Issue 1

C64 BLAST

FREE COMMODORE 64 FANZINE

C64 BLAST

EDITORIAL

Hi and welcome to the first edition of C64 Blast. Out of all the computers I've used in my life, the C64 will always remain my favourite. Watching games improve through the 80s with ever improving graphics and sound was such an exciting period. I'm not a writer by any stretch of the imagination, so you'll probably find grammar mistakes galore, but this is something I wanted to put together for fun and as a tribute to the C64, to my Dad Andrew who first bough the Vic 20 and C64 and also for anybody who shares this passion. I was also delighted to get an interview with Jeff Minter a while ago which I can now publish in this fanzine. Any comments, photos or articles welcome, email me at philjohnwheatley@gmail.com

All the best, Phil

This issue and future editions: **www.theretrogamesnews.com/c64**

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GAME: Barbarian
PUBLISHER: Palace
RELEASED: 19847

Barbarian, which originally came out in 1987 for the Commodore 64, caused quite a stir at the time for various reasons. Before you even took the cassette out of the box, you couldn't help notice the bold photo on the front cover.

Palace software who were also known for creating Cauldron 1, Cauldron 2 and the Sacred Armour of Antiriad, wanted to do something a little different than the usual hand drawn cover art. They hired body builder Michael Van Wijk, best known as 'Wolf' in the UK version of the Gladiators, to appear on the front cover as a Conan inspired barbarian, barely covered by his loin cloth.

For the guys, we were treated to model Maria Whittaker, who in fairness was wearing more clothing than she normally does. Regardless, the photo upset a lot of parents at the time which worked well for promotional purposes, and also detracted from the actual violence within the game.

As the name suggests, you play the part of a barbarian who has to rescue princess Mariana from the

evil wizard Drax. Well, I guess it's slightly more original than the 'rescue your girlfriend' plot, but not by much.

The fighting takes place in fighting pits and forests, under the watchful eye of Drax himself. You have to battle your way past eight barbarian warriors, each getting progressively tougher, whom are protecting Drax from your advances.

Once you have managed to defeat them, which is no mean feat, the scene ends with Mariana dropping to her knees in front of you before the

screen fades to black. Hmm, no guessing what happened next!

While many software houses were pumping out kung fu style beat em ups like 'Way of the Exploding Fist'

and 'Kung Fu Master', Palace software wanted to go for something a little different.

Not only can you attack your opponents with your sword, but you can also kick them or even head butt them. However, the move which raised a few eyebrows at the time was the head chopping death blow. It took good timing, but you span around full circle and then sliced the opponent's head clean off, resulting in blood squirting
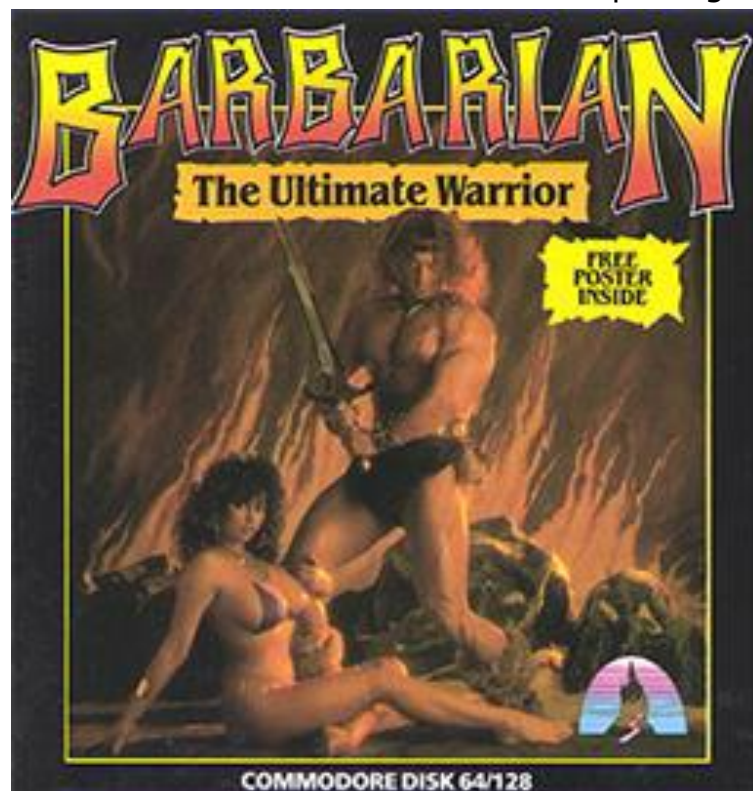
from his torso.

A nice added touch is when you dismember your opponent, Drax's trusty helper; this little green goblin geezer walks across the screen to clear up the mess you've made.

As well as using your sword to attack, you can also use it for blocking, one block in particular called the web of death shows off how much the game designer and artist Steve Brown knew about animation. In fact, the game boasted some of the biggest character sprites at the time, something that is also visible in the Sacred Armour of Antiriad.

The Commodore 64 was the original version, and due to its success, the game was then released on the Speccy, Amstrad CPC, Apple 2, Atari ST and BBC Micro.


In America, the game was licensed to Epyx and was sold under the name Death Sword.

The game also spawned a sequel called 'The Dungeon of Drax' which contained similar moves and graphics as Barbarian but was a fully-fledged scrolling arcade adventure, another game from Palace really worth checking out.

If you have never played Barbarian, it's worth playing and is still enjoyable and challenging today. Rating 95%.

WANTED!

