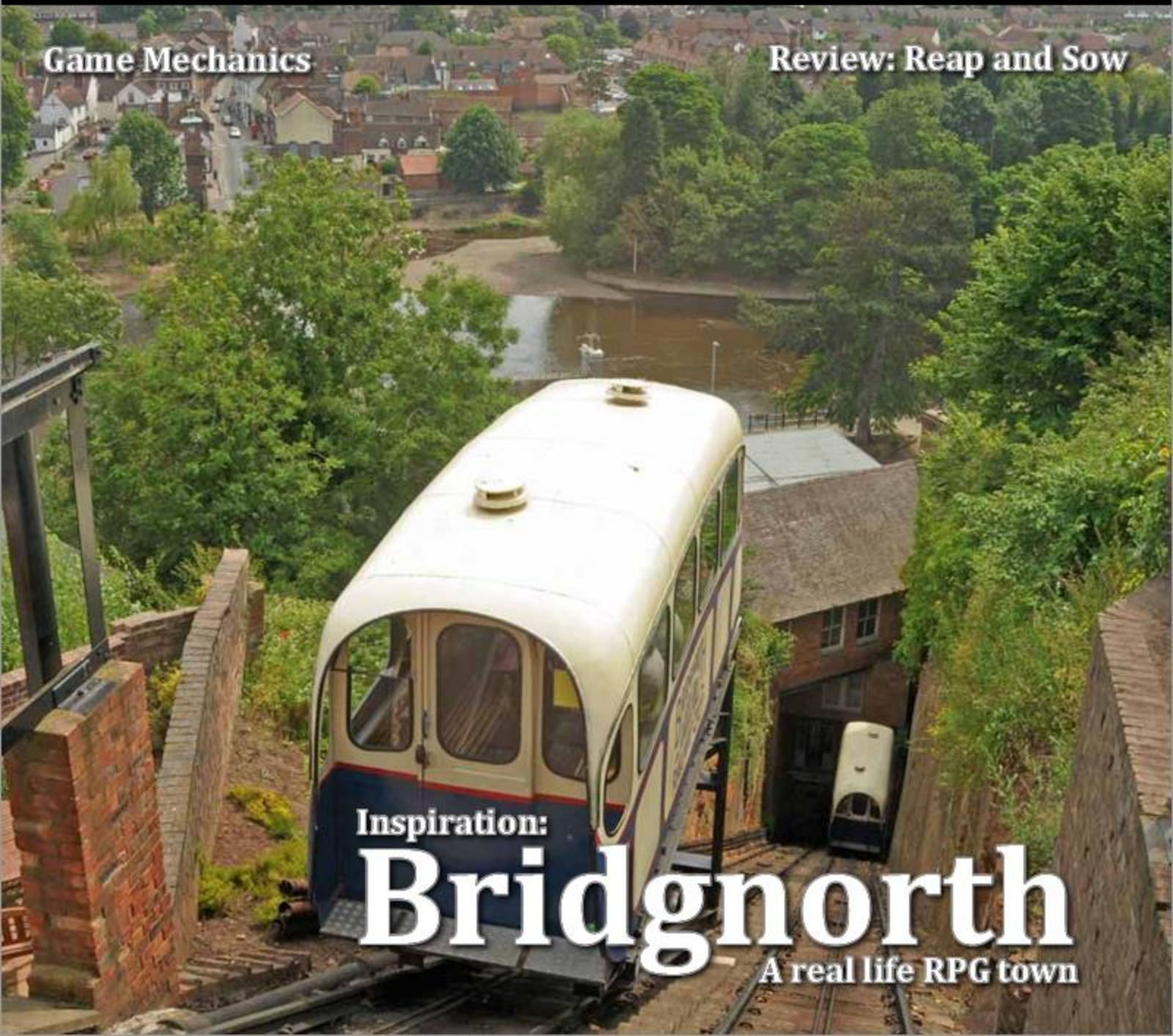# ADVANCED
RPG Maker

Game Mechanics

Review: Reap and Sow

Inspiration:
Bridgnorth
A real life RPG town

ADVANCED
RPG Maker

Welcome to Issue 2

It's with great pleasure that I can introduce you to this, the second issue of *Advanced RPG Maker*, the online faux magazine dedicated to furthering RPG Maker game development and showcasing the online RPG Maker community. This month we're looking at inspirational places both online and in the real world, games which have made the most of the engines available, diversity in games and the results of some great contests that have been going on around the web this month.

What is ARPGM?

Advanced RPG Maker is a faux magazine published in PDF and PNG form. It is created independently by members of the overall English RPG Maker community on the 'net and released monthly. It is the sister project to the *HBGames.org eZine*, a similar publication focused on the HBGames.org community.

ARPGM relies on submissions from the community to stay packed full of exciting content and features (though we have no problem doing hard work ourselves, of course!), so if you have anything to submit, even if it is just an idea or suggestion for a future article, feel free to send it our way. We have threads on many RPG Maker websites or you can find us at our homepage, **www.arpgmaker.com**.

On the cover:

The Bridgnorth cliff railway; source: staedtepartner-sob.de, *the Twinning Association of Schrobenhausen*, a town twinned with Bridgnorth in Shropshire.

