

# Retrogaming Times

## Issue #32 - April 2000

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### MAME Reviews

Once again, I decided to take a look at some of the classic games that have been on MAME for awhile. With my bad internet connection, I haven't downloaded the latest versions of MAME, so I must rely on the 800+ games at my disposal. So sit back and read about games that you are either enjoying or may have overlooked.



#### Bubbles

This is one of those odd little games that only the classic era could give us. In the constant search to come up with more unique and creative characters to play in video games, comes yet another one. This time you are a bubble. Yessir, the embodiment of Mr. Bubble himself, you are a little soap bubble that tries to get bigger. You do so by cleaning up the sink, which makes you bigger and bigger. Get big enough and the sink drains and you go to the next level by going down the drain.

But dirt isn't the only thing laying around the sink. There are many things that can pop a poor bubble. The people that own this sink are not going to win any housekeeping awards, that's for sure. Besides leaving razor blades laying around (let's hope there are no children in this house), they have bugs. Big stinking ants pop up out of the sink to bust your bubble. But you can fight the ants with a handy, dandy, miniature broom. Honest! You grab this teeny tinny broom and whack the giant ants with it. Try and tell me that game programmers from the 80's weren't influenced by certain substances, legal or otherwise.

As is expected, the game keeps getting harder and harder with more obstacles, more ants and a faster pace. While the game is essentially the same over and over, the frenzied pace will keep you from getting bored. It is a fun little game that is a bit tricky to get the hang of (controlling a bubble is harder than it looks), but will have you playing a few more games.



**Frontline**

The first of the one man versus an entire army games that was later made popular by the likes of Commando and Ikari Warrior. Frontline does offer something the others don't, a bowlegged soldier! You almost feel sorry for the poor chap, who looks like he just spent ten hours on a horse.

The game itself is quite simple, move up the trail and kill everyone you see. Shoot them or throw grenades at them, but whatever you do, kill them before they kill you. Simple right? The controls are not so simple. In fact they can be quite hectic, especially if you are using a keyboard. Thankfully I have a V-Stick (Attention joystick companies, this is your golden opportunity to get lots of plugs. Just send a version of your MAME compatible joystick and we will review it and mention it in reviews just like this, so the 6,000-8,000 readers can hear all about it. Back to our regularly scheduled review). to make it a bit easier. What you really need is a spinner to make it easier. You see, one set of controls moves the soldier and another controls where your gun is shooting, just like Robotron. But you also need two other buttons to shoot and throw grenades. It is enough to make a person wish they were an octopus. But once you get past the somewhat clumsy controls, it is a decent game.

Besides just shooting soldiers, you can also hop in an abandoned tank and run them over! But there are enemy tanks that you must deal with and they love to blow you out of your tank. Thankfully, your tank smokes for a few seconds after being hit, so you have time to jump out and run for cover. If you don't leave it, you will be blown to littly bitty bits. So once you get hit, jump out!

The sound effects in the game are decent and you get a nice little drum roll at the beginning. The enemy are pretty stupid as they just come right at you. A few will jump in the bushes to ambush you, but most of them just march forward, with no regard for personal safety. Don't know if I respect such bravery or laugh at such stupidity.

If you like the kind of game where one man must take on insurmountable odds, then this game is for you. If you like your war games to have lots of realism, then avoid this game. If you like bowlegged heroes, then you will love this game. I personally like it in small doses. It is a fun game, but those controls are enough to drive a man insane.

