

INSTRUCTION MANUAL

MELBOURNE TATTY



video game cartridge for use with the Atari 2600 and compatible systems



NOTE: Always turn the console power switch off when inserting or removing an ATARI® Game Program cartridge. This will protect the electronic components and prolong the life of your ATARI® Video Computer System™ game.

Use your Joystick Controllers to play this game. Make sure to plug the controller firmly into the left controller jack. Hold the controller so the red button is in the upper left corner.

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So you've decided to seek your fortune as an adventurer? Explore the mazes of MELBOURNE TATTY for elusive and valuable treasures.

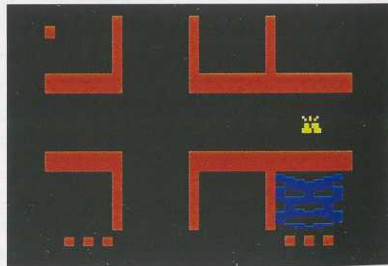
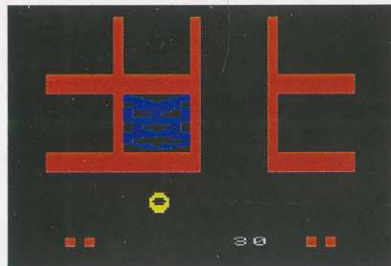
Just be careful, as this is no average maze -- The walls shift and move with a life of their own to confuse and disorient you. And beware of the hungry wolf that prowls the maze, looking for a tasty morsel just like you...

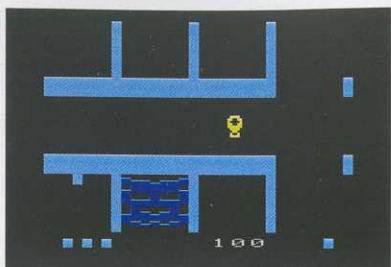
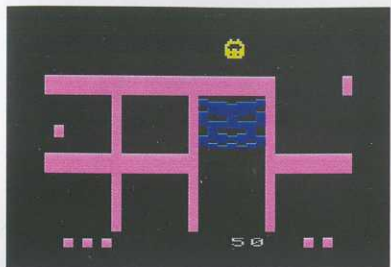
GAME INSTRUCTIONS

MELBOURNE TATTY is a one-player game only.

1. Follow the manufacturer's instructions to connect your Atari 2600 or compatible video game system to your television set.
2. Plug in your joystick controller. MELBOURNE TATTY uses the left joystick.
3. Game select switch:
 - a) There are twenty levels in MELBOURNE TATTY.
 - b) The opening screen will display your most recent score until you press Select. Keep pressing select to choose the level you wish to start from. (The default is Level 1.)
4. Hold the joystick with the red button in the upper left position.
5. Starting the game:

Press Fire on the left joystick or Reset to begin. If there is a game in progress and you wish to start over, press game reset on the console.





6. Navigating the Maze



Use the left joystick to move around the screen. Walls will block you, but they won't block the wolf! Try to gather the golden treasures as they appear on the screen. You get ten points for every treasure you collect. If you can recover ten treasures, you'll move on to the next level.

Press the fire button to put down a golden decoy. The wolf will leave you alone and pursue the decoy until he grabs it. Use this time to put some distance between you! You get three decoys at the start of every level. Every



time you place a decoy, your decoy meter on the left side of the screen will drop. You get fifty bonus points for every unused decoy at the end of the level.

7. Hazards

The wolf pursues you relentlessly across the screen. He'll move one room at a time through the maze, pausing briefly in every room he reaches. You'll hear a warning tone shortly before he moves. If he catches you, you'll lose one life. You get three lives before the game is over. Your lives are displayed on the right side of the screen.



STRATEGY HINTS FOR HIGH SCORING

- Conserve your decoys. You can get up to 150 bonus points at the end of each level for them. But learn the best place to put them so you can get through an emergency alive.
- Learn to manipulate the wolf. Don't just go rushing into the maze -- plan your route carefully and trick the wolf into pursuing you away from the next treasure.
- Every level is different. Learn how the walls move in each level and get a feel for where your best opportunities for retreat may lie.



BEHIND THE SCENES: THE DEVELOPMENT OF MELBOURNE TATTY

What is MELBOURNE TATTY? Here are some comments from the programmer, Edward Griffiths, on the design and programming of the game.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Melbourne Tatty was my first serious attempt at an original Atari 2600 game. I knew that I wanted to make a classic-style arcade game, but I didn't really know much more than that. Prior to that, I had made practice games that had no screen background elements whatsoever, so I began by thinking of ways to use the background sort of as a character that the player would have to interact with. Since I've always loved mazes, I came up with the idea of a maze where the walls keep moving around.

