

Well, the long lost (and sometimes presumed dead) Eamon newsletter has finally arrived. The name gathering stage lasted from September through January and the production stage started the first of February.

Doing the newsletter, debugging and distributing Eamon, answering letters, preparing a new software package, writing new Eamon adventures and holding down a full-time job was getting to be too much, so I enlisted the aid of a close friend and my partner, Bob Davis.

Bob will be an editor of the newsletter and has been working with Eamon off and on for a couple of years. He will be handling some of the columns for me.

We have some ideas for what should be in the newsletter, but we would also like to solicit your ideas and opinions as to what you would like to see covered.

Bug Bytes

Stamp Out BUGS!!!!

Yes, bugs can be eliminated in YOUR lifetime if you help us!

The Eamon System bugs are being stamped out as fast as possible with the limited time and number of feet available. We have compiled a master bug list, giving the known bugs along with the cures, if they have been corrected. As new bugs are reported or fixed, this document will be updated. The document will have a revised date on it so you can tell how old it is.

The thing we most need from our members are bug reports. If you have encountered any bugs in Eamon or have any questions that you think might be a bug, please let us know. The easiest way is by postcard, but telephone is nice if you can afford it. If it is a complicated bug, it may require a letter.

To report a bug, please give as much information as possible about the situation at the time. A lot of times we get the comment: "Oh, I tried to play that adventure and it bombed off. I don't remember why." That doesn't help at all. It could take three years to find a bug from that information. Some people have actually taken the time to write with not only the specifics of a bug, but how to fix it. I appreciate this very much. It saves me a lot of time. The information we need is what you were doing at the time, if the program bombed, we need the line number that it stopped on and the error message. Then list the line number (By typing LIST nnnn). Print the variables that are given on that line. (e.g. program bombs on line 123 with a bad subscript. LIST 123:= MD%(M,15)=1:AD%(X,4)=6. Now type PRINT MD%(M,15): BAD SUBSCRIPT ERROR. Then type PRINT M:= 234)

If you have fixed a bug you have run across, send in the fix. It will greatly help us. Also, the fix you supply may be one we hadn't thought

of, or (shudder!) one that won't work under all conditions. The fixes for bugs to Eamon adventures will be published in the newsletter when space allows.

Please do not return Eamon diskettes for program bugs unless requested. Instead, we will list the exact steps needed to fix your adventures yourself, if possible. If the change is too difficult, we will not attempt to lead you through it, but ask for return of the diskette for correction.

Designer's Den

For those who would like to design their own Eamon adventures, but need help getting started, the following summary of the process may help.

The first thing to do is be sure you have everything you need.:

1. Dungeon Designer Diskette - preferably version 5.0 or above
2. A scratch diskette (blank)
3. The DDD Manual - provided on the DD Diskette
4. A map of how the dungeon is to look
5. A list of all the monsters and Artifacts
6. A theme for the adventure - What the adventurer is suppose to accomplish.

~~The first thing you have to do is boot the DDD. Be sure the DDD is write protected by putting the little tape dealie over the notch (technical jargon!)~~

You will be presented with a menu. Select the 'Initialize a New adventure' function. The program will start and you'll see a flashing message to replace the DDD with a blank diskette now. Better do what it says, lest thou be forever sorry.

The program then prompts for the name of the adventure, your (the author) name, and the adventure number. You should be clear on all of these but the adventure number. Use 99 for the number, since this will be assigned by the library when you submit the adventure after finishing it.

The program will also prompt for the number of directions. Until some kindly soul perfects the ten direction functions, we will use the six direction. This is simply the number of directions you may move. (North, South, East, West, Up and Down = six)

The program will then initialize the diskette and create some programs on that diskette. You now have the beginning of the adventure to end all beginning adventures. If you will do a catalog, you will notice a text file called SAVE BASR PROGRAM HERE or SAVE LEADIN PROGRAM HERE. Whichever it is, delete it.

