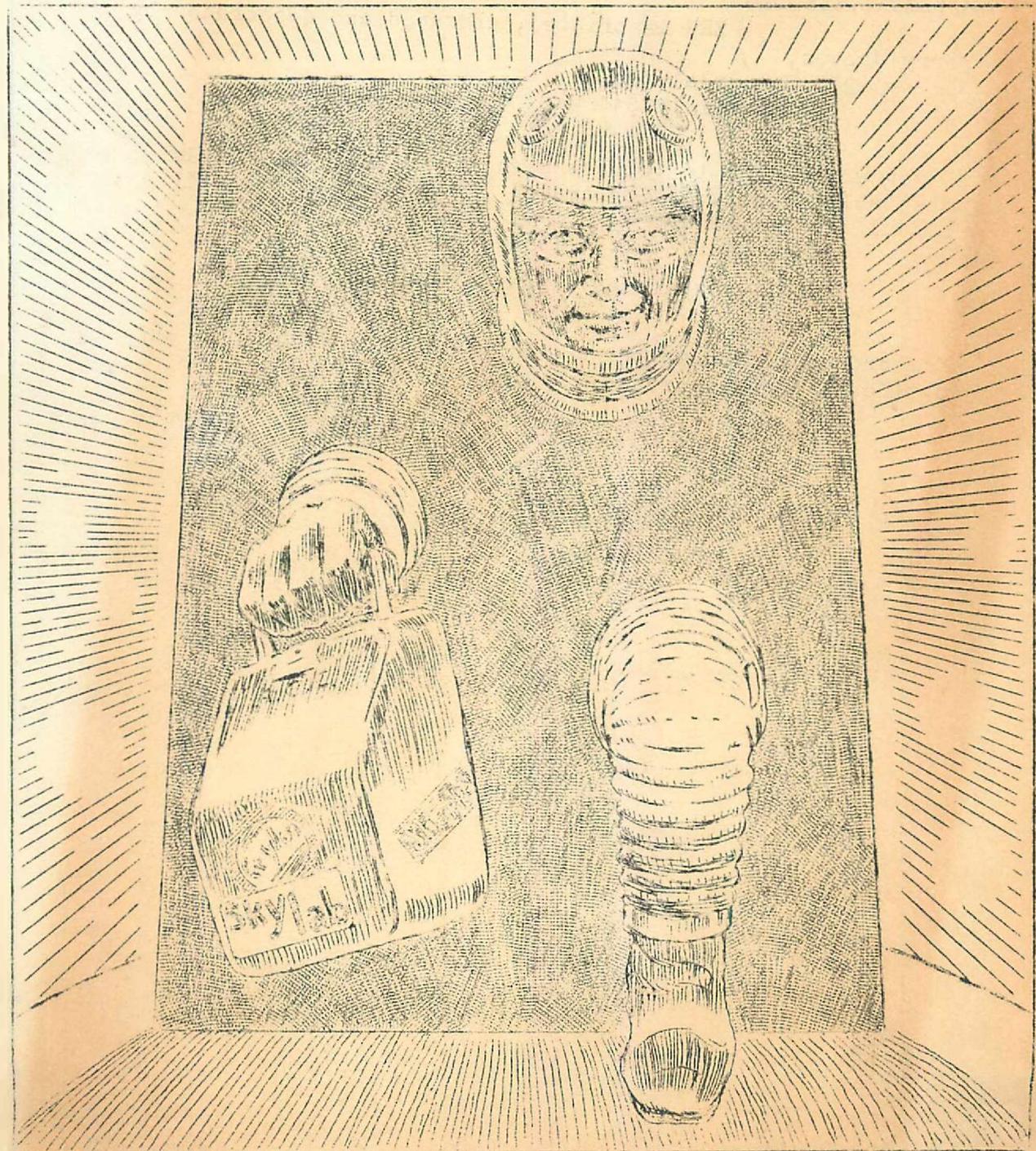


BERG

quarterly

49

JANUARY 1975





.....Please renew.

ERG is ERG 49

Now in its SIXTEENTH Year.

For January 1975

ERG is printed, produced and desecrated by

Terry Jeeves,
230 Bannerdale Rd.,
Sheffield S11 9PE
ENGLAND

If you would like to get the next issue, then RESPOND in some acceptable manner..... by trade, by LCC, or by subscribing.

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If a cross appears in the box at the top of this page, then it is time to renew your sub. I hope you will decide to do so.

Sincerely,

Terry

EDITORIAL

Greg's ERGbooks:

Among other people, some 70 to 80 members of FAPA will be receiving this issue - whether or not they get any more is in the lap of the gods...or maybe someone a bit nearer. I won't go into all the details, but I have a problem..tis this. When I was on the waiting list for FAPA, our secretary, Bill Evans offered to pay my dues if I could get him some hard-to-get books. I managed to have these mailed to BILL, but since then he just doesn't answer my letters...so what happens to my dues ?? Here is a summary of the dates....

Aug 18/ 73	Sent Bill \$3.00 advance dues)
Nov.22 73	Fantast Medway mailed books.	\$2.20) \$7.80
Dec.11 73	Fantast mailed further books	\$2.60)
Dec.16 73	Wrote asking Bill about money.	No reply
Mar.23 74	Wrote asking Bill about money.	No reply
June 1974	Sent Greg \$1.00 docs, to keep me a member	
Jun 30 74	Wrote to Bill asking for news	No reply
Sept.2 74	Wrote copy letters to Bill Evans, Redd Voges and Greg Calkins asking for some help or news.	Only Greg replied, to say (as he had

done before) that he was contacting Bill about the money.

So there it is. Somebody, somewhere, holds about \$7.80 of my FAPA DUES. I sent the books in good faith, and have only got trouble in return. BILL may be sitting on the money and intending to pay each renewal date...but I don't KNOW that.. or what the position is. Can SOMEBODY..preferably Bill himself, sort out the matter and let me know. I want to stay in FAPA, but I just daren't risk mailing any more cash into a vacuum. HELP! The above is being written in November...just in case Bill finally writes before this appears.

On a happier note..the artwork in this issue. Some of the pages have artwork transferred on to thermostencil from pencil drawings, I don't know how they'll come out, but it is an experiment worth trying. My thanks to Keith Freeman who kindly did the transfer work. All being well, the cover this issue is a H&D-CUT masterpiece by that superlative worker, Jim Cawthorn. Those of you who get TRICIDE will need no further information to tell you how good the man is. All being well, I hope to include further samples of Jim's work (reprinted from Triode, etc) in the final volume of the duplicating symposium. For newcomers, the pages on stencil work form part of a series which, when complete,

will be available as a limited edition with additional material. I also hope to include a selection of reader's notes on various aspects of duplicating and fan publishing, so if you have any pet ideas, by all means send 'em in. So far, material is at hand from Eric Lindsay and Graham Poole...keep it coming.