Apologies - for Issue 1, the wrong header was applied. This issue has the correct title, with Advanced RPG Maker's logo, and is the one that will be used for future issues. This was a silly mistake.

If you know of any RPG Maker websites or communities that would like to participate in *Advanced RPG Maker* please let us know - we might not know they exist. Start the thread yourself if you like and we'll drop by and say hello! (If you run such a site, you might want to contact us to discuss the magazine, we're happy to have a chat).

Contents

FARM MAPPING CONTEST

In April 2014, the results of RPGMakerWeb's Farm Mapping Contest were announced, with some fantastic entries. To celebrate the release of Celianna's rural farm tiles pack, downloadable content for RPG Maker, the brief was simply to create a farm or farm town map using the RTP and/or Celianna's tiles. 35 people entered their creations for judging! The best, as chosen by RPG Maker Web and their members, are shown here.

Celianna's choice: thatbennyguy

RPG Maker Web community choices

Candacis

Chaos17

*ARPGM*s favourites:

EyesUnclouded

ShinGamix

Incredible Journey mapping contest

The next RPG Maker Web mapping contest - Incredible Journey - has just begun, and you can find all the details in their announcements board. HBGames.org are also running a small mapping competition this month with a different theme.

rmn

Without a doubt the most exciting RPG Maker site of the time, *RPGMaker.net*, or RMN for short, is a small corner of the Internet with so much on offer. It takes the concept of a forum and then pushes it further. Using the django content management system, the site is a functional CMS where everything is fine tuned and works together. Screenshots, images, graphics and scripts, development blogs and events, and of course games (both completed and in development) are all uploaded to the system and use intertwined ratings and commenting systems to bring everything together in a coherent site that works.
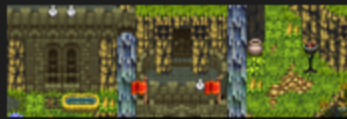
Knight...

Final Quest - The disc...

Grace's Diary

Dead Moon Night

xOMBYCAPYSE

Azure Waves

Events are special and anybody an run them. Right now for example the Castles Masterpiece Set contest, the Game Name Game, and a contest for levels for The Last King of Hyrule are all ongoing, with countless others long passed. These are friendly, community competitions anybody can enter.

Every year the Misao awards are hosted, using the integrated systems of the site to draw up a list of games to choose from. The Misaos are an awards ceremony for RPG Maker, with awards such as Game of the Year, Best Atmosphere, or Most Technical Prowess; anybody on the site can vote and any games posted to the site can be voted for. 2014 nominations are currently taking place and the Misaos have run every year since 2006.

RPGM MAGAZINE

RPG Maker Magazine, RPGM for short, is an eZine in the more common sense - a blog styled website dedicated to news and other magazine content about RPG Maker. Encompassing all RPG Maker engines, it features reviews, articles about game making and gaming culture, user-created games and Let's Plays, and news. All content for the magazine is created by members and aggregated automatically in a web format, in contrast to *ARPGM's* more traditional form.

RPGM is located at **www.rpgmmag.com**

Issue 19 of **HBGames.org the eZine** has been released. April's issue looks at gender in games and how it can be overcome, and introduces the opening of the HBGames **Game of the Year** 2013 voting, which is dominated by RPG Maker titles.

Joseph Seraph, of RPGMaker.net, is remaking the graphics of RPG Maker 2003 in higher definition for RPG Maker VX Ace, and they're looking great.

2k3 is well known for its graphics, which are 16x16 tiles that are scaled up by the engine in double size. As shown here, Joseph is recreating the tiles to every detail.

Euphony has reposted his old RMXP resources to RPG Maker Web, featuring extensive edits such as wagon interiors, new trees, a lighthouse, and a church spire.

RPG RPG Revolution
10th Birthday

Seeds of War

Ten years ago, RPG RPG Revolution was founded by *Rydin* as a site dedicated to RPG Maker, shortly before RPG Maker XP was released in Japan. Although originally a site for 2000 and 2003 games, it grew into a community solely for XP, and later added VX and VX Ace support as they came out, focusing intentionally only on those engines legally available to the English audience.

RPG RPG Revolution is one of the most prolific RPG Maker websites, with a huge member count and constantly hundreds of people online viewing. Its boards contain over 200 complete games, more than a thousand in development, and nearly a thousand scripts.

Colloqually *RRR* or *R3*, the site is based around a forum, but has a mainsite providing game downloads, tutorials, and handy information on all the engines; particularly useful is the RGSS Reference, an extensive encyclopedia for anybody learning how to use it.

RRR was the first RPG Maker site to hit 100,000 members and has seen some fantastic games through its doors. Here's our best picks.

Cerebral Symphony

Legionwood

Vergo

Project RMW World

Project RMW World is a collage mapping collaboration at RPG Maker Web. Users get together to attempt to create a seamless world between themselves. Each member gets a spot on a 10 by 10 grid, maps their section, and then it all gets thrown together at the end integrated into the vast world of RMW. A lot has been created so far, but there are still plenty of slots available for you to showcase your mapping talent!

Let the world-making begin!

Anybody is free to join regardless of their skills; it's a fun, free collaborative world building event. Let's map our own world! You'll find it in the RPG Maker Web general discussion board under game development.