MONTY MOLE
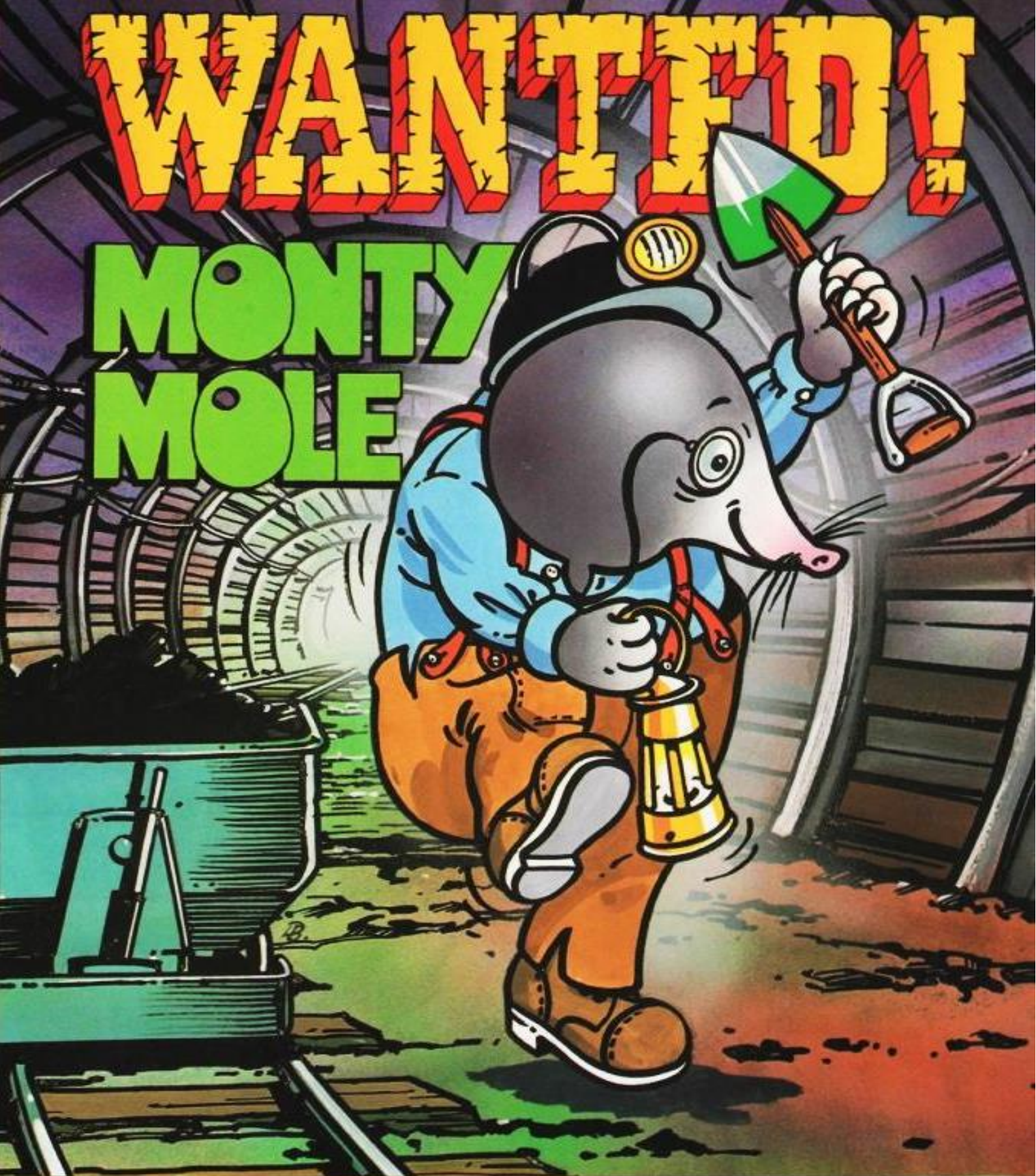
GAME: Uridium

PUBLISHER: Hewson

RELEASED: 1986

For this review I want to look at what could possibly be the best shoot em up on the C64. Back in 1986 when Zzap 64 ruled the roost for game reviews, when they gave this an overall score of 94% and a graphics score of 99%, I just knew it was something worth spending hard saved pocket money on.

Released by Hewson, and coded by Andrew Braybrook of Gribly's Day Out and Paradroid fame, this game was no exception when it came to quality. The artwork for the cassette inlay set the scene, and once the game loaded, you were presented with a decent menu and title music. Nothing too fancy, but enough to lead you into the game.

You are thrown straight into the action with your space ship flying

horizontally across the screen in the path of oncoming alien ships, so you start blasting to

clear the path. The way the ship flips and turns is very slick as you fly back in the opposite direction to pick off any ships you might have missed on the first attack.

As you fly over the landscape of the first ship (called Zinc), you have to keep an eye on oncoming ships, heat-seeking missiles and also physical objects on the landscape itself, no easy task. Fly too slow and you get hit by a missile, and fly too quickly and you go smack into a wall.

Once you get to the end of the ship, you have to hang around the landing strip until you get the call to land. This can be frustrating at first as you have to make sure you fly slow enough while keeping an eye on any more waves of attacking ships.

Once complete, the ship is destroyed and you can progress onto the next terrain, each one getting more and more difficult. The only way to get good at this game is to play it enough times to learn the physical structure of the ship you are bombarding, otherwise you will spend most of your time

crashing into things.

There are 15 levels in total, the last one based on a fictitious metal called Uridium. I have to admit, I haven't made it that far but you can guarantee it will be pretty damn difficult to complete.

I once heard a saying that "a Commodore 64 without Uridium is like a gold fish bowl without a gold fish". A strange quote but there is some truth
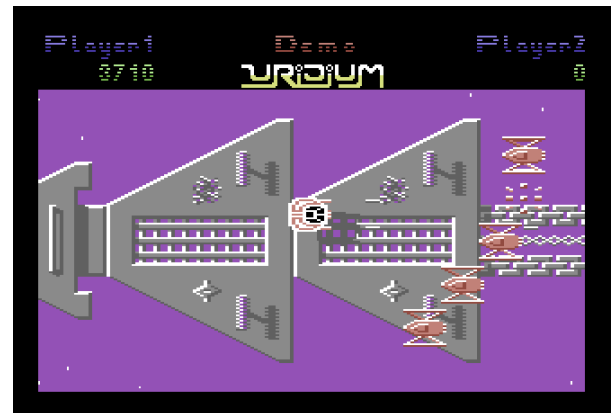
in it for sure. This game is still as playable and challenging as the day it was released, so make sure you check it out at C64 near you!

Rating: 97%

Jeff Minter

This issue we had the pleasure of interviewing Jeff Minter, who has written some of the most memorable and enjoyable games ever. Such as Attack of the Mutant Camels, Hover Bovver, Tempest 2000 and Space Giraffe, to name but a few. His views on gaming and what the future holds for the industry makes for a fascinating read...

C64 BLAST: In the beginning, did you use furry animals in your games as a way of differentiating yourself from other programmers, or some other reason?

JEFF: Initially it was just because I liked Certain animals (camelids in particular) which was why Llamasoft was so called. The first few games I did weren't that full of beasties but as things went on I got much more into using them in games and yes, they did serve to distinguish our games somewhat. If you saw a giant camel or a flying sheep in a game you had a pretty good idea where it was from.

C64 BLAST: Composers on the C64 had only 3 channels to play with, what was the biggest challenge you faced when writing games on the 8 bit machines?