A few paragraphs back, I mentioned TRICIDE, well for those of you who have subscriptions and are wondering where No.20 has got to, here are the details. No.20 was completed on stencil a couple of months ago...and 34 pages run off on stock to hand while waiting for Messrs Chapman's to send new supplies. Eric and I have now been waiting TWO MONTHS for the rest of the paper to complete the issue. I offered to finish the issue off in ERG white, but Eric decided to wait for TRICIDE buff. So, if you get ERG 49 before you get Triode 20, you will know that Chapman's paper has a snail powered delivery service. Luckily, I have enough ERG paper on hand for at least a year.

POSTAL RATES are likely to jump very soon now that the latest budget has given the green light for some price rises. Add to this the inevitable costs increase for items such as ink, paper envelopes caused by wage rises...and simply by higher delivery costs occasioned by the petrol rates, and it is obvious that fanzines are in for a slim time. Many have gone to the wall, and more will follow. However, have cheer, for this issue at least ERG isn't raising its sub rate, and maybe not for the next issue if I can help it. However, if you're in doubt, renew now! As I said in the last issue, I particularly welcome single dollar bill subs for four issues (or multiples thereof). A dollar slips easily into an envelope and saves you the bother of cheque or money order, and for my part, it can be mailed back to a good man such as D.C. who can then renew my Analog and other subs for me. Renewing my membership isn't quite so easy of course.

Having seen one ..and thankfully, only one, in the new STAR TREK cartoon series, I can only say... 'Who'd like to join a society for the suppression of Star Trek?' The old version was cruddy enough...but this cut-price animated version...ugh. No doubt someone will say... 'Ah, but they have money problems as you would know if you read xyz'. Nuts. Would you accept shoddy material anywhere else on the grounds of not enough cash? The BBC's past s-f series, and those of ITV probably had less lolly than 'Trek', but avoided much of its ham (apart from Dr. Who) so let's judge the programme on what we see, without the excuses.

The page count escalated rather quickly this issue, and to keep within postal limits (overseas and UK) I will probably have to carry over a few items to No.50, among them John Alderson's Australian letter. Apologies John, but it will appear. This issue also see the start of a new series, 'What I think of...' where various people comment of famous authors. This issue sees Arthur C. Clarke in the hot seat, and No.50 will be looking at Robert A Heinlein. Comments anyone?

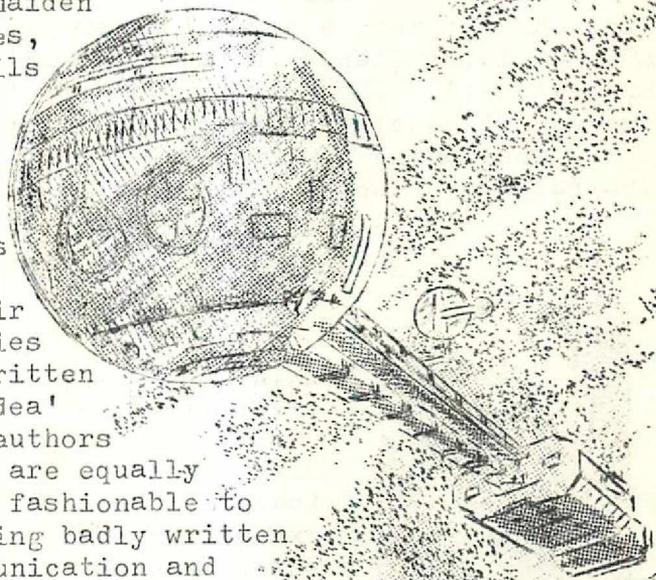
Bestest, Terry

ARTHUR C. CLARKE

The first in a new series in which sundry people say what they think of some well-known personalities in science-fiction. The choice of Arthur C. Clarke for number one, was inevitable. Not only does he happen to be one of my favourite authors, but he is also known and respected by s-f readers throughout the world. In a letter in Ed Conors, 'Mobius Trip' I inadvertently gave the wrong impression so I can think of no better way of showing that I do appreciate Mr. Clarke's work, than by saying so in this introduction. W.J.

KRISTE FLEEMAN "When one starts reading science fiction it is inevitable that you come across a book that is so much more memorable than the rest that it not only stands out, but later, when other (perhaps superior) books are read, the first still sticks in your mind. Such a book, for me, was THE SANDS OF MARS. Characterisation is not, so it's said, Arthur's strong point - perhaps then it's not surprising that I remember the 'background' of the Earth-Mars ship on its maiden voyage, Mars and its dome-cities, the oxygen weed and other details whilst only vaguely remembering the main character (a bastard news reporter, if I'm correct?).

Yes, I find Arthur's works dominated by their staging, scenery and ideas - not by their characters. In his short stories this is even truer, most are written purely around one intriguing 'idea' - and yet he's one of the few authors whose short stories and novels are equally enjoyable to me. Today, it's fashionable to criticise 'old hat' s-f for being badly written - but books are a form of communication and I've always found Arthur's stories communicate with me - that long lost sense of wonder even, would you believe! Other authors seem to change their styles - develop (not always an improvement), for me, Arthur C Clarke was, from the first words I read, a master story-teller and a master word-smith. I LIKE Clarke's stories - I'll leave the critics to tell me why I should (or shouldn't) Ever since reading SANDS OF MARS he has been my favourite author - my only complaint being his lack of productivity...happily, REMEMBRANCE WITH REASON might be the first of many more new books....?



ERIC BENTCLIFFE

For the long-haired set, Arthur C Clarke is not the man, in that his writings don't contain drug-crazed fantasies. Everything he writes is coolly, scientifically possible, if not to-day then sometime in the future. He has had the misfortune to have predicted a lot of things that have come to pass, and that's a heavy cross for any writer to bear, in that it leads people to read his works for information rather than entertainment.

I can't say that Clarke is the master of the long novel, although works like 'The City and The Stars', 'Childhood's End' and 'The Sands Of Mars' are eminently readable and don't bore the intellect as, for example, Clement tends to do. Clarke I would say, would be a magnificent teacher introducing science to youngsters, and indeed he has written some juvenile works of great merit, 'Prelude To Space' to quote one.

