Retrogaming Times

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CCAG Show

The Classic Computer and Gaming Show
May 25, 2002, Cleveland Ohio

The Deep Roots of Classic Video Games

Ask the average person about where the ideas for most of their favorite video games came from and they would mention some Nintendo 8-Bit game. But if you dig a little deeper, you

would find that many of the most popular game genres of today have their start in the classic era. The influence of classic games is great and unfortunately often overlooked by the general populace. But all classic game fans know of the invaluable influence that classic games had. So with that in mind, we will take some time each month to point out the roots of a popular genre or some other major influence that classic games had on the video game industry of today and into the future.

For our first installment, we will look at the very popular side scrolling game. The popularity of the Nintendo 8-Bit can be greatly attributed to the 2D side scrolling games that were all the rage. The first game to really get the Nintendo going was Super Mario Bros, which was one of the most popular games of all time and took Mario from a minor star and turned him into the most popular video game character of all time. But would a game like Super Mario Bros be around if not for the numerous classic games that preceded it?

Possibly the most popular and most influential of all the classic side scrollers was Pitfall. This true classic from Activision was the game that really established the side scrolling games as a genre of their own. Before Pitfall, most games were set on a single screen. Whether it was Pacman or Kangaroo or even Donkey Kong, it featured a single screen for the character to move on, before being able to advance to another screen. There was no leaving this screen, until a set objective was completed, be it make it to the top or clear all the dots. But with Pitfall, you could move from one screen to the next, quickly and without having to achieve any certain objectives (other than not getting killed). You could also do something that was unheard of back then, you could go back to the previous screen. It may seem like nothing now, but back then, when you went forward, you went forward.

Pitfall also offered various challenges, more than your typical game. You have to remember that most games consisted of a few different screens back then and that was it. Even a game like Gorf, was just 5 different screens, played over and over again. But in Pitfall, it gave the illusion that there was much more to it. With snakes, stationary and rolling logs, fires, gators, opening pits and more, you really felt like there was a whole world to explore. It was really the start of the explore this new world as you made your way through it that was all the rage.

Not even counting the almost endless flood of imitators in the Bit Age (my term for the second generation of video games, where systems are often categorized by the number of bits they were, see our sister online magazine, Bit Age Times for more info), the influence that Pitfall had in the classic era was great. Besides the excellent sequel, aptly named Pitfall II, there was Cabbage Patch Kids, Smurfs and even other Activision games like H.E.R.O. As you can see, this David Crane masterpiece is the start of one of the longest and most popular roots in video game history.

CCAG Has a New Virtual Home!

Last month, we told you how the CCAG show found a new home and was on schedule for its third year. Now we have more news! The show has a new website address. It is no longer hosted by Tomorrow's Heroes, but now has its very own website. The new address is http://www.ccagshow.com. Bookmark this page and check back for frequent updates, including how many tables are still available (as of Monday, March 18th, 1/4 of the available tables were gone). So check out the great job that Digital Dinos are doing on the new site and we hope to see you there!

COMMERCIAL VAULT

by Adam King

Greetings, gamers. This month I thought I try to expand my column by doing two commercials per month. That's right, twice the nostalgia at half the price.

RealSports Baseball

With March arriving, it won't be long before the baseball fields start filling up again. So my

first commercial this month is for Atari's RealSports Baseball. Around 1982, Atari was getting tired with Mattel for saying their Intellivision sports games surpassed their 2600 titles (even though Atari couldn't deny that the INTV sports were superior, and their's, well, sucked). SO they relaunched their sports line under the name RealSports, promising even better sports games on the 2600. For their television ad for one of the games, RealSports Baseball, Atari hired baseball manager Billy Martin to tell how he likes the game. During the ad, which takes place in a locker room, Martin actually takes shots at George Plimpton and the Intellivision, even though he doesn't actually say his name.

BILLY MARTIN: "I've been hearing this other guy talk about his realistic home video baseball game. Well, I've played real baseball. I also played the new Atari RealSports Baseball, and I like it! 'Cause I can hit and run, steal, pick off runners, hey, it's baseball like baseball should be played. And who are you gonna listen to anyhow, that other guy who talks baseball, or a nice guy like me, who lives it?"
ANNOUNCER: "New RealSports Baseball, one in a series, only form Atari."

PICTURES:

"Watch me talk smack about George Plimton without really doing so."

"What do I think of RealSports Baseball? I LIKE IT!"

"Who's the baseball king now, Intellivision?"

Don't forget, Billy Martin LIKES IT.

Atari also did a similar ad for RealSports Football, only with Ed "Too Tall" Jones.

Cabbage Patch Colecovision

The next commercial was brought to my attention by Sarah Szefer. In around 1983/84, Coleco had two things going for it. They had the Colecovision, the hit arcade system, and they had the top selling Cabbage Patch Kid doll line. So why not do a promotion that

combines the two? Coleco had an offer where if you buy a Colecovision you'll receive a free Cabbage Patch doll by mail.

Coleco even put out a television ad for the offer. In this commercial, a girl is trying to convince her parents to buy a Colecovision for her brother because of the games. In truth she's really out to get a free Cabbage Patch doll. This ad is a testament to how stupid Coleco was in handling their Cabbage Patch Kid line. Take a look (sorry about the poor quality).

The girl talks to her mother first:
"Mom you should buy Billy a Colecovision. Then he can play Burgertime. Beside, he ate his Brussel Sprouts."

The girl then sees her father, who's reading a newspaper:
"The Colecovision plays Congo Bongo. And Billy did clean his room."

The father replies, pointing at a newspaper ad:
"This wouldn't have something to do with the free Cabbage Patch Kid?"

The girl, acting innocent, simply says:
"Cabbage Patch?"

The announcer spills out the offer: "Buy a Colecovision and a Coleco Game Cartridge by november 15, we'll send you a free Cabbage Patch kid by Christmas."

Sure enough, in the last scene Billy is enjoying his new Colecovision, and the girl is holding her free Cabbage Patch doll.

Billy: "Wow, a Colecovision! Way to go, Amy!"
Amy: "I did it just for you. (winks)"

The announcer finishes: "When you buy a Colecovision, you make two kids happy."

PICTURES:

"Mom can Billy have a Colecovision so I don't have to buy a doll?"

Mom was a hard sell, so I'll try dad.

"Oh no, he's onto me."

Billy has his Colecovision, Amy has her doll, and everybody's happy, right?

