

# InsideADRIFT

The newsletter of the ADRIFT community

Issue 19

September/October 2004

## Contents

### News and announcements.

1. **Main news** (World ALR Forum)

1. **Competition news**

(*Summer Minicomp; Game of the Year Competition; 3 Hour Game Competition; Annual IF Comp IF Art Comp; Intro Comp*)

2. **Forum news** (Moderators under fire; Changes to forum moderators; Writing challenges; Conversation trees)

### Regular features

- 2. Editorial
- 3. Drifters birthdays
- 3. Events diary
- 5. Drifters Toolbox: VersionBackup
- 6. ADRIFT recent releases
- 5. Interview: Greg Boettcher is questioned by KF
- 11. InsideADRIFT merchandise

### Articles

- 5. *The (big) idea by KF: Reality in IF is overrated!*
- 6. Alphasmart by Mystery
- 9. *Failed game intro: Rainbow Man and the lost weekend by Ken Franklin*

### Reviews

- 9. "The ADRIFT Summer Minicomp games reviewed by Eric Mayer"

### Reference

- 11. Manual: Text formatting

**Issue: 19 (Sep/Oct 04)**

**Issue 20 due out 30 Oct 04**

## News and announcements

### World ALR Forum

This is one of those simple initiatives that may have quite a big impact. Roberto Grassi has launched a forum for the promotion and discussion of ADRIFT Language Resources that are created to adapt ADRIFT's messages to the demands of other languages. While ADRIFT itself is very much an English language program, ALR's provide a way for those for whom English isn't there first language to still make something playable with it.

Mystery is also adding the resulting files to her O.A.R.S. website at <http://home.gcn.cx/mystery> while Roberto's forum is at [http://www.robortograssi.net/at/itdrift/sf2k\\_v34\\_04/default.asp](http://www.robortograssi.net/at/itdrift/sf2k_v34_04/default.asp)

## Competition news roundup

### InsideADRIFT Summer Minicomp 2004

The event took place at the end of August and must be the tightest ever, with two of the six entries ending up exactly tied in first place. The third place entry was just a further 0.024 marks behind.

The two winners were "Choose your own ...." by DavidW and "Shadrack's Underground Adventure" by Mystery which both averaged 5.857 marks from each judge. DavidW's other entry, The Mystery Of The Darkhaven Caves, was in third place just behind.

Congratulations to the winners, and thanks to those who took the time to enter and judge. There is a brief review of the event later on along with Eric Mayer's thoughts on the games.

For more information visit [http://www.insideadrift.org.uk/comps\\_sum\\_04](http://www.insideadrift.org.uk/comps_sum_04)

## Editorial

*Onwards into the third year of the newsletter. I am considering, in the light of recent events, whether it would be better for my to give up editing the newsletter I would hate to become a bitter and twisted editor and following my own agenda. On the other hand as the newsletter has always been independent this may not be a factor.*  
 KF

## Contact

*Send any suggestions, requests or comments about the newsletter to: [editor@insideadrift.org.uk](mailto:editor@insideadrift.org.uk)  
 Find the newsletter at: <http://www.insideadrift.org.uk/>*

## InsideADRIFT merchandise

*You can now purchase an exciting InsideADRIFT mug, if you so desire. It has been updated with the new logo.  
 The store is really not fully operational, if you are interested look at [www.cafepress.com/insideadrift](http://www.cafepress.com/insideadrift)  
 More details can be found on page 11.*

## InsideADRIFT Game of the Year Competition 2004

Just a reminder that you can still enter a new game for the Game of the Year Competition, as well as any other game released this year.