Perhaps the most interesting of his works was a sort of Bonestell-Ley type collaboration about the conquest of the moon, with all the materials used in his stories drawn by an artist whose name I don't recall ((Exploration Of The Moon by A.C.Clarke & R.L.Smith. Published by Frederick Muller... T.J.)) It is one of the most interesting books of illustrations it has been my pleasure to light on, and Clarke the practical man, has the book finish with a drawing of a crashed rocket, and his comment..'The Inevitable Price'

But it is with the short story that Clarke is superb. He can put more into a short story than many a more famous writer can put into a novel. It was with grief and anger that I saw what that idiot Stanley Kubrick did with Clarke's trite little story 'The Sentinel'. The only good things that emerged from the mishmash of wonderful models and execrable fancy that was 2001 were two good books - The Making Of 2001, and the actual story, both lavishly illustrated and though pricy for paperbacks, well worth getting.

To conclude, what a pity he's hooked on skin-diving. Come back to SF Arthur, all is forgiven.



ERIC BENTCLIFFE

The first time I saw this author he was on-stage with Bill Temple at an early London Convention (back in the early fifties) giving a hilarious exposition of the first flight to the moon by Orion Spaceship. Back then, Ego and Bill were a sort of prototype Aldiss & Harrison..... I don't begrudge them their fame, but fandon lost a couple of great characters when Arthur found fame and fortune at forty fathoms, and Bill got enmeshed in his THREE SIDED TRIANGLE.

The second time I met him, I had

7.
just returned from a vacation in Italy and entered into the Globe with a pile of Italian s-f magazines. I couldn't read these, but they had excellent covers and much better artwork than any other prozines of the time. One of them had an Arthur Clarke story in it and I made a handsome profit by selling the magazine to him...well, it was enough to pay the tube fare back to my hotel.

The third time I met Arthur wasn't in person. I had been borrowing s-f pulps from a bookshop in Manchester for some time, when on returning an ancient AMAZING, I came across STARTLING STORIES for November '48. This contained, AGAINST THE FALL OF NIGHT. I never went back to that bookshop because I couldn't bear to trade in that issue. It is still, I think, my favourite s-f story

The fourth time I met Arthur C Clarke, at the '57 Worldcon; I wasn't impressed. By this time, his nick-name of Bigo Clarke had, I think, become a rather accurate assessment of his personality. Whilst other big-name authors I've had the pleasure of meeting, Asimov, Bob Bloch, Bob Tucker, Brian Aldiss, Harry Harrison, amongst others, have always been pleasant to converse with and not averse to entering into the convention spirit. Arthur C Clarke had a quite cold, distant reception for anyone not able to benefit him financially.

Arthur C. Clarke is still one of my favourite authors, but a loooong way from being one of my favourite people - even though I must admire his rise to fame from being a humble (?) s-f fan.

ROCKY FILE

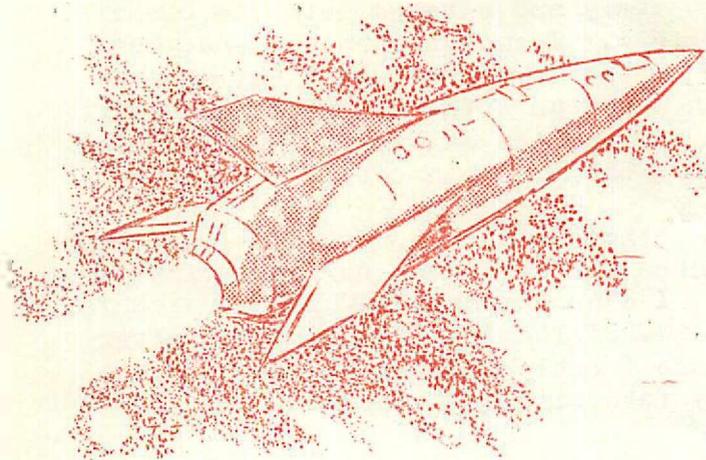
I'm not qualified to discuss the technological or sociological implications of Clarke's work, so I'll restrict myself mainly to the imagery. Here though, Clarke was never the greatest of image-builders. His settings, though carefully detailed lack the technical vitality of a Bradbury, or the convincing grittiness of a Miller. They do have a durable quality though, and when more exotic landscapes grow dim, memories of his stark shadow worlds remain; a world burned - mountains behind glass - a terrified populace flocking together as night falls...

A good, competent writer, though sometimes over-conscientious; allowing narrative to become bogged down in a mass of detail. And no great humourist: at the conclusion of his short piece, The Haunted Space Suit, for example, the reader is left in a state of anti-climax, and any humour felt is of a slightly condescending nature.

Sadly, unlike Diaspar, one of his best-known tales has suffered the passage of time. Enthralled by his wonderful vision of the city, I was disappointed when Alvin confronted those, "tall, golden-haired people" - the cliché, for me, dispelled the magic of the book's earlier chapters, and I read little further.

Still, Diaspar remains in my mind - for a thousand years or more - at least

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THE WORLD OF FANZINES

Fredric Wertham M.D.
Southern Illinois University Press

Right away, it must be said that at a price of ten dollars (Ken Slater will get you a copy for about \$4.30) this is not the sort of item which every fan will get for his kit-bag. Of its 144 pages, the first thirty are reproductions of assorted fan-art (including one of my own cartoons...reprinted without permission). The author covers the various aspects of fanzines as a means of communication unfettered by the chains of more normal publications. He touches on fanzine history, s-f, fantasy and comic zines. There is a brief flirtation with fan jargon..not wholly accurate..or fully comprehensive. Production, style, topics and tabus are dealt with in a manner which through striving for objectivity, manages to lose in readability. Nevertheless, Wertham is obviously sympathetic to fanzines. His aim is to detail their existence and scope rather than to explain and castigate. He uses a plethora of quotes, drops numerous names, both of fans, and of fanzines. In this connection it should be mentioned that this is predominantly a look at the American field. British fanzines are mentioned, but little more. In six pages of listings, I found only a score of UK fanzines..and of these several were defunct, and some I had never heard of. Nevertheless, this is a scholarly look at the field, and one which is fairer than many fan might care to admit.