I spent about a week coming up with the programming that makes the maze walls move and amusing myself by navigating my little square through it. I had a vague sort of idea that the game should involve collecting treasure and avoiding monsters, but I didn't have a firm direction to go with it until I had a conversation about it with my good friend James Cliffe. Now, I've known James for several years, and he's been an influence on a number of my hobby projects. For example, he once drew a cartoon fox who became a main character in the first practice game that I wrote.

So when I told him that I had a new idea for an Atari game, he asked me, "Is it Melbourne Tatty?" I asked him what Melbourne Tatty was, and he explained that it was just a hilariously random name that he had come up with. I haven't been able to find any other reference to the expression "Melbourne Tatty", nor have I been able to get any other explanation out of him, but I liked the way it sounded -- sort of like Indiana Jones or Pitfall Harry -- so it stuck. He also suggested that the antagonist should be a wolf. Armed with his suggestions, I set to work on it.

I decided early on that the wolf should operate on a cycle of moving and resting to give the player a chance to get out of its way. I originally wanted the speed of the game to increase as a level progressed and then drop back at the beginning of the next level, but the more I played the earlier versions, the more I realized that the natural focus of the game wasn't speed but moving strategically, luring the wolf away from the part of the screen where you want to go and then eluding him. So the speed progression became a lot more subtle.

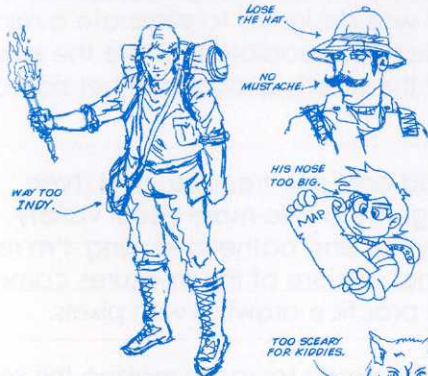
The level select feature was added because the game was turning out to be very difficult. Since the point of the game isn't so much to beat every level as it is to get a high score, I decided to let the player start at any level he chose so that novices can get a taste for what they can expect in later levels and proficient players can go right to their favorite levels or the levels they need more practice on without a lot of hassle.

And then I started asking people on the AtariAge forums for opinions about it. I got quite a few helpful suggestions, but the ones that had the biggest impact came from two users, Piggles and jbanes. Piggles suggested that the player have the option to drop bait to throw the wolf off his trail, and jbanes suggested that it be limited to three drops per level. It added exactly the sort of finishing touch that I thought the game needed.

The finished version of Melbourne Tatty contains bug fixes and graphical enhancements made by Fred Quimby, the developer of the programming language that I used throughout Melbourne Tatty's development. I owe him two debts of gratitude then, firstly because the game never would have begun without him, and secondly because it never would have resembled a real game without him.

ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT

MELBOURNE TATTY PRE-PRODUCTION ART WORKS.



MORE TOONIE.



EARLYER LABEL ART WORKS.



ART WORKS BY ATARIBOY.

A lot of the decisions I made about the game graphics were based on my limited experience programming the Atari and my desire to work with Fred Quimby's batari Basic. In particular, I decided, for better or for worse, that I wouldn't put up with any flickering characters on the screen. Since the gameplay I had in mind needed to allow for the possibility of four objects intersecting at once, I had to make some graphic sacrifices. I felt it was important for the wolf and the treasure to be distinctive objects, so the player and the decoy were demoted to rectangles. As a player who carries a great fondness for Adventure, I felt the tradeoff was reasonable.

I drew all of the original sprites directly as pixel art with no concept sketches whatsoever, which goes a long way toward explaining the crude look of the wolf character and the treasures. There

were two versions of the wolf that showed up in early builds of the game. Both of them were flat and decidedly unwolflike. The final version was created by Scott Dayton (Neotokeo). Besides looking much more gruff, the final wolf was designed to eliminate a minor bug in the game; in early builds, it was possible to share the same room with the wolf because of the empty space to either side of his chin.

The first version of the game had only one treasure, and three more were added to give the game a little more visual variety. The earliest versions were pretty flat and pathetic-looking; I'm reasonably happy with how the final versions of the treasures came out, after I had had a bit more practice drawing with pixels.

John Calcano (Atariboy) gets the credit for really making this setting come alive through his artwork. The way he depicts the characters goes beyond anything I had imagined them doing, and yet it feels so right. I really can't thank him enough for what his imagination has brought to the world of Melbourne Tatty.

CREDITS

Game Design and Programming - Edward Griffiths
Additional Programming and Design - Fred Quimby
Artwork - John Calcano
Cartridge and Manual Services - AtariAge
Game Testing - Darren Braun
Box Production - Marc Oberhäuser
Produced By Scott Dayton (NEO GAMES)

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