The rules can be found at [http://www.insideadrift.org.uk/comps\\_win\\_04](http://www.insideadrift.org.uk/comps_win_04)

### *Wider IF community events*

#### *2004 Interactive Fiction Competition*

*It is too late to decide to enter the IF Comp as you had to have expressed your intention officially by 1 September. If you have then you have until the end of September to get your game in.*

*DavidW reports that it has been a bumper year for people expressing their interest in entering, maybe this includes some of the sixty who fell by the wayside last year in the final month to complete the games.*

#### *Spring Thing 2005*

*This event is very much on the calendar now, and I have interviewed the organiser, Greg Boettcher, in this issue of the newsletter.*

*The competitions rules are now posted up and everything is set for take off.*

## Forum news

*Mystery organised a joint e-message for Mr & Mrs Wild for their birthdays and first wedding anniversary, which took place over a short period at the start of September. Having put together a picture for the happy pair, Mystery posted a thread asking for active drifters to post there. She then proceeded to contact them all to get people to "sign" the image.*

*It was posted to the forum on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September in a new thread, allowing people to add their own personal messages of congratulations.*

## Drifters birthdays

### October 2004

- 1 ImpShial (33); SoftIron (24)
- 2 Narniagate58 (36); Morpork (21); Sprite (17)
- 4 TheDataHacker (27)
- 12 skater\_paulish (21); Lady\_Juliet (23)
- 14 baXter (30)
- 17 Lil Dot (37)
- 19 cricketmoon (32)
- 21 Century (22)
- 23 davidw (31); theleaf (17)
- 25 ursus (34)
- 28 Sarazar (17)

## Events Diary

### September 30, 2004 2004 Annual Interactive Fiction Competition

Entries must be in by today.

### September 30, 2004 Spring Thing 2005 entries open

You can now send in your intention to enter the Spring Thing in March 2005 and reserve one of the 20 slots (subject to \$7 entry fee)

### October 01, 2004 2004 Interactive Fiction Competition

Entries released for judging (ends 15 Nov. 04)

### October 30, 2004 InsideADRIFT 20 November 2004 due out

The November issue of the ADRIFT newsletter should be available today

### November 15, 2004 2004 Interactive Fiction Competition

Judging ends today. Results announced when organiser has worked them out.

## Moderators under fire

A furious dispute raged on the forum for about three days over a piece of moderation that was argued to have been vindictive towards DavidW. The debate, some informed, some not, fortunately was brought to an end when Mystery closed the thread involved. Shortly after Campbell Wild posted supporting the moderator's position.

### *Campbell's response included*

*"I am very upset by some of the comments I've seen in this discussion. This forum is supposed to be a place where people can get together, discuss ADRIFT, adventures and anything else related, with the expected relaxed deviations, and have FUN."*

I am sure that we all agree with Campbell that in the end what matters is discussion of ADRIFT and related matters, and ideally differences should be settled in private, via PMs, chat or email.

*It was a difficult decision whether to include this, and risk inflaming old wounds, but I feel it has a relevance to the community that merits inclusion.*

## Changes to forum moderators

My (KF) tenure as a moderator has ended, so I am free to concentrate on other matters ADRIFT. This is of course largely to do with the previous item, but only in the sense that it brought me to a decision that I had considered a few times before. I will still be around on the forum as much and will try to help if I can, but now others will be responding to any requests for a moderator to act.

There is no dilution of moderator numbers though as Woodfish has now joined the group along with Mystery, The Amazing Poodle Boy and (rarely) AgapeIncognito. Good luck to them in keeping the forum heading forward as the most important source of help for those who choose to use ADRIFT.

## Writing challenges (Contributed by Mystery)

Beginning in August, NickyDude began a monthly writing challenge in the Writing Discussions Forum. The basic idea is to write a detailed location description based on the objects he gives. It is an exercise in creativity and writing, that will hopefully help you to sharpen your skills.

**November 27, 2004  
InsideADRIFT 21 due out**

The December issue of the ADRIFT newsletter should be available today.

**December 19, 2004  
InsideADRIFT Game of the Year Competition 2004**

Entries for the Game of the Year (formerly "End of Year") Competition must be in by 1500hrs GMT today. Judging will take place over the next two weeks.

This event is open to any ADRIFT games released during 2004 as well as any newly written games.

**December 24, 2004  
InsideADRIFT Review of the Year 2004 due out**

Hopefully the special end of year issue of the ADRIFT newsletter should be available today.

**Events in 2005**

**January 02, 2005 InsideADRIFT Game of the Year Competition 2004**

Judging ends, all marks in by 1500hrs GMT today. Result to be announced on the ADRIFT Forum as soon as possible after that.