THE JOHN W. CAMPBELL MEMORIAL ANTHOLOGY Ed. by Harry Harrison

Sidgwick & Jackson \$2.95

Being an 'Astounding' lover from way back in the 30's, I am naturally prejudiced in favour of this one. In addition to an Asimov foreword and a Harrison afterword, the 296 pages hold 13 other items ranging from a 'Probability Zero' bit by Cogswell, to yet another 'Thiotimoline' spoof by Asimov.

Poul Anderson is here with a very lightweight 'van Rijn' story. Alfred Bester has a lovely tongue-in-cheek yarn about a sentient satellite which takes over Earth. Hal Clement gives us a Mesklin problem-story and Gordon Dickson supplies a 'Dorsai' incident. Normally, Sprague de Camp sets my teeth on edge, but here with 'The Emperor's Fan' he has written a great humour item. The goodies keep coming with Harrison's own, 'The Mothballed Spaceship'. Mack Reynolds continues the El Hassan African take-over series and George O. Smith brings back his Venus Equilateral team to work on matter transmission. Sturgeon toes the s-f/fantasy line with 'Helix The Cat', and even Simak comes back with a 'City' series tale about Jenkins, the faithful (and sickly stupid) robot. These are not all top-rank tales, some are very much the stuff of puff-pastry, nice, without being memorable. Without a doubt, this collection is a MUST for your shelves alongside the Asf file.

CREDIT UNLIMITED

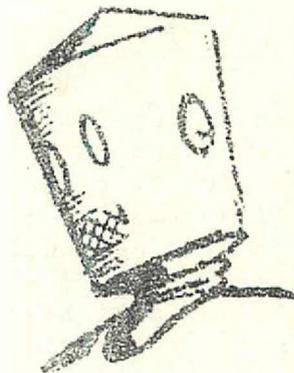
Poul Anderson.

Sidgwick & Jackson £2.50

Three novelettes (2 from Analog, 1 from Fantastic Universe) have been collected under one title, loosely linked by the lineage of one character. Part one describes how

Jan Svoboda manipulates a mincristy party (The Constitutionals) into leaving Earth's decaying and stratified society to colonise the newly discovered planet Rustum. Part two deals with a disaster in the fleet orbiting Rustum and is solved by the 'rabbit out of the hat' system. Finally, when the colony has started, an exogene, vat-grown child runs away from the

stereotyped pressures of cruel siblings and an overharsh father. The hunt is milked for all it isn't worth in true Disney-saccharine style. Poul Anderson has written worse tales than this, but also many better ones. In this collection, the final tale should have been omitted and the other two expanded into a more rounded whole.



ONE-EYE Stuart Gordon.

Sidgwick & Jackson £2.50

Classed as s-f, but nearer to heroic fantasy. Khassan's hordes muster to attack the mutant-hating city of Shadraig where One-Eye is born. High Witchman Patrick Corman has schemed to have the child taken out of the city by a, invincible golem and then leads his Company after them. Pursued by 'Witchmen', the runaways meet with numerous dangers in the Wilderness before the one-eyed child god causes them to surrender to Khassan who has resurrected a band of 'numen'. In a final climactic battle, the 'numen' turn Khassan's

10. warriors against each other. The remnants of the Company survive to try to follow the vanished One-Eye.

Normally averse to this type of fantasy, this one proved to be well-written and held my interest throughout. Action is logically self-consistent and continuous. My one disappointment being the rather indecisive ending. If you're a fantasy lover, you'll go for this.

SINGULARITY STATION by B.N. Ball Sidgwick & Jackson 62.50

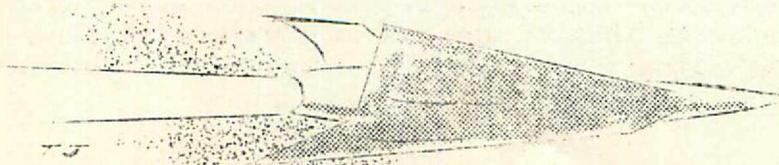
Commander Buchanan loses his starship in a spatial anomaly created by a 'black Hole'. The loss becomes an obsession and he rejects his fiancée to take command of a one-man 'Singularity Station' sent to investigate the phenomena. His fiancée ships aboard a prison ship carrying Maran, the infamous cyberneticist. Maran breaks loose, takes over the ship and eventually, all three characters meet in the time-linbo of the Singularity. This is the best story Brian has ever written in my estimation. Interest never flags, the characters are not painted black and white figures, but have human foibles. Not cerebral philosophy maybe, but rattling good entertainment.

BACK BY HEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID by Philip K Dick Gollancz 62.20

Behind the ghastly title lurks a well-written tale. Top-flight entertainer Jason Taverner wakes in a dingy hotel room to find no one remembers who he is and his name has vanished from every form of record. He manages to buy forged ID cards, essential in the police state if one is to stay out of the labour camps. In his struggle to find out what is happening, Taverner becomes even more deeply enmeshed before all is sorted out in a few brief pages...by the introduction of a highly improbable drug. An unsatisfactory epilogue seems an attempt to bring the whole thing within a stipulated word limit. Good story, but without the obnoxious language and with a better ending, this would have been a winner. With these reservations, I enjoyed it immensely and thought it far better than 'Palmer Aldritch'.

PROPHESIES OF THE FUTURE by Arthur C. Clarke Gollancz 62.75

A revised version of the 1962 edition opening with two fascinating, well-documented and well thought out chapters on the hazards of prophecy. Braving similar pitfalls, the author then goes on to speculate on transport, GEMs (ACVs to you), gravity, speed, matter transmission, teleportation, space exploration, time, power-supplies and a host of other topics. Apart from the sheer pleasure of reading the speculations of a top s-f author you will find enough idea fodder here for a host of new stories if that is your desire. The whole bundle being linked together in a highly palatable and entertaining manner. I would like to have seen a few line drawings and perhaps a diagram or two to augment the text, but even without them, this is a book no hard core s-f enthusiast or popular science buff can afford to be without. Highly Recommended.