JEFF: Really it was just the finite resources of those machines - only so many sounds, only so many sprites, only so much time to move things around. There was a lot of emphasis on using clever techniques to get around such limitations, improving efficiency of code and exploiting hardware peculiarities to wring out the best performance you could. Sometimes a lot more effort went into that than did into game design.

C64 BLAST: How did you go about marketing your games in the 80s, considering from the outside it looks like you were doing everything by yourself?

JEFF: We placed ads in various computer mags and attended lots of computer

shows to demonstrate the software and meet the users. I was never a fan of heavy-handed marketing and for the most part we just used to let people know when new games were available (usually by doing an ad featuring the latest Steinar Lund artwork which was always excellent). And at the computer shows people could come and play the games, have a chat and a few beers, go out in the evenings round the arcades in London. It was very relaxed and I miss that kind of thing.

Probably why I find a lot of the desperate scramble for exposure that characterises the iOS marketplace so depressing really.

C64 BLAST: At times, playing your games can put you in an almost hypnotic state, is this something you deliberately engineer, or just a by-product of the frantic on screen visuals?

JEFF: It was a by-product of the early games (not just mine, but many coin-op shooters from back in the day, especially the likes of Eugene Jarvis' works). I began to recognise it as a state and started trying

consciously to create games that engendered that state. It's a very comfortable and relaxing state to be in once you get used to it so making games that are effective vehicles to take you there is now something I aim for, whether it be a deep trip like in Space Giraffe or just a little 5 minute excursion with Gridrunner :)

C64 BLAST: A few of your games have been adaptations of existing games? Is there any reason you like to do that?

JEFF: Some of the old classic designs - particularly those that have survived the test of time and remain things you actually play

properly even today (rather than look at in an emulator for 30 seconds and tut about how nobody had a clue about difficulty curves back then) - were genuinely excellent, elegant and simple. It's a kind of gaming that i feel still has some relevance today - you don't always want to sit down and play some 80 hour epic story of a game, sometimes you just want a bit of arcade-style action. Of course those old designs were often constrained by the hardware limitations of the day, so one thing that can be fun now is to revisit those old things but modernise and

extend them in ways that simply weren't possible back then, making them a bit more relevant and fun to modern gamers. That's kind of what the Minotaur Project stuff is about. I don't want to simply clone old games because that would be unsatisfying to both me and modern gamers. But I do like to design new games that have something of the style and purity of old arcade games, but with none of the limitations.

C64 BLAST: You were developing games for the Neon, a cross between a DVD and games machine? Do you feel it was too far ahead of its time to really take off?

JEFF: I think it just took a bit too long to be finished and brought to market, and more mainstream DVD players were more firmly entrenched than they might have been if Nuon had come out earlier. The idea was that we had this CPU that did DVD decode and it would be as cheap as existing hardware decode-only solutions so there'd be no disadvantage in manufacturers using it and getting all this extra functionality (including gaming) for the same price. I guess by the time the chip was ready that wasn't true anymore. The chip itself was pretty far ahead of its time (it had multiple VLIW cores that you could use to do significant calculation on every pixel of the display per frame time, something that only later became possible with the advent of GPU pixel

shaders). You also had to code in some lovely assembler to get the most out of it, something I loved doing but by then a lot of game shops were used to getting away with doing stuff in C, so not many people were able to get the best out of the chip.

C64 BLAST: As games like Space Giraffe was only available on Xbox live and Tempest 3000 for the Neon, are they any ways people can get hold of these games now?

JEFF: T3K is a rare beast indeed and the only way to play it right now is to get a Nuon DVD player. I know there is an emulator being

worked on but I don't know how far off it is

actually being able to emulate Nuon at full speed. Eventually though it may actually be able to play T3K at a better frame rate than the original if the emulator gets good enough which

would be cool. Space Giraffe was also made for the PC as well as the x360 and is available on Steam (you get a second set of level backgrounds too).

C64 BLAST: With gadgets like the Kindle, Tablets and

streaming TVs, media seems to be moving towards a digital only format, what are your feelings about that?

JEFF: It's inevitable I guess, and actually more convenient in most contexts (I fully intend to go download only with my vita and 3ds, since the very nature of portable devices is that you don't want to have to carry a lot of cruft and clutter with you when you take them out). Not having to store and move physical crap around when you're buying and using zeros and ones just makes sense, and the idea that when you buy something it's yours and stored in the

C64 BLAST: What type of technology do you envisage will take gaming to the next level?

cloud somewhere and if you lose or destroy your device you haven't lost the data, you can just redownload it into a new device - that makes sense for digital media in the age of the global network. I love the way the kindle is both book and bookstore and wherever you are you can always get a new book when you want one, and I think in the end it'll be that way for gaming too (already is, on iOS) just like it is for music now. It's just a much more sensible way to handle and consume media and games these days.

JEFF: There's still plenty of scope for gaming to expand in novel directions (look at how the jumping about and waving your arms around like a fool game market has exploded due to the Wii and Kinect). There will doubtless be further improvements in the way we communicate with the machines and they with us - haptics, sunlight readable displays, AR glasses, natural language recognition/translation etc. The possibilities continue to expand as the limitations fall away and who knows what designers will come up with in a

future with machines with which we can communicate naturally and easily and where everything is effortlessly globally connected. I'll still be wanting to sit down with a joypad for some kinds of gaming though, I don't think that'll ever go away. Likewise people will still enjoy the occasional bit of oldschool arcade gaming alongside whatever generative multiverse hypersensory epic is flavour of the decade :).

C64 BLAST: If we burst into your house unannounced, would we be likely to catch you playing something like Elder Scrolls, Call of Duty, Need for Speed, or anything of that nature?

JEFF: Yeah, although when I'm busy I tend to spend most of my time tightly focused on

whatever game I'm making and don't play much of anything else. But I do find time for other stuff too, Skyrim on PC got a good airing and I've got Portal 2 to play one of these days. I also have things I play in a few minutes of downtime here and there like wipeout on the Vita and pinball arcade on iOS. And when Half Life 3 comes out eventually that'll be me done for however long it takes :D.

C64 BLAST: For any up and coming game programmers, what do you think they should focus on if they want to be employed by a software house?

JEFF: Completion! One finished game is worth a hundred starts that are never finished. Demonstrating the ability to see a project all the way through from inception to completion is important. A lot of game making is just hard work and showing that you can push through that to get to your goal is important.

C64 BLAST: What games are you currently developing and any projects you have on the horizon?

