

Arcade Tales

Arcades
Histories
Photographs

Amusements



4

GREAT BRITAIN...

THE COUNTY OF KENT...

THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE AND UNIVERSITY CITY OF **CANTERBURY**, WITH ITS CATHEDRAL, FOUNDED IN 597 AD...

HOME TO **CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY**...

WELCOME TO
Canterbury
Christ Church
University

AND TO
DR ALAN MEADES

SONIC BOOM!

SONIC BOOM!

HADOKEN!

HELLO AND WELCOME TO ARCADE TALES 4...

ARCADES,
HISTORIES,
PHOTOGRAPHS.

STREET FIGHTER II

SONIC BOOM!

Dr Alan Meades
Principal Lecturer
in Digital Design
School of Media
Art / Design

IN
LAB

HADOKEN!

HADOKEN!

HADOKEN!

LET ME JUST BEAT RYU AND I'LL BE RIGHT WITH YOU...

AHHH... NO... COME ON, COME ON, COME ON! AHHH...

NO, NO, NO...

HADOKEN!

DAMN.

OR GET BEATEN BY RYU.

CRUNCH

EURGGHH!

EURGGHH

EURGGHH

YOU LOSE

UM-BADUM-BADUM-BADABBA-DABBA-DUM



MY NAME IS **ALAN MEADES**, I'M A PLAY RESEARCHER AND **ARCADE TALES** IS MY PROJECT.



IN THIS ISSUE I WANT TO TALK ABOUT **THE GEORGE WILSON ARCHIVE OF ARCADE PHOTOGRAPHY**, AND THE REASONING BEHIND **ARCADE TALES...**



HAVE YOU SEEN THE OTHER **ARCADE TALES** COMICS?

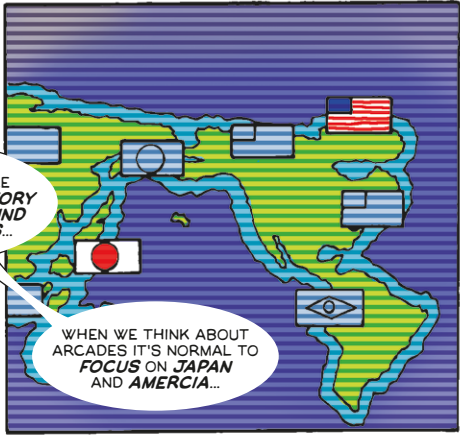
UM-BADUM-BADUM-BADABBA-DABBA-DUM



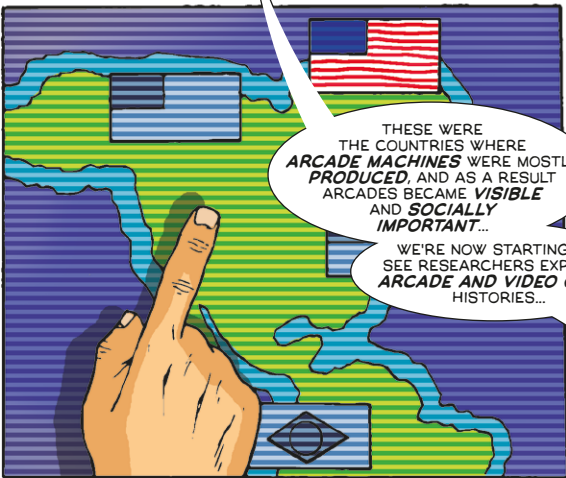
BEATEN... BY RYU?



BUT FIRST, LET'S THINK A LITTLE ABOUT **ARCADE HISTORY** AND THE **BACKGROUND** TO **ARCADE TALES...**



WHEN WE THINK ABOUT ARCADES IT'S NORMAL TO **FOCUS ON JAPAN** AND **AMERICA...**

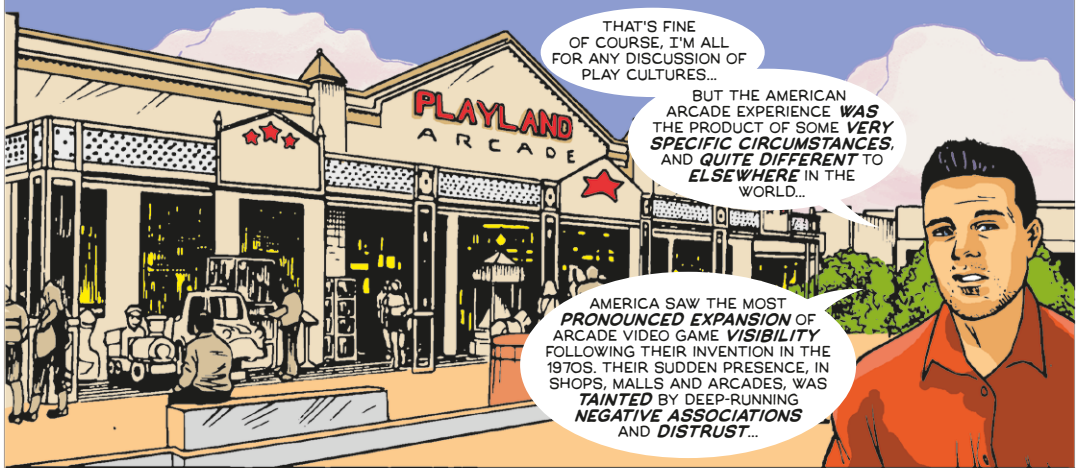


THESE WERE THE COUNTRIES WHERE **ARCADE MACHINES** WERE MOSTLY **PRODUCED**, AND AS A RESULT ARCADES BECAME **VISIBLE** AND **SOCIALLY IMPORTANT...**

WE'RE NOW STARTING TO SEE RESEARCHERS EXPLORE **ARCADE AND VIDEO GAME HISTORIES...**



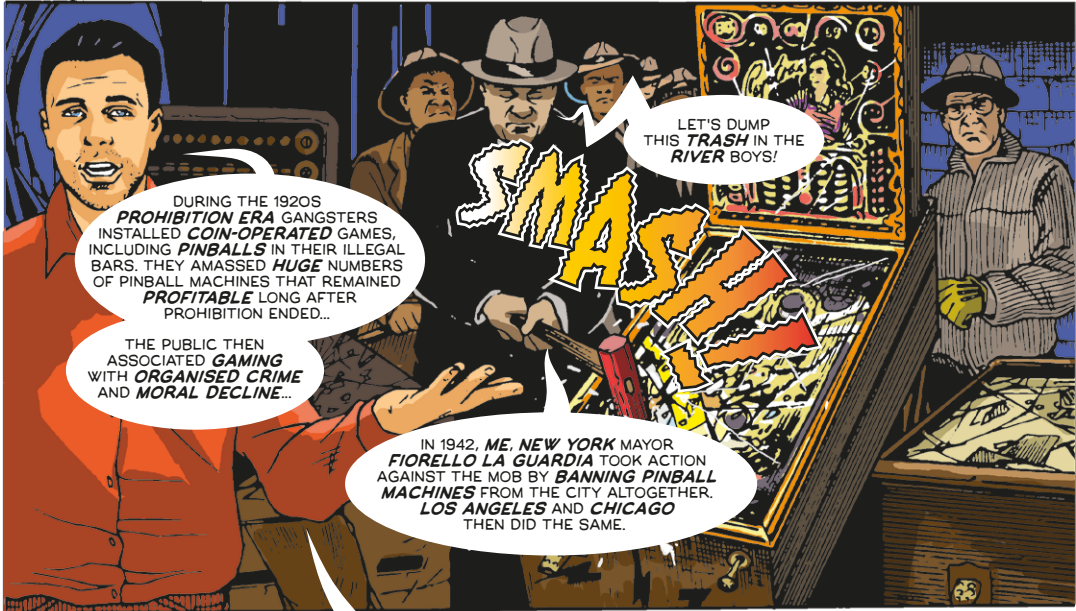
BUT THEY TEND TO BE **LIMITED** TO THOSE **AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES.**



THAT'S FINE OF COURSE, I'M ALL FOR ANY DISCUSSION OF PLAY CULTURES...

BUT THE AMERICAN ARCADE EXPERIENCE WAS THE PRODUCT OF SOME VERY SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES, AND QUITE DIFFERENT TO ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD...

AMERICA SAW THE MOST PRONOUNCED EXPANSION OF ARCADE VIDEO GAME VISIBILITY FOLLOWING THEIR INVENTION IN THE 1970S. THEIR SUDDEN PRESENCE, IN SHOPS, MALLS AND ARCADES, WAS TAINTED BY DEEP-RUNNING NEGATIVE ASSOCIATIONS AND DISTRUST...

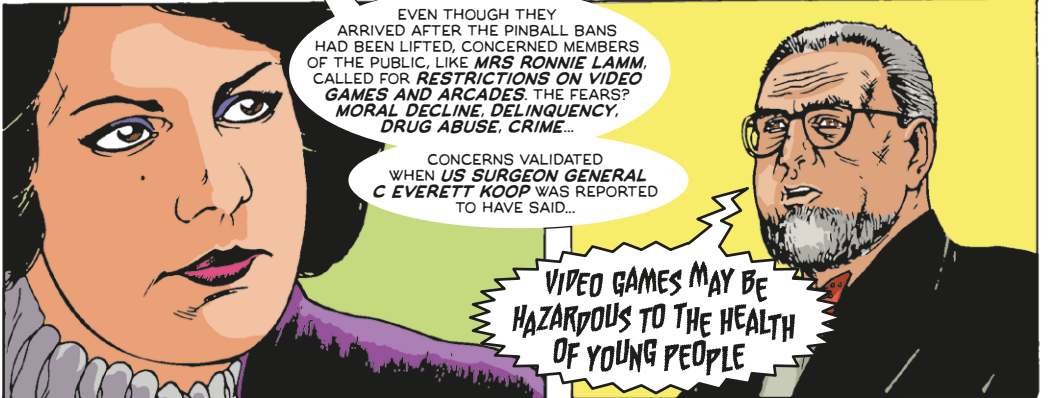


DURING THE 1920S PROHIBITION ERA GANGSTERS INSTALLED COIN-OPERATED GAMES, INCLUDING PINBALLS IN THEIR ILLEGAL BARS. THEY AMASSED HUGE NUMBERS OF PINBALL MACHINES THAT REMAINED PROFITABLE LONG AFTER PROHIBITION ENDED...