TRIP TO THE STARS

by Michael Coney. Gollancz £2.30

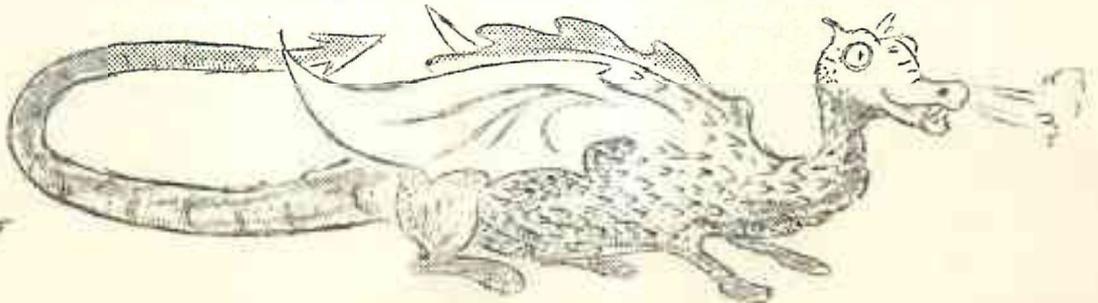
Originally appearing in shorter form as two pieces in Galaxy, the story concerns the struggle for existence of a small group of people living in the snow-bound belfry of a church. The rest of the village and the whole of the country (England) being covered by an ice age caused by a shift in Earth's orbit. They exist by digging tunnels to the village shops and on food (unspecified) brought back by 'Jacko' from his snow-boat trips. Attacks by 'flesh-eaters' and the telepathic animals called 'Pads' add depth to the tale. Characterisation is good, right down to the strength & weakness of each member of the band as they meet each crisis. Solutions are very much, 'deus ex machina' but never spoil the narrative flow. Not great s-f, but I found it pleasant and compulsive reading.

THE GOLDEN ROAD Edited by Damon Knight. Gollancz £3.00

It gets a bit tedious saying, 'Gollancz have done it again', but it happens to be true. Here is yet another king-size anthology squeezing no less than 13 stories into its 342 pages. Culled from a variety of sources, the list reads like a 'Who's Who in S-F'. H.G. Wells is here with 'Pycraft', Heinlein with 'Magic Inc.' from the late lamented UNKNOWN. You also get yarns from Kate Wilhelm, Kornbluth, Mark Twain, Ursula Le Guin, Algis Budrys, Larry Niven and a host of others. Obviously, you can't please all the people, all of the time, but Damon Knight has come as near to doing so as you're ever likely to get when he made up this scintillating assortment. Whether your tastes run to sorcery or satire, ghouls or ghosties...or simply to the enjoyment of a well-told tale, I'm betting there is a lot for you here. Not a bad one in the lot. Recommended, and at the price, would make a superb present.

NEBULA AWARD STORIES No.9 Edited by Kate Wilhelm. Gollancz £3.00

The 1973 Award winners and the runners-up, selected by the S-F Writers of America. Personally, I feel that the awards (of all types, not just Nebulae) seem to go NOT to the best, but to the runners-up...rather as if no one wanted to give too big a push to a competitor. Be that as it may, this selection tends to confirm my theory. All are rattling good tales, highly individual, and well off the normal rut, but not what I would have rated absolute tops. If you like Harlan Ellison's pyrotechnics, then 'Deathbird' is for you. Bearer the mainline in some ways, is Wolfe's 'Death of Dr. Island'. 'Love Is the Plan' by James Tiptree is both more gruesome and more gripping. For fact lovers, Bova writes on scientific progress and Damon Knight waxes historical on the s-f of 1973. For your money, you get 8 stories, 2 articles and one list of Nebula winners and their authors. Good value, but if you can only afford one, I'd aim you at 'Golden Road'



12. DOUGLAS Midgwick & Jackson have just issued two new volumes in their series, 'The Best of....' The two authors selected are Fritz Leiber and A. I. vanVogt. The Leiber runs to 364 pages, and the vanVogt to a stunning, 436. Both are nice hefty, chunky, volumes at \$3.50 each.

THE BEST OF FRITZ LEIBER 22 stories and a bibliography. Surprisingly enough, I had always thought of Leiber as a fantasy writer until reading this collection. I have had to change that view, as virtually all are in the main line of s-f, and without a bad apple in the barrel. My favourites were, 'The Ship Sails At Midnight' and 'Poor Superman', although with such a varied and thoroughly interesting assortment, it is hard to select any item to the exclusion of the others. If I might make one little quibble, it is that it seems a shame that the 'Best of Leiber' doesn't contain just one, little, 'Grey Houser'. I had hoped for his 1970 Nebula winner, 'Ill Bet In Lankmar'...but it seems it isn't rated as one of his best. Strange. Nevertheless, this IS a superlatively good compilation for any Leiber fan.

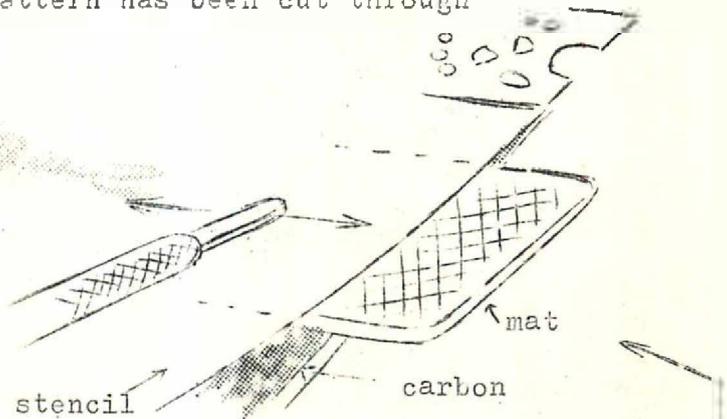
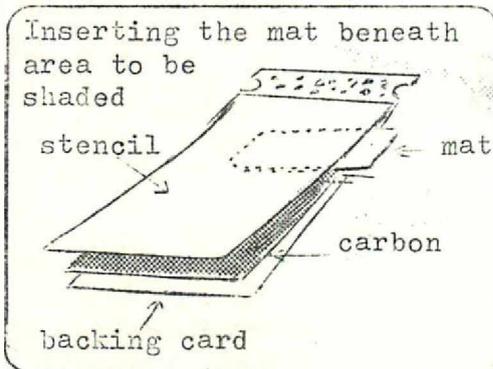
THE BEST OF VAN VOGT 13 stories and a bibliography (naturally, the stories are each a bit longer than in the Leiber) The selections range from the 40's right up to 1968. Sadly, vanVogt's first (and greatest?), 'Black Destroyer' isn't here, nor are any of the shorts which later merged into 'Space Beagle'. We do get a host of other 'goodies' though. His superb little, 'The Monster' is here, as is 'Ugernaut', 'Green Forest', 'Weapon Shop' and 'The Storm' to name but a few. In recent times, vanVogt (rather like the late E.E. Smith) seems to have had trouble in whipping all the ends together into a credible and entertaining whole. Not so with the tales in this collection, with the possible exception of the final three, all the material here is vintage van Vogt...and if you don't know what that means, you have a treat in store.