JEFF: I'm currently working on a vert scrolling shooter for iOS. I never did a vert scroller back in the day so I'm doing one that's roughly in the style of Star Force (although there is a bit of polarity shooter and a touch of bullet hell in there too). Most of it's done, I'm now just filling up the levels with spaceship types to shoot at. Should be finished in a couple of weeks or so I hope :).

GAME: Fist 2

PUBLISHER: Melbourne House

RELEASED: 1986

Most people who owned a Commodore 64 or a ZX Spectrum would have played Way of the Exploding Fist by Melbourne House, a game which really raised the bar for home computer 'beat em ups'. While this was a great game, there was an element of repetition as the game was a series of bouts which got progressively harder as you increased in rank.

So, you can imagine my excitement as a kid when I spotted this new game in a store(John Menzes, Uk) which was the sequel to the afore mentioned game, called Fist 2. What made this hugely exciting was the description on the back of the cassette, explaining how this had all the combat moves of the first game, but you were thrown into a world containing rivers, caverns and mountain ranges.

At the time, it was hard to get your head around the scope of the game, and how on earth it would be possibly to fit it all into one load of the Commodore's RAM (there was no multi-level loads).

As soon as you launched the game, you were greeted

with great scenery and an atmospheric soundtrack, which changed according to what part of the game you were in.

The characters were also very unique and slightly mysteries, like the war painted warriors and river dwelling ninjas. Fighting these characters whilst waist deep in water was certainly a new experience. In fact, if you performed a foot sweep, you were almost entirely submerged.

The object of the game is to find a series of scrolls which have gone

missing since an evil warlord had destroyed the original Exploding

Fist temples, something that would take some serious exploration which lead to climbing to the highest points of the landscape.

To make things difficult, when you

start the game, your energy bar (or chi level) is quite low, but throughout the

landscape, you would discover temples in which you can meditate. Upon meditation, you would reach the next level of enlightenment, and thus increase your chi/energy level. This would allow you
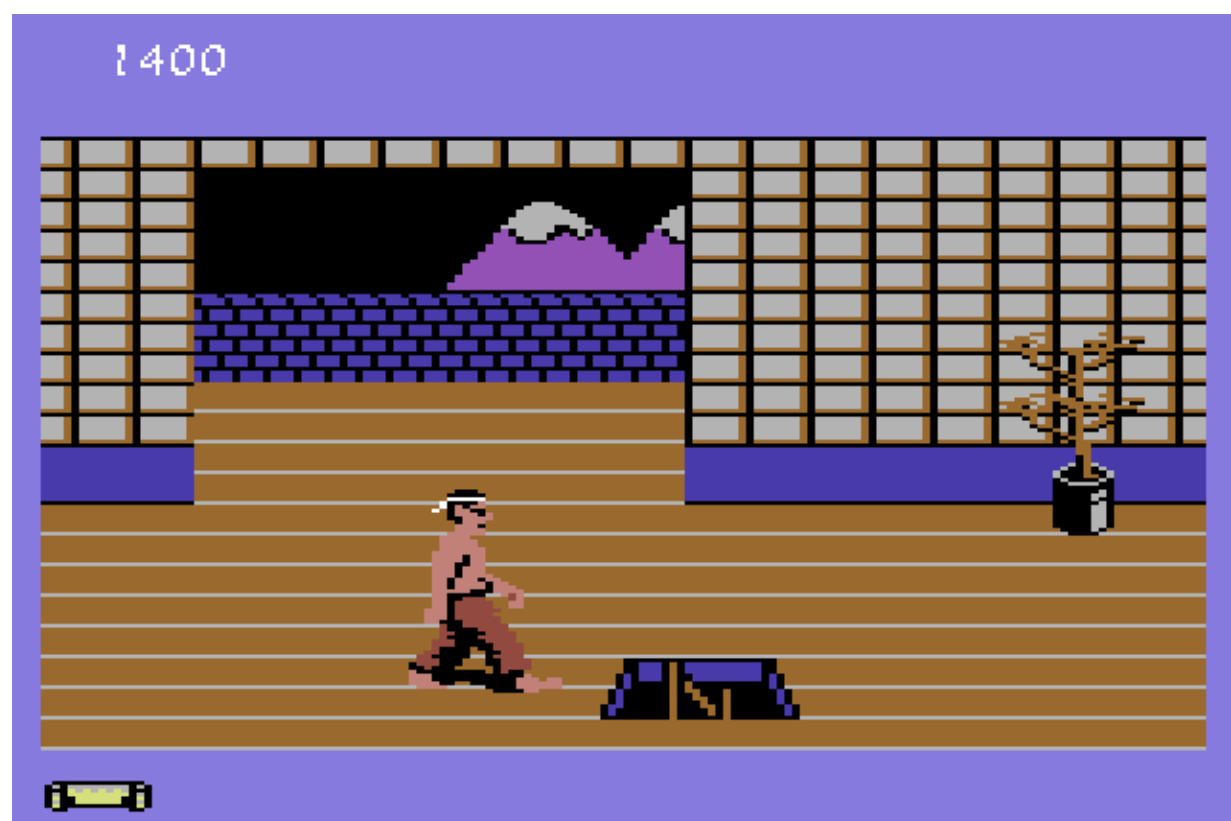
to stand a better chance of defeating trickier foes.

An element to the game which kept you constantly on edge was the fact that if you lost your life, that would be the end of the game and you would have to start from scratch. I can remember sweating with every battle knowing that if I blew it, which would mean going back to the beginning.

An added bonus to the game was on the flip slide of the cassette was a game I dubbed Fist 1.5, as it was a hybrid of Way of the Exploding Fist and Fist 2. Basically, the combat was similar to the first game, but the characters were from Fist 2. With that said, the backdrops were unique to both games which was great. This addition to Fist 2 allowed you to hone your combat skills.

This game had great graphics, atmospheric music and a combat system which tied it all together well. This game was well ahead of its time and still provides an enjoyable challenge even today.

Rating 94%.