**January 08, 2005 InsideADRIFT Issue 22 due out**

The January/February 2005 issue of the ADRIFT newsletter should be available today

**March 15, 2005 Spring Thing 2005 closing date for intents**

This is the last day for making a statement of intent to enter the Spring Thing

**March 31, 2005 Spring Thing 2005 closing date for entries**

All entries must be in by this date. The judging period will be announced when entries are released (will allow about one week for every three entries)

*The current writing challenge uses the following:*

*Location: Castle Moat*

*Contains: Weeds, fish [dead and alive], rusty armor, bones, wooden barrel, a small box with buttons, and a pair of beady eyes.*

The goal is to location description in a convincing manner, using all of the objects mentioned. You can add more of your own, but all of the objects he gives MUST be included in your description. It is a fun activity to get in on. If you would like to enter, please visit the <http://www.adrift.org.uk/cgi/iB3/ikonboard.cgi?s=4b4aa8a339a2dc9ce1fbfad5ac2cc21;act=SF;f=6>

---

**Conversation trees**

There was a fairly long debate on the merits of conversation trees as an alternative to the inbuilt *ask character about* method which imparts information without altering the game play. As can be seen below, this is something very much on the ADRIFT road map for the future development.

*From the ADRIFT Manual*

*The Future*

*I have no intention to stop development of ADRIFT at this stage. My goal is for it to become the most widely used Interactive Fiction development environment. There are still many things which could be improved within the program.*

*Some of the features I hope to add in future versions are:*

*Character conversation trees*

*Interchangeable Player and characters*

*Allowing characters to sit, stand and lie on objects*

*More powerful tasks, which can control events*

*User definable map to draw layout*

*I am always open to suggestions for further improvements.*

## The (big) idea by KF

### Reality in IF is over-rated

I am beginning to wonder if the pursuit of some things in IF are actually to the detriment of the games they are produced for. The main one is the search for lighting reality within games where you are looking for a source that is right for the genre and yet has few problems.

We have the portable light solution (a.k.a. the torch), which always gives the problem of the player leaving it somewhere. Another problem is if you are carrying it do you put it down to use two hands for something else. While I know that some will moan if something isn't exactly right, will it really ruin things for everyone else.

If I am wondering around in caves or a labyrinth, if the author assumes it is lit why should I, the player, find the game to be compromised by such an assumption.

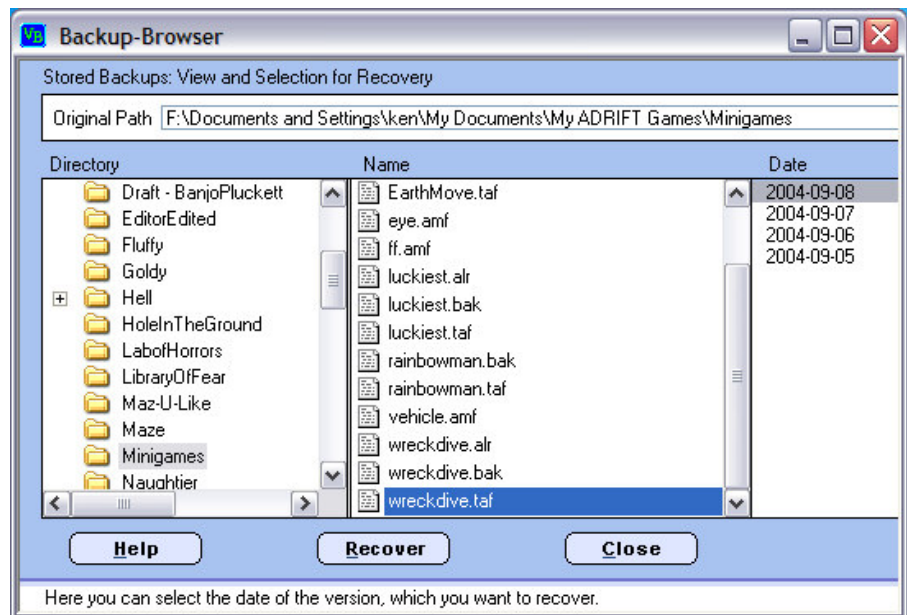
Another place that the reality thing raises its ugly head is with eating, sleeping, and bodily functions resulting from having eaten. While in early games the idea of a player requiring food to keep up their strength, and sleep to recover from their exertions were nearly always there. These things have become less fashionable with them just being left to the imagination of the player.