RAMA WITH RAMA by Arthur C. Clarke Pan.50p

Inarguably, Clarke is to authors what John W. Campbell was to editors. Without either, the field would have been far different - and far poorer. Clarke almost invariably writes well, now and then, not-so-well, and never badly. 'Rama' ably supports this view. In essence, it tells of a mission to explore a mysterious 'asteroid' as it sweeps through the Solar system, and after it has turned out to be an alien spacecraft (Rama). On to these bare bones, Clarke grafts the flesh of a gripping yarn as the spacemen enter Rama and investigate its wonders; the giant stairs, the seas, canals and buildings. It pickers might object to the 'sky cyclist' gaining weight after leaving the zero-G lines of Rama's axis, since this would not let centrifugal force grip him until he was accelerated either by actual contact with Rama's 'land' or by the (much slower) work of air friction. Quibbling aside, the tension mounts as Rama's internal mechanisms begin to operate as the craft nears Sol and the tremendous plan of the builders becomes clear. Typically, Clarke embeds one of his little 'stings' in the tail. This is a rattling good yarn, well thought out, extremely convincing and one in which the interest is never allowed to flag. Get it, by all means!

SHADING METHODS

The most obvious method of adding a tint to a line drawing is by use of a shading mat. These generally come in the form of a panel of hard plastic with a pattern embossed on one face. This is placed directly beneath the stencil (on TOP of the carbon), the stencil is held down firmly on the plate and burnished with a polished metal rod or spoon until all the pattern has been cut through the stencil.

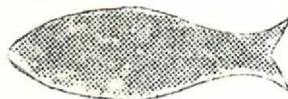


Burnish to and fro, do not rub haphazardly in all directions or uneven results will be obtained

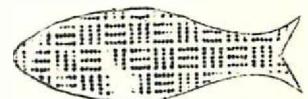
Here are some examples of tints produced from shading mats



Outline



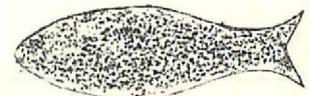
Mat.1.



Mat.2.

Messrs. Gestetner market a wide range of these, including plates with various commonly used symbols, and also many border patterns.

CHEAP HARD-SURFACED materials may be used in lieu of professional shading plates. Here are two examples of tints produced by using different grades of sandpaper



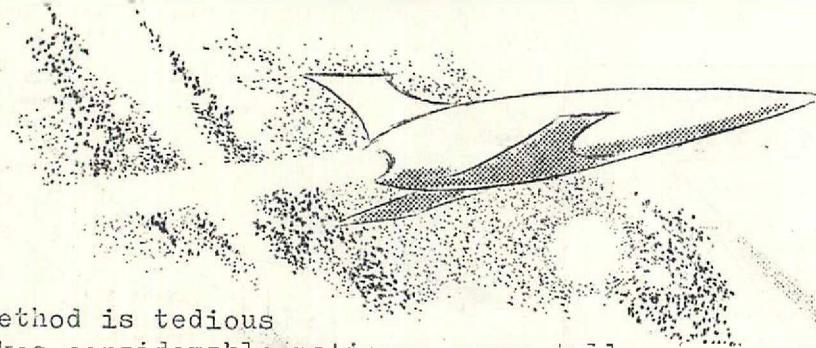
.....and of course, you can use them almost anywhere, not just for filling in outlines.



It is also possible to create different shading effects by varying the way you use a stylus. For instance, the two styli which drew these lines....

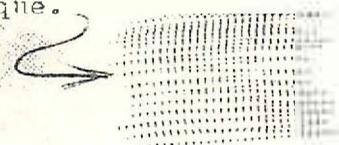
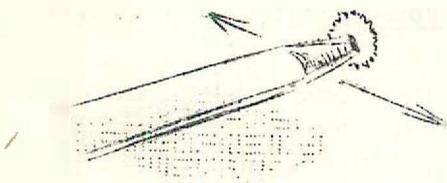


.... can also be used in a stabbing, dot-producing motion to provide various textures. A technique I often use in ERG, and a sample of which is used below.



This method is tedious and takes considerable patience, especially when covering a large area. The system may be blended in with tints from shading mats if care is taken. Another mechanical system is the wheel pen. Again, these may be bought commercially, but if you get hold of an old alarm clock and dismantle it the supply of small gear wheels and knurled adjusting knobs will make you a variety of wheel pens.

The process of putting in dots can be speeded up, but the regularity of the dots produced limits the use of this technique.

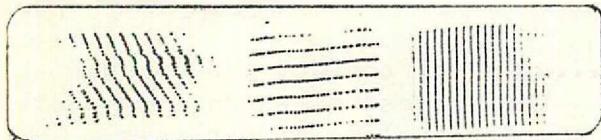


One way of overcoming this regularity is to confine the tint to small sections and 'patch-work' them to produce an unusual background.

An even more effective use of this 'patchwork' is obtained if you mount one of the knurled knobs on to a discarded felt pen shaft and then use that.

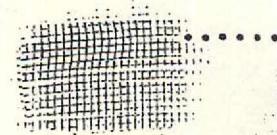


Here are a few of the different textures you



can get by using different wheels.

By laying one texture at right angles to another, you may produce other results.

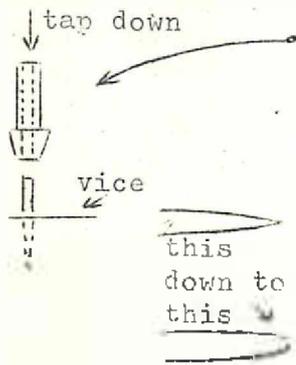
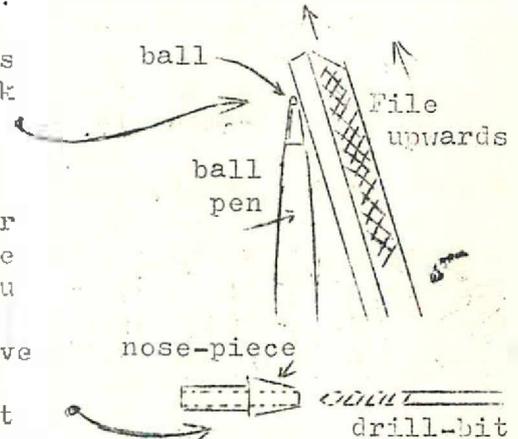


Experiment with various 'mats' and home-made tools, then stick with those you like best.