Okay, so according to Coleco, videogames are only for boys, and dolls are only for girls. Certainly a sexist and stereotypical ad from Coleco. For ten-on years I read gaming magazines from female gamers talking about this subject. Maybe it's ads like this that led to this ongoing debate. And that's my 2 cents, as Kent Brockman would say.

What do you think about two commercials per month? Like it, don't like it? Let me know. Also if you gamers out there have a suggestion for a commercial for this column, let me know and I'll see if I can find it.

Video Game Lingo

Cross Platform-As the name implies, it means a game that is released over different game platforms. A good example would be the Parker Bros games, like Frogger that were released on the Atari 2600, Atari 5200, Colecovision and Intellivision.

Easter Egg-This is a hidden secret within a video game. It could be an extra level, message, picture or whatever. The first Easter Egg was in Adventure.

Cheats-Many games, especially the later ones, were quite long and it took awhile for people to complete them. In order for programmers to test the games, they would install cheats that gave them unlimited lives, invincibility, etc... This made it much easier to finish a game and make sure it worked correctly.

Prototype-These prized possessions were pre-production copies of the game, many times incomplete or different from the original. Some were games that were used for display at trade shows or to show the progress in the game.

Review Copy-While these are similar to prototypes, there are some distinct differences. Review copies of most games, especially the classic era games were usually complete or very near complete. They were also usually in cartridge format with a casing, where most prototypes were usually boards, with no casing. Some of the review copies would feature the following phrase "For Review Only" or something similar on the cartridge casing.. These were usually sent to magazines for review of a game.

Colecovision Reviews

By David Mrozek, The Video Game Critic
www.videogamecritic.net

Back in the early 80's I was a big Atari 2600 fan, and I tried to turn a blind eye to those "other" systems. But when a friend of mine got a Colecovision, I couldn't help but become insanely jealous of those arcade-quality graphics and sound effects. The Atari 2600 simply could not compare in terms of color or graphic detail, but I wouldn't admit it in public. Knowing that my parents wouldn't buy me another system, I lived a life of denial, secretly longing to experience that level of ultimate arcade realism in MY home. Less than 20 years later, I finally acquired the coveted system, and it is soooooo sweet! Colecovision is so awesome I can't stand it. Some of these games are even better than I remember. Check out some of my reviews:

Gorf (Coleco 1983) A

Let's get one thing straight - Gorf kicks ass. What other game provides so many flavors of space shooting fun? Indeed, Gorf is four games in one, hence four times the fun of your normal shooter. The first stage, "Astro Battle", is pretty much a Space Invaders clone, except you have a single, thin, wide shield that you poke holes in. You can move your cannon up and down as well as sideways. Right away you'll notice the unique firing mechanism, which allows you to abort your previous shot simply by firing a new one. This prevents you from having to wait until your bad shots leave the screen. The second stage, "Laser Attack", has more of a Galaga flavor, with aliens moving around the screen in different formations. Then there's the third (and very short) "Space Warp" stage. This one didn't turn out quite as good. It's supposed to be a black hole with aliens emerging from it. You basically just want to shoot in the middle to hit them when they first appear. Finally, there's the "Flag Ship" stage, in which you need to take out the mother ship as it moves back and forth across of the top. You can blast away at the hull all you want, but you'll need a perfect shot to hit the reactor and destroy the thing. The resulting explosion, four fuzzy boxes, is pretty weak compared to the arcade. But overall the graphics are fine, and the sound effects are even better. There's a very nice, distinctive sound effect at the end of each stage that I really like. The only thing missing is the "My name is Gorf" voice synthesis from the arcade version.
1 or 2 players

Slither (Coleco 1983) B

This is a pretty good Centipede clone which lets you move all over the screen and shoot both up and down. Instead of a centipede, you shoot an army of snakes, and instead of a pesky spider, a pterodactyl terrorizes your cannon. The levels, set in a desert, are strewn with cactus and rocks. Some nice color changes occur as day turns to night. The first few levels feel like a second-rate Centipede, but in the later levels, when the whole screen is crawling with snakes, the action gets pretty intense. Unfortunately the graphics and sound get pretty choppy when there's a lot going on. But I can't deny the fun and challenge. This game was clearly designed for use with Coleco's Roller Controller (track-ball), and it works very well.
1 or 2 players

Venture (Exidy 1982) C

I always loved Venture because it's an adventure game in its purest form. You go into a series of rooms, shoot the monsters, and grab the treasure. Each set of monsters is imaginatively drawn and have their own theme music. The graphics are very simple (each object is a single color, and your guy is a smiley face), but there is charm to than simplicity. Venture is challenging. Unfortunately, most of the difficulty is due to the horrendous controls. It's really ridiculous how tough it is to control your guy, and you often collide with

a monster you are trying to shoot. Still, exploring each room is fun, at least until you've visited all 12 of them, in which case you have to start over again.
1 or 2 players

Tarzan (Coleco 1982) D
This game tries to be a turbo-charged Jungle Hunt, but ultimately fails due to choppy animation and mediocre gameplay. Visually, Tarzan has a lot going for it. The graphics are gorgeous; the lush, detailed jungle is awash with bright colors. There are about a dozen screens full of trees, vines, monkeys, and crocodile infested rivers. You can either take the high road by swinging on vines, or the low road by walking on the ground. Unfortunately, the ground is cluttered with cheap hits like pits and snakes that appear without warning - not fun. Every few screens you'll be required to save caged monkeys from hunters or gorillas, which is the best part of the game. Tarzan and his flowing hair are nicely drawn. Unfortunately, his movement is so choppy that the control feels unresponsive. He can climb trees, leap, and punch, which will temporally daze his enemy. The background music is good, featuring some nice bongo drums. But overall I was not impressed with this title. After you see all the screens, the game starts to feel like a chore.
1 player

Buck Rogers Planet of Zoom (Sega 1984) F
This is one of "those" games that tried to simulate the 3D effect of the Death Star trench scene in Star Wars (another game that comes to mind is Mattel's Star Strike). The effect is pretty lame, and all that's left is some really poor gameplay. You control a space ship flying through several 3D environments featuring some extremely choppy animation. You need to shoot flying saucers and avoid getting shot. Due to the choppy action on the screen, it's difficult to gauge your position in relation to the saucers, so shooting them down is difficult. Colecovision was in way over its head with this one. It just couldn't handle the 3D requirements of this game. The result is really bad and virtually unplayable.
1 or 2 players

Dragonfire (Imagic 1984) A
If you enjoyed the Atari 2600 version of this game, you owe it to yourself to check out Dragonfire for the Colecovision. Imagic really went beyond the call of duty for this one. The first screen displays the exterior of a castle and a bridge. The castle walls and shimmering water below look excellent. You must avoid fireball blasts coming from the castle gate. If you get hit, you'll splash into the water below. In later stages, there's a retracting bridge and an archer in the tower to complicate matters. Once you get into the castle, you get a 3D view of the treasure room, with a large dragon at the bottom of the screen. As you run around collecting treasures, your man actually scales in and out. My only complaint is that the treasure items (which looked so nice in the 2600 version) are plain and single-colored.