THE PUBLIC THEN ASSOCIATED GAMING WITH ORGANISED CRIME AND MORAL DECLINE...

LET'S DUMP THIS TRASH IN THE RIVER BOYS!

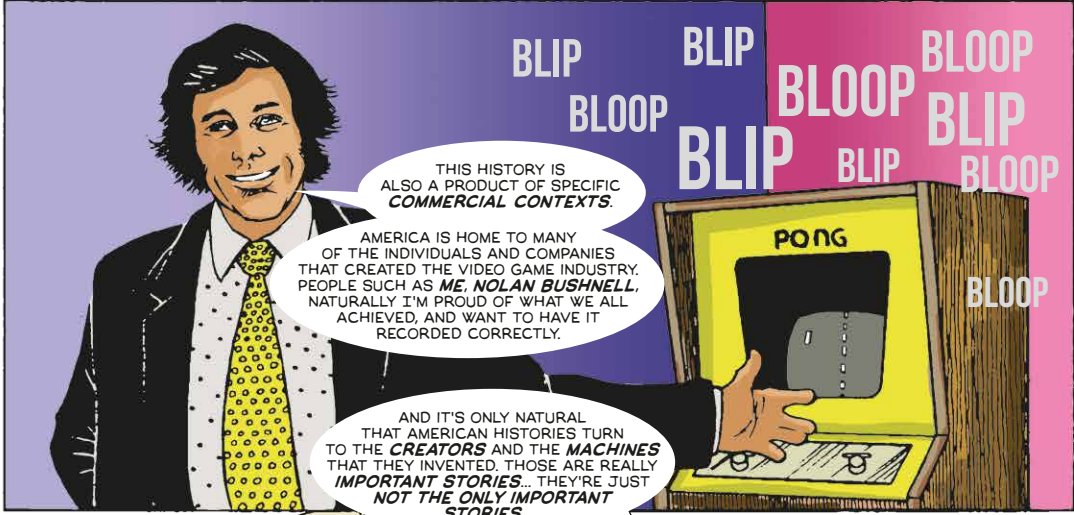
IN 1942, ME, NEW YORK MAYOR FIORELLO LA GUARDIA TOOK ACTION AGAINST THE MOB BY BANNING PINBALL MACHINES FROM THE CITY ALTOGETHER. LOS ANGELES AND CHICAGO THEN DID THE SAME.



EVEN THOUGH THEY ARRIVED AFTER THE PINBALL BANS HAD BEEN LIFTED, CONCERNED MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, LIKE MRS RONNIE LAMM, CALLED FOR RESTRICTIONS ON VIDEO GAMES AND ARCADES. THE FEARS? MORAL DECLINE, DELINQUENCY, DRUG ABUSE, CRIME...

CONCERNS VALIDATED WHEN US SURGEON GENERAL C EVERETT KOOP WAS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID...

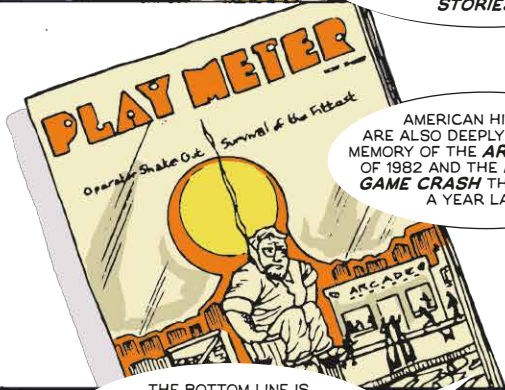
VIDEO GAMES MAY BE HAZARDOUS TO THE HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE



THIS HISTORY IS ALSO A PRODUCT OF SPECIFIC **COMMERCIAL CONTEXTS**.

AMERICA IS HOME TO MANY OF THE INDIVIDUALS AND COMPANIES THAT CREATED THE VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY. PEOPLE SUCH AS **ME, NOLAN BUSHNELL**, NATURALLY I'M PROUD OF WHAT WE ALL ACHIEVED, AND WANT TO HAVE IT RECORDED CORRECTLY.

AND IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT AMERICAN HISTORIES TURN TO THE **CREATORS** AND THE **MACHINES** THAT THEY INVENTED. THOSE ARE REALLY **IMPORTANT STORIES**... THEY'RE JUST **NOT THE ONLY IMPORTANT STORIES**...

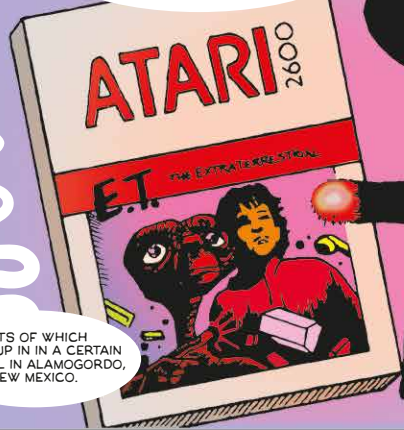


AMERICAN HISTORIES ARE ALSO DEEPLY SCARRED BY MEMORY OF THE **ARCADE CRASH** OF 1982 AND THE **HOME VIDEO GAME CRASH** THAT FOLLOWED A YEAR LATER...



THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT BECAUSE OF EXPANSION THERE WERE **TOO MANY ARCADES**, **TOO MANY VIDEO GAMES**, AND **TOO FEW CUSTOMERS** TO GENERATE TURNOVER...

THE HOME CRASH WAS THE PRODUCT OF SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCE: A GLUT OF **POOR-QUALITY GAMES** SAT ON SHELVES AND REDUCED CONSUMER CONFIDENCE. GAMES LIKE **PAC-MAN** AND **E.T.** FOR THE ATARI 2600.



LOTS OF WHICH ENDED UP IN IN A CERTAIN LANDFILL IN ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO.



BUT IT'S IMPORTANT TO PHONE HOME AND REMEMBER THAT EVEN THOUGH THE CRASHES WERE CATASTROPHIC IN NORTH AMERICA, OTHER PLACES SUCH AS THE UK, **HARDLY EVEN NOTICED THEM AT ALL**.

MANY FELT THE CRASHES MARKED THE **DEATH OF THE VIDEO GAME CRAZE**, AND FOR A FEW YEARS AFTERWARDS THERE WAS LITTLE APPETITE FOR CREATING HARDWARE OR SOFTWARE...

THIS BEGAN TO CHANGE AFTER THE **NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM** WAS RELEASED IN 1985, WITH ITS SEAL OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PLATFORM CONTROLS...

THESE PREVENTED OVERSUPPLY AND MAINTAINED PROFITABILITY...

AND USHERED IN A SHIFT TOWARDS THE **JUVENILIZATION OF VIDEO GAME PLAY.**

LET'S NOT FORGET ABOUT THE CONCERNED PARENTS, KIDS! AMERICAN ARCADES HAD IT TOUGH, **REGULATION** ON ONE SIDE AND **FALLING PROFITS** ON THE OTHER...

SO THEY **DIVERSIFIED**...

IN FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS VIDEO GAMES WERE SEEN AS **PART OF THE ENTERTAINMENT MIX** ALONGSIDE **SOFT-PLAY AREAS, FOOD COURTS AND CHILDREN'S PARTIES**. MANY ALSO OFTEN ADOPTED A STRICT POLICY OF **NO UNACCOMPANIED MINORS**...

THE PRESENCE OF YOUNGER **KIDS AND ADULTS** MADE THESE SPACES UNPALATABLE TO ALL BUT THE MOST PATIENT ADOLESCENT ARCADE GOERS. AND GRADUALLY THE NUMBER OF ARCADES **DWINDLED** AND WITH IT PUBLIC CONCERN.

MANY BECAME **FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS** LIKE NOLAN BUSHNELL'S **CHUCK E. CHEESE'S PIZZA TIME THEATRE**...

AND NOW MANY PEOPLE FONDLY RECALL THEIR ARCADE EXPERIENCES, BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER THE CRASHES...

TIME OUT TUNNEL

Growing Up In Arcades: 1979-1989

DUE TO THEIR **RELATIVE SCARCITY** PEOPLE CHERISH **PHOTOGRAPHS** OF ARCADES, **SHARING AND CELEBRATING** THEM ONLINE IN GROUPS LIKE...

FLIKR'S GROWING UP IN THE ARCADES 1979-89.

THESE PHOTOGRAPHS TEND TO CONSIST OF OCCASIONAL **PARTY SNAPS**, AND EVEN SCREEN GRABS FROM FILMS. THEY TAP INTO AN UNDERCURRENT OF **NOSTALGIA**.



WHILE NOSTALGIC WEBSITES OF PARTY SNAPS ARE GREAT, **STANFORD UNIVERSITY** HAS A FAR MORE USEFUL AND INTERESTING RESOURCE...