## Drifters toolbox

### VersionBackup (looked at by KF)

My interest in finding this sort of product came with a number of people having problems with ADRIFT that resulted in their games becoming corrupted. This brought me to something I believe is a big advantage that is built into some operating systems, which is automatic creation of backups. Here I am not simply talking about what ADRIFT does when you have the previous version saved with the .bak suffix, but an automatic system allowing you to revert further back.

This piece of software performs a simple, but rather useful job, and backs up the requested directories, keeping a set number of versions of the files.



The backups can then be browsed and if required restored as shown in the window displayed above, and as you can see the it shows the days for which it has a copy of the file, it only creates one if the file has been changed..

The way I have it set up it backs up my ADRIFT games directory every time WindowsXP starts up. This should mean that any disasters will only mean I lose at most the work from a session, and if I make a big mistake I can go back to an older version.

If this program sounds like it could help you to keep things that little bit safer then you can find more at <http://www.versionbackup.sb-aw.com/>



## ADRIFT recent releases

*I hope this brief listing helps drifters spot anything they have previously missed. In the end it is only of any use if something is produced to list.*

**Shadrick's Underground Adventures**  
(shadricksundergroundadventu  
res.taf 111 Kb) **By Mystery,**  
released 31-08-04

New to the town of Willingsdale, young Hanson overhears a couple of thugs talking about hidden treasure in the tunnels below his family's home and business. If he could find it first it would fix his parents money troubles and they would be rich. You discover Hanson in the cellar but before you can drag him back upstairs he disappears through a hole in the wall. It is up to you to save your little brother and bring the thugs to justice.

**The ADRIFT Project : Classified**  
(theadriftproject.taf 226 Kb) **By Mystery,** released 30-08-04

"I have an urgent assignment for you, and there isn't any time to waste. We've just launched the ADRIFT Project, and something has gone terribly wrong. The ship will be over your house in 5.3 minutes to beam you aboard. We need you to test all the major areas to make sure we're not getting false readings. It is a very difficult task and Drifters around the world are depending on you. I know you can do it. You will be the only human on board. Be on the lookout for DARWIN. I think it's the cause of the false readings we're getting. It may have tampered with the ADRIFT-

## AlphaSmart

*Mystery has been looking at a different sort of portable computer that may meet the needs of the busy author.*

In our busy lives it is hard enough to find the time for a hobby, and you're always looking for something to make things a little easier. If you're an interactive fiction author, then you know that an idea can come at you out of the blue, or you finally have figured out the right method for getting that puzzled to work, but your don't have access to your PC for one reason or another. If this happens to you, then you really should be checking out AlphaSmart.

I'll start with AlphaSmart 3000, which you'll find in many schools across the US. The AS3000 is a basically a portable word processor that features a full keyboard and has a 4-line by 40-character LCD display. It is lightweight and you'll find it very convenient to take on the train, field trips, or just about anywhere you go. The full keyboard is much easier to use than one of those hand helds, and less hassle to lug around a laptop- and much more affordable than both. It can run up to 700 hours on three AA batteries.

The AS3000 can hold up to 100 pages of single spaced text in 8 separate files. On top of that, it has a 70,000 word spellchecker, cut, copy, and paste. As many IF authors know, you sometimes get new game ideas, plot twists, and puzzle ideas that come to you at the strangest time- and often find yourself empty handed to work it out. When your back at your PC, simply upload the files to your computer via your USB port. With AlphaSmart 3000, you can send text via wireless infrared to any infrared-enabled Macintosh, PC, or printer.

The AlpaSmart 3000 is also expandable with the use of AlphaSmart SmartApplets. Compact applications are available for word processing, calculator functions, keyboarding instruction, quizzing, outlining, and word prediction.

AlphaSmart is perfect for those families that share a single home computer. While the kids are researching for their next science project, you won't miss out on writing your next IF masterpiece.