In later stages a troll also patrols the room. Dragonfire has 10 skill levels, and it's more challenging than it looks. Fortunately the controls are perfectly responsive. This game has it all. There's even a nice title screen showing a princess in the tower and the dragon peeking out of the gate.
1 or 2 player

For over 1500 more reviews, check out The Video Game Critic at www.videogamecritic.net

The Many Faces of...Zaxxon

by Alan Hewston

I'm making a focus on what game titles to review based on their 20th anniv. We'll start with the 1982 arcade game Zaxxon. Oh what a relief I did not pick E.T., the Extra Terrestrial (or how I fell into holes over and over again looking for Reese's Pieces) – since this week marks the big screen's 20th anniv. For the most part, I hope to acquire & review the popular games from 1982 this year and 1983 next year etc. I'll still eventually cover the pre '82 titles like Frogger & Centipede (if I get all vers). Too bad I didn't think of this sooner!?! There's no time left to review all of the '82 games in '02, but if Tom gives me the bandwidth to do 2 compact reviews per issue (those with fewer versions) I'll cover most of them. [See also RT# 14 for Doug Saxon's MF of Zaxxon & RT#s 27-30 for Tom's Zaxxon short story].

Zaxxon gave us a major change from the typical space shooter and provided a better 3-D perspective (via an isometric three-quarters view) than ever before. The use of shadows, an altimeter bar and enemy fighters moving in 6 DOF (Engineering term for Degrees of Freedom - no not from Kevin Bacon) were the final touches that make this perspective work. I'm sure you know all about flying, shooting and dodging the enemy in this huge hit and its sequel Super Zaxxon – so let's get to the home reviews.

Arcade game by Sega/Gremlin 1982
Classic Home releases: '83 by Coleco: Intellivision, Atari 2600 & Colecovision; Commodore 64 (cart '83 Sega & then a late disk release '84 Synapse, Peter Adams); Datasoft in '83 on disk/cassette: Atari 8-bit (Ron S. Fortier et al), Apple II (John Garcia) & CoCo (Steve Bjork). Atari 8 bit & 5200 cart versions in Sega cases (coded by Datasoft). Also, rumor mill TI-99 (by Datasoft, 8K was to large for cart and canceled). Categories: Gameplay, Addictiveness, Graphics, Sound & Controls Sequels: Super Zaxxon, late 1982 by Sega, and a PB Board Game. Categories: Gameplay, Addictiveness, Graphics, Sound & Controls

Sequels: Super Zaxxon, late 1982 by Sega, and a PB Board Game.

"Wow check out the cool Zaxxon Board game!

Tom should review all of these classic VG board games."

Have Nots: Apple II (N/A)
The Apple II family has a HUGE library of disk-only games, but not too many are arcade ports. As you'll see in upcoming reviews, the AP II was very successful and often the first version written for home computer-only games - many that became hits. I've not been blessed with having found one (dirt cheap) yet, but I did play on them some in my youth.

Datasoft has done a fine job on every port I've ever seen, so I expect this version to be pretty darn good.

Have Nots: CoCo (N/A)
Similarly, I have no CoCo, but there were a fair number of carts, and also some disk-only arcade ports - like Zaxxon. The bulk of it's game library are CoCo unique games. See my interview/site review (probably next issue) for more about the CoCo. The Radio Shack Color Computer version of Zaxxon is made by Datasoft and is reported to be one of the better CoCo action games ever officially licensed.

"Many of the Zaxxon faces indeed"

Have Nots: Intellivision (29)
I expected this version to just beat out the 2600, but I forgot that Coleco made sure that their version was the best – so this one suffered the most from it's potential. Well actually the Inty is as good or better than the 2600 if you ignore my Control score. The Controls are effective (7), & 7 ties my highest score ever for the Inty. But what good is a shooter when the controller doesn't have a real fire button? The Gameplay. Hmmn. With so many variations or options or features missing from system to system, I made up a separate score sheet (not included) to detail the Gameplay for each version – how much it adds to or subtracts from the Zaxxon experience. The Gameplay here is good (6), but if you never saw it before, you may not know that it is Zaxxon. With a head–on view instead of three-quarters view, it looks more like River Raid with altitude added. Most of the enemies are included but not the same with the head-on view and fewer obstacles to go over, under or between. Fortunately Coleco added randomness so that every game plays differently. The focus on each enemy having unique abilities in attack, movement, position & height, when combined make for a nice mixture of challenges which Zaxxon is known for. The lack of scenery on the asteroids makes it play and look very foreign, as if everything is moving at you instead of you moving at them. Only the 3 Coleco versions offer the 4 start-level options for either 1 or 2 players, and a bonus life earned at 10K. They also have the altimeter and fuel gauge, but there are no rockets, mobots, and no crosshairs in the space battle. They added Dodgerguns that appear to move (L/R) towards you at least most of the time. The Graphics are average (5) but could have been better. See below my Atari 2600 comments on the Graphics - which also apply here - but the Inty is better. The Addictiveness is good (6) with the standard Inty pause button combo and the large amount of variety, but I get frustrated playing a shooter with 4 tiny non-fire buttons. The Sound is mediocre (5), but improves with the added effects and variety in later levels.

Have Nots: Atari 5200 (30)
Sega or Datasoft let me down here. The graphics on the manual, box and cart label are beautiful and most prominently show the rockets launching from the asteroids. But they are not listed in the 8-bit manual and I've yet to see them show up in the game either. Aw c'mon, is this false advertising, or am I just not good enough to see them in play? Again, being the same game as the Atari 8-bit, the Graphics, Gameplay and Sound all match the 8-bit (see below). The Controls are effective (7), but really frustrating when you need to dive or climb full tilt, and often combined with L/R but the sticks decide to only go up or down part of that time. Dooh! I should have scored Controls lower, but you can adjust your strategy to play it safe knowing this, and maybe still enjoy the game. But these 2 ports also seem to play the hardest, and fastest for no apparent reason and that surely

hurts the Addictiveness, which is fair (5), but could be much better. Yep, you'll get frustrated or tired of this version first, if not right away.