Not speaking every language in the world, it's difficult to get a true sense of the global RPG Maker community out there. If you're an avid member of such a site and want to write about it feel free to send something our way and we'll feature it; our naïvity about the global community is certainly not of our own wish!

One of the first commercial RPG Maker games, *Aveyond*, was released in 2006. By the creator of the 2k hit *Ahriman's Prophecy*, it has spawned a series and an entire community based around it that is itself one of the largest RPG Maker websites. Amaranthia both create games and offer support to other people with their own. **www.amaranthia.com**

Castle Oblivion 3, by *luiishu535* at RMRK.net

Feedback for Issue 1

As *NewBlack* pointed out, a copy paste error meant rmn and Chaos Project's member counts were messed up. At time of print rmn had 44,051 members, but Chaos Project had only 725, unlike what was printed. Sorry! (Chaos Project is still one of the more substantial RPG Maker websites out there).

Link_2112 liked that it had more short snippets than a couple of long articles, keeping it interesting if there happen to be articles you aren't particularly interested in. They also liked the tips and tricks section which we have kept, but turned into a mini tutorial in this issue. We'll see how it goes down.

CashmereCat suggested an active members list for the forum list. In retrospect the forum list wasn't very useful to begin with, and as sites don't generally publish their active members, the list won't feature in future issues; instead we'll highlight a few websites as and when they have interesting content to comment on.

Chivi-chivik said the entire magazine needs a serious makeover, which we've certainly tried to take on board. Hopefully this issue is an improvement.

Your feedback and comments are greatly appreciated. If you can't find us on your favourite RPG Maker website, you can talk to us at **www.arpgmaker.com**, or start a thread there yourself and we'll find it. *We'll always find it.*

We've been made aware of a piece of software that has been titled *Advanced RPG Maker*. As we're a magazine, we don't see this as particularly an issue (pun not intended); however we did research the name and potential other names extensively before committing to *ARPGM*. Apparently our research was not thorough enough, and we apologise. We shall, however, be sticking to the name, partially because it is descriptive, but also because, as the software creators ought to be aware, *RPG Maker* is a registered trademark of Enterbrain Inc. This magazine is not affiliated or endorsed by Enterbrain Inc but is extensively about one of its products.

Nonetheless, we apologise.

REAP AND SOW

In a world so lush and engrossing, Reap and Sow has no place to offer sentimentality alongside anguish the way it does. And yet I love every second of it. Pushing a giant doll into a firey barrel has made my heart race faster, and pound harder, than ever before. I was terrified by this game. Reap and Sow delivers a package full of surprises, with moments both horrifying and gory, and tender and graceful.

Reap and Sow is a farm simulation game set in a universe that is far different to our own. The fantastical is seen as the norm, but it centers around a man trying to escape and navigate through the horrors of his dream world. As soon as you play this game it feels like you have planted yourself in a thick, earthy world. You are a masked inky being, trapped in a mystery that is slowly unwinding like a long tether of rope, revealing one strand of the mystery at a time. You play as a humble farmer but also as a lonely man trying to escape the abhorrent creatures in his nightmares.

hidden among those there are these fleeting glimpses of light, and of a more peaceful time. The story leaves you wanting around every corner, searching for hidden clues and trying to piece together the story with the environment, with one leading question: how did they get here?

There are scenes of memory interspersed among his nightmares, which provide an unseen depth to much of the game. These scenes provided the pulsating heart of the game. When the demo ended, I was left wanting more, and dying to find out what was the mystery behind it all. The story was both riveting and sparingly told through details hidden amongst NPC banter and environmental information.

A WORLD ABOVE THE CLOUDS.

I usually head this section up with how fantastic the visuals are (and in this game, they are amazing) but let me just point out how impeccable the music choice was. Soothing and sentimental when it wanted to be, and brooding and nightmarish when it needed to be, every song lends to the effort of the game to bring emotion to your ears. There is one song that is absolutely annihilating in scope, titled "Rusty Brazier", that put me on the verge of tears. Those high choral notes sent me to heaven. I thoroughly enjoyed the audio side of this game, as well as the well-chosen sound effects and menu sounds.

The story revolves around the faceless protagonist, in a forest town where he must survive as a farmer. You are placed in this world, with a suitable intro of him on a cliff thinking to himself. This game has revealing and tender moments, as well as truly horrifying and creepy ones. But as well as this air of horror and mystique, there are moments of sentimentality and true hope hidden in the depths of the main character's mind. It feels like you are exploring his memories, his aspirations, his deepest fears, and

As for the visuals, they are almost a given in SnowOwl games. The textures are phenomenal, the sprites are pieces of art. In particular, the dolls and terrifying floating

baby heads gave me the shivers. There are truly terrifying dream sequences in this game. The dreams get more and more surreal, more and more terrifying, as well as more and more challenging. The maps are great compilations of existing and most probably custom resources.

The monster sound effects could have been better, though. There is a certain little monster that yells, "Boo-yah" every 5 seconds that I just want to tell him to shut the hell up. He's like that annoying kid who thinks his whistle sounds good but he's really just spitting through his teeth. But some of the groans and screeches are truly terrifying. When a blur comes rushing at you with a high-pitched squeal, it's hard to know what to do.