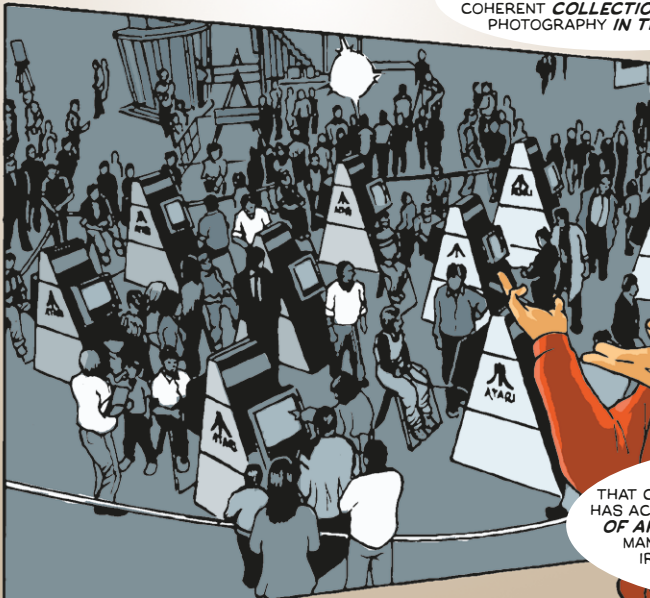


THE BAY AREA ARCADES
PHOTOGRAPHS BY RENOWNED PHOTOGRAPHER **IRA NOWINSKI**.



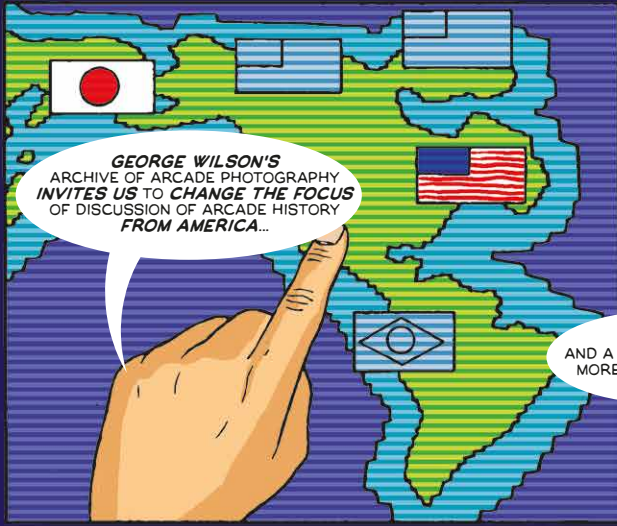
THIS COLLECTION, ACQUIRED BY THE UNIVERSITY IN 2011, IS CONSIDERED THE **LARGEST** AND MOST COHERENT **COLLECTION OF ARCADE PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE WORLD**.

IT CONTAINS OVER **600 IMAGES**, FROM CALIFORNIAN ARCADES IN 1981 AND 1982 - A TRUE GLIMPSE INTO THE ARCADES **BEFORE THE CRASH**. NOWINSKI'S PHOTOGRAPHS ARE AN **IMPORTANT SOCIAL DOCUMENT**, AND **WONDERFUL IMAGES** IN THEIR OWN RIGHT...



WHILE A LOT OF THE CONTENT IN NOWINSKI'S PHOTOGRAPHS IS **FAMILIAR** TO SOMEONE FROM THE UK, THERE'S SOMETHING SLIGHTLY FOREIGN, SLIGHTLY OUT OF PLACE TO IT...

I'M THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE THAT CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY HAS ACQUIRED THE **GEORGE WILSON ARCHIVE OF ARCADE PHOTOGRAPHY**. AN ARCHIVE IN MANY WAYS COMPARABLE TO STANFORD'S IRA NOWINSKI COLLECTION, BUT FROM A **BRITISH PERSPECTIVE**.



GEORGE WILSON'S ARCHIVE OF ARCADE PHOTOGRAPHY INVITES US TO CHANGE THE FOCUS OF DISCUSSION OF ARCADE HISTORY FROM AMERICA...



TO THE UK AND A HISTORY SO MUCH MORE FAMILIAR TO ME.



OK, SO... THE UK IS A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A FAIRLY LARGE POPULATION. IN THE MID 1800S DURING THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION THE POPULATION SHIFTED, CONCENTRATING AROUND THE MAJOR CITIES, SUCH AS LONDON, MANCHESTER, AND BIRMINGHAM. PEOPLE WORKED IN THE DIRTY CITIES AND SOUGHT ESCAPE IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS...

NOTHING UNUSUAL THERE THEN...

BUT IMPORTANTLY, NOWHERE IN THE UK IS MORE THAN 70 MILES FROM THE COAST. AS WORKING CITY POPULATIONS DEMANDED PLACES TO RELAX AND UNWIND AWAY FROM THE SMOG AND NOSE OF THE CITY, SEASIDE HOLIDAY RESORTS BECAME POPULAR.

I HOPE MY VERSION OF AMERICAN ARCADE HISTORY WASN'T TOO SIMPLIFIED.. IT'S JUST A SKETCH AFTER ALL...

AND WHAT ABOUT A HISTORY OF JAPANESE ARCADES, OR THOSE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES? WE KNOW SO LITTLE ABOUT THEM.

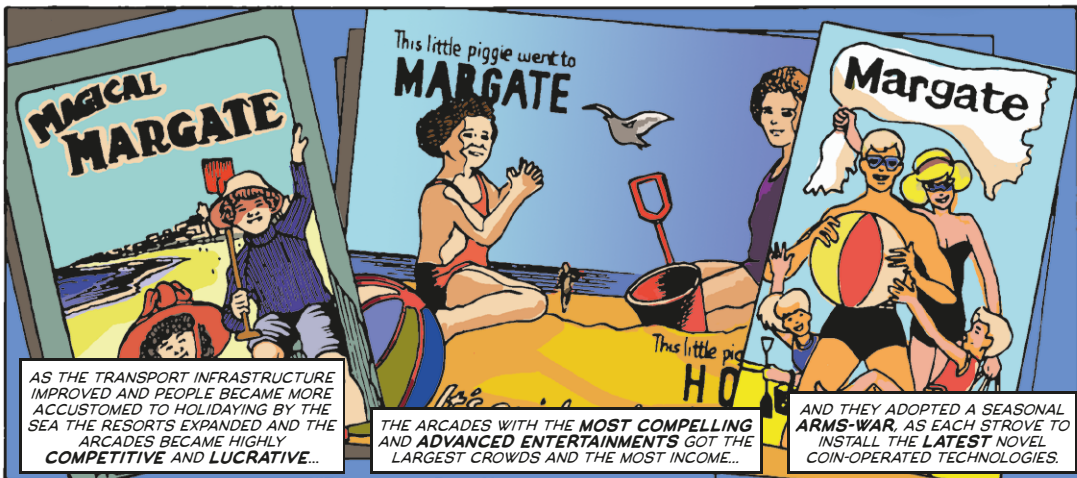
I'LL PLAY AS KEN. THAT'LL DO IT!

PLACES SUCH AS MARGATE, BLACKPOOL, EASTBOURNE, SKEGNESS, AND HERNE BAY BECAME PLACES FOR LEISURE, ENTERTAINMENT, AND LICENSE. PART OF THIS PLEASURE WAS THE AVAILABILITY OF COIN-OPERATED AMUSEMENTS SUDDENLY AVAILABLE TO THE MASSES.

THIS WAS LEISURE ON AN INDUSTRIALISED VICTORIAN SCALE, WHERE TECHNOLOGY WAS CENTRAL TO THE EXPERIENCE. ONE RESORT, RAMSGATE, BUILT A TRAIN STATION DIRECTLY ON THE EDGE OF THE SANDS...



HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF HOLIDYMAKERS STEPPED STRAIGHT ONTO THE PROMENADE LINED WITH ARCADES AND AMUSEMENTS.



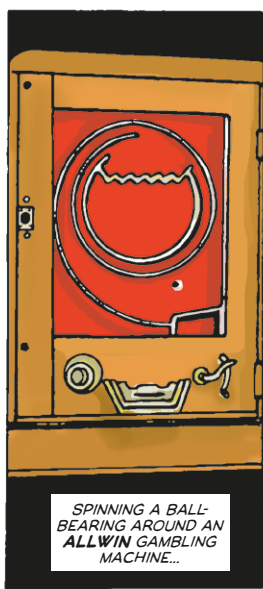
AS THE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVED AND PEOPLE BECAME MORE ACCUSTOMED TO HOLIDAYING BY THE SEA THE RESORTS EXPANDED AND THE ARCADES BECAME HIGHLY COMPETITIVE AND LUCRATIVE...

THE ARCADES WITH THE MOST COMPELLING AND ADVANCED ENTERTAINMENTS GOT THE LARGEST CROWDS AND THE MOST INCOME...

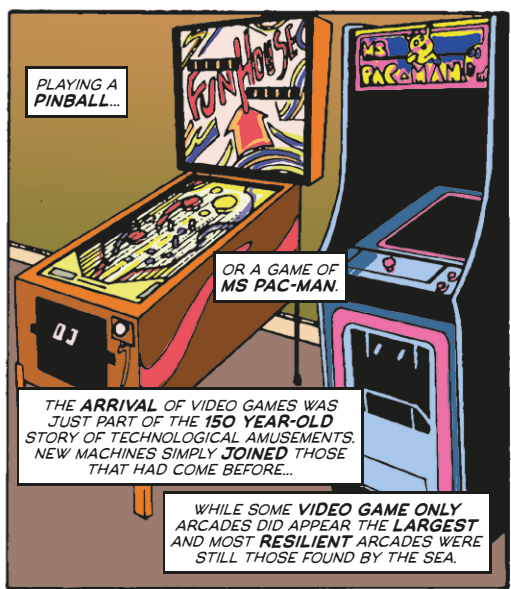
AND THEY ADOPTED A SEASONAL ARMS-WAR, AS EACH STROVE TO INSTALL THE LATEST NOVEL COIN-OPERATED TECHNOLOGIES.



WHETHER IT WAS A PEEK AT WHAT THE BUTLER SAW ON A MUTOSCOPE...



SPINNING A BALL-BEARING AROUND AN ALLWIN GAMBLING MACHINE...