Have Nots: Atari 2600 (31)
I think that this version was the first completed by Coleco and typical of their arcade ports, the non-CV versions were nowhere near as impressive. The Controls are perfect (10), easy to do when you only move in 8 directions and have one fire button needed. The Sound is mediocre (5) as they tried to capture most of the arcade effects, but many sounds are annoying instead. The Graphics are marginal (4), for looking like Zaxxon, but pretty good relative to a typical 2600 game. Likewise, the 2600 version is played from a 2-D head-on view. The best effect is probably the space battle with the enemy fighters getting bigger and bigger as they close in. But unfortunately this stage is only in 2-D as you can only move left and right, no up/down. IMHO this is the game element / graphic effect most sorely missed from the arcade, where the fighters move in all 6 directions (I/O/U/D/L/R) and in packs and formations and even kamikaze. They also skipped having an enemy plane counter, or subtracting planes shot on the asteroid. Overall the graphics are limited with few to no asteroid details, big, blocky sprites, minimal use of colors, sprite overlapping and explosion problems, plus the ever-popular limited number of on-screen objects. The Gameplay is decent (6) and all the same comments from the Inty apply here as well.

The Addictiveness is fine (6), and is helped by the variety of each game, but there is no pause in the action either. Note that it is not bad game, more like average for all the 2600 games I've reviewed thus far.

Bronze Medal: Atari 8 bit (34)
Although there are still 3 versions better than this one it still wins the Bronze, tying my worst composite score yet for the 8-bit. My main concern besides the hurried, way too fast pace is that the Graphics are only good enough (6). Everything is a bit too big, making it lose detail & # of objects & down-field distance, playability,& variety. There are poor detections / collisions of sprites, your shots are hard to see and there are really dull colors throughout. The Sound is fine (6), but nothing special as several of the enemies and their sound effects are absent. Fortunately the Controls are flawless (10). The Gameplay, is good enough (6) to play, but surely the worst. The hurried asteroid speed continues on to your face-off with Zaxxon giving you almost no chance, just luck. Then there are no start level options, no rocket launches, mobot formations, crosshairs, guided missiles, fewer enemy planes (with less or no creativity in their attacks). Then, there is no up/down motion on the space scenes and the ships are always the same size, making the space phase clearly worse than the Inty/2600. The Addictiveness is fine (6), with a pause, but all the above problems make you want to quit. I also forgot to mention that there are significantly more force fields and walls to overcome on these versions & way too difficult to enjoy - No points scoring, just duck and cover. I could only get my disk version (Datasoft?) to work on the 800, not the XL - even with a translator disk.

Silver Medal Colecovision (42)
A huge step up from the pack brings us to the version with the best, outstanding (9) Gameplay, and the one I've personally played the most. All elements are included & done well, save for no Dodgerguns or Satellites (see other versions). The Controls are excellent (10), but only if you use a Y-cable or start the game with the CV controller and then quickly switch out/in an Atari controller. Once started, you do not need any keypad functions and there is no pause, so why not try an Atari stick? The Sound is impressive (8) and includes the best background spaceship noise - the one that varies with your altitude. The Graphics are cool (7), but the details of the asteroids are missing and the colors are also boring. The Addictiveness would be superior with a pause button, but is still enjoyable (8). This version is really not to far from the winner – so a little better detail and programming would have got it there.

Gold Medal: Commodore 64 (42 on disk by Synapse & 43 on cart by Sega)
OK, so there are 2 official versions here, which is an unfair advantage, but only one can win a medal. I'll start with the disk version, which scores just as well as the Coleco and strangely was a remake one year later by Synapse - not Sega, Coleco or Datasoft. The

Graphics are sharp (8) with loads of detail, very smooth scrolling and a good bit of color added. Both C64 versions have a star-field in the space battle. The Sound is crisp (8), and includes effects for everything, but some seem odd. The Gameplay is impressive (8) and better than the cart version, as it includes everything the CV has except for the mobot formations that precede the arrival of Zaxxon. There are no start level options for either C64 port, but they've added a satellite (worth bonus points) to the space battle stage. The Addictiveness is enjoyable (8) with a pause button (F7), but you start the asteroid over with every death. The Controls are excellent (10) for this and the cart version as well.

C64 Cart Version: The Controls are actually better than the other versions as you can really make it dive/climb fast. Despite a few missing Gameplay elements, this is the clear winner – as it scores the best at everything else. The Graphics are superb (9) with packed detail everywhere. The Sound is outstanding (9) & everything is most excellent. The Addictiveness is also enjoyable (8) and the pause button (run/stop) is good. I was a bit harsh and dropped the Gampelay score to very good (7), as it is complete other than lacking the start level options, crosshairs, and (I've yet to see any) guided missiles - maybe they come later. The Sega version may also available in bootleg format on disk. Special thanks to Mat Allen for making sure that I did not forget to try both C64 versions and include them here.

A final note about all 7+ versions is that some gameplay elements do not show up in level one, so you need to get further along to enjoy them. In every port the game would be significantly better if they gradually added enemies and difficulty for about 4 levels, or so, because once all the features are in place & you've hit the top speed - Zaxxon become very repetitive. Thus no version earned a 9 or 10 in Addictiveness.

Come back next month when I'll review the Many Faces of Mr .Do for the Atari 2600, Atari 8-bit, Colecovision, and Commodore 64, and hopefully also Megamania for the Atari 2600, Atari 8-bit & 5200 and Commodore 64 (if official - mine says '85 Activision Tony Taylor using Gamemaker).

(Alan Hewston, can be reached at: Hewston95@stratos.net and here's your chance to help him to obtain some '82 games before '02 is over: Dragonfire & Threshold [CV]; SW ESB, & DK Jr. [Inty]; Robotron 2084, Joust & Dig Dug [TI-99]; Mountain King, Moon Patrol, Serpentine, Protector II (if made) & Dig Dug [Vic 20]; Buck Rogers, Tutankham & Miner 2049er [TI-99 & Vic 20]. See http://members.core.com/~hewston/Hewston_vg.html)

I Got What You Want…

By Fred Wagaman

Hey, looking for the Rare ? The Unusual ? The Unique ? Well spare no expense, cause I got what you want, right here…

Sounds like a sales pitch.