Then load the LEADIN PROGRAM from the DDD. If you don't find a program called LEADIN PROGRAM, you have an old version of the DDD. (Send in a check.) Until you have a new version, you'll have to wing it. Write your own program to print out a description of the adventure and when that is done, have it run MAIN PGM. If you do have LEADIN PROGRAM, all you have

to do is type in print statements to print the description of the mission. The LEADIN PROGRAM takes care of headings, wishing the party luck and other such pleasantries.

Once you have the LEADIN PROGRAM ready, save it to your diskette under the name of your adventure. Example if you entered Plato's Playground for the adventure's name, then type SAVE PLATO'S PLAYGROUND. It should save this as the second name in the catalog.

Now load the Main program from the DDD into memory. This program will be under the name BASE DUNGEON PROGRAM or BASE PROGRAM 2.0 or MAIN PGM depending on the version of the DDD you have. Save this program on your diskette under the name MAIN PGM. You will probably need to make program modifications to this program later, but for now, just save it as it is.

You are now ready to start entering data. This is done by running DUNGEON EDIT from the DDD. The things you will need to enter are Rooms, Artifacts and Monsters. The DDD manual will explain these things in detail so I don't have to here.

Once these files have been created, you will be ready to make your program modifications. All Eamon adventures have them, simply because they would be too plain without any changes at all. In order to make the necessary program changes, you will have to have a fairly decent knowledge of Applesoft Basic.

Use the information provided in the Dungeon Designer's Manual to provide the details on how to create an adventure, but the above steps will provide a good skeleton procedure.

When you want to test your adventure, you will need a FRESH MEAT file on your adventure diskette. This can be done using TEST BENCH from the Eamon Utilities for designers or by using the Master diskette.

When you are satisfied with your adventure, have a friend test your adventure it. When you are completed, send us a copy of it. We will review it and distribute it if you like.

Notices and Junk

Eamon, being a non-proprietary product is hard to provide support for. Part of this problem stems from the fact that there are no funds to pay anyone in order to provide the incentive to perfect the system. To provide these incentives, we charge a fee to copy the Eamon adventures and use this money for the club. We enjoy Eamon, so we do not mind putting time into it. The second reason for this difficulty is that everyone is free to change the system in any way they wish. This then becomes more than just difficult to support, but moves to the impossible category.

For this reason, we are forced to divide Eamon up into "official" versions and customized versions. We will always distribute the "official" versions, and may distribute certain customized versions, but with the understanding that these have no real support. We will attempt to keep all club members notified of changes to their adventures

necessary to keep their adventures current and "official".

We at the club would like to point out that although Eamon adventures may be obtained from other sources at sometimes cheaper prices, the alternate sources do not support the adventures they sell and cannot guarantee the most current (error-free) copies. The \$5.00 we charge goes for diskette, packaging and postage expenses and anything left over goes to the production of the newsletter. To support YOUR newsletter and avoid undue problems with bad programs, we urge you to obtain your Eamon adventures from the Eamon club.

Anyone wishing to contribute donations to the Eamon club is welcome to do so. The amount of available funds will have some impact on the frequency the newsletter is published. Special consideration will be given to contributors as soon as we think of something suitable.

*** Iowa residents, please include 4% tax on all orders ***

Club News

ADVENTURE LISTS - For a free copy of the complete list of available adventures at any time, please include a SASE with the request. Otherwise send \$1.00 (club donation).

UTILITIES - Utilities have been totally redone. You'll like these. All menu driven, enhanced and debugged (?) and categorized by general function. Vol 1 is for everyday adventuring, Vol 2 is for designers, Vol 3 contains monster battles and consolidation program and Vol 4 is for playing God. Also, (as if this wasn't enough) the utilities have been documented! A copy is available on each utilities diskette in a text file accessible by a word-processor. For a printed copy, send \$2.50 for printing and postage.