HOME-MADE STYLUS

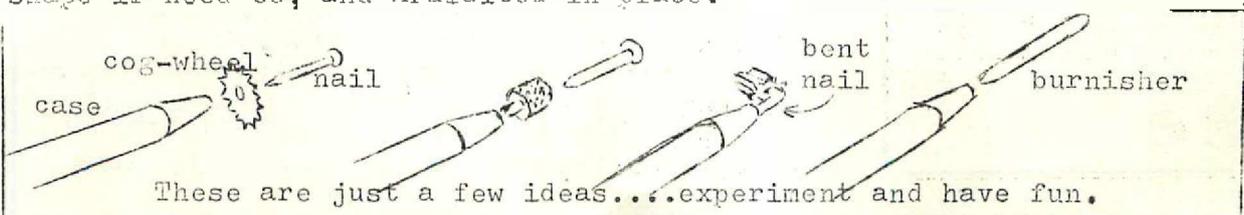
Stencil-cutting tools may be made from a variety of odds-and-ends, but certain items seem to come in handy every time. Don't throw away exhausted ball-pens and felt-tipped pens. Their cases make excellent holders and an old alarm-clock will provide enough material for a wide range of cutters. The simplest item to start with is a home-made stylus. My own favourite which I use for almost all my illos, was made from an old gramophone needle...the steel kind which would only play one record before wearing out on those abrasive 78s. I have a box of these, but if you can't lay hands on one, simply use a large size darning needle or a small bodkin. I detail the steps in full here, the technique may be varied as need and imagination dictate:

1. Take a medium file and run it upwards against the tip of the ball pen. Work round and round, filing as you go until the ball drops out
2. Take a drill bit of the same diameter as your needle, and drill through the brass nose piece of the ball pen. You can discard the plastic re-fill tube if you wish...unless you care to leave it in place to allow you to have a retractable stylus. This needs a bit more care in fitting the needle if it is to retract right out of the way.



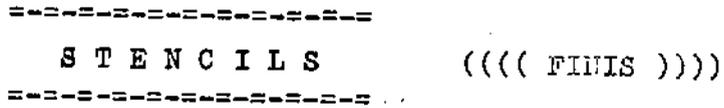
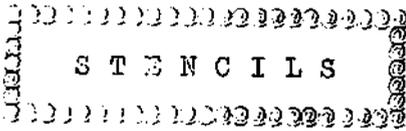
3. Place needle tip point down in the jaws of a vice, and gently tap the nose piece down on to it. If the needle is a loose fit, Araldite it in place, and leave to set.
4. Assemble nose piece back into pen case and grind or file the needle point away to a smoothly rounded curve trying it on a bit of stencil from time to time until a good cutting tip is attained.

Old felt-pen cases are even easier to prepare, simply pull the tip out with the aid of a pair of pliers. Then you can make a variety of wheel pens, rollers or burnishers by suitable choice of bits and pieces. Most wheels can be fastened in by using a suitable sized round nail, bent to shape if need be, and Araldited in place.



16
LETTER-GUIDES

Sooner or later, the problem of lettering will raise its ugly head. Much can be done in the typewriter by way of producing special border and display techniques, a few of which are shown here :-



In the first two samples, an extra space has been added between each letter in the word 'STENCILS'. In the word 'FINIS', this was omitted. It is noticeable how cramped it makes the word appear. In the second example, the word was made 'heavier' by re-typing after shifting the stencil very slightly in the typewriter. Variations on such styles are many, but eventually, larger lettering and more varied styles will be called for. For speed, and where rigidity is not required, I use a free running style. This method only needs two faint pencils guide



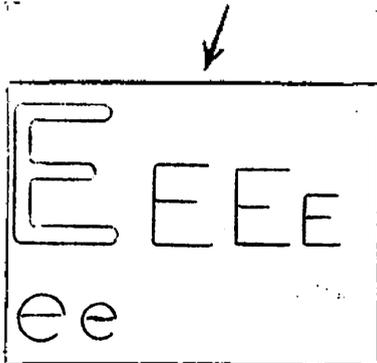
lines. You don't need to stick to them slavishly, but try to keep a balance above and below if you do go over the lines

Desiring a more rigid style, I developed the alphabet which I use on the ERG heading and elsewhere. The great advantage is that it can be cut entirely with a ruler, and includes no curves. All the letters are based on a plain rectangle divided down its centre line. The left half has a 'solid' body, the right is usually the line part of the letter.



letters are based on a plain rectangle divided down its centre line. The left half has a 'solid' body, the right is usually the line part of the letter.

However, if you feel that such fiddle-de-dee is too much trouble, then the letter-guide was invented for you. Usually in the form of a transparent plastic sheet. The letters are cut out and only need a bit of stylus work to cut their outline on to stencil. Here are a few samples of the range available..



But make sure you get guides for pencil use, NOT pen.

Pen guides have distance pieces to raise them clear of the surface to prevent blots. They allow the stencil to tear.

Pencil guides lay flat, and hold the stencil firmly thus reducing the chance of it tearing.



pen guide



pencil guide

It is tempting when laying out a heading, to mark out equal spaces for each letter of a word, then shove a letter in each space. However this method comes a cropper with words having letters of uneven areas. Take the word, 'RAVENING'. On the equal space system, this comes out like this...

RAVENING

... but the result looks strangely out of balance.

It is better to adjust the spacing by eye, to achieve a balance which, though not mathematically even, nevertheless looks more regular and pleasing.

RAVENING

Lettering may be plain, sans serif



or a more fancy style with decorative serifs.



It may become even fancier and more distorted as the fancy takes you...



....but, BEWARE!

Far too often one comes across a title so outlandish in its attempt to be avant-garde, that it becomes unreadable and thus defeats its object...communication. When you meet this idiocy, the only answer is to turn to the contents page to try to find out what the artist was trying to say.

Your local library will have a book or two of assorted typefaces if you don't want to 'roll your own'. A point to bear in mind when selecting one, is to try to match the lettering to the topic of the material it heads up, thus a rolling mill would be more likely to use the heading

STEEL

than this one

STEEL

The blocky letters suggest great strength, whereas the

slender ones seem about to fall apart.

Similarly,

FUN

looks a lot happier than..