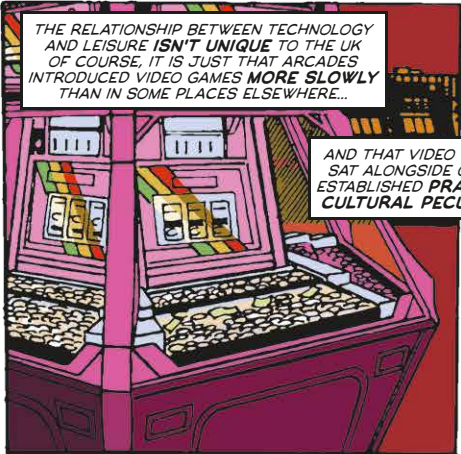


PLAYING A PINBALL...

OR A GAME OF MS PAC-MAN.

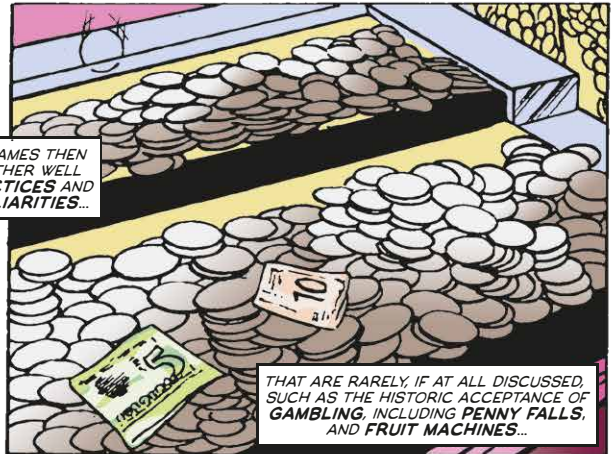
THE ARRIVAL OF VIDEO GAMES WAS JUST PART OF THE 150 YEAR-OLD STORY OF TECHNOLOGICAL AMUSEMENTS. NEW MACHINES SIMPLY JOINED THOSE THAT HAD COME BEFORE...

WHILE SOME VIDEO GAME ONLY ARCADES DID APPEAR THE LARGEST AND MOST RESILIENT ARCADES WERE STILL THOSE FOUND BY THE SEA.



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY AND LEISURE **ISN'T** UNIQUE TO THE UK OF COURSE, IT IS JUST THAT ARCADES INTRODUCED VIDEO GAMES **MORE SLOWLY** THAN IN SOME PLACES ELSEWHERE...

AND THAT VIDEO GAMES THEN SAT ALONGSIDE OTHER WELL ESTABLISHED PRACTICES AND CULTURAL PECULIARITIES...



THAT ARE RARELY, IF AT ALL DISCUSSED, SUCH AS THE HISTORIC ACCEPTANCE OF GAMBLING, INCLUDING PENNY FALLS, AND FRUIT MACHINES...

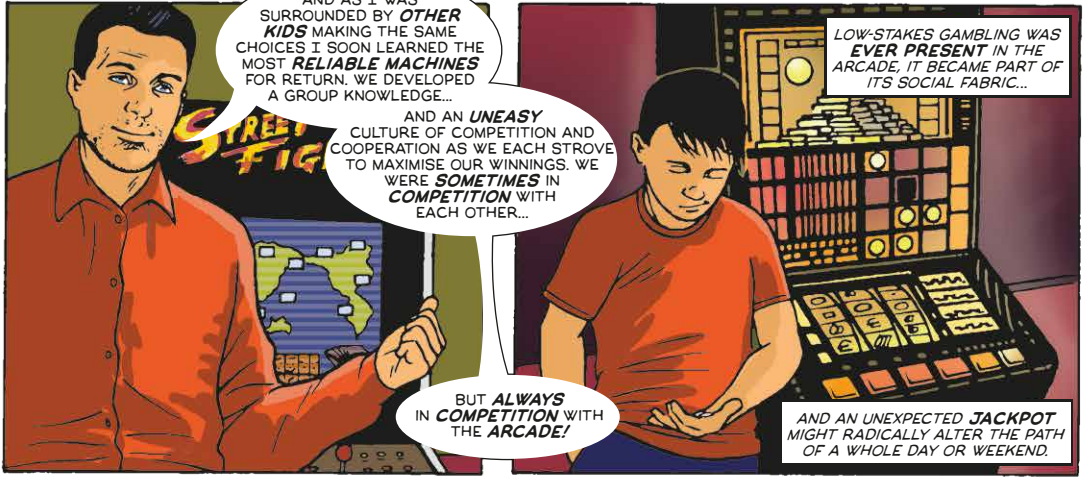


THE PRESENCE OF **LOW-STAKES GAMBLING** MACHINES IS CRITICAL IN UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF THE BRITISH ARCADE...

AND LINKS WITH ATTITUDES OF PERMISSIVE LICENSE THAT HARKS BACK TO THE SUMMER HOLIDAY. LET'S MAKE IT CLEAR...

IN THE BRITISH ARCADE IT WAS ENTIRELY NORMAL FOR CHILDREN TO BE SEEN USING GAMBLING MACHINES.

AS A KID I WOULD OFTEN PONDER WHETHER TO SPEND MY LAST MONEY ON A VIDEO GAME OR TO **GAMBLE IT** IN A **FRUITIE**. IF IT '**PAID OUT**' I COULD **THEN KEEP PLAYING** FOR LONGER...



AND AS I WAS SURROUNDED BY **OTHER KIDS** MAKING THE SAME CHOICES I SOON LEARNED THE MOST **RELIABLE MACHINES** FOR RETURN, WE DEVELOPED A GROUP KNOWLEDGE...

AND AN **UNEASY** CULTURE OF COMPETITION AND COOPERATION AS WE EACH STROVE TO MAXIMISE OUR WINNINGS. WE WERE **SOMETIMES** IN **COMPETITION** WITH EACH OTHER...

BUT **ALWAYS** IN **COMPETITION** WITH THE ARCADE!

LOW-STAKES GAMBLING WAS **EVER PRESENT** IN THE ARCADE, IT BECAME PART OF ITS SOCIAL FABRIC...

AND AN UNEXPECTED **JACKPOT** MIGHT RADICALLY ALTER THE PATH OF A WHOLE DAY OR WEEKEND.

LIKE THEIR US COUNTERPARTS
BRITISH ARCADES HAD THEIR OWN
CHALLENGES TO DEAL WITH...

**Mini
Tours**

2 weeks
from £29

AS A RESULT OF THEIR SEASIDE LOCATION,
WHEN FOREIGN PACKAGE HOLIDAYS
BECAME AFFORDABLE THE OLD RESORTS
QUIETENED AND ARCADE PROFITS FELL....

CLUB TROPICANA DRINKS ARE FREE-EE

THAT MONEY GOT SPENT
ON THE COSTA BRAVA!

AND WHO COULD
BLAME THEM! WHERE'S
MY SANGRIA?

IN ADDITION THE UK HAD A VIBRANT
HOME COMPUTER SCENE WITH
THE BBC MICRO AND THE
SINCLAIR ZX SPECTRUM...

THESE WERE PROMOTED BY THE BBC AND IN
SCHOOLS FOR THEIR EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL...

BORING!

BUT THERE WERE ALSO
LOTS OF VIDEO GAMES
AVAILABLE FOR THEM!

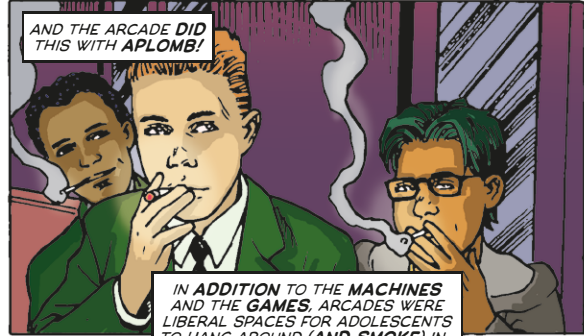
LIKE THE
MANIC MINER
WHO BECAME
JET SET WILLY!

THESE MUST HAVE
COMPETED WITH
THE ARCADE ON
SOME LEVEL...

BUT THE ARCADE WAS RARELY
WHOLLY FOCUSED ON VIDEO GAMES
AND SO WAS RATHER RESILIENT...

TASTES HAD CHANGED BEFORE, AND THEY'D CHANGE AGAIN.
THE ARCADE JUST CONTINUED TO OFFER SOMETHING
DIFFERENT, SOMETHING UNAVAILABLE ELSEWHERE...

AND THE ARCADE DID THIS WITH APLOMB!



IN ADDITION TO THE MACHINES AND THE GAMES, ARCADES WERE LIBERAL SPACES FOR ADOLESCENTS TO HANG AROUND (AND SMOKE) IN...

THEY WERE FREE FROM THE JUDGEMENTAL GAZE OF ADULTS AND PARENTS...



BUT STILL UNDER THE DETACHED PROTECTION OF ARCADE WORKERS WHO MAINTAINED ORDER...

GRANGE HILL

PEOPLE ALSO REGARDED BRITISH ARCADES WITH SOME DISDAIN, BUT NOWHERE LIKE THE LEVEL AS THEIR AMERICAN COUNTERPARTS...

PERHAPS BEST EXPRESSED IN KIDS TV SHOW GRANGE HILL, AND ITS STORYLINE ABOUT POOR OLD ZAMMO, WHO GOT HOOKED ON HEROIN AFTER GETTING INVOLVED WITH AN ARCADE GANG!



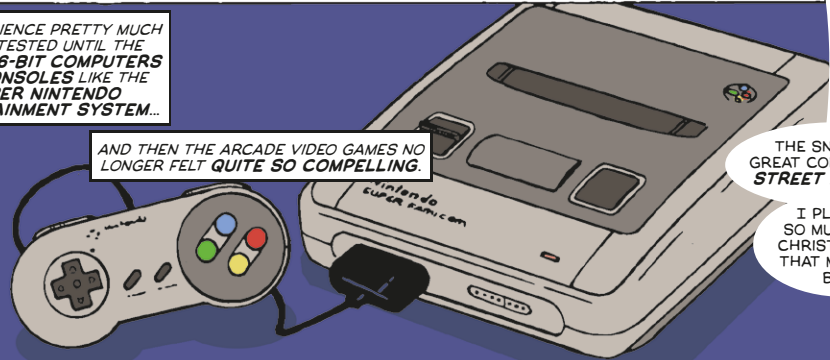
AND THE MOMENT YOUR PARENTS CASUALLY ASKED IF A GANG HAD EVER APPROACHED YOU WHEN PLAYING DIG-DUG...