There was also the weather effects. I couldn't help but admire the rain in this game, and especially the thunder. The way the thunder has a slight delay before it hits, that replicates real life. I don't think I've had the pleasure of appreciating that in many other games until now.

I'M DREAMING AGAIN...

The gameplay cycle of Reap and Sow is surprisingly complex for a horror game, and not at all complex for a farm simulator. You dig holes, you plant seeds, you water them, you go to bed, visit a terrifying dream dodging horrible monstrosities, wake up from your nightmare with wet pants, have a shower, perhaps wee on some plants, and then start it all over again. The complaint I have with this is that Reap and Sow can sometimes feel disjointed. The truth is that this sometimes works to its benefit, because farming can provide some good stress relief from dodging monsters in your dreams. The break between reality and dreams is refreshing, and gives you a sense of progression. Both worlds are initially exciting and full of possibilities for self-improvement.

But there are several mechanics in the farm world that should be improved. One of the biggest flaws in this current demo is that there is no visible gold total. So you never know how much you have to buy stuff with. I kind of just bought a flurry of random seeds, because I was given no indication beforehand of how long each one took to grow. It would be nice to be given information on this, as well as how often each one should be watered, or where to find them, etc. And is it just me, or do carrots take way too long to grow?

Now onto the monster side. I must say, the dream world impressed me greatly. This was my favourite part of the game, and it kept me coming back for more. There were several genius puzzles hidden amongst the general monsty population: the "Don't Move" scene in particular scared me greatly at first, but once I got used to him, it was a breeze getting past him. There are great number of innovative puzzles, especially towards the end, where I felt it was just warming up. Checkpoints are scattered freely, so when you do get to one, it is to your solid relief.

Part of the gameplay is recognizing monsters' repeating patterns, so you can dodge them. However, some of them move so fast, and on a low-performance laptop such as mine, it tends to lag and cause a veritable amount of frustration when trying to dodge flying birds and the such like. Bosses have interesting and varied AI which causes you to treat them much like puzzles.

But my major criticism is due to the junction between these two worlds. At some point, the real world becomes a little pointless. I'm not sure if this is a personal or philosophical thing, but it does. I became disenchanted with the idea of farming and at some stage wouldn't bother growing plants before falling back asleep. I didn't do any jobs, or any of my duties. In other words, I was living the life. I would dream, have fantastic adventures, wake up, pee on a plant, and then go back to bed. I

found myself just loading previous saves because I didn't want to go outside anymore.

Perhaps it's because I wasn't properly introduced to all the mechanics of the game. I didn't even encounter buying animals. I didn't encounter the fishing minigame like in the screenshot. Apparently there's some kind of boardgame hidden in the project. Maybe I didn't talk to everyone. As I had found later in the editor, there was some other stuff I missed out on. I didn't venture up north to the forest because I didn't see much point. As I said, I didn't see much point in farming after a while anyways. The story progression lay in the dream-exploring part, not the farming part. Despite that, the mechanics were engrossing and it was still fun to water plants, but after a while I just wanted to see what was happening next in the story.

Conclusion

Reap and Sow is one of the most promising RPG Maker demos I have ever played. I was thoroughly engrossed throughout, and the few flaws I found were overshadowed by its greatness. The graphics are engrossing, the music uplifting-slash-harrowing, and whilst it may be horror-based, it is imaginative and vibrant. The world is inviting, and draws you in. Sometimes I wish like there was more of a reason to care about farming, but overall the game is consistently designed and makes many brilliant design decisions. It is an experience to be had.

I have subscribed and thoroughly await the next demo installment. I am willing to update this review when that comes out.

Diversity

Within video games, one thing I've always found that's an important contributor to whether a game becomes successful or flops is diversity. This can be in the form of different levels, stages and enemies doing different things, for example. As long as the game has an element of change over its lifespan, it can be deemed to have diversity. In a more traditional RPG sense, this would be in the form of various quests, items, enemies and loot.

Final Fantasy XI's opening, picture credit: destructoid.com

A great example of diversity in an RPG is Final Fantasy 9. Final Fantasy 9's first moments have you controlling two different characters at different times, as well as lots of loot to find in the houses of the first town. There are even a multitude of enemies to talk to, introductory battles with different goals, simple reaction minigames and even an escape scene. This diversity brings a sense of realism into the world, as well as a pleasurable feeling that you're always doing something different, not just some menial task over and over. Final Fantasy 6 did the same, 13 didn't. See where this is going?

If you wish for a non-Final Fantasy example, look at The Witcher 2. Whilst not as diverse as Final Fantasy 9 in its opening moments, The Witcher 2 has an elaborate

fighting system that allows you to bring your own diversity into the fray in how you fight. On top of this, the starting 'village' has a multitude of NPCs to talk to as well as some short quests. Later on, there's even a minigame that breaks up the pace of the battles, allowing the story to reach a calmer moment. This is important in the sense of the story, too.

Generally, when creating your game, you should always consider that if a player performs the same task hundreds of times with no respite nor other tasks to break up the monotony, they will get bored. Present them with different things to do so that they can make decisions for themselves on what aspects of gameplay they like, and wish to focus more on. To counteract this, include diversity in your games. The diversity doesn't have to be straight-up different quests, but can be lore-related events that allow the player to further understand the world around them.