**Don't You Hate....**

*When you let your ship get captured by the tractor beam in Galaga and then you realize it was your last ship.*

**Rock n Roll and Video Games**

We all know about Pac-man Fever and how it was a big hit in the top 40 charts. We also know the little ditties that play during a video game. Who can forget that catchy little tune during Frogger or the nerve wracking music in Space Invaders? Well, this article isn't about any of those. This is about what rock n roll songs would have made good songs for video games. Most of these were chosen for the titles of the song as opposed to the actual song. So sit back and check out the tunes that fit certain video games. Feel free to send in your own suggestions:

Game	Song Title	Artist
Robotron	Against All Odds	Phil Collins

Rally X or Pole Position	Running on Empty	Jackson Browne
Mountain King	Hall of the Mountain King	Grieg or Savatage
Pac-Man	Nowhere to Run	Martha Reeves
Breakout	Another Brick in the Wall	Pink Floyd
Q*Bert	Jump	Van Halen
Locomotion	Crazy Train	Ozzy Osbourne
Riddle of the Sphinx	Midnight at the Oasis	Maria Muldair
Road Runner	Born to Run	Bruce Springsteen
Time Pilot	Time after Time	Cyndi Lauper
Pepper II	Heaven and Hell	Black Sabbath
Fathom	Dream of the Dolphin	Enigma
Pressure Cooker	Under Pressure	David Bowie and Queen
Haunted House	These Eyes	Guess Who
Boxing	The Boxer	Simon and Garfunkel
Jungle Hunt or Jungle King	Jungle Love	Steve Miller
Utopia or Conquest of the World	Everybody Wants to Rule the World	Tears for Fears
Great Wall Street Fortune Hunt	Money	Pink Floyd
Stampede	Rhinestone Cowboy	Glenn Campbell
Color Bar Generator	True Colors	Cyndi Lauper
Atlantis	Atlantis	Donovan (too easy to pass up)
Ms. Pacman	More than a Woman	Bee Gees
I Want my Mommy	Mother	Pink Floyd
Burgertime	Cheeseburger in Paradise	Jimmy Buffett
Crazy Climber	Higher and Higher	Alice DeeJay

So get creative and send me your best ones and I will post them in the next issue. I know there are tons that I missed.

**Philly Classic Report**

By [Fred Wagaman](#)

I had the pleasure of attending the Philly Classic Game show on Saturday, April 15, 2000. The event was organized by David Newman, with help from many others. The show was held at the Villanova Convention Center in Radnor, Pennsylvania.

The show ran all weekend, but I only attended on Saturday. Since it was within easy driving, I couldn't justify spending the whole weekend. My friend Rick convinced me to go by offering to pay my way if I drove.

I didn't take a whole lot of time to prepare for the show. I grabbed some trade bait I had lying around and a bunch of extra Sega Master stuff and threw it in the van. I also thought I'd take along some show-off material, so I packed up my PC-Engine Supergrafx and its games along with a monitor. Not knowing if I'd have a table available, I tossed a card table, extension cord and 6-outlet plug in the van too.

I picked my friend up about 7:30 am and after a stop at Bob Evans, we were at the show around 9:30.

The first thing I did when I got to the show was introduce my self to David. He seemed a little out of breath from running around with last minute things but was very polite with us. Since we were pre-registered, we were given our "tickets" for the show; a common Atari 2600 cart turned into a keychain. (David, I think you have a potential goldmine here. Copyright these things before someone else does.) We were allowed to pick our ½ of a table from the open tables and went about setting up. Since this was a convention center, they had some luggage carts for us to use. This made moving our stuff in very easy. A ½ a table gets filled up rather easily, so it was fortunate that I had a card table to set up the Supergrafx.

I would estimate that about 40 people attended the show. Some brought tables full of stuff to show and/or trade. Some brought nothing but some cash. One guy brought a photo album of his collection, (like a proud parent might have of their children) that I thought was pretty cool. Most people were easy to deal with. Prices and trade deals were reasonable, but as expected, there was someone there with what one might call a “flea marketer” attitude. (Not to worry, it was not anyone that I had dealings with).

Several local “big” names were in attendance. It was nice to meet Joe Santulli, Al Backiel and some of the crew from Digital Press. John Hardie from Atari Gaming Headquarters was there and was very easy to deal with. Sometimes you encounter people who are well-known in a particular hobby and they seem a little smug in dealing with the “lessor” people. John isn’t one of them. Chuck Whitby of the Intellivision Web Ring was also there and did a lot for the show, including some of the auctioning. Dan Boris was a pleasure to meet and talk with as well. Another nice person to meet was the guy (and his long-suffering, soon-to-be-mom wife) who runs the Adventurevision page. ([www.adventurevision.com](http://www.adventurevision.com)) . For the life of me, I can’t remember his name.