OF COURSE NOT! INSTEAD FOR MANY PEOPLE, MYSELF INCLUDED, THE ARCADE WAS A PRETTY BLISSFUL PLACE TO PLAY NEW TECHNOLOGY, MEET FRIENDS, AND AVOID ADULTS.

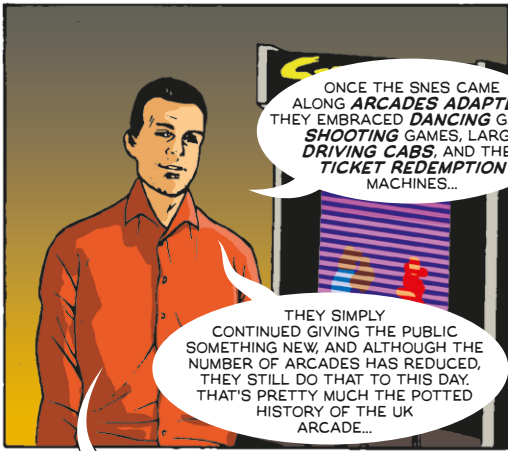
AN EXPERIENCE PRETTY MUCH UNCONTESTED UNTIL THE RISE OF 16-BIT COMPUTERS AND CONSOLES LIKE THE SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM...

AND THEN THE ARCADE VIDEO GAMES NO LONGER FELT QUITE SO COMPELLING.



THE SNES HAD A GREAT CONVERSION OF STREET FIGHTER 2.

I PLAYED IT SO MUCH OVER CHRISTMAS 1992 THAT MY THUMB BLED.

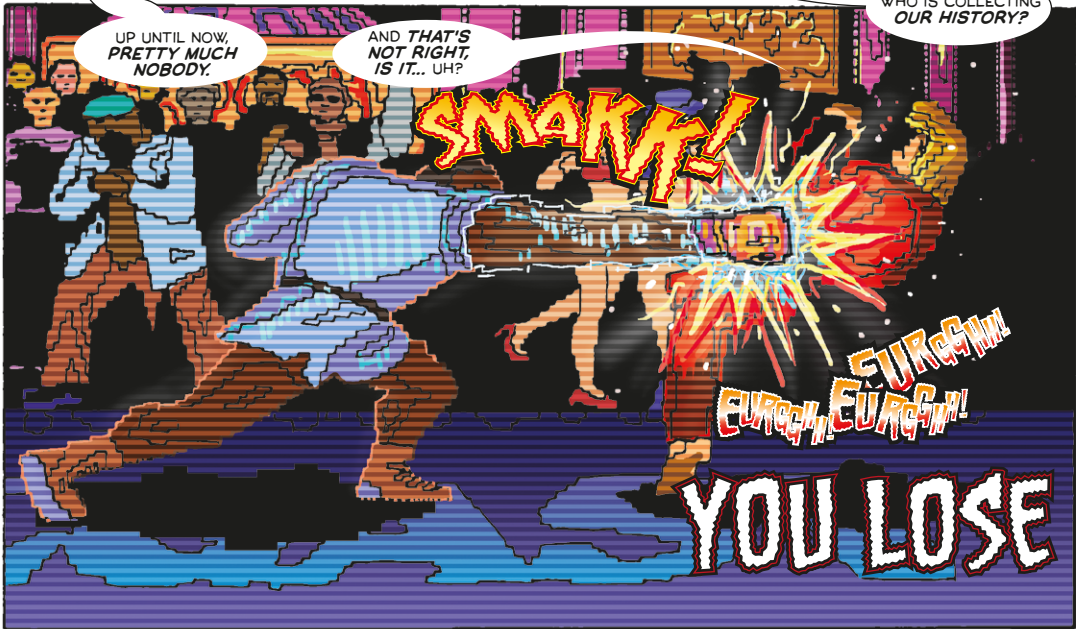


ONCE THE SNES CAME ALONG **ARCADES ADAPTED**, THEY EMBRACED **DANCING GAMES**, **SHOOTING GAMES**, **LARGE DRIVING CABS**, AND THEN **TICKET REDEMPTION MACHINES...**

THEY SIMPLY CONTINUED GIVING THE PUBLIC SOMETHING NEW, AND ALTHOUGH THE NUMBER OF ARCADES HAS REDUCED, THEY STILL DO THAT TO THIS DAY. THAT'S PRETTY MUCH THE POTTED HISTORY OF THE UK ARCADE...



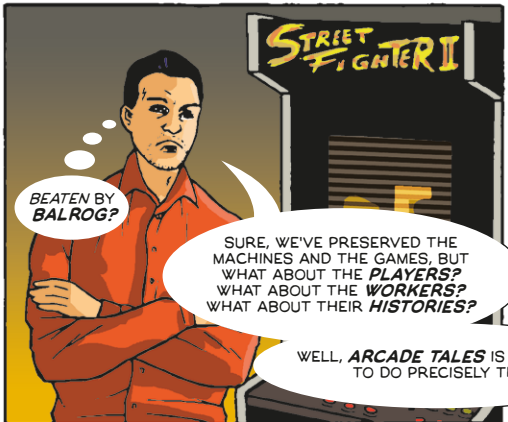
HEY! BUT HANG ON! THIS IS TURNING INTO ONE OF THOSE STORIES ABOUT MACHINES AND INDUSTRY! WHAT ABOUT A **STORY**, ABOUT **THE PLAYERS** AND **THEIR PLAY!**



UP UNTIL NOW, **PRETTY MUCH NOBODY.**

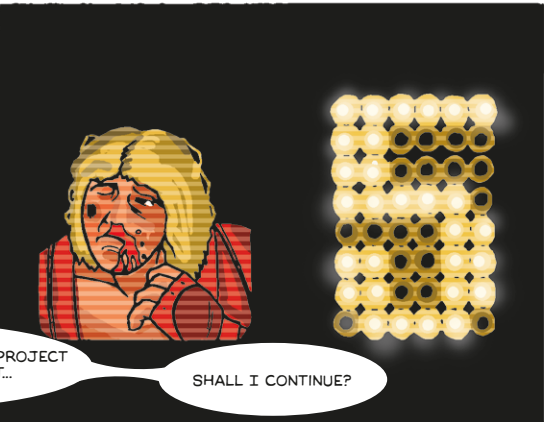
AND **THAT'S NOT RIGHT, IS IT... UH?**

WHO IS COLLECTING **OUR HISTORY?**



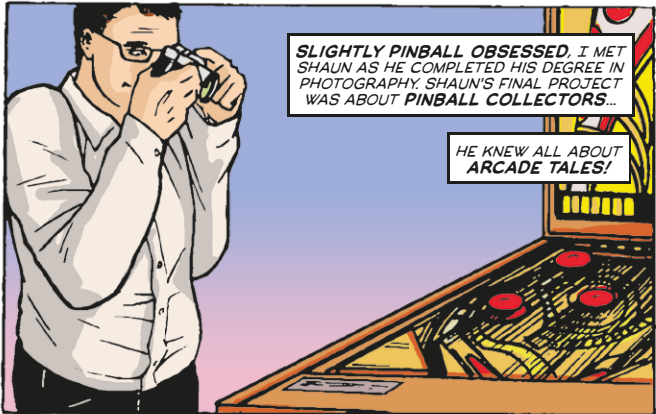
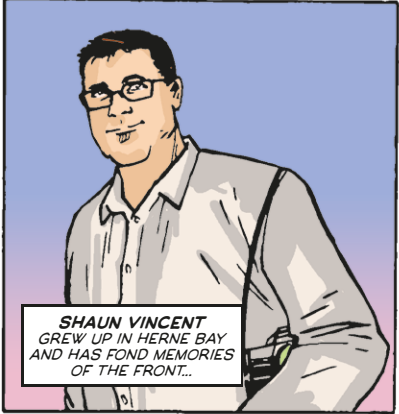
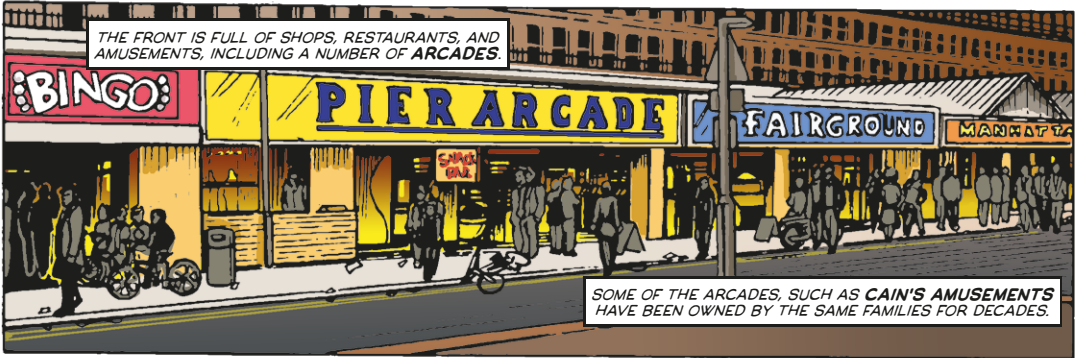
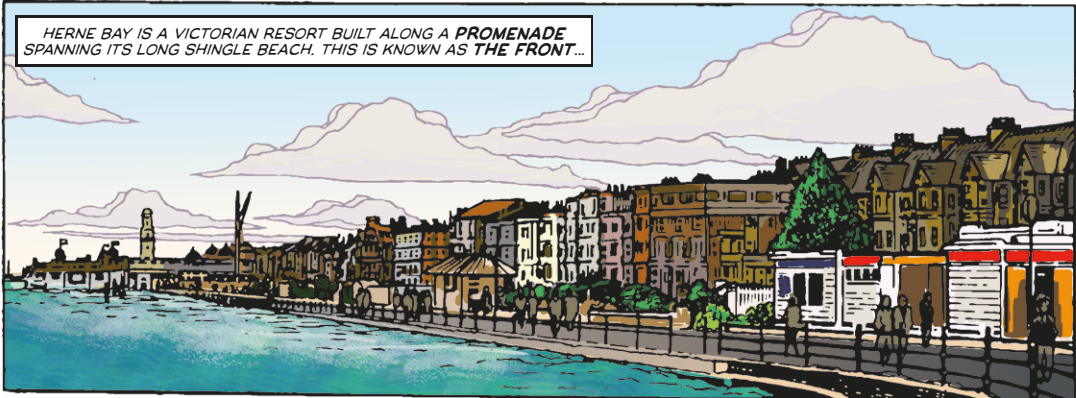
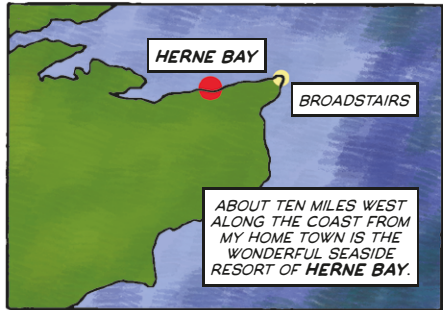
BEATEN BY BALROG?