Other games with good examples of diversity that help pacing and improve the overall gameplay are Resident Evil 4, Divine Divinity and Blades of Avernum. Eremidia: Dungeon! is also an example of one for RPG Maker.

Eremidia: Dungeon!, by Enthrean Guardian

Bridgnorth

Deep in the heart of rural Shropshire, landlocked in middle England, lies the small town of Bridgnorth. Inhabited for millenia, its interesting topology, ancient buildings and preserved history provide the perfect inspirational setting for any RPG game. If no other town in the world existed, the features present in Bridgnorth would be a ripe farm of beauty and unusual structures, and is likely the inspiration for the very notion of the RPG town. In this article we're going to take a look at the town and what makes it so special, as a source of inspiraton and ideas, and to show that many of the cliches present in RPG towns are indeed practical and true to history.
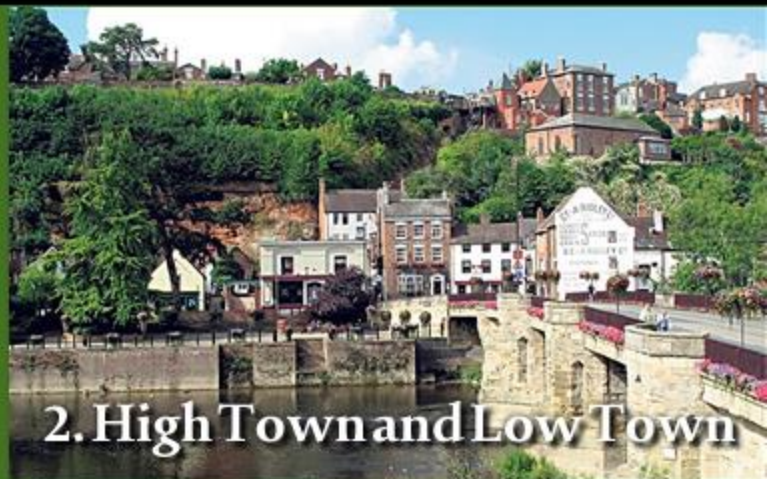
2. High Town and Low Town

Picture credit: Daily Telegraph

Built on a rocky cliff side, the town is split into two: the once rich High Town, protected by the cliffs and surrounding a church, sits atop the formerly poorer Low Town where the peasants lived.

1. Centred on a bridge

Picture credit: virtual-shropshire.co.uk

As the name suggests, Bridgnorth is centred on a bridge, specifically over the River Severn, the longest river in Britain. The impressively ancient stone structure still stands with its wide arches and promenade. The bridge lies as an entrance to the town, the river providing a natural moat, hence the bridge itself is immediately fortifiable. Other bridges have since been built next to it, but the grand structure itself still sits as a landmark in the town and is the main entrance driving from the East.
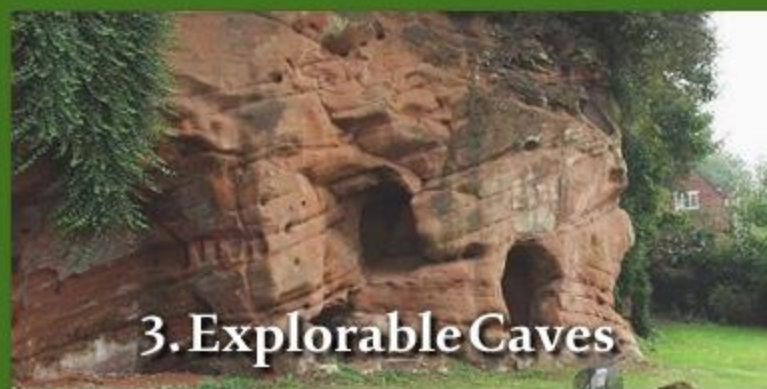
3. Explorable Caves

Picture credit: geolsoc.org.uk

Directly beneath the High Town, carved into the sandstone cliffs by the elements, lie caves which are deep enough to exlore and indeed have even in the past been inhabited.

Bridgnorth is a terminus of one of Britain's heritage steam railways, a former mainline and featuring many restored locomotives and rolling stock.

4. Entered via an archway

Picture credit: Malc McDonald

The main High Street is accessed by an ancient hole-in-the-wall gatehouse, once part of much larger town walls.

6. Steam Powered

Picture credit: Wikimedia Commons

Due to its nature the railway is constantly featured in films and TV series such as Poirot or Sherlock Holmes.

5. Mayor in the air

Picture credit: Virtual Tourist

Impressively, the entire town hall sits in the air, raised above the ground by arches providing space for a market underneath. The heart and soul of the high street, tudor built with a wooden frame, bell tower and clock face, it provides a great landmark for a meeting point and of course as a town hall itself is constantly in use by the local community. In the times a lot of fantasy RPGs are set, town halls would be much more prominent in the leadership of the town, and the high arches would provide good spots for stables and such.

Picture credit: steamtraingalleries.co.uk

While the railway is soon to be reconnected to the main railway network of the UK, the steam service shall carry on, still ran by volunteers who dedicate their time to the preservation of the line and various traction that runs on it.