The show started off with plenty of time for people to set up and mingle. Trades and sales were bouncing around the room. Several tournaments were scheduled with the most people participating in the Galaga tournament. TNT Amusements of Philadelphia donated a full-size Galaga arcade machine for use at the show. Tournaments were also run for Tekken 3, Defender, Goldeneye and Saturn Bomberman. I only participated in the Tekken tournament where I won my first round, being the game playing fiend that I am, by beating an 8 year old. I lost in the next round to the eventual winner of the tournament.

As the trading and selling declined, the tournaments were started. In between tournaments, door prizes were given. I was lucky enough to win one of the copies of Space Invaders for the Game Boy donated to the show.

About 2, an auction was started. The first items that were on the block were donated items. They included a shrinkwrapped Kid Vid Berstein Bears game, a Vectrex Multicart and a Pac Man corkboard. After that portion of the auction, people were able to offer their own items for auction. Many steals were to be had as people were more interested in getting rid of items than taking them home.

On a personal note, I was able to trade for one of the “missing links” in my collection. For over 4 years, I’ve been looking for Power Lords for the Odyssey 2. Occasionally I’ve seen it on ebay but it usually goes for more money than I can afford. Alan DePalo made me a great deal on it and a very cool Turbogرافx 16 carry bag. Thanks Alan. Some other cool things I picked up were River Raid II, a Pac Man TV tray and an arcade Jamma board.

All in all it was a great show. I really hope David and his team try to make this happen again. About the only suggestions I can make for next time is that more table space be made available per person and that some sort of arrangements for food be made during the show. Many people felt uncomfortable leaving their stuff there while they ran out. Maybe a prearranged delivery with a local pizza shop could be made for next time.

*(Fred has been playing games for over 25 years and actively collecting them for over 10. The 2400+ games in his collection takes up most of his home office and living room. He lives in Denver, PA with his understanding wife Jennie, his 4 year old, button-loving son Max and his newly acquired, wire chewing 4th player, Lynzie. He has seen it, It does exist. The Atari 5200 Tempest prototype was at the show. He says it actually looked pretty good).*

## **Eyeball Benders - Part IV Overlays**

by [Alan Hewston](#)

This month, the Eyeball Benders explore yet another area of classic video gaming - that of overlays. Most of these are pretty easy but a few are less common items, so you'll either know them or not right away. Figure out what game and/or what system the overlay is for, and of course what piece of classic gaming hardware that it overlays. Good Luck. Next month



I hope to do something besides Eyeball Benders, but if I do not find creative time, then you'll see more Eyeball Benders - either more videogame hardware or instruction manuals.

Hints - Once again there are 10 eyeball benders, numbered #31 through #40. One of these isn't actually an overlay, and the other 9 each "overlay" something

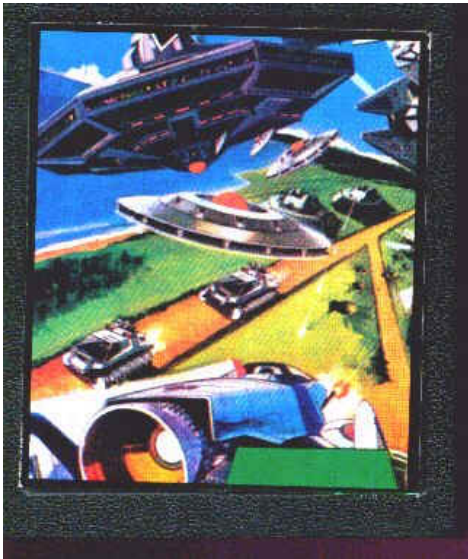
[<CLICK HERE>](#) to go to the Eyeball Benders. If you are a new reader, then make sure to go check out the previous 30 that I've done.