SURE, WE'VE PRESERVED THE MACHINES AND THE GAMES, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE **PLAYERS?** WHAT ABOUT THE **WORKERS?** WHAT ABOUT THEIR **HISTORIES?**



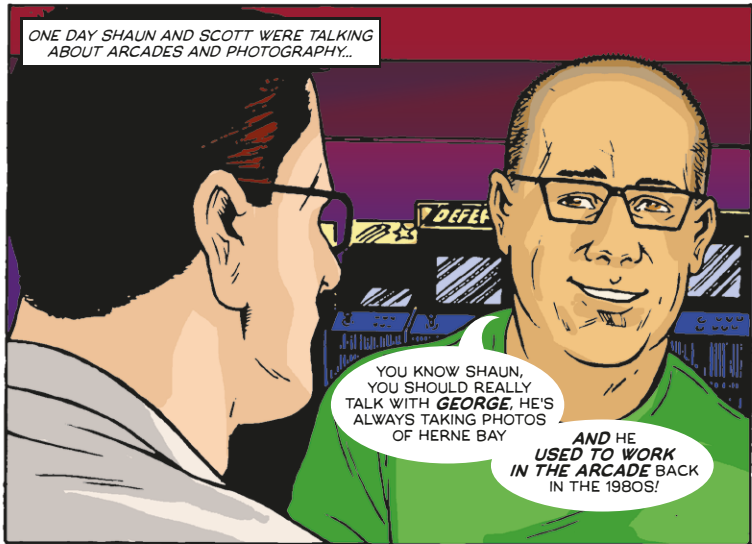
WELL, **ARCADE TALES** IS A PROJECT TO DO PRECISELY THAT...

SHALL I CONTINUE?



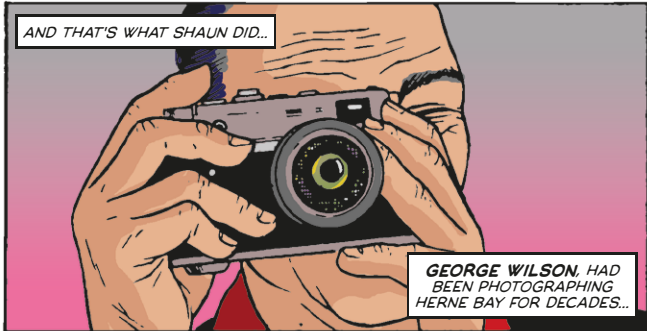


SHAUN IS GOOD FRIENDS WITH SCOTT TURNER, THE GENERAL MANAGER OF CAIN'S ARCADE...



ONE DAY SHAUN AND SCOTT WERE TALKING ABOUT ARCADES AND PHOTOGRAPHY...

YOU KNOW SHAUN, YOU SHOULD REALLY TALK WITH **GEORGE**, HE'S ALWAYS TAKING PHOTOS OF HERNE BAY AND HE USED TO WORK IN THE ARCADE BACK IN THE 1980S!



AND THAT'S WHAT SHAUN DID...

GEORGE WILSON, HAD BEEN PHOTOGRAPHING HERNE BAY FOR DECADES...



PIER ARCADE SNACK BAR

USING HIS CAMERA TO DOCUMENT THE PLACE, EVENTS, AND PEOPLE.



THAT'S REALLY INTERESTING GEORGE, I WAS WONDERING THOUGH, DID YOU EVER TAKE ANY PHOTOGRAPHS **IN** THE ARCADES?

I DID TAKE A **FEW**, LET ME DIG SOME OUT FOR YOU TO TAKE A LOOK AT.

AND WHEN SHAUN SAW THE PHOTOGRAPHS HE WAS **AMAZED**, THEY WERE SHOWING THINGS YOU SO RARELY SEE.

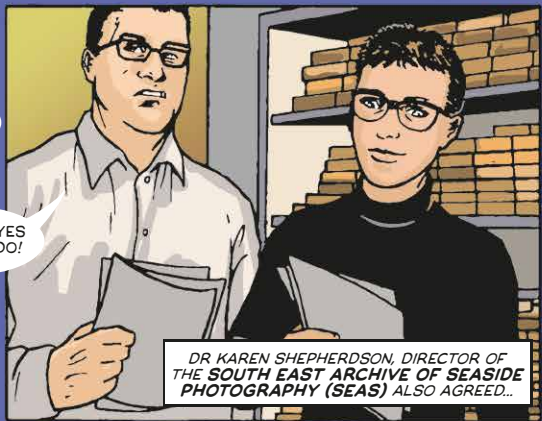


I WAS AMAZED TOO!

SHAUN, DO YOU REALISE *HOW IMPORTANT* THESE IMAGES ARE?

YES ALAN, YES I THINK I DO!

THESE REMIND ME OF NOWINSKI'S AWESOME WORK!



DR KAREN SHEPHERDSON, DIRECTOR OF THE SOUTH EAST ARCHIVE OF SEASIDE PHOTOGRAPHY (SEAS) ALSO AGREED..

AT THIS STAGE WE HAD NO IDEA WHAT *OTHER IMAGES* GEORGE'S ARCHIVE WOULD CONTAIN.

AND SEAS PAID FOR SHAUN TO SCAN, REVIEW, AND ORGANISE, GEORGE'S PHOTOGRAPHS.

SHAUN RETURNED TO SEE GEORGE AND COLLECTED A STACK OF NEGATIVES AND CONTACT SHEETS...



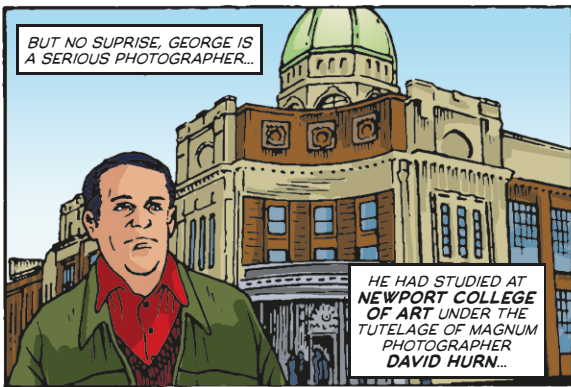
WHEN SHAUN WAS FINISHED WE WERE **THRILLED** BY WHAT WE SAW...

ON *THE LEFT*, AN IMAGE FROM STANFORD UNIVERSITY'S **IRA NOWINSKI BAY AREA ARCADES** COLLECTION...

AND ON *THE RIGHT*, ONE OF **GEORGE WILSON'S UK HERNE BAY ARCADE** PHOTOGRAPHS.

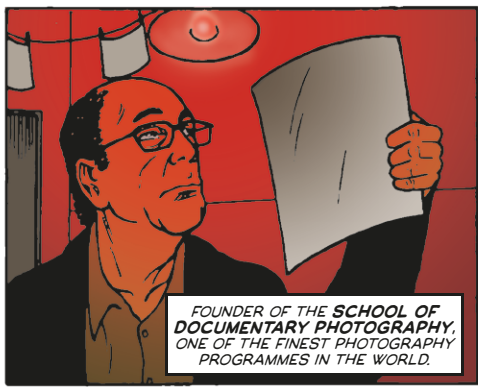
THERE WERE **OVER 480** PHOTOGRAPHS FROM HERNE BAY ARCADES - A FEW FROM ELSEWHERE IN THE UK, TAKEN IN 1981 TO 1983.





BUT NO SUPRISE, GEORGE IS A SERIOUS PHOTOGRAPHER...

HE HAD STUDIED AT NEWPORT COLLEGE OF ART UNDER THE TUTELAGE OF MAGNUM PHOTOGRAPHER DAVID HURN...



FOUNDER OF THE SCHOOL OF DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY, ONE OF THE FINEST PHOTOGRAPHY PROGRAMMES IN THE WORLD.



WHEN GEORGE FINISHED HIS STUDIES HE MOVED TO CANTERBURY WITH HIS WIFE, BUT HERNE BAY CALLED...

I HATED CANTERBURY, IT WAS SO DEAD AT NIGHT, LIKE A GHOST TOWN. SO WE DECIDED TO MOVE TO HERNE BAY...

WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY MONEY, NEITHER OF US HAD A JOB, I WAS WALKING DOWN THE SEAFRONT ONE DAY AND I SAW AN ADVERT FOR BINGO CALLERS AT CAIN'S ARCADE.