Everything is preserved - even the old ticket offices, signage, staff uniforms and signals.

On a slightly darker note, the Nazi Party of Germany wanted Bridgnorth to be the headquarters of Nazi Britain, once invaded and annexed as part of the Reich.

Even quaint, peaceful towns aren't free from Godwin's law.

7. ....had a castle

Picture credit: oldcastlebridgnorth.co.uk

Unfortunately, though built in 1100 AD, Bridgnorth castle was destroyed in 1647 by the Cavaliers in the English Civil War. This does, however, provide an interesting focal point. It's been sitting at this precarious angle ever since.

The castle is surrounded by beautiful gardens that are well maintained and are very well used. The castle itself once had walls, but again these were destoyed in the civil war, of which the Midlands played a pivotal role.

9. An evil dictator

Picture credit: Electron Pencil

Located in the heart of the country but away from the urbanised conurbations of the Midlands, having a railway, airfield and vital communication lines made it an ideal location. Documents reveal the Nazis were also fascinated by its history: the norman castle, the churches and their saints, and other historical sites and features. Who'd blame them?

Within Britain the town holds no real prominance, although notably is a favourite holiday destination for many people living in Wales, on whose border Bridgnorth sits not far from.

The town has a population of not much more than 10,000, placing it far down in importance in the eyes of the government and media. This however gives it a quaintness and charm and helps keep its picturesque image.

8. Like an ever spinning wheel

Picture credit: patalanmachin.blogspot.com

While remnants of the early industrial revolution exist in the town, there still remain buildings from beforehand - such as Daniel's Mill, a water mill on the River Severn.

It will soon be connected to Birmingham and beyond via the national rail network, running diesel commuter trains, though any expansion is surely off the cards (and righty so).

10. An old curiosity shop

Ever found it odd the things RPG town shops sell? Wonder no more, as such a place exists. The old curiosity shop in Bridgnorth is a mess crammed with all sorts of weird, fascinating objects. Pitching itself as a shop and museum, it showcases anything and everything, from war memmorablia to cannons, rifles to guitars, shop manequins to flags and has an extensive collection of both toy teapot houses and top hats.

11. Funicular, Funicular

(the view is quite spectacular)

By far and away the most impressive, interesting structure in Bridgnorth is its funicular railway - a railway that goes up a cliff. Seen in games such as Final Fantasy VII, such features actually exist, built in Victorian times before concepts such as escalators were conceived. Rather beautifully, the funicular railway is the main way of traveling between the aforementioned High Town and Low Town. Offering stunning views (as seen on the cover) it is a tourist hit and has been so since the Victorian age.
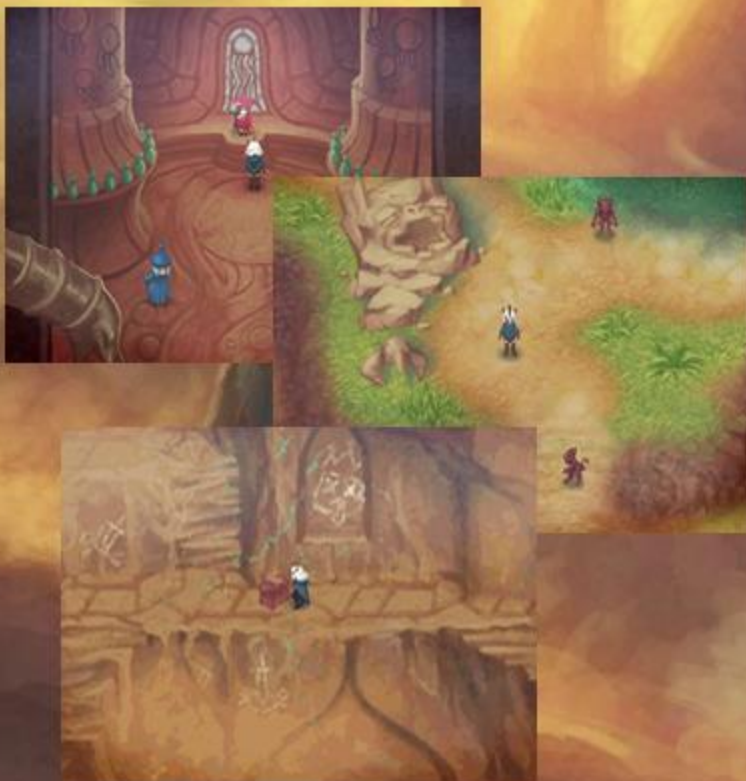
AMBER THRONE

Games need more than just pretty graphics to be good, we know that. But one project in particular could go a pretty long way with nothing but its looks. *Amber Throne*, from RPG Maker Web and created by member *Missile*, is a painted-look game which is animated throughout, in every scene. Even while sitting in battle, smoke and fog roll past, on top of extensively detailed battle animations and character movement, and map animations for characters moving down ladders or otherwise interacting with the beautiful painted scenery.

Menus are animated using scripting such that every movement, even deciding which spell you want to

use, is full of action and flashiness, and unlike some projects Amber Throne pulls this off really well. Gif animations are shown in its project thread at RM Web for your eyes to fall in love with (and they - you - will).