*(Alan is happy that Garage Sale Season is here - but will it be the final one to find Classic Games? Alan or his "Ernie's Rocketship" playing daughter, Samantha can be reached at: [hewston95@stratos.net](mailto:hewston95@stratos.net)).*

## **THE GREAT WHITE NORTH OF RETROGAMES - ATARI 2600 PART SIX (CONCLUSION) - US GAMES & ZELLERS**

### **US Games**

US Games were never sold in Canada - which is fine with me. My friend who brought to Canada about a dozen Fox games also bought a bunch of US Games to - and they were all jokes - the gameplay was horrible, the name would never sell in Canada (as I'm sure "Canada Games" would not sell well in the US) and everything sucked about them. Oh well, he had the stack of Fox games to play, that suited me just fine!



### **Zellers**

Zellers is basically the same as K-Mart, Target, Wal-Mart, etc. in the United States. Zellers sold all types of games, but they also had Zellers games that came in boxes with "Zellers" printed on them. These carts are hard to find, and the packaging/instructions are even worse. On top of that, every collector has heard of the Zellers versions, and just goes crazy for them. They are the ugliest cartridges in my collection, and the games are just pirates of popular games by Activision, Atari, etc. Zellers carts are just pirates - I'm sure the store didn't realize they were, but I would be pretty upset to buy Zellers version of "Frontline" for \$30 and find out that it is just Atari's Combat. If your not into variations or getting EVERYTHING for your 2600, stay away from Zellers games as they aren't anything special, and you probably already have the game in your collection.

### **Conclusion**

I hope you had fun the last couple months checking out the variations and the stories of what we Canadian kids had to deal with when it was too cold outside to play hockey and the Atari 2600 was our entertainment. Next month we'll get started on the ColecoVision, and the many Canadian variations it spawned...

Ryan Harrison is a 21 year-old collector from Brantford, Ontario, Canada, who grew up on a constant diet of Atari 2600, Commodore 64, Nintendo, and Game Boy. Known locally as the guy "who keeps wasting quarters on that old Ms. Pac-Man game" at the local bar, he's the Sumguy you'll run into at the local Thrift in Southern Ontario looking for new stuff for his collection and hopes Bira Bira will find him Sumgirl that will take part of his mind off retrogames. He currently makes his own "label variations" as a Packaging Engineer with 3M Canada. Ryan can be contacted at [ryan.harrison@home.com](mailto:ryan.harrison@home.com)

## Letters to the Editor

I hate to be the one who breaks it to you, but video game characters aren't real. They don't exist outside of video games. They don't go to therapists and Billy the Block does not exist. Never has, never will. So get a clue.

Signed Mr. Reality Check

*Editor. OK Tom, take a deep breath and count to ten. 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10. There, that's better. Get the old blood pressure down. Now to respond to Mr. Reality Check. First off, they do exist and there is a world where they live. Ever see Roger Rabbit? Well, a similar world exists for video game characters. I know because I have been there. And Billy the Block does exist, the game industry just doesn't want you to know about it. It is a conspiracy against the man...errr...I mean block. Do you really think I could make up stuff like this?*

When I read through some of the old issues of the Retrogaming Times, I noticed some regular columns that were dropped. Ones like the Question of the Month, Deeper Look and Many Faces. Why is that? I would love to see them back.

Signed A Fan

*Editor-The Question of the Month was dropped due to lack of response. When the newsletter only had a small readership, I used to get all kinds of people responding. But as the readership grew, the responses declined. Why? I do not know the answer to that one.*

*The other ones were replaced as I try to change the newsletter around to keep it fresh. I may eventually bring some of them back and actually have been looking for someone to take over either Deeper Look or Many Faces.*

*Don't You Hate....*

*When you read about some secret in a video game only to find out it was just a hoax.*

## Promoting the Site

One thing I get people asking me all the time is why don't I use the newsletter to promote the website. They tell me that I am missing a golden opportunity to showcase my own site. Well, I have never been a big self promoter, but they may have a point. So I am going to spotlight a different part of the website each issue. This way you may find out about something on the site that you are not familiar with. It is a huge site and you could get lost in it.