If this doesn't appeal to you, then the AlphaSmart Dana, Dana Wireless or AlphaSmart Neo might be of interest. The Dana features the Palm OS™, and access to thousands of applications at a fraction of the price you'd pay for a hand held. You'll simply love the lightweight, affordable, and stylish full keyboard of all of

O-Sweep too. I knew that robot should have been tested more." The future of ADRIFT lies in your hands...

#### Choose Your Own...

**(chooseyourown.taf 54 Kb) By David Whyld, released 29-08-04**

Following an unexpected delay in the mountain village of Globrieska, you find yourself in a life or death struggle with a power-crazed madman named Erik von Lastmere. An interactive fiction style gamebook. [Joint first place in the Adrift Summer Comp 2004] [genre: thriller]

#### The Mystery Of The Darkhaven Caves

**(mysteryofthedarkhavencavesthe.taf 27 Kb) By David Whyld, released 29-08-04**

Can YOU solve the mystery of the Darkhaven Caves, a devious labyrinth of monsters, mayhem and a sword-pinching dwarf. [3rd place in the Adrift Summer Comp 2004] [genre: cave crawl]

---

#### From the Demos Page

**Colored Numbers (percent.zip 6 Kb) By Soothsayer, released 19-08-04**

This will mark numbers from 0 to 100 with corresponding colors in a gradient from red (0) to yellow (50) and to green (100). Numbers to be marked need to be preceded by a !0 tag so that not all numbers in your adventure are colored, and a </font> tag needs to be placed after them as well. Better instructions and a sample TAF using this ALR are included.

**Rain Module (rain0.zip 22 Kb) By Soothsayer, released 19-08-04**

Just plugin to have rain coming and going in your adventure. Remember to set the tasks completeable in all rooms and

love the lightweight, affordable, and stylish full keyboard of all of the AlphaSmart products.

Let AlphaSmart take you on an adventure and visit their website at <http://www.alphasmart.com> for more information. You'll find the pricing is reasonable and affordable, and can view full product details. There were just too many to include here. They also have a strong community for support and is full of friendly users.

### Interview: Greg Boettcher questioned by KF

*This issue I have the opportunity to question the Spring Thing organiser about himself and the competition that he has revived.*

**Q.** You have previously told me that you are quite new to the interactive fiction community, what was it that brought you here?

**A.** I was crawling through Home of the Underdogs (<http://www.the-underdogs.org>), looking for games to play. Their interactive fiction section was a lot bigger than I expected, with a lot of recent freeware games. Eventually this led me to the web pages of the IF community, where I learned about the cool authoring systems that make IF writing so much easier.

**Q.** Obviously the main reason that encouraged me to ask you to do this interview was the resurrection of the Spring Thing Competition. The event ran for a couple of years before, but was then discontinued. What encouraged you to take action and relaunch this event?

**A.** I was disappointed when I learned that the IF community's biggest competition is one that was originally designed to encourage short games.

Apparently when the IF Comp began in 1995, short games were getting ignored, but now, if anything, it's longer works that need more attention. That was my main motivation. I don't think I would have had the wherewithal to start a competition of my own, but I really liked the idea behind Adam Cadre's Spring Thing competition of 2002-2003, and it was just sitting there, waiting to be revived.

**Q.** A lot of the focus on the Spring Thing has been on its perceived encouragement of long games, as it doesn't have the two hour judging rule of the IF Comp. Do you think that this may result in people being discouraged from entering shorter games?

**A.** I hope not. Despite what I just said, authors of shorter games are welcome to submit and get a chance to win.

events descriptions showing in the right rooms. Includes sample TAFs and a readme file. (this is the same as the one that has once been in KF's modules library)

**Back from the Dead  
(zombiewalk.taf 1 Kb) By  
Mystery, released 13-08-04**

This is a demonstration on how to bring a dead NPC back to life. (It uses a little trickery, but works) Uses the battle system. File update to make it appear like there are several enemies.

**Advancing Line (line1.taf 1 Kb)  
By Mystery, released 11-08-04**

This file demonstrates how to have an advancing line of people. When you push a button, the person at the front of the line is replaced by the next person in line. At one point an important character is brought to the front to deliver a message.