Unfortunately, as with a lot of good looking projects, the story and information provided alongside its screenshots are lacking; understandably we have been criticised for focusing on apparent vaporware projects. We really hope this isn't the case with *Amber Throne*, and that it is more than just a pretty face.

Amber Throne uses *Yanfly Melody*, an extensive script system by *Yanfly*, but as can be seen in its screenshots the game not only puts them to good use well, but also modifies them to take them further. Yanfly's Melody Engine is available at **yanflychannel.wordpress.com** alongside all their scripts.

Tutorial: Mechanics

Our "quick tips" section this month forms an entire game. The aim is to demonstrate various small parts of the RPG Maker engine and how they can come together to work as one mechanic, in this case, the game of Sokoban. Sokoban is a game where boxes are pushed into spaces around a room, but you can only push, not pull, leading to them being trapped in corners if you're not careful. Let's look at how to implement it.
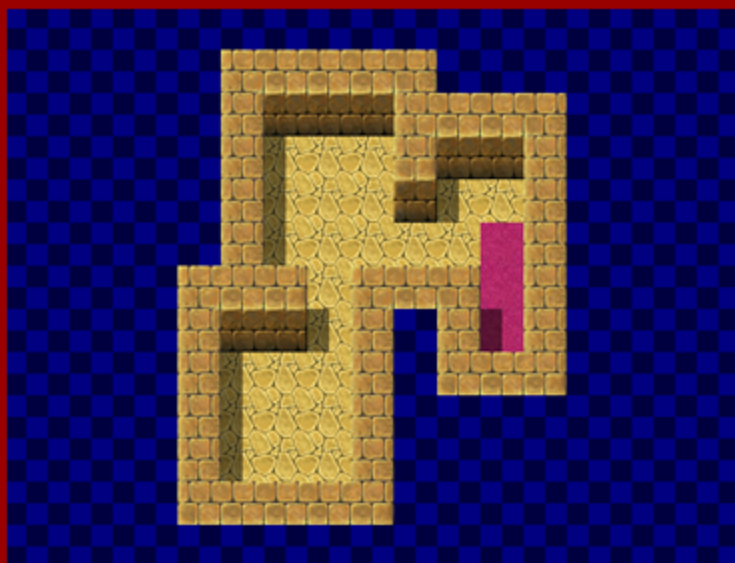
First we need to create a map. The map should be drawn using a floor tile alone, until it's entirely done - we then add in wall tiles being careful not to go over our floor. Walls mean nothing to us, the floor is our level, with anything else just making it look pretty. Here I have used the shift key to draw a purple carpet autotile as if it was a single, plain tile, to create the box storage area.

Next we create an event styled as a box and give it some actions. Set move route lets us choose "move away from player", which moves the box in the opposite direction to the player.

```
@>Set Move Route: This event (Skip)
:                 : $>Move away from Player
```

It's better to do this using conditional branches to test what direction the player is facing, but this shall do

for now. We need to change some settings for the event to get it working as a Sokoban style game.

Speed:	4: Normal
Freq:	5: Highest

First (above) it needs to move at the same speed as the player or higher; by default it won't be. Secondly we need to set it as a "player touch" event so that the event is triggered when the player walks into it, and to set it to be the same level as the player so that the player can touch it rather than having to be on the same tile as it.

Trigger	Priority
Player Touch	Same as Characters

We're now going to skip ahead to the end of our level, in order to place other mechanics inbetween. We need to create a common event.

By setting its trigger as parallel process the event will run simultaneously to the main game, provided its chosen switch is on. We create a conditional branch that checks "something".

```
@>Conditional Branch: Script: check_chests
```

By setting its condition to "script" and typing the name of a functon we can create this function later on and choose what it does.

Inside this we merely provide a message telling the player the level is complete and then move them to the next map. How can we do this? The transfer player event command can be manipulated using events.

First we set variable 1 and 2 to the centre of all maps, one tile which is always free, say (7,7). We then set the third to "script" and choose:

```
@>Control Variables: [0003:map] = $game_map.map_id + 1
```

By setting it to "$game_map.map_id" the variable becomes the number of the map we're currently on. By incrementing it by 1 we move to the next map, an equivalent replacement for the "go to next room" command in Game Maker.

Now let's go back to our script.

We create a new script in Materials and call it Game Handling. We use the Game_Interpreter class so that our function can be accessed on the map, and create a method called check_chests. This method returns either "true" or "false" so that it can be used in a conditional branch as if it was a switch.

This might sound daunting, but it's simpler than it sounds. Firstly we create a barebones method that simply returns either true or false.

```
class Game_Interpreter
  def check_chests
    if 1
      return true
    else
      return false
    end
  end
end
```

The "if" statement is basically a conditional branch within our script, and works exactly the same.

We create two variables:

- *safe* is a measure of how many box events are in their correct places.

- *total* is a measure of how many events are in the map to begin with.