This Issue's C64 Legend – Andrew Braybrook

If you had a Commodore 64 in the 80s, then you almost certainly would have played one of Andrew's games. Without him we wouldn't have Uridium, Paradroid and Gribbly's Day Out. Need I say more…
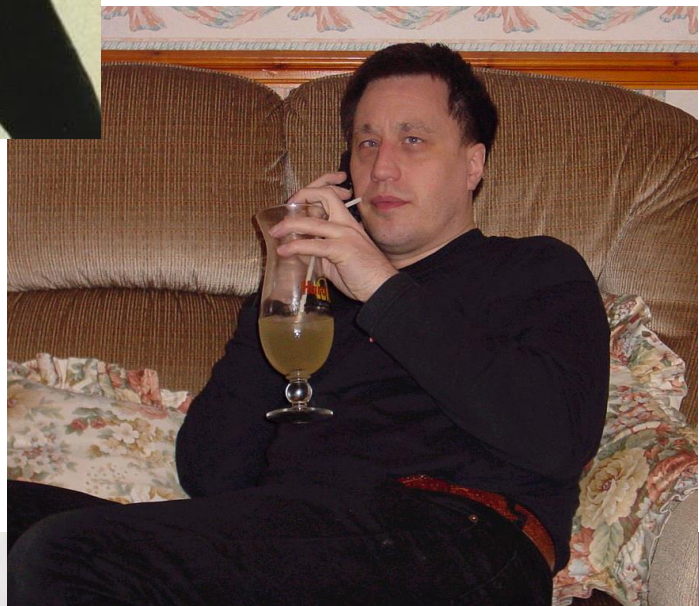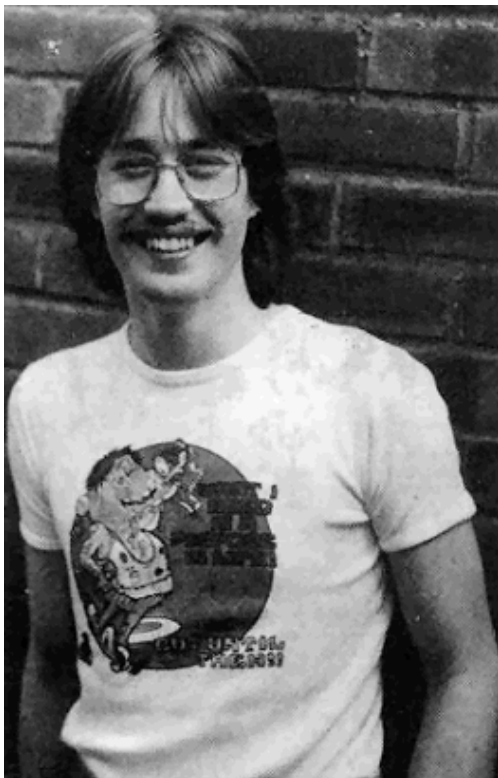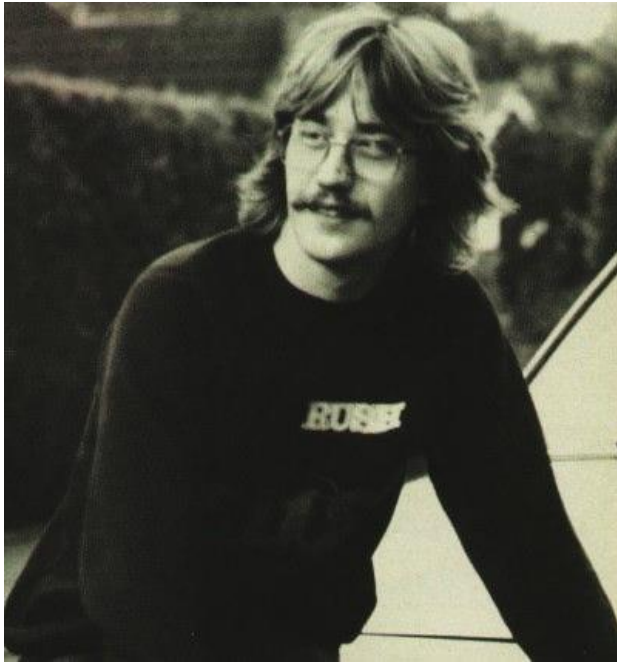
GAME: The Staff of Karnath

PUBLISHER: Ultimate

RELEASED: 1984

In the first half of the 80s, Ultimate Play the Game made a huge impact on the Spectrum scene. Despite their games costing around three British pounds more than their competitors, they were cleaning up with games like Jetpac, Sabrewulf and Knightlore.

Their games had interesting titles, great gameplay and unique packaging that somehow unified them; you felt like you had to have the whole collection. However, could the Stamper Brothers repeat their success on the Commodore 64?

I can remember the excitement of seeing the advert for The Staff of Karnath in a computer magazine, with its familiar artwork and associated mystique. In a departure from the norm, the game would be written by freelancers outside of the Ultimate camp, but surely one could rest assured that it would be up to scratch? After all, the brand had to protect its reputation.

The main coding was done by a programmer called Dave Thomas whilst his brother Bob

Thomas took care of the graphics. Obviously, it had quite a different look to Spectrum games but took full

advantage of the Commodore's colourful and chunky sprites.

Whilst the game loaded, the player was presented with a faithful reproduction of the game cover, followed by a decent ditty to keep them entertained whilst they perused the instructions.

As the inlay stated, "Many millions of years ago before man and his descendants, there lived a very different kind of creature.

These creatures were known as Sarnathians, originating from a long dead planet and coming to Earth when their planet was on the verge of destruction."

"These evil creatures used an Orb from their planet to wreak havoc and assist in their plans to control the universe. However, the orb became too powerful to control and banished these creatures into the

stratosphere, destroying their planet.

Centuries pass and the player is transported to the exact day the Orb is reaching its critical power level. It is 6 o'clock and our hero Sir Arthur Pendragon has until midnight to destroy the Orb before it destroys time and space as we know it.

To achieve this, Sir Arthur must find 16 pieces of a pentagram which have been hidden around a castle in order to access to the Obelisk. Contained within is the Staff of Karnath which must be destroyed in order to complete the game.