**Time and Weather System  
(weathertime.taf 2 Kb) By  
Mystery, released 30-07-04**

This is a time and weather system. It does not use standard time, but rather morning, midday, afternoon, evening, night. The weather changes over time, as well as the clouds, wind, rain, and be sure to check out the sun.

**Dress by Gender  
(dressbygender.taf 1 Kb) By  
Mystery, released 29-07-04**

This demonstrates how to automatically dress the player character according to the which gender is selected when prompted.

**Q.** The most controversial aspect of the competition rules has been the \$7 entry fee. With the awkwardness of actually collecting the money do you think it is worthwhile as a means of discouraging timewasting entries?

**A.** I did consider getting rid of the entry fees, but when I asked some veteran IF community members about this, they all advised against it. I guess it might be awkward, but as you said, it cuts down on the time-wasting factor. It also makes it so that the twenty slots won't fill up so quickly.

**Q.** Now that you have announced the event do you feel a bit frustrated that there is still quite a bit of time before things start to happen? I certainly find the wait for things to happen in a competition I have organised a bit tedious.

**A.** Not really. I'm glad I announced Spring Thing 2005 when I did, because it gave prospective IF Comp 2004 entrants a chance to decide which contest to enter. Now there are months of waiting, but that's a good thing, as it gives me time to work on my own projects.

**Q.** Now back to you, and your current game development . You told me you haven't yet released a game, but that you are working on something. Can you give some brief details.

**A.** I'm working on two games right now. One of them tries to do new things with conversation. The other one uses graphics, and it's those graphics I'm working on right now. Both games should hopefully be out sometime in 2005.



## Failed game intros

### “Rainbow Man and the lost weekend” by Ken Franklin

*This was a game that I quite liked the idea of, but realised it was going to be a bit complicated.*

*You have got out of a mental institution in your Rainbow Man costume, along with a bottle of whisky. When you wake up you have forgotten the real you, and believe yourself to be Rainbow Man.*

*When people in white coats chase you, you think they must work for your arch enemy.*

*You awake in a heap on the grass in a small children's playground. Your head is thumping and you are having great difficulty remembering little things like who you are and why you are here. You are dressed in what you immediately recognise as the uniform of Rainbow Man, superhero and bringer of colour to the world. Surely you shouldn't be wearing your uniform if you are not out on a mission, so maybe you are!*

*Nearby is an empty whisky bottle, which you suspect might have caused your headache, obviously you must have been struck over the head with it. Starting to rack your brain for a reason why you are here doesn't make*

## InsideADRIFT Summer MiniComp 2004

The Summer Mincomp proved something of a frustrating success. There were six entries, which is pretty much par for the course, yet I would have to admit that the idea of having three sections was a bit of a flop. In the event there were four entries in the ten room section, two in the maze games section, and none in the time limited event. The competition was a triumph for two of our main authors, DavidW and Mystery who between them took the first four places, but the other two authors who entered games were important too and I am very grateful to them for entering..

Richard Otter's game *Ticket to nowhere* received quite a lot of praise and was a very close fifth place. Bruce Humphreys was unlucky because he created a game for the one-week event, but it was entered into the ten room event instead as there were no other time limited entries. Possibly my advice to do this was wrong as it meant the game was being judged against games developed over much longer time frames, whereas his game did betray it's speed IF nature.

I am considering the future of this competition, and considering the possibility of moving the Spring Competition for full-size ADRIFT games into the Summer, in this way providing more separation from the Game of the Year event in December. What do others think about the competitions we have, a thread on the subject seemed a bit inclusive with people thinking there were too many, but not wanting to lose specific ones.

## Game reviews

### InsideADRIFT Summer Minicomp games reviewed by Eric Mayer

If the Adrift Summer Competition proved anything to me it's that I don't like IF. Well, that's a bit of an over simplification. Let's just say, for me, story will always win out over those things that differentiate interactive fiction from regular fiction -- things like puzzles and world simulation. I most like those aspects of If that are least If-like.

Which is not to say I never enjoy puzzles or simulation, only that I prefer them as spice rather the main course.