S AMUSEME

HELP WANTED APPLY WITHIN

GEORGE APPLIED FOR THE JOB
AND MET WITH DAVID CAIN...

YES,
I'LL GIVE
YOU A GO.

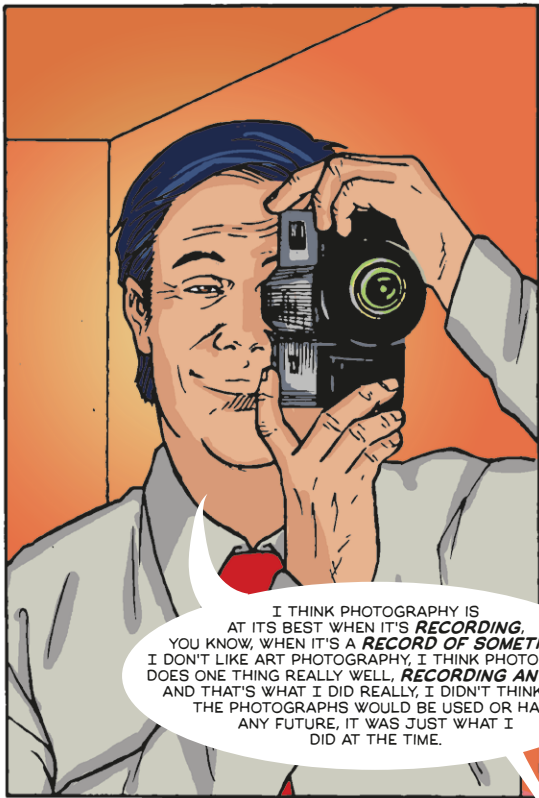
AND
THAT'S HOW IT
STARTED!



THE THING IS... YOU DO A
TWO YEAR COURSE IN PHOTOGRAPHY,
YOU THINK YOU'RE A PHOTOGRAPHER BUT YOU'RE NOT.
YOU'RE RUBBISH. YOU'VE GOT NO IDEA REALLY, HAVE YOU?
I USED TO **WORK** IN THE ARCADE, I WASN'T SUPPOSED TO
BE **TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS**, SO I USED TO TAKE MY
CAMERA DOWN SNEAKILY, AND TAKE A
FEW PHOTOGRAPHS. THAT'S
IT REALLY.



I WAS JUST
PRACTISING REALLY,
PRACTISING TO BE
GOOD, HAHA!



I THINK PHOTOGRAPHY IS AT ITS BEST WHEN IT'S **RECORDING**. YOU KNOW, WHEN IT'S A **RECORD OF SOMETHING**. I DON'T LIKE ART PHOTOGRAPHY, I THINK PHOTOGRAPHY DOES ONE THING REALLY WELL, **RECORDING AN EVENT**. AND THAT'S WHAT I DID REALLY, I DIDN'T THINK THAT THE PHOTOGRAPHS WOULD BE USED OR HAVE ANY FUTURE, IT WAS JUST WHAT I DID AT THE TIME.



I THINK IT WOULD BE **IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE THIS WORK NOW** BECAUSE THEY'D JUST **THROW YOU OUT**. BUT THEY **COULDN'T** THROW ME OUT 'COS I USED TO **WORK THERE**. THAT'S THE **ADVANTAGE**, HAHA!



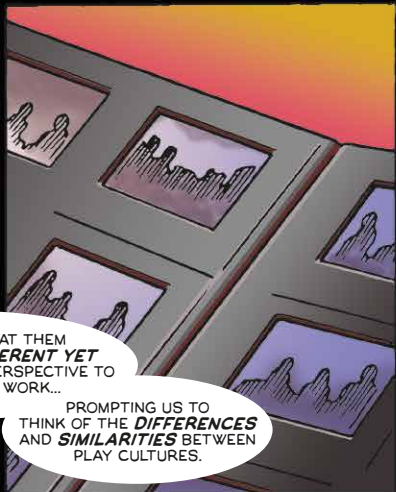


IN JULY 2016 GEORGE DEPOSITED HIS PHOTOGRAPHS INTO THE *SEAS ARCHIVE*...

SO THAT THEY COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE AS PART OF THE *PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD* OF BRITISH SEASIDE CULTURE.

WHEN WE LOOK AT THEM THEY OFFER A *DIFFERENT YET COMPLEMENTARY* PERSPECTIVE TO IRA NOWINSKI'S WORK...

PROMPTING US TO THINK OF THE *DIFFERENCES* AND *SIMILARITIES* BETWEEN PLAY CULTURES.



WE'RE INDEBTED TO GEORGE FOR MAKING HIS PHOTOGRAPHS AVAILABLE. THE FACT IS THAT IMAGES OF BRITISH ARCADES ARE SO RARELY SEEN...

ESPECIALLY WITH SUCH A COHERENT VOICE AND DEDICATION TO DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY.

SO, LET'S TAKE A VISIT TO THE BRITISH SEASIDE ARCADES OF THE EARLY 1980S. AS SEEN BY GEORGE WILSON!

IMAGINE YOU'VE JUST LEANED YOUR *BMX* UP AGAINST THE WALL, WALKED PAST THE *TEENAGE MODS* SITTING OUTSIDE ON THEIR *SCOOTERS*, STROLLED PAST THE *DOUBLE BUBBLE GUM* MACHINE AND INTO HERNE BAY'S *FAIR GROUND* ARCADE...

WHAT WOULD YOU SEE?





WE CAN INTERROGATE THESE IMAGES TO LEARN ABOUT THE UK ARCADES IN THE EARLY 1980S...

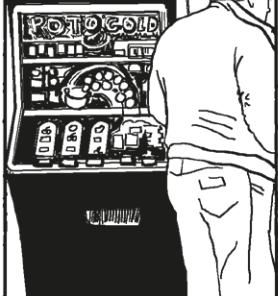
TOMORROWS WORLD

TOMORROW'S WORLD
THIS REALLY DID REPRESENT A POINT WHERE TOMORROW'S WORLD OF **TECHNOLOGY** WAS SUDDENLY AVAILABLE TO THE MASSES...



AND A POINT WHERE **ANALOGUE** AND **DIGITAL** GAMES SAT - OFTEN UNEASILY - BESIDES ONE ANOTHER...

WE SEE THE PRESENCE OF **GAMBLING MACHINES...**



WE SEE **ARCADE WORKERS, MANAGERS AND OPERATORS** - **CUSTODIANS OF THE ARCADE** - LET'S NOT UNDERESTIMATE THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE ARCADE...



AND WE SEE KIDS JUST **HANGING AROUND THE ARCADES, WATCHING OTHER PEOPLE PLAY AND HELPING THE MANAGERS WITH VARIOUS TASKS.**

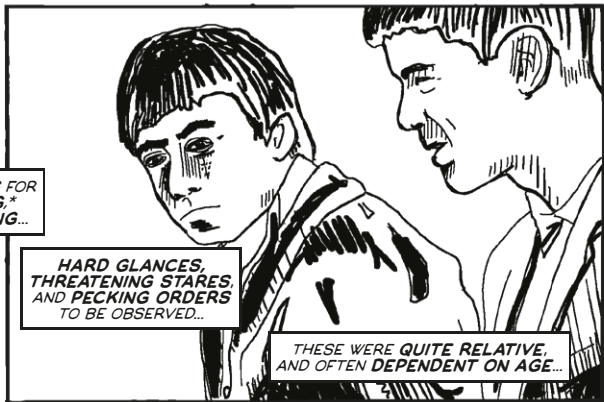




WE SEE THE CENTRALITY OF **GAMBLING** WITHIN THE ARCADE - AND THE **SPECTATORSHIP OF GAMBLING** (AND OTHER PLAY). WE SEE **GROUPS** AND GANGS OF **CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS**. NOTE THE CROWD IN THE BACK AT THE CHANGE BOOTH.



ARCADES WERE OFTEN SPACES FOR ADOLESCENT POSTURING.* THERE'D BE LOTS OF SMOKING...

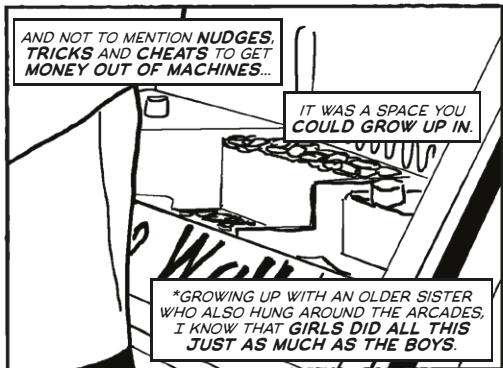


HARD GLANCES, THREATENING STARES, AND PECKING ORDERS TO BE OBSERVED...

THESE WERE QUITE RELATIVE, AND OFTEN DEPENDENT ON AGE...



THERE'D BE OWNERSHIP OF SPACE. LEANING ON MACHINES AND LOITERING...



IT WAS A SPACE YOU COULD GROW UP IN.

*GROWING UP WITH AN OLDER SISTER WHO ALSO HUNG AROUND THE ARCADES, I KNOW THAT GIRLS DID ALL THIS JUST AS MUCH AS THE BOYS.





THEY WERE PLACES TO GO TO, TO WATCH AND BE SEEN, EVEN LONG AFTER YOU'D RUN OUT OF MONEY.