Finding the hidden pieces would already
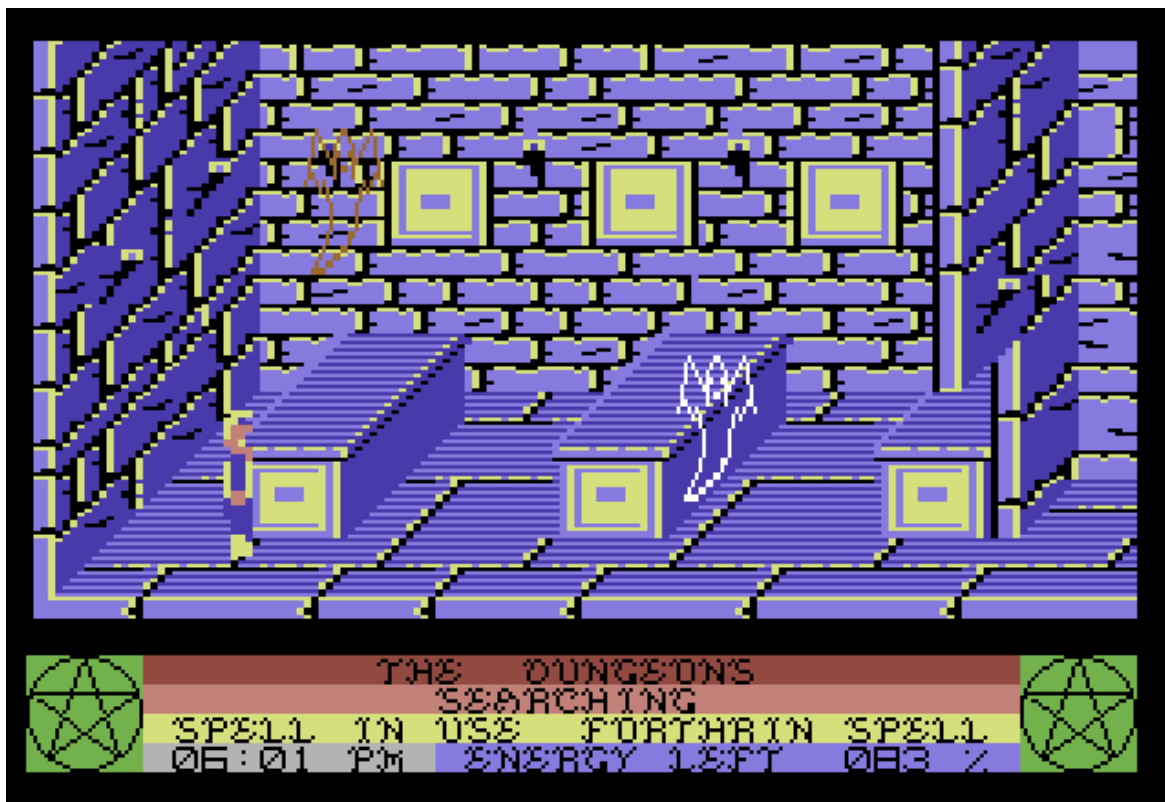
be hard enough but the player's progress is hindered further by the presence of creatures roaming around the castle. For the best part of the game, avoidance is the best strategy, but spells can also be collected which will remove the aforementioned fiends.

When the player has collected one of the pieces, they must place it in the chamber before they can move onto the next one. As there is no save functions, all tasks must be completed in one sitting - this is no mean feat.

The castle is presented as a three dimensional cutaway and the screen scrolls smoothly as the player moves from room to room. The attacks from the creatures are pretty relentless which can make the game a bit frustrating at times, but also challenging.

This game was a great first outing on the C64 for Ultimate, but whether the quality would be consistent in the next few titles would remain to be seen…

The Staff of Karnath is a great game which was well received at the time and is still very playable to this day. Rating 91%

My C128

The 128 in the photo is the machine I used mostly in the latter days of my 8-bit commodore gaming, a great machine which unfortunately many companies didn't take advantage of the extra memory. Originally, I had a C64 breadbin style, which was replaced by the 128, but I now have a C64 also. If you have any C64 related photos you would like featured, please send them in to me.

I'LL JUST NIP AND BORROW TOM'S!
DOG LOYALTY: 0000002
DOG TOLERANCE: TOM'S
MOWER OVERLOAD: MOWER

GAME: Hover Bovver

PUBLISHER: Llamasoft

RELEASED: 1983

Hover Bovver. I thought it would be fitting to review a game written by one of our interviewees this month, Jeff Minter. Just in case his first big hit 'Attack of the Mutant Camels' wasn't original enough for you, along comes this beauty.

Only a man as cool and diverse as Jeff could seriously write a game based on mowing the lawn, and make it exciting. Jeff's games are known for being frantic, and this one is no exception.

The premise of the game is simple, you've been nagged about the grass on your lawn getting a bit long, so it's time to get the mower out and give it the once over. The problem is your mower is knackered.

The solution is to borrow your neighbour's mower instead, "Jim won't mind", he thinks to himself. You see your character nipping next door to grab the fly-mo from his garage, and then it's back to your garden.

Your garden is luscious green with
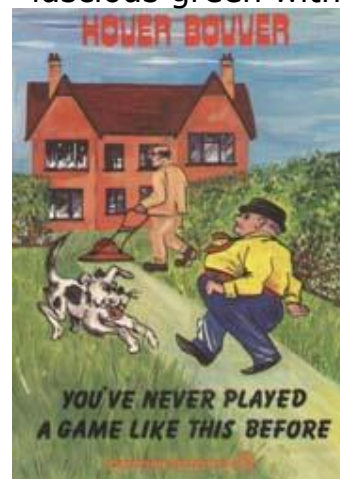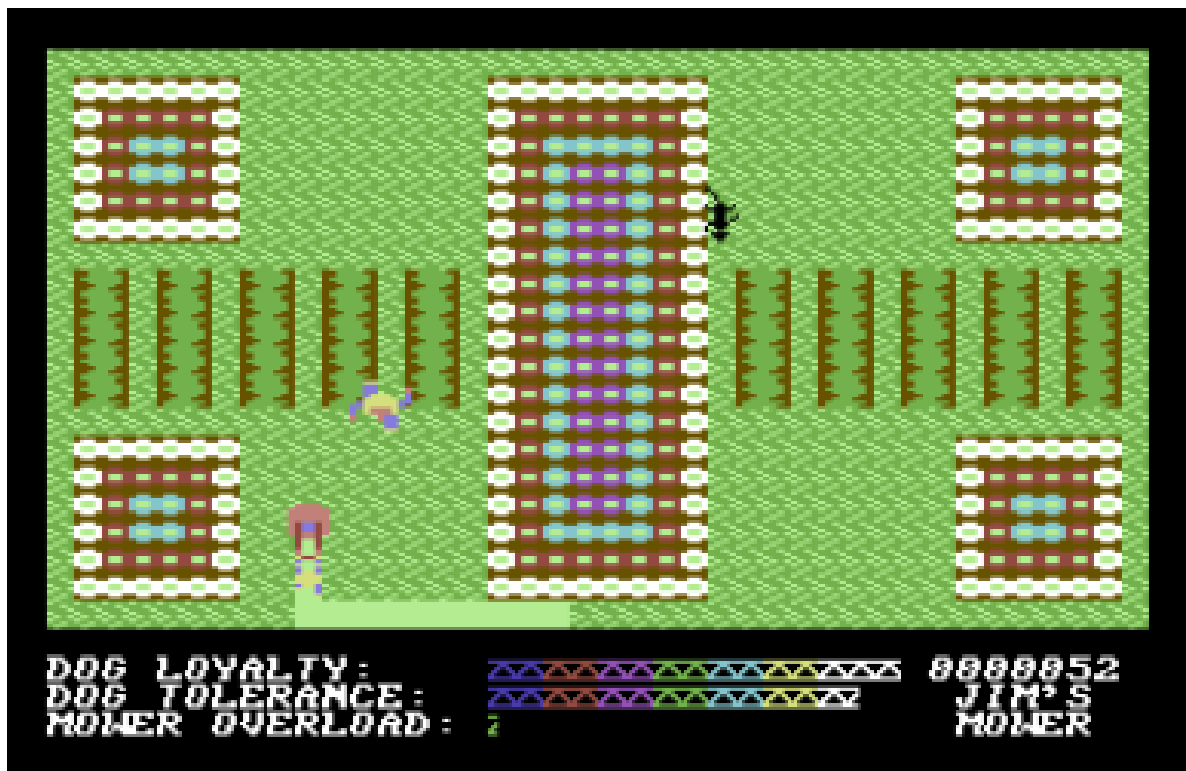
a nice set of flower beds. All you have to do is mow every patch of grass and then the job is done. This would be simple enough if it wasn't for the fact that Jim has noticed somebody has nicked his mower and now wants it back. This is where the action begins.