We set "safe" to "0" to begin with, as no events will be safe at the start of the level. We set "total" to be the number of events in the map.

```
class Game_Interpreter
  def check_chests
    safe = 0
    total = $game_map.events.size
```

We then increment through each event to find out which ones are "home". Firstly we draw over the purple tiles created earlier with a region tag, for example region 1. This tells the game where our safe spots are.
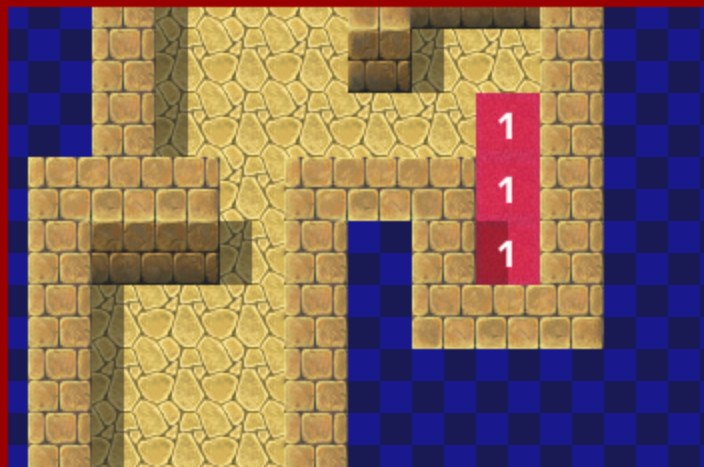

```
for i in 1..total
  if $game_map.events[i].region_id == 1
    safe += 1
  end
end
```

This block is essentially saying: *for every event in the map that isn't the player, if it is sitting on a safe tile, add 1 to the counter.*

You could extend this method by checking whether events names contain the word "box" to check only box events, if you need other events present in your map.

```
class Game_Interpreter

  def check_chests

    safe = 0

    total = $game_map.events.size

    for i in 1  total

      if $game_map.events[i].region_id == 1

        safe += 1

      end

    end

    if total == counter

      return true

    else

      return false

    end

  end

end
```

We then make sure our initial conditional branch points to the right function.

```
@>Conditional Branch: Script: check_chests
  @>Text: -, -, Normal, Middle
  :       : Level complete.
  @>Control Variables: [0001:x] = 7
  @>Control Variables: [0002:y] = 7
  @>Control Variables: [0003:map] = $game_map.map_id + 1
  @>Transfer Player:Variable [0003][0001][0002]
  @>
: Else
  @>
: Branch End
```

Game complete!

Because our mechanics are implemented partially via global event we can turn our "game" on or off using the switch we chose, usefully. Otherwise the game will just continue cycling through maps and checking if we've completed them, which is fine if our Sokoban game is a full game rather than a minigame inside a larger project, which it could work perfectly as, forming a small puzzle.

Extending RPG Maker 2000/3

fdelapena at RPGMaker.net, alongside others, is trying to work out how RM2k/3 savegames work, and quite interestingly - creating a game with minimal content, saving, changing something, playing and saving again, and comparing the differences.

UPDATED PROJECT ZELDA ENGINE

A Zelda starter kit, by SilentResident at RMRK.net. A tool for RPG Maker XP, the Zelda engine allows gamers to create their own Zelda titles, using an extensive collection of scripted features such as pixel based movement in 8 directions, ledge jumping, HUD, and of course Zelda's action battle system.

Love and War by *Admiral Styles* at HBGames.org

Thanks for reading!

We hope you enjoyed this issue, and encourage you to share it any way you wish to. As long as you don't claim anything as your own that isn't, and do not edit the magazine in any way without permission, you're free to redistribute this magazine, promote it on your website, blog it, tweet it, tumblr it, bleat it, as you see fit.

While there's no set team for ARPGM, we're on the look out for talented writers who want to produce regular articles for us. No contracts, nothing set in stone, just if you'd like a regular spot and are talented, just send things our way and they'll end up in the magazine if they're any good. (If you want an official title, write frequently enough and you can

grab one to flash around at people.)

Graphics wise, all formatting and production of the magazine is currently being handled by Amy, who would rather improve if it's no good than hand it over to somebody else (sorry, egotism). Your comments are more than appreciated and if there's anywhere we can improve please let us know. If you want to produce any graphics, title pages, etc, let us know too. Basically, let us know things!

We know issue 1 wasn't perfect, and issue 2 won't have been either, but the more we produce and the more feedback we get, the better it'll become. Watch this space for issue 3 in June!

Write for Us

We welcome any articles, news, tutorials or reviews that you'd like to see in the eZine, as well as ideas for them. For more information on how to submit your content, please visit our website, www.arpgmaker.com, and click on the magazine board where you'll find all the details.

We also welcome small advertisements and promotional pieces, in limited quantity and size. Anything larger or commercially oriented is at our discretion and we cannot guarantee you will feature.

Contributors

Edited and compiled by Amy

Diversity (page 11): Hotfirelegend

Reap and Sow (page 8-10): Cashmere cat

A huge thank you to anybody who submitted ideas, feedback or content to the magazine, and to anybody whose content was featured. Thank you to anybody who promoted or otherwise supported issue 1 and this issue.

On the Cover

This month's cover is a photograph of Bridgnorth's view from the station of the Bridgnorth Cliff Railway, from the twinning assocation for Schrobenhausen.

Donate

Far from us to ask for a fortune, but staying online isn't free. If you feel like giving a little bit, it'd be much appreciated, even if it's just a few bucks. Every little helps. Please speak to Amy for more information, or donate to www.hbgames.org.