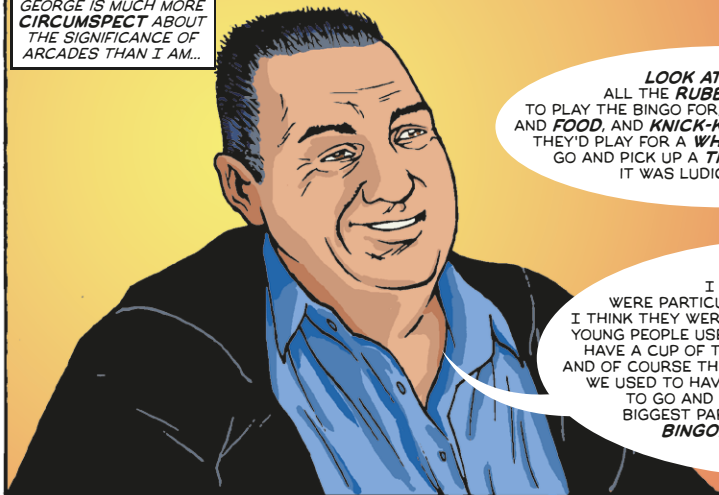


THEY WERE ABOUT THE **GAMES**, ABOUT **TECHNOLOGY**, ABOUT THE EXCITEMENT OF A **FRUIT MACHINE JACKPOT**.



...OR A PLACE TO *HAVE A CUP OF TEA*, SPEND TIME WITH *FRIENDS* AND *WIN BIG* ON THE *BINGO*.

GEORGE IS MUCH MORE **CIRCUMSPECT** ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ARCADES THAN I AM...



LOOK AT THE TAT!
ALL THE **RUBBISH** THEY USED TO PLAY THE BINGO FOR, ALL THE **CUDDLY TOYS**, AND **FOOD**, AND **KNICK-KNACKS**, AND **ODD ITEMS!** THEY'D PLAY FOR A **WHOLE AFTERNOON** THEN GO AND PICK UP A **TIN OF CORNED BEEF**. IT WAS LUDICROUS REALLY.

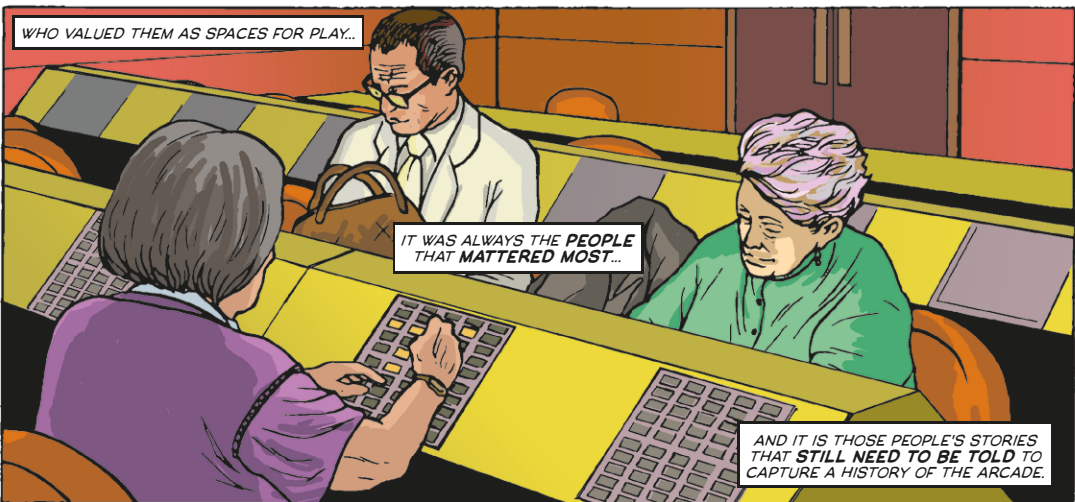
I **DON'T** THINK ARCADES WERE PARTICULARLY **IMPORTANT** AT ALL REALLY. I THINK THEY WERE JUST A **HAVEN** FOR **YOUNG PEOPLE**. YOUNG PEOPLE USED TO GO IN THERE, THEY USED TO MEET, HAVE A CUP OF TEA, COFFEE, AND PLAY THE MACHINES. AND OF COURSE THE HOLIDAY VISITORS, WHAT FEW VISITORS WE USED TO HAVE TO HERNE BAY IN THOSE DAYS, USED TO GO AND PLAY IN THERE AS WELL. BUT THE **BIGGEST PART** ABOUT THE ARCADE WAS **THE BINGO**, THAT WAS THE **LIFEBLOOD** OF THE ARCADE.



SO THE ARCADES WERE NEVER ONLY ABOUT THE GAMES, NEVER REALLY ABOUT THE PRIZES, THEY WERE ABOUT THE PEOPLE THAT SPENT TIME IN THEM...



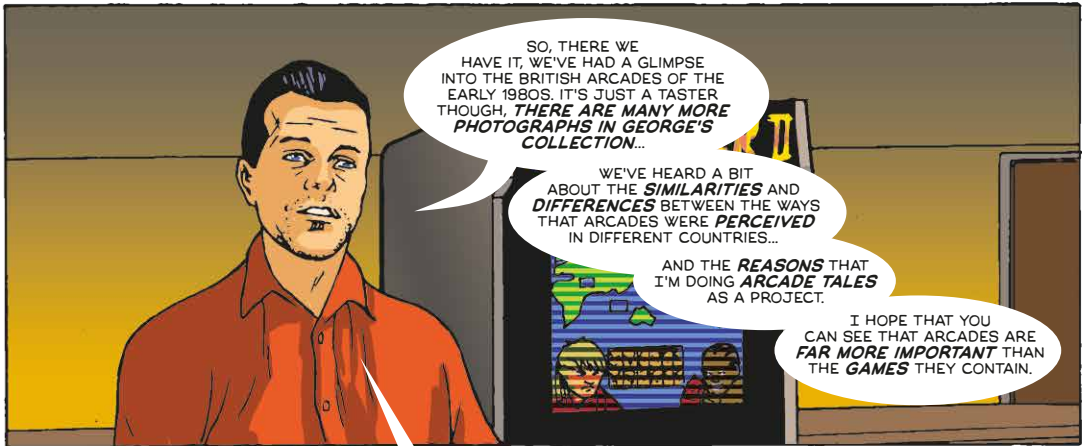
WHO OWNED AND WORKED IN THEM...



WHO VALUED THEM AS SPACES FOR PLAY...

IT WAS ALWAYS THE PEOPLE THAT MATTERED MOST...

AND IT IS THOSE PEOPLE'S STORIES THAT **STILL NEED TO BE TOLD** TO CAPTURE A HISTORY OF THE ARCADE.



SO, THERE WE HAVE IT, WE'VE HAD A GLIMPSE INTO THE BRITISH ARCADES OF THE EARLY 1980S. IT'S JUST A TASTER THOUGH, **THERE ARE MANY MORE PHOTOGRAPHS IN GEORGE'S COLLECTION...**

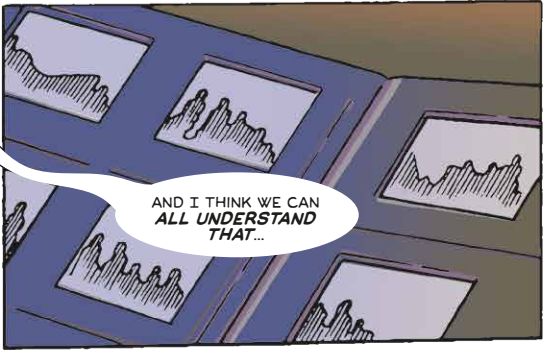
WE'VE HEARD A BIT ABOUT THE **SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES** BETWEEN THE WAYS THAT ARCADES WERE **PERCEIVED** IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES...

AND THE **REASONS** THAT I'M DOING **ARCADE TALES** AS A PROJECT.

I HOPE THAT YOU CAN SEE THAT ARCADES ARE **FAR MORE IMPORTANT** THAN THE **GAMES** THEY CONTAIN.



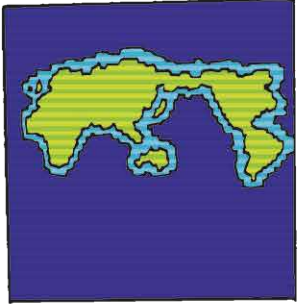
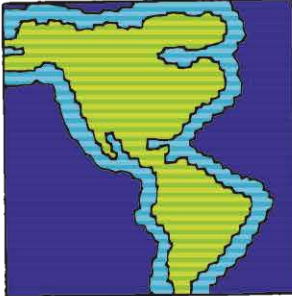
THAT EVEN IN THE **BLEAK** COLD OF A BRITISH WINTER ARCADES REMAINED A **BEACON** - PLACES NOT JUST ABOUT GAMES AND PLAY BUT FOR **PEOPLE** AND **FOR COMMUNITY...**



AND I THINK WE CAN **ALL UNDERSTAND** THAT...



NO MATTER **WHERE** WE COME FROM.



I HOPE YOU'VE FOUND THIS ISSUE OF **ARCADE TALES** INTERESTING, IF YOU HAVE PLEASE DO GET IN TOUCH. WE'RE KEEN TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE FROM AROUND THE WORLD TO CONTINUE TO EXPLORE THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE ARCADE...

WE BELIEVE THAT IT'S TIME TO DEVELOP AN **INTERNATIONAL ARCADE RESEARCH NETWORK**, SOMETHING I HOPE TO BE ABLE TO TELL YOU ABOUT IN A FUTURE EDITION OF **ARCADE TALES!**

SO, DO PLEASE GET IN TOUCH ON:
ALAN.MEADES@CANTERBURY.AC.UK
WWW.ARCADETALES.COM

AND REMEMBER... **THESE ARE YOUR TALES, YOUR ARCADES, OUR HISTORY!**



Amusements

CREDITS

HUGE THANKS TO GEORGE WILSON, IRA NOWINSKI & STANFORD UNIVERSITY FOR USE OF BAY AREA ARCADES PHOTOGRAPHS P7.

THANKS TO THE AWESOME SHAUN VINCENT AND SCOTT TURNER.

SUPPORTED BY SEAS PHOTOGRAPHY, CCCU RKE FUNDING, AND SCHOOL OF MEDIA, ART, AND DESIGN.

CLEAN SWEEP

ART: JOHN HOWARD.
ART, COLOUR, TEXT: ALAN MEADES
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