As you can imagine, trying to mow the lawn neatly while your neighbour is trying to grab his mower back is not an easy task. Thankfully, you have your trusty dog

Rover at hand. When you press the button on the joystick, the dog will run after the neighbour effectively chasing him away, at least until you stopped pressing the button.

So, why not just keep the button pressed throughout the whole game you might ask yourself? Well, once your 'dog loyalty meter' has depleted fully, your dog stops responding to your commands and then even starts to go for you also. In fact, it

attacks the mower which causes it to overheat, and you have to remain stationery until it cools down again.

Your mower can also overheat simply by mowing too much grass in one go, this mower was built in the 80s after all ;-)

If neighbour grabs your mower, then that is one life lost. However, you still have two other neighbours you can 'borrow' from, Tom and Alf.

If you complete the garden, then there

are other gardens to mow which get progressively more difficult to negotiate.

If all this was not difficult enough, then you have further problems, if you mow the flowers by mistake then the gardener will not be very happy and essentially joins the chase to get the mower off your hands.

For extra fun, the sound track is a C64 version of 'English Country Garden' which is obviously well suited to the game.

This is one of those titles you can just pick up and start playing and have lots of fun in the process. Don't be fooled by the subject matter of the game, it makes for a very tough challenge!

Rating: 92%
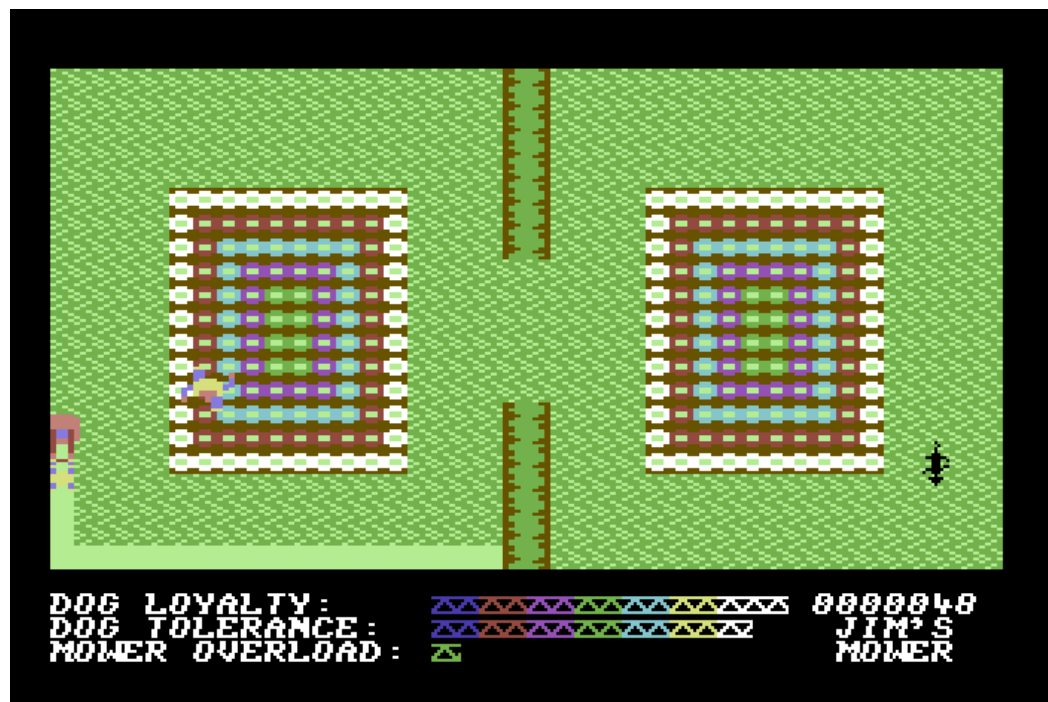
SCORE 000000 : 9633 TIME

LEVEL 01 PASSWORD:- NONE

·MASTERTRONIC·

GAME: One Man and His Droid

PUBLISHER: Mastertronic

RELEASED: 1985

As you may remember, back in the days of 8 bit gaming, there were typically 3 price points; Premier (£9.95), Cheapy (£2.99) and Mega Cheapy (£1.99)…these are not official terms by the way ;-) Whilst the £2.99 games could often be good, especially as some of them were re-releases of premier priced games, you really took your chances with the £1.99 range…
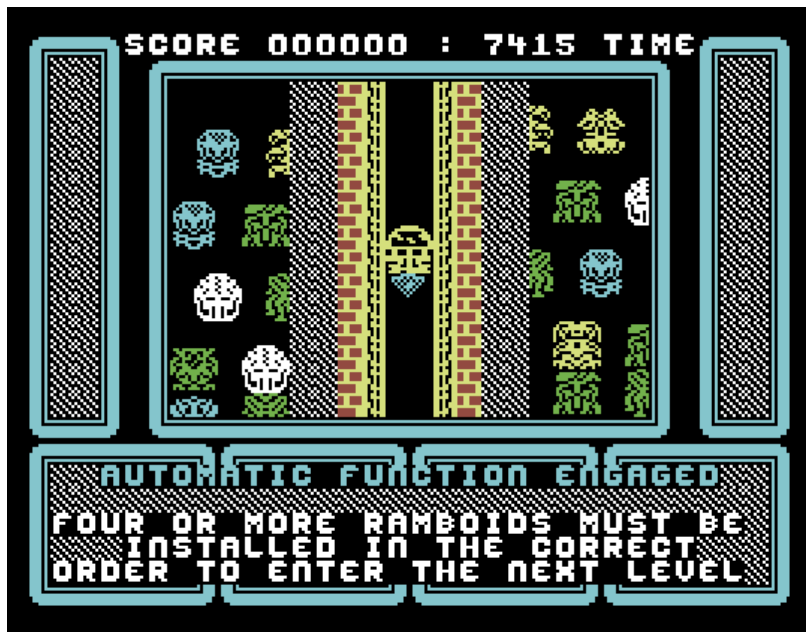
Most of the games at this price point were released by software house Mastertronic, who spotted a niche market for cheap and cheerful games. For many, these titles were a life line, especially if you were on a pound a week pocket money!!

Strangely enough, despite these being very low budget games, they often attracted the talents of top programmers and musicians. The music for One Man and His Droid was composed by none other than Rob Hubbard, who for many was considered the leader in his field. This music has been remixed countless times by other musicians, and it's no wonder as it is a very catchy tune.

So, what the hell is this game about? Well, although this phrase does bug me slightly, it's definitely a situation where it really "does as it says on the tin". You're a

SCORE 000000 : 7415 TIME

AUTOMATIC FUNCTION ENGAGED
FOUR OR MORE RAMBOIDS MUST BE
INSTALLED IN THE CORRECT
ORDER TO ENTER THE NEXT LEVEL

man…uh…with a droid and is obviously a skit on the popular(???) British TV programme One Man and His Dog.

For anybody who didn't get the chance to tune into this riveting show (ahem), the programme pitted farmers and their sheep dogs against sheep which they had to round up and usher into a pen, before closing the gate…I told you it was riveting! So, using this concept for the basis of a game sounds like commercial suicide, but that was the

beauty of games in the 80s, they could afford to be far more experimental…Hover Bovver comes to mind!