Consider the location limited portion of the competition. Bruce Humphrey's TEARS OF A TOUGH MAN was the least accomplished game, I thought. (Note though that Bruce wrote the game in a limited time, for that section of the competition, which had no other entries, and so worked with a huge handicap) But even though the game was understandably short and sparse, the premise intrigued me and kept me interested, as far as I got: The last entry in your diary made you cry but, weirdly, you can't remember what it was or manage to turn to the page. You need to know what's on that last page.

*anything come to mind. You start looking around to see if there are any clues tucked away that you have missed.*

*Do you have a game that has hit the rails, but you would like to share with the community? If so, send it in to me.*

The beginnings of the other games didn't grab me.

In David Whyld's CHOOSE YOUR OWN you embark on a routine business trip and don't even realize you're going to have an adventure until strange things begin to happen on the train. Mystery's THE ADRIFT PROJECT - CLASSIFIED gives you the task to test the Adrift Project ship where something has gone terribly wrong and in TICKET TO NOWHERE by Richard Otter you have the most important meeting of your life in less than seven hours, but missed your train and need to find some other way to get to the meeting on time. While these are both important problems for the protagonist they don't seem to me very dramatic.

In CHOOSE YOUR OWN the lack of a hook doesn't much matter because all you do is choose options which lead you through variations of the adventure. I've played this to a number of different ends and it turned out to be my favorite in this category. Even I can't get hopelessly stuck in a choose-your-own!

The other two entries were more sophisticated but I got nowhere. In THE ADRIFT PROJECT - CLASSIFIED I managed to gather up all sorts of clever devices but never found anything to do with them. Exotic mechanical contrivances are a popular staple but I've never warmed up to them. I can't follow the instructions to use real machines let alone simulated ones. Of course the fact I don't like IF isn't Mystery's fault so I gave a reasonable score.

TICKET TO NOWHERE presented me with even more of a problem. Richard Otter's railway station, with its changing weather, passing trains, announcements, wandering characters and wildlife and attention to every detail, is one of the best environments I've seen in Adrift. Unfortunately I could accomplish virtually nothing. Even when I resorted to the generator, I was at a loss. I gave the game a good score because I wasn't sure whether there should have been more pointers to what I was supposed to be doing or whether I'm just that dense. It isn't Richard's fault I can't solve puzzles.

I guess I'm used to reading books where the author leads me along. That's obvious from my preference in the maze category.

Neither game struck me as what I'd call mazes (thank goodness) but rather were cave crawls, which used to feature mazes. THE MYSTERY OF DARKHAVEN CAVES, by David Whyld, was good fun with amusing characters and lots of puzzles, some of which I actually solved and others of the oh-of-course-I-should've-thought-of-that variety. (David was born too late. He probably could've made a good living back in the 1930s remorselessly cranking out pulp stories)

Mystery's SHADRICK'S UNDERGROUND ADVENTURE though was my favorite of the whole competition. OK, I admit I got through it without so much as a hint. Any game I can manage to do that with, I love. (And please don't tell me Mystery wrote it for her kids and they thought it was

## InsideADRIFT Merchandise

Although this is not intended as a money spinning idea, more a way to create items for me, these items are available for the discerning drifter to purchase.



The mug, priced at \$11.39, has a crisp copy of the new magazine logo. It is large enough for those beverages needed to keep you going through long creative sessions.



Costing \$17.39, the baseball jersey comes in red/.blue/black and white.

*Also available from [www.cafepress.com/insideadrift](http://www.cafepress.com/insideadrift) are: sweatshirt \$21.99; mousepad \$10.99; teddy bear \$13.49; sticker \$2.49.*

too easy)

In the game, you're a youngster who has to explore a cave under your parents' pub in search of your younger brother. What I liked was that the cave crawler is given a distinctive personality, which is nicely introduced in a short interactive introduction. Then too, it is essentially a straight forward story with puzzles enough to make you a participant but which don't really offer much of an impediment to the flow of the narrative.

Which goes to prove, as I said, I just don't like IF.

## Reference

*This issue we look at how to make our text more interesting to read by using the HTML style tags provided by ADRIFT. Just remember that over use of different styles can be worse than not formatting at all.*

### Formatting Text

#### Supported HTML Tags

The default two-tone text display in Runner can be manipulated in order to display text exactly as you wish. ADRIFT uses HTML style tags in order to format the text.