It might be.

But I'm not really selling anything. At least not until the Philly Classic show. ;)

No. What I want to discuss here is knowing what you want. Or in other words, "Watcha lookin for ?"

Many of us collect anything we can get our hands on. If we don't have it, or it isn't complete, we'll pick it up. And even if we do have it, we'll probably pick it up to trade it (or sell it) for something we don't have.

Now this may come as a shock to some of you. I hope you're sitting down.

You can't get everything.

That's right. No matter how much of a completist you are, you will not get everything. Or you won't get everything in the condition and format that you want it.

Bad news for the Atari 2600 completist out there, there are some prototypes you'll hear about, but never see.

New games in limited quantities are being produced each year.

Games were released with weird names in Europe and Asia that you will never have.

So if you can't get everything, how do you narrow your focus of what you want ?

I know of a person that is attempting to get all of the PC-Engine (Japanese Turbografx-16) games that were released. That's over 800 games. And to make it more interesting, he wants them in their original packaging. That's a narrow focus. But what a challenge !

I have a large collection of games. I set smaller goals for myself as I was going along. As I found things I didn't have, I began to keep a list of what I did have. Then I began to keep a list of the games I didn't have for certain systems. As that list got smaller, I began to go after certain games to finish the collection. Many of you do the same thing.

Some people only look for games they want to play. Either because they had them (and liked them), or they've heard of them and want to give them a try. These people couldn't care less about Chase the Chuckwagon, but would pay reasonably well for a copy of Pitfall!.

Some of these people have a small list of games for different systems that they are looking for.

That brings me to another thought. Do you have a list ? A list of games you have ? Maybe one of games you want ? Or games you have that you'd like to get rid of ?

How many times have people asked for your "want" list ?

Personally, I'm at the point where my want list is pretty slim. Not because I have so much, but because I want so little. I'll probably never have an Atari 2600 Crazy Climber. If I did, I might play it a few times and file it away. But it is on my list. I'm also not willing to pay a lot or trade away my first born to get it.

So not only do I have a list, but I also have limit to what I'm willing to do to get something on that list. Even if I come across something I don't have, I may pass on it because of it having too high of a price (money or otherwise).

So here we go. How do YOU collect ? Do you have a list ? How do you know what you want ? What defines your wants ?

If I get some interesting responses, I'll post them here next month.

Fred has been playing games for over 25 years and actively collecting them for over 10. The 2500 + games that he has takes up most of his home office and living room. He lives in Denver, PA with his understanding wife Jennie, his 6 year-old, button-loving son, Max and his 2 year-old, 4th player, Lynzie. Your unique collecting lists and ideas can be forwarded to him at fcw3@mail.ptd.net .

Missing Asteroids Champion To Receive Posthumous Award

FAIRFIELD, IOWA- March 16th, 2002 - A Cherry Hill, New Jersey man, who, in 1982, scored the highest score ever on the classic video game Asteroids, has finally been located after a fifteen-year search. He had died in Los Angeles in March, 1989 from injuries received during a fall while trying to save his pet cat from a cornice of his apartment building.

Scott Safran -- who would now be 35 years old -- scored a world record 41,336,440 points on Asteroids at the All-American Billiard Company in Newtown, Pennsylvania on November 13, 1982. At that time, his accomplishment was recognized as the world record by both Atari Games and Twin Galaxies. Safran's score remains the longest standing

world record to be held on a major video game title.

When both Atari and Twin Galaxies moved offices in the early 1980s, all correspondence with Safran was lost and he could never be located again. "Neither Atari nor Twin Galaxies could remember where Safran lived," says Walter Day, chief scorekeeper at the Twin Galaxies Intergalactic Scoreboard -- an organization that tracks scores for the worldwide video game and pinball industries. "Unfortunately," continues Day, "we presumed he was a local player living in the Newtown, Pennsylvania area and could not locate him. However, the 15-year-old Safran lived two hours away in Cherry Hill, New Jersey and was driven to Newtown, Pennsylvania by his parents so he could play Asteroids as part of a fundraiser."

Day tried to locate Safran in the early 1980s to award him a certificate of merit for his Asteroids accomplishment. Day, however, was unable to find Safran, despite numerous searches over the years. With the 1998 re-release of Asteroids by Activision, Safran's score reentered the limelight, but, once again, the champion could not be found.

Day says: "When we realized Safran's 20-year-old score may never be beat -- its like Joe DiMaggio's hitting streak of 56 games -- we started looking for him again, in order to honor him with a special award for this tremendous feat." However, Safran remained missing in spite of a lengthy nationwide search, which included attempts by the Scranton Tribune, an online division of ABC News, an Internet talk show, a myriad of postings on the Internet and a news release describing the search issued to 1,500 radio stations by the Wireless Flash News Service.

Three other Scott Safrans were found, however, but none were the missing champion. "One radio station in Tulsa, Oklahoma," says Day, "got numerous phone calls saying they knew where Safran was, but the calls turned out to be a hoax." And, online searches by the Scranton Tribune found two Scott Safrans in New Jersey -- both who proved to be the wrong person. Even though the search for Safran was extensively reported on the Internet, it was not until January, 2002 that someone saw the news story and sent Twin Galaxies a tip that connected Safran to his hometown of Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Until then, Day believed that Safran had lived in the Scranton, Pennsylvania area. "Wherever he lived, however, we were sure he had moved completely out of the area," says Day.

In spite of Internet attention directed at Scott Safran and his accomplishment, his parents, Mitch and Frann Safran of Cherry Hill, who died only two years ago, never knew their son had attained eternal fame. "His Asteroids record was a thing of the distant past that most of his surviving family members had completely forgotten about," says Marci Billow, Scott's younger sister who witnessed in-person Scott's record-breaking weekend in Newtown. "I still have a photograph of my mother handing Scott the official quarter that started the game," says Billow. Now living in Redmond, Washington and working for Microsoft, Billow says: "Scott had a huge heart with an insatiable passion for life. He played hard and made life a fun adventure for everyone around him." Ms. Billow also noted that by his college years, Scott had transferred his passion for Asteroids over to guitar playing and the Grateful Dead.

