ Hard Disk(s)_____

Monitor(s)_____ Modem(s)_____

Disk Drive(s)_____ Printer(s)_____

Other:_____

Programming Experience: ☐ Professional   ☐ Average
                            ☐ Learning   ☐ No Interest

Programming Languages(s)_____

Interests: ☐ Business   ☐ Word Processing   ☐ Education   ☐ Hardware   ☐ Scientific
            ☐ Home Finance   ☐ Art / Desktop Pub. ☐ Music   ☐ Games   ☐ Other

JULY 1989
SLCC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	Smile, You're free! 4 MAIN MEETING 8PM	5	6	7	8
9	10 Main and ST Meetings 8:00 San Leandro Library	11	12 Executive Board Meeting	13	14	15
16	17 **JOURNAL DEADLINE**	18 Telecomm SIG 8PM	19 ST Software SIG 8PM	20	21	22
23 / 30	24 / 31	25 Pascal SIG 7PM Business SIG 8PM	26 ST Beginners SIG 7:30PM	27	28	29

Now That It's Plugged In.....

The SLCC has two SIGs (Special Interest Groups) designed to introduce members to the operation of their Atari computers. System set-up, DOS, keyboard functions, and other introductory material is discussed. The ST group meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month, while the 8-bit sessions are scheduled on an as-required basis. Contact the appropriate SIG leader for information and directions.

Sig leaders and their phone numbers are located on page 3.

They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.

We must indeed all hang together, or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately.

Benjamin Franklin
(1706-1790)

American scientist, diplomat, publisher

SLCC

JOURNAL

P.O. Box 1506 San Leandro, CA 94577-0374

Next Meeting:
July 10, 1989
8:00 PM

**San Leandro
Community Library**

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