

GitHub Link: https://github.com/HunterBearWideman/The_Phoenix_of_1899.git

Itch Link: <https://huntingbear.itch.io/the-phoenix-of-1899>

Video Link: <https://youtu.be/oZkvQQLtzo>

Challenges Identified:

In the third round of playtesting, significant feedback was gathered which can be condensed into the following points:

- It is not worthwhile to climb the facade of the Historians' Society, nor clearly evident that you may do so.
- The player is not required to walk to the exit of the Society Main Hall.
- Firebolt is not clearly a spell.
- Gray can be spoken to and shown the trowel without having cleaned the trowel as intended.
- The game makes little mention of archaeology or skills an archaeologist would have.
- There are few animations.
- There are few opportunities to use Firebolt.
- The Society Main Hall is barren of extra viewable details.
- Lydia does not feel British or posh enough.
- The second half of the game does not yet exist, including a puzzle spanning multiple rooms and two whole rooms.
- Lydia is not at all animated.
- The other existing NPC is a Graybox (who will be named Miss Gray as a tribute to the process).
- No rooms have their final designs yet.
- Many players are delighted by the prospect of a fire spell.

Improvements Made:

- *Game Writing:*

Since the last playtest, two new rooms have been added: the Presidential Study and the Ruins. With them, the final quests have been implemented to speak to the President of the Historians' Society, be directed to the Ruins, find the feathers, and use these to unlock the door and find the fabled bird. Many new items, inventory "crafting" combinations, and dialogs were created to achieve all this. Lydia's dialog has been updated with more English and Victorian mannerisms and slang. Many additional cues and hints have been given in dialog, viewable details, and descriptions throughout the game, including such details as labeling Firebolt as a spell and giving each inventory object viewable qualities. Many pieces of the background can be investigated. Lydia also may no longer climb the facade as it was unnecessary and proper gates and movement requirements have been added to all functions. Firebolt has an additional opportunity to be used per player demand and may prompt certain thoughts from Lydia if attempted on certain things. Tidbit lore and jokes have been added to bookshelves and distant

details and the location has been formally recognized as the city of Artashat, a real-life ruin in Armenia. A number of typos have also been fixed throughout.

- *Art Assets:*

All backgrounds have been fully painted, all characters have been fully designed with talking animations as appropriate, and all inventory and environment items have been carefully made with clarity in mind. Every visual asset in this game is an original creation. Each human character has clothing designed after actual traditional wear and objects and architecture are made with the same goal of paying tribute to Armenian culture.

- *Audio:*

Ambient audio has been added to outdoor areas. Perig the Firebird has a speaking voice and the Firebolt shot at the thieving magpie of the Overlook can be clearly heard. The magpie also chirps angrily at the player when looked at or spoken to and flaps its wings when scared away. Also in the Overlook, when digging up the loose soil with the restored trowel, shifting dirt can be heard.

- *GUI:*

Every GUI asset has been redesigned with custom colors and icons. Nothing has been left untouched. Each icon is themed according to the setting and the character of Lydia, including a carpet bag with a faint spiderweb design as inventory, a leather book with and without a pen for save and load functions, a magnifying glass for investigation, and a gloved hand for interaction. The arrow indicates movement, however may be rendered as too literal of an arrow as based on Victorian designs studied in production. Clarity could yet be improved with it.

- *Animations:*

Ms. Gray and Perig have speaking animations (President Boyajian is only an exception due to his mustache for sake of humor). The resulting blast of the Firebolt in the Overlook is fully animated. Lydia has full movement animations, occasional idle motions, and she has a second animated movement mode of climbing seen in the Overlook. This is the section I most regret not giving more juice due to time constraints.