Scott Safran was born August 19, 1967 in Trenton, New Jersey. He was a 1985 graduate of Cherry Hill High School West. Moving to California after high school graduation, he studied business administration at Pierce Community College in Woodland Hills, California. In March, 1989, he fell from a rooftop while attempting to save his pet cat, Samson, named after the Grateful Dead song, Samson and Delilah. He was buried in Pennsauken, NJ and a Scott Safran Memorial Fund was established in care of the Jewish Community Center, 1301 Springdale Road, Cherry Hill.

"Scott's surviving relatives are very pleased that he is receiving this posthumous honor," says Marci Billow. "We will probably take turns displaying the award certificate that Twin Galaxies is creating to honor his achievement."

"In the history of video game playing, Asteroids will stand at the top with Pac-Man and Space Invaders," explains John Saxon Wendell, a spokesperson for Twin Galaxies. "Due to its greatness, Asteroids was recently re-released by Activision -- mainly because it is the granddaddy of all competitive video games." From the moment it was introduced in 1979,

Asteroids sparked major competitions and high-score attempts and established a generation of video game superstars. Asteroids was the original game that launched the "high-score" craze that Scott Safran became a part of. Players were able to keep games going on a single quarter -- quite often for days on end -- while racking up astronomical scores.

The Twin Galaxies Intergalactic Scoreboard, based in Fairfield, Iowa, has been keeping score for the world of video game and pinball playing since 1982 and monitors the highest scores on all home and arcade video games, PC-based games and pinball. Its most well known product is the Twin Galaxies' Official Video Game & Pinball Book of World Records -- which is a 984-page book containing 12,416 scores from players in 31 countries compiled. Twin Galaxies also conducts an Annul Video Game Festival at the Mall of America in Bloomington, MN.

CLASSIC GAMING EXPO 2002 SHOW DATES ANNOUNCED; MULTIPLE ANNIVERSARY EVENTS PLANNED

VALLEY STREAM, NY (March 17, 2002) - The organizers of Classic Gaming Expo have announced the dates of the 2002 show to take place at Jackie Gaughan's Plaza Hotel. On Saturday August 10th, and Sunday August 11th, the computer and gaming industry's most innovative pioneers will gather in Las Vegas to attend Classic Gaming Expo 2002. Dubbed "CGE2K2", the fifth annual event will celebrate multiple historical anniversaries and is inspired by a strong, continued commitment to classic game updates and re-releases by the industry's major publishers.

Heading up this year's celebration are several historical video game anniversaries, most notable of which is the thirty-year anniversary of the founding of Atari. Officially formed in 1972, Atari has become a name synonymous with video games and is still in existence today under the guidance of parent company Infogrames. In addition to the formation of Atari, 2002 also marks twenty-five years since the release of their Atari 2600 game system, one of the best-selling consoles of all time.

Other milestones being celebrated at this years Expo include the twenty-year anniversaries of the release of both the Coleco and the Vectrex game systems. These systems, released in 1982, helped to revolutionize the video game industry. "It's amazing to think that all of these important historical events have anniversaries in 2002" said Sean Kelly, co-promoter of Classic Gaming Expo. "In addition, there are several smaller events to commemorate - including our fifth year of organizing CGE."

Other items of interest at this year's show include an updated museum exhibit, numerous additions to the guest speaker list, and the release of several new games for various classic systems. The Classic Gaming Expo museum encompasses hundreds of items including many one-of-a-kind prototypes. The museum contains the largest public display of classic game hardware, software, and memorabilia in the world. "What makes the ClassicGaming Expo Museum so special is the fact that it's comprised of items belonging to dozens of individuals," states co-promoter John Hardie. "This is not just a single person's collection but rather a grouping of items on loan from enthusiasts as well as many of our distinguished guests."

Aside from the numerous keynote speeches by various industry legends throughout the show, CGE 2002 will play host to a large number of classic video game vendors and exhibitors. While many of them will be selling mint-condition hardware and software from the days of old, others will be
presenting new products for sale for systems such as the Vectrex, ColecoVision, Atari 2600, 5200, Lynx, and Jaguar as well as many modern-day consoles.

Other show highlights include various classic console game stations, tournaments, raffles, door prizes, live music, and an incredible number of classic coin-operated video games, all set on free play for the attendees.

"We're thankful for the ongoing support and interest shown by the video game industry," notes co-promoter Joe Santulli. "We feel it's vital that this history be preserved for generations to come."

Now in its fifth year, Classic Gaming Expo remains the industry's only annual event that is dedicated to celebrating and preserving the history of electronic entertainment; bringing together industry pioneers, gaming enthusiasts, and the media for the ultimate experience in learning, game-playing and networking. Classic Gaming Expo is a production of CGE Services, Corp. (www.cgexpo.com)

MAME REVIEWS

by Adam King

Hello, everybody. Tom let me do the Mame Reviews for this month, So I decided to go along with three of my favorites that I think you will enjoy as well.

Qix (Taito, 1981)
This game can be described as somewhat like an etch-a-sketch. You control a little diamond marker and you need to draw whole squares and rectangles. The object is to claim 75 percent of the field so you can go to the next level. You can draw in two speeds: fast and slow, which is more dangerous but scores you more points. While you're doing that, a swirling helix called the Qix randomly floats around the playfield, and if it touches a line you're drawing, you die. You also have to watch out for Sparx, which crawl along shapes you completed, and it'll fry you if it touches you. Also one you start a line you can't stop; if you pause or attempt to go backwards the fuse will chase after you. One more thing you need to be careful of is the Spiral Death Trap, meaning if you accidentally draw yourself in a spiral, you pretty much comitted suicide. If you think one Qix is bad enough, wait until level 3, when you're faced with two Qixes. This is not an easy game, since there's unlimited patterns and you never play the same way twice. Some may seem turned off by this, but this is still a very enjoyable game, one that'll have you hooked in no time. (To this day, I still haven't reached the high score board on MAME.)

Home versions are availabe on the Atari 5200, Atari Lynx, NES, and Game Boy.

Klax (Atari Games, 1989)
This puzzle game was a big hit in the day with fun gameplay a la Tetris. Imagine you're at the end of a conveyor belt controlling a paddle. Rows of different-colored tiles come rolling down the line and you have to catch them with a paddle and set them down in a 5X5 grid. The object is to line up the same colored tiles, and if you get 3 or more in a row (horizontally, vertically, and diagonally), that's called a Klax and you score points. Something to remember is that 4 in a row counts as two Klaxes, and 5 in a row is counted as three Klaxes. You can also chain Klaxes together for super bonus points.