### Arcade Section

As the name suggests, this section is devoted to arcade games. There are actually quite a few different sections there Here is a highlight of what you can find in the Arcade Section.

Marquee Price Guide-One of the most popular sections here is a very large price guide for marquees. It is the only one of its kind and a good reference point for collectors of these wonderful pieces of art. There are over 400 different ones listed and there are even pictures of some of them. You will also find sections in here on information about marquees and Why Collect Marquees.

Arcade Conversions-This is a huge list of all the arcade games that have been converted to the home consoles and handhelds. It is very big and very extensive, but there are still a ton that need to be added. Be sure to look at the list of contributors at the bottom of the page who helped me compile the list.

Arcade Ads-Here is a small selection of ads for arcade machines. I hope to eventually add some more as well as some arcade flyers.

Dragon's Lair Card Set-I went and scanned a complete set of Dragon's Lair cards. So now you can check out all the cards and not have to eat that disgusting bubble gum!

Reviews-This is a section where I have been slowly compiling all the MAME reviews from

Retrogaming Times. I also hope to add some new reviews to this section.

## **eBay Notes**

I have spent little time on eBay recently. Part is due to bad connection and part is due to lack of funds. But I have noticed a strange trend. Many games being sold singly are going for alot less and alot of games sold in lots are getting more than they used. A few examples is Coleco games. I have seen individual Coleco games sell for very low prices. I am talking Up n Down for \$10.00, Wing War for \$4.00, Frogger II for \$8.00 and many other great deals. Granted these are isolated incidents, but there always seems to be some deals on there. But groups of games, especially ones that are bundled with either a system or an accessory are going for alot more than before. I am not sure if it is because some of these sellers charge up to \$5.00 to mail one lone cart, where I have seen \$5.00 shipping for a dozen carts. But whatever it is, I have been getting some great deals and missing even more!

One of the best deals I missed was an Odyssey II deal. There were 10 loose games that sold for about \$15.00. Among them was Killer Bees, Atlantis, Demon Attack, PT Barnum and others. I caught it too late. Oh well, someone got a real steal! There are many other deals similar to this one, if you are willing to look around.

## **Sites of the Month**

Once again I will spotlight two well deserving Classic Video Game sites for you to check out. As always, send in your suggestions and I will check them out and consider them for future issues.

### **Zophar Newsletter**

While the Zophar site is a huge and excellent site, especially for emulator fans. But for this issue, I am going to take a look at their newsletter for emulation. They currently have seven issues done and each one is full of information on emulators and the people behind them. They contain interviews with many of the people involved in making the emulators. These interviews are probably the highlight of the newsletter.

But the newsletter is much more than just an interview. There is a featured site of the month, featured file of the month and even horoscopes! See if the planets are aligned for you to break that high score on Dig Dug! So if you are looking for another newsletter for your emulation news, hop over and check out the Zophar's Newsletter. Also, check out the rest of the site as there is a ton there! Here is the URL:

<http://www.zophar.net/newsletter/>

### **Giant List of Video Game Programmers**

Ever wonder who created a certain game? Did you ever want to know what other games they did? Well, this site is for you as they have a huge list of most of the classic video game programmers for the consoles as well as the computers! You will be overwhelmed with the sheer amount of work that went into this site!

There is also some archived information as well as an ad to order a book called Halycon Days, a book with interviews from many classic programmers. While I haven't ordered it yet, it does look like quite a book. So if you ever wanted to settle a bet about a programmer or want to get studying for that Classic Video Game Version of Trivial Pursuit that may come out one day, this is the place for you! Here is the URL:

<http://www.dadgum.com/giantlist/index.html>

### **Don't You Hate....**

***When you put up a high score on a game, only to have a first time player come by and beat it.***

## **Big Sale!**

It is time for me to do something that pains me. I am going to sell off parts of my collection to raise money. I have some personal things that have come up that require money, so it is

time to put some of the collection up for sale. Below are collections that I am selling. The prices are fixed and do include shipping. Please do not ask to buy individual items, they are going as lots. I figured I would put them here first before going to eBay. I would rather see them fall in the hands of someone who would appreciate them as much as I did.