#### Tag Description

<code>&lt;i&gt; &lt;/i&gt;</code>	Display text in italics
<code>&lt;b&gt; &lt;/b&gt;</code>	Display text in bold
<code>&lt;u&gt; &lt;/u&gt;</code>	Display text using underlined
<code>&lt;c&gt; &lt;/c&gt;</code>	Display text using the secondary colour
<code>&lt;font size=[+/-]X&gt;</code>	Change font size to X, or increase/decrease
<code>&lt;font</code>	Sets the font colour. rrggbb is the value for
<code>&lt;font face="fontname"&gt;</code>	Sets the font to fontname. Please note that if
<code>&lt;/font&gt;</code>	Restore font to previous state
<code>&lt;bgcolor="#rrggb"&gt;</code>	This sets the background to a colour (as
<code>&lt;centre&gt; &lt;/centre&gt;</code>	Centralise text

<code>&lt;centre&gt; &lt;/centre&gt;</code>	Centralise text
<code>&lt;right&gt;&lt;/right&gt;</code>	Right justify text
<code>&lt;br&gt;</code>	Insert a new line
<code>&lt;wait X&gt;</code>	Wait for X seconds, where X is between 0.0 and 10.0. This can be to the nearest 10th of a second.
<code>&lt;waitkey&gt;</code>	Wait for the player to press a key before resuming.
<code>&lt;cls&gt;</code>	Clears the screen
<code>&amp;lt;</code>	Displays the < character
<code>&amp;gt;</code>	Displays the > character

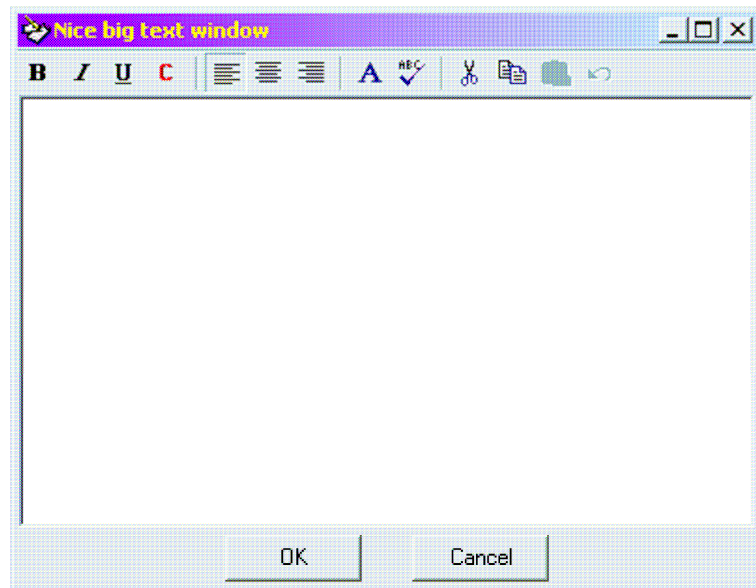
\* All these tags can share the one font tag, i.e. you could have a command:

*The HTML standards are also supported with American spelling of center and color.*

### Nice Big Text Window

By default, the text windows within ADRIFT are not very good at formatting the text – they don't display the text as it would appear in Runner unless you have no formatting at all, and many of the windows are quite small so that you may not see your whole text segment. You can bring up a large text box where you can format your writing using standard word-processor facilities. To do this, double-click in any text box.

This will bring up a window such as:



This allows you to select bold, italic, underline and secondary colour,

left centre and right justify text, change font, spell check, cut, copy, paste and undo, all at the click of a button.

Clicking OK will then convert this text into HTML format so it will be displayed the same in Runner. Tags not supported by the NBTW will be displayed as they were in the standard text boxes.

---

© Campbell Wild, Oct 2003

*Information is copied and pasted from the manual and while every effort is made to be accurate, there are no guarantees that it is error free*

---

© 2004 Edited by KF.

Please send any contributions or suggestions to [kf@kfadrift.org.uk](mailto:kf@kfadrift.org.uk).