The game, which first hit the shelves in 1985, and was written by Clive Brooker, and takes place on the planet Anromadus. There are Ramboids (robo sheep if you like) running amok and it is your job to do the responsible thing and round them up.

The game starts with you sitting at the bottom of an open cavern, with an endless stream of

Ramboids raining from up above (man this is hard to explain!) and your first task is to fight your way through to the top in order to reach the main holding bays. This is much harder than it sounds as you have to weave in and out to find a clear path, and often find yourself being trapped and forced all the way to the bottom of the screen again. This can be a bit frustrating at first, but now and then you get a lucky break and make it on your first attempt.

Once you get to the top, the main part of the game begins. The computer shuffles a deck of Ramboids, and presents you with a sequence, the order of the Ramboids which have to be guided into the pen. To get maximum points, you have to get them in in the correct order, which again can be tricky

as sometimes, they will just behave erratically (like real sheep) and just wonder in to the pen on their own accord.

Once all of the Ramboids have been rounded up, the next sequence is given to you and you proceed to the next level. Each level presents you with new puzzles of how to navigate around, and ensure the Ramboids find their way to the pen correctly. Sometimes, you need to burrow through a wall with your droid to clear a path, other times you need to build bridges over gaps. You can also drill into the ground to let Ramboids pass overhead.

The good news is, once you have completed a level, you are given a password. This means the next time you load up the game, you can type in the password

allowing you to jump to the level you were last attempting.

I only recently discovered that a sequel was written a few years later (1991) but for some reason, was never officially released in physical format. However, in 2001, the original programmer released it on the Internet for fans to play.

I played this game again recently on an emulator, and have to say that it is as fun and challenging as the day I first played it, and is worth booting up for the soundtrack alone.

So, this classic game gets a rating of 93%
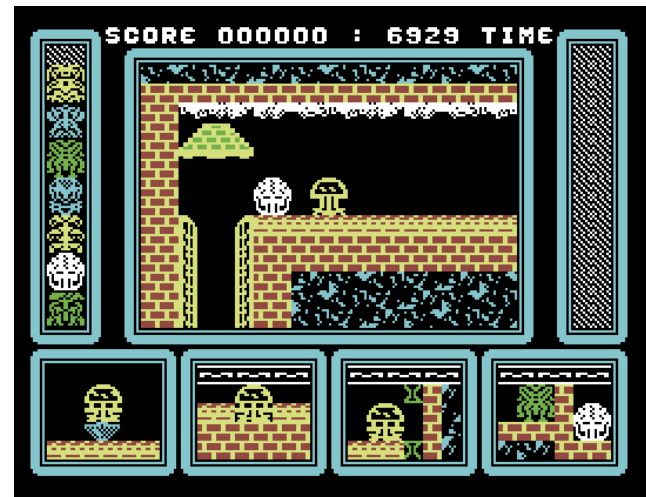
CLOSING THOUGHTS

Thanks for tuning into this first edition, and I'm already planning the second edition which should include a review of Ghosts 'n' Goblins, Thrust and Nodes of Yesod, plus an exclusive interview with Ben Daglish.

If you're into the C64 and other related retro goodness, then you'll love this resources below, all of which I read and have bought from.

See you next edition! Cheers,
Phil **www.theretrogamesnews.com/c64** (this issue and future editions)

RESOURCES – CHECK 'EM OUT!

CHRIS WILKINS https://fusionretrobooks.com/

Amazing retro books covering the C64, Spectrum, Amiga and more. Also look out for his C64 Group on Facebook, search on Facebook for "The story of the Commodore 64 in Pixels"

FREEZE 64 http://www.c64endings.freeolamail.com/freeze64/freeze64.htm

A great fanzine on the subject of C64 pokes, hints and maps.

RESET 64 http://reset.cbm8bit.com/

Long established C64 fanzine, a fantastic read and also has the option of cover disks.

OLIVER FREY ART http://www.oliverfreyart.com/

Legendary artist who created the covers of Zzap!64, Crash, Amtix as well as computer game covers, comics and more.

Commodore 64 Fan App
https://apps.appmachine.com/commodore64fanapp

A brilliant,free C64 app which links you to commodore resources.

RETROGAMER http://www.retrogamer.net/ Who doesn't love this mag!?