### **[Lot #1-Tabletop and Handheld Collection - Price \\$775.00 shipped and insured.](#)**

Contains the following items:

- Coleco Pacman
- Coleco Ms. Pacman
- Coleco Donkey Kong
- Coleco Donkey Kong Jr. (one of the labels missing)
- Coleco Frogger
- Coleco Zaxxon (bilingual version)
- Coleco Galaxian (Pac-man battery cover)
- Nintendo Popeye Tabletop
- Nintendo Snoopy Tabletop
- Nintendo Mario's Cement Factory Tabletop
- Q-Bert
- Tron
- Dracula by Entex
- Entex Boxing
- Grandstand Scramble
- Entex Super Cobra
- Bandai Crazy Climber (warping on bottom)
- Tandy Super Cobra Copter
- Bandai Gunfighter
- Caveman
- Entex Defender
- Wildfire Pinball
- Coleco Bowl-a-Tronic
- Tomy Daring Driver
- Donkey Kong II Game & Watch
- Tiger R-Zone Super Screen

There are also some non working ones included like a Galaxian (with Pacman battery cover), Galaxy II and some that work like a Head to Head Baseball (no battery cover) and a few odd ones that haven't been tested. Most are in very good shape and all have been tested. All have battery covers and instruction stickers. There is a little wear, but all are good working units. If you break it down, it comes to under \$30.00 each, which is about right for some and a deal for others.

### **[Lot #2-Video Game Magazines-Price \\$500.00 shipped and insured.](#)**

There are 64 magazines from the classic era here. Most are in very good to excellent shape. There are a few with pictures cut out, but only a few.

Atari Age

First 8 issues

Colecovision Experience #1 (terribly water damaged)

Electronic Fun with Computers and Games

1982-December (cover is detached)

1983-March, April, May, June, August, September (2 copies), October (2 copies), November, December

1984-January, February, March

Electronic Games

1982-August, November

1983- February thru December (2 copies of September 1983)

1984-January, March(2 copies), May, July, September (cover ripped), October, November,



December

Imagic Numb Thumb #1

Intellivision Christmas Catalog (from INTV with pictures of Stadium Mud Buggies, Spiker, Diner, Dig Dug and more!

Joystick

1982-September, November, December

1983-January, April, July, September, November, December

Video Games

1982-October

1983-January, March, July

1984-February

Video Games Player

Fall 1982 (1st issue)

### **[Lot #3-Activision Patches-\\$125.00 shipped and insured.](#)**

All are in great shape. There are 15 total, so that works to a little more than \$8.00 each, which is about right for some and some it is a deal (they sell for anywhere from \$8.00-\$25.00 each on eBay, before shipping).

- Sea Quest - Subhunt
- Stampede Trail Drive
- Starmaster-Order of Supreme Starmaster
- Starmaster-Wing Commander
- Starmaster-Leader
- Starmaster-Starmaster
- Robot Tank-Cross of Excellence
- Robot Tank-Medal of Merit
- Chopper Command-Chopper Commandos
- Spider Fighter-Spider Fighters
- Freeway-Save the Chicken
- Barnstormers-Flying Aces
- River Raid-River Raiders
- Pitfall-Explorers Club
- Grand Prix-Driving Team

## **Conclusion**

This issue can be known as the issue where Tom finally gets writer's block. Yes, for one issue I had so many other things on my mind, that I couldn't even think about classic games. For the first time in over 3 years, I was stumped on what to write. I almost thought about skipping an issue and taking a break. But I thought of all the people who have come to rely on reading a new issue each month and figured I would dig deep into the creative well and get the issue done. Also, my online connections have been nothing short of terrible. So I finally ponied up for a DSL connection that should be in place by next issue. So hopefully by next month I will be more creative and having a better connection will help. Check back for the next month's prognosis.

[Tom Zjaba](#)