Each level has different objectives. Some require you to get so many Klaxes, others you try to catch 40 tiles, and so on. You can only hold up to five tiles on your paddle, and the grid only has enough room for 25 tiles maximum. The drop meter keeps track of how many tiles are dropped, whether by missing them or by trying to catch them if your paddle is full. If you drop too many tiles or if you fill up the grid with unklaxed tiles, the game is over.

The graphics are nice to look at with some intersting backgrounds, even though some of them don't have much to do with the game. What I really liked was the cute sound effects. A female voice introduces each level and complements you on combo matches. When you drop a tile a pitpful scream is heard, and when you complete a level you get applause, and when you lose you get a sympathetic "Awww". Two players can go at it simultaneously to see who can last the longest. Klax is certainly a very fun and challenging game for those who love puzzle games.

There were quite a few home versions available. Klax can be found on the Atari Lynx, NES, Game Boy, Genesis, Game Gear, Turbografx-16, and Sony PlayStation as part of

Midway's Arcade Party Pack. In Europe versions were released on the Atari 2600, 7800, and Sega Master System as well.

Food Fight (Atari, 1983)
Now for a taste of the weird. Those of you who enjoyed the food fight scene in National Lampoon's Animal House will certainly get a kick out of this title. You play as Charley Chuck, a guy with a huge head, and you want to get to the other side of the screen where a delicious ice cream cone beckons you. However, several chefs come out of some manholes and try to throw food at you. What you can do is pick up the foodstuffs in each level and throw them at the chefs. Each chef you hit with food gets knocked away for a few seconds, but they soon come back for more. You win each level by reaching the ice cream cone and gobbling it up (this guy's head gets even bigger). You lose a life you touch a chef, fall into a manhole, or get hit by food, in which case all the food piles up on you. One cool feature about this game is that if you do especially good, you're treated to an instant replay that shows your moves. This game is different, yet very fun and creative. You can't go wrong with flinging food at disgruntled chefs.

The only home version I'm aware of is on the Atari 7800. So either that or MAME is the way to go. If you prefer MAME, I suggest you use the mouse as your controller. It takes some getting used to but I feel it offers the best control.

The TI 99/4A
Ports and Joysticks

by Jim Krych

I want to thank everyone who has written to me about the interviews we have had so far. I am hoping to have one last non-game programmer interview, and that would be with Mike Becker from Germany. Hey Mike, where are you????

Let’s talk games! Obviously since Tom prefers material about games, especially the classics! (And, I don’t have Timex Sinclairs to review the games with, and talking about Russian clones don’t count!!!)

The first part of this article is going to be of “what’s the best arcade ports for the TI 99/4A Home Computer?” This will not include look-alikes or clones of similar arcade games, but actual licensed titles.

Until I started playing with MAME32, I never would have realized that Blasto and Hustler were actual arcade games from the 1970’s! Having said this, and having been able to play the emulations and the TI ports, Milton Bradley did a very good job of brining the arcade home on the TI 99/4A!

Ok, who’s the next contestant? Sega, with its’ “Star Trek Strategic Simulations” cartridge. It’s not vector graphics, but the detail is quite good, and the speech really helps bring the arcade excitement home!

My absolute favorites have to be from Atarisoft! The two for me that come to mind are Defender and Donkey Kong. Defender is especially well made. Donkey Kong is perhaps one of the best home ports from the classic era, not bad for an 8K cart!

Okay! I am wanting to hear from you folks out there! What do you think the best arcade ports are for the TI 99/4A? Remember, these must be actual licensed products.

Now, for the second part of this article. You have the games, now you need the right controllers. Now, go out to Happs, buy a firebutton and a 4-way stick and hook it up! Better yet, hack your TI keyboard to have the keyboard inputs to handle the joystick too! This will allow the best arcade quality on your TI 99/4A, and even better, Caps Lock will never prevent you from enjoying the stick! How about this, stick the stick and button in your favorite cereal box!

Back to reality here! (Too much alt.games.mame!!!)

The first controllers I ever had for my TI was actually the Atari 2600 joysticks from our family 2600. I had purchased a Wico adaptor. The first game I played with these was Parsec.

There is something to be said for third-party sticks. Or better yet, adaptors that allow you to take advantage of what is out there. The TI sticks are great for only one thing-the coding examples they gave on how to use the sticks in your programs! I have seen the original TI joysticks, and they are quite ugly! But then again, so are the “normal” TI sticks.

I have used a variety of Atari-compatible joysticks with my TI over the years. I still very much enjoy using the old reliable Atari’s. However, there were quite a few, and some even made specifically for the TI. Ron Marcus, Tom’s Uncle, has some that allow for a switch from 4-way to 8-way (Prostick II, the official non-MAME joystick of Retrogaming Times).

What’s your favorite stick for serious gaming on the TI? Now put down that Telco, and stop typing away on Funnelweb, and play a good game of Defender! Save your girlfriend in Donkey Kong, rescue the Federation with Star Trek, or for that old-fashioned Victor Morrow feeling, play Blasto!

Let me know-just which stick do you like to use to stick it to Donkey Kong!!!

Musings from the Yahoo Group:

USB-great idea, hardware can be done, but who is going to write the software?

Assembly Language-teaching new people TMS 9900 assembly language. Great idea, but keep the debate between experts out. So far, so good. Keep on helping them, Paul!

Forth-was about time that it showed up again!

Hardware questions-meat and potato stuff!!!

We are close to having the first chapter of “From Neptune to Earth” being released here on Retrogaming Times! We even have a background for terms and history written! So far, it’s another, David, from the Swiss Army and me! Anyone else wishing to write? You just need to be a Gyruss fan AND a member of the military, or a veteran. Artists, logo drawers, etc, can be civilian.

This was written while listening to the soundtrack from the “Right Stuff”!!! <editor note - Oh no, I started a trend!>

“Hi, my name is Jim W. Krych. I am a 32 year-old electronics technician. My products that I currently work on are the SMU models 236,237, and 238. I am also a 13+ year veteran of both the USCG, active, and the Ohio Army National Guard, reserve with B Co. 112th engineers. I can be reached at: jwkrych@adelphia.net or jwkrych@n2net.net I have a two-year-old son, Treyton, and he is the CEO of Treyonics! I have founded my own business and, of course, I named the company after my son Treyton! Our product is the Treyonics Home Controller System Model 9908. Better known as the…

Devastator

Commodore Sixty-Forum

By Alan Hewston

Do you like this title? I’ve been saving it for a couple years now, but waiting for a good time to jump in and do something Commodore. We’ve had other writers providing C64 coverage, and at one point the RT had enough writers that Tom would limit us to one major article per issue. I know that we’ll still get some nice contributions from our other C64 writers and hope that we do, but in the mean time . . .