DUNGEON DESIGNER VERSION 6.0!? COMING SOON?!

NEW ADVENTURES!

- 38. City in the Clouds (not quite so new as the others)
- 39. Museum of Unnatural History (still a little bit new)
- 40. Daemon's Playground
- 41. Caverns of Lanst
- 42. Alternate Beginner's Cave
- 43. Priests of Xim!
- 44. Escape from the Orc Lair
- 45. Swordquest
- 46. Lifequest (no relation to the other 'quest's)
- 47. Futurequest (reviewed in this newsletter)
- 48. Picnic in Paradise (club exclusive!)

Terminological Inexactitudes

Things appearing in this column must not be confused with actual facts.

Donald Brown? Dead??? Best remembered as the father of Eamon, he hadn't been seen or heard from since Swordthrust #6 appeared. Last known Eamon

work - #11 Tomb of Molinar (Molinar is believed to be an old alias of Brown's). Official sources deny this vehemently and claim he is working on utilities to improve access time to WOM (write only memory) chips. However, if Tomb of Molinar is played backwards you can see the words 'Brown is dead' in the mirror.

Several known Eamon authors have taken recluse near Bathurst Inlet in Canada for the purpose of designing the next tournament diskette. Information received from the counter girl at McDonald's indicates the adventure will have 1,365 rooms, 937 monsters, 844 artifacts, 1 effect and 127 different missions - all but 3 insolvable. The prize for the highest score? A 1985 Chrysler Cordoba with an easy payment plan.

Rumours that John Nelson is an alias of Don Brown's are highly exaggerated. Although they are joined at the hips, they in no way associate with each other.

Spotlight On: by Bob Davis

This feature will spotlight Eamon adventures, old and new, giving a short description of the adventure along with a rating and a difficulty score (1 to 10). Sometimes I'll ramble on and give my own likes and dislikes as critics will. If you have a particular adventure you would like to see reviewed here or just have no one else to write to, please drop me a line. The address is:

The first spotlight is on a new adventure called FUTUREQUEST by Roger Pender. As the name implies, this adventure takes place in the distant future with some machine-like commands being used to fit your surroundings! SCAN is used in place of LOOK, REPAIR for HEAL and TRANSMIT for SAY are just some examples. This adventure isn't for the beginning character or the character that likes to snoop into every little corner of the unfamiliar environment.

A lengthy description tells how you came to be in this future society along with (what is now) some history on the last few hundred years which strengthen your convictions that the need for adventurers will never diminish.

You start out aboard a space ship in a cryogenic sleep knowing that your mission is to assassinate a futuristic emperor with an enormous and elite fighting force. Suddenly awakened by failing systems during an attack, you must find your way off the ship. Luckily, this is not hard to do. Once off the ship, you land on a planet in a barren desert. Now, knowing how to get out of the desert isn't difficult, but actually surviving what should be a short journey isn't easy with an inexperienced character. (Don't ask me how I know.)

After crossing the desert, it is very helpful to acquire friends. Let's say almost necessary. The emperor just doesn't lay around by himself and wait to be assassinated. Besides, he's on another planet and at the moment

you have no way of getting there. Obviously, there is still a lot to do before you can accomplish your mission and FUTUREQUEST has several environments that, once you're home, make you feel you've been on a 3-day tour of a solar system.

And that is where I'll leave you, with a little uncertainty but an ever pressing urge to tackle the unknown and face any danger with a smile and a sword (or in this case a laser rifle.)

The rating I mentioned earlier is based on a scale 1 to 10 and is purely my own arbitrary decision based on the already existing ratings of Eamon adventures and how I believe it compares to them. In other words, not scientific. Personally, I found FUTUREQUEST to be refreshing in the various environments and somewhat difficult. My ratings are:

Pleasure rating ----- 8
Difficulty rating ----- 7

Thank you for reading my article and I hope you found it somewhat enjoyable. And again, all comments are welcome.