In response to our readers hoping for more coverage on other systems/computers – as they see a terrific article every month on the TI-99 by Jim Krych. This is the first time I'm dedicating an article just to the Commodore 64, my favorite game machine, but hopefully not the last. Since January I've been working on an article for the Radio Shack Color Computers which is both a website review and interview, but it is not yet done – and it may take 2 parts. Also coming up I'll be reviewing the recently released Bally Astrocade multi-cart and provide a few links for that system. Maybe I'll get something going on the Fountain, or Sega SC 3000 or the MSX. We certainly hope that if you can contribute by writing your own article, or asking one of us to assist. We'd be glad to help tap into your memory banks and vast resource of information specific to your favorite system or computer.

OK, for this month, I'll just list 64 unique and cool sounding, sometimes politically incorrect, maybe humorous, or just plane bizarre game titles for the Commodore 64. There are so many games out there, so much creativity, possibly more games than any other system besides the IBM/compatibles.

Addgar, Agent Orange, Alioth, Ballz, BAT, Booty, Bop'n Rumble, Bounder, Catastrophes [Editorial Note: this is one of Tom's favorites], Chickin Chase, CJ's Elephant Antics, Confusing Quest 2½, Count Duckula, Cylu, Denis Through the Drinking Glass, Di's Baby, Dr. Mad vs. the Topsy Turvy Moon Men of Mars, Enigma Force Construction Set, Freak Factory, Garth, Halls of the Things, The, Harvey Headbanger, HATE, Hexpert, Hoppin' Mad, Hummdinger, Hyper Blob, I-Alien, Josh, Kayden, Kinetik, Krakout, Krystals of Zong, Maggotmania, Mermaid Madness, Mission Genocide, Moontorc, Murray Mouse Super-Cop, Octapolis, Oh No!, Pakacuda, Peanut Butter Panic, Pneumatic Hammers, Potty Pigeon, Psycastria, Q-Billion, QX-9, Run Like Hell, Sex Vixens from Space, Sidewize, Sooty and Sweep's Fun With Numbers, SPUD! - Super Powered Urban Device, Steg the Slug, Supa-Catcha-Troopa!, Super Trux, Synex, Ten Little Indians, Thrust, Turn 'n' Burn, Vioris, WitchSwitch, Woody the Worm, Xiom, Xiphoids, and Zalagan.

(Alan Hewston can be reached at hewston95@stratos.net, if you enjoyed this list of C64 game titles, then ask him to dig out some more for next time.)

Sites of the Month

This month we will take a look at sites from some of the classic programmers. These are the a few of the men behind the games that we enjoyed in our youth. Now, go forth and learn something!

Warren Robinett's Home Page
While the man has accomplished alot in his life, he will always be fondly remembered for Adventure, one of the best games for the Atari 2600. To learn a little more about the man and even some info about Adventure (including a map), check out the following URL: http://www.warrenrobinett.com/

Howard Scott Warshaw
The man responsible for three of the biggest selling games for the Atari 2600, Yar's Revenge, Raiders of the Lost Ark and ET, has also done a video series on the history of Atari. This site not only has some good info on HSW as well as his excellent video series. You can check it out at the following URL: http://www.scottw.com/ouatari.html. By the way, if you have not checked out this great video series, you owe it to yourself as a classic game fan to view this.

Letters to the Editor

Time for me to put to rest one of the most frequently asked questions that I get, where to find roms. Not a day goes without getting an email with a rom request. So it is time to answer these, once and for all.

I love Tron, where can I download the game on the net?

My son really loves Zaxxon, where I can find this game for his computer?

Where can a fellow video game fanatic find Crazy Climber for the PC?

Arrrggghhh! For once and for all, I cannot help you out with your emulator needs. There used to be sites that had roms up that you could download and install into MAME, but the last of the big ones has been forced to get rid of their roms. The rumor going around is that a well known arcade company sent out the cease and desist letters (while many companies and games were mentioned as the one that caused all the trouble, the leading rumor points at Mortal Kombat as the game that broke MAME's back, but this is just a rumor). So I cannot help you with roms. If you really have a craving for some roms, may I suggest ebay? Type Rom in the search box and you will find all kinds of roms; CD-Roms, DVD Roms, Rom the Space Knight, the list goes on and on.

I recently ordered from you and liked how the boxed games came in plastic bags. Can you tell me your source for these bags?

If you have bought boxed games from me in the past, you will probably have received them in plastic bags. These bags are there, so that I can easily identify if the game is complete when I am sorting them. It is also to price them for video game shows. The bags are just simple comic book bags and are great to put your prized boxed games into. You can buy them at any comic book store. Personally, I use the Silver Age size, but the modern work just as well. This is especially good for Intellivision games, which come with overlays. You must remember that Intellivision overlays are like socks, they come in pair, but rarely remain that way. But by putting them in a bag, you can keep them from disappearing into that huge void where unmatched socks, TV remotes and unpaid bills reside.

I really enjoy the newsletter and I like to print it off, to read later. Is there any problem with this?

No problem whatsoever, but thanks for asking. I am astonished at how many people print off each issue of the newsletter. I am glad that you find it worthy of your time and paper. Now if you are selling them, then that is a different matter, but for personal enjoyment, I say print away!

Conclusion

Was this a big issue or what? I could have gone without any articles and it would have been about the average size. But I decided to not be lazy and write a few articles. Right now, I am trying to get ready for the Phillyclassic. Have a ton of stuff to get priced and in order for the show. As far as Bit Age Times, I have not decided if I will do an issue this month. Maybe if I get enough submissions, I am get one together, but things are getting hectic here. Barely have time to play video games and we all know how awful life is without video games.

-Tom Zjaba

(This issue was written while listening to "Rebuild the Wall" by Luther Wright and the Wrongs. It is a remake of Pink Floyd's The Wall, but done in blue grass. Very odd, but very good. Also, a sprinkling of songs by Wally Pleasant to keep things light).

(Some of the photos taken from the Digital Press CD. If you do not know what Digital Press is, then you need to get with it and check out their awesome site at http://www.digitpress.com).