FUN

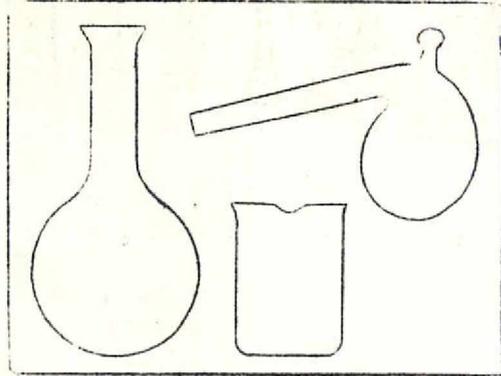
If you intend to use electrostencil, Messrs Letratone market a fantastic range of alphabets...including 'copper-plate, Greek and Russian type faces. One catch though, they currently run at about 75p for a sheet, so don't dash around to the shop with a list of several dozen assorted sizes.

How you arrange a layout is a matter of choice...but please -- let the first consideration be legibility ..otherwise the whole idea might just as well have been done in that Greek or Russian alphabet.

TEMPLATES

are an off-shoot of the letter-guide system. in addition to plastic sheets of letter-styles, it is also possible to get sheets with cut out shapes. Probably the most common being the 'science' stencil which seems to haunt everyone's schooldays. I still have mine, and it produces such shapes as.....

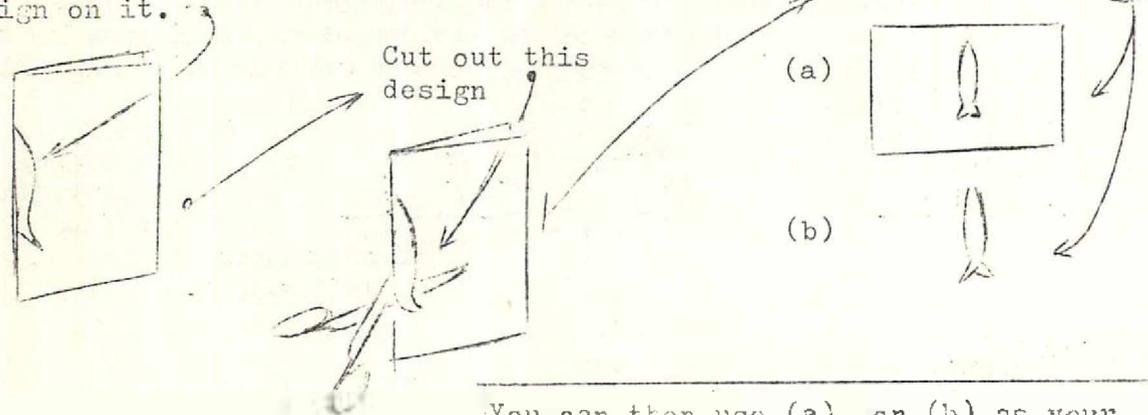
Educational stationer's are good huntin grounds for such sheets, and are usually far more reasonable in price than the big duplicating firms or office stationers, most of whom firmly believe that the \$ is the lowest unit of money now in use.



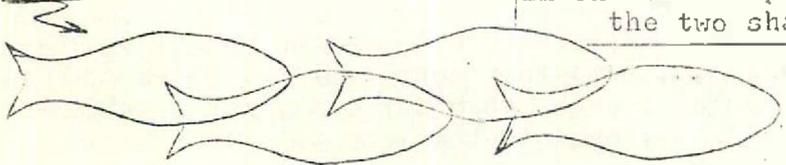
Such sheets, particularly those with assorted circles and standard geometric shapes, are extremely useful, but there comes the time when you want to draw an unusual outline several times over and it isn't on your plastic sheet. The answer is simple, you go ahead and make one! Take a piece of thin card such as a plain post card (a pocsarcd will do just as well) and cut out the outline of the shape you want. This cut-out makes an admirable stencil for you to go round with your stylus. If the shape is symmetrical, then you can fold the card first as I did to make the template for the fish used in the pages on shading.

Fold the card and pencil half the design on it.

Open out the two pieces



simple fish pattern



You can then use (a), or (b) as your stencil. You can even make extra cuts in one of the pair, and then alternate the two shapes in your design

To ensure that any such repeat pattern work doesn't go up and down in level...when you don't want it to, simply put down a few pencil guide lines to help in lining up the template.

SELECTIONS from your LETTERS

with
ERGitorial interjections
marked thus
//.....//



Alan Burns
Goldspink Lane
Newcastle on Tyne
NE2 1NQ

"Thanks for ERG 48 and up to standard, indeed what I like about ERG is that the only time it falls from, or rises above standard is when you start experimenting. I agree with the ruthless pruning of deadwood among subbers who respond not, it has the twofold advantage of saving money and effort 'Son of Nartaz'. Well when we get our new calculator at work I'll sit down and work out how many combinations of the letters A-I-R-E-A-N you can get (((Simple, Factorial six..but not all are pronounceable))) and I will then know how many more of your terrible puns I have to endure. The stories have a dreadful fascination, like seeing an Victorian diving into my freezer to nosh the contents thereof. 'Recent Reading' is a monument to the industry of Jeeves and you do a very good review. 'Cagle Chronicles' are hilarious and would be well worth putting out at sometime in the future as an anthology. (((I hope you note that Ed, and de-Gafiate))) Duplicating article very good, you will of course issue all these items in a book for which I believe I have put my name down for when it comes out (((You have, but looking at the material I want to include, it looks like being a year or two before it appears))) Aussie newslatter, interesting, but John Alderson is no Cagle - but don't stop pubbing them if any come. (((The current one is the last..unless John comes through with more)))

Keith Freeman
123 Fairford Rd
Milchurst
Reading RG3 6UP

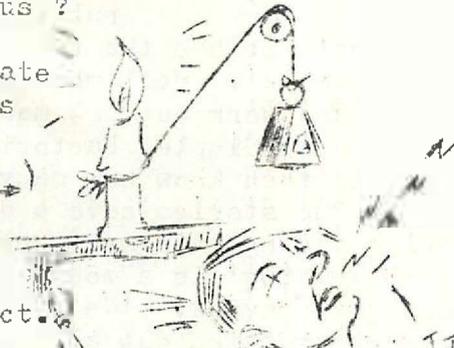
I liked the use of some colour on the headings - would only query why it wasn't used on the front cover. (((Didn't seem worth the bother..so few even seem to notice it inside))) I was vexed by the colour headings on pages 5 & 25. 'Son Of Nartz' is not the kind of thing I'm particularly keen on - but if I'm supposed to decypher the first paragraph from the multi-coloured background, I'll have to be PARTH decyphering. (((Sorry about that..the Panda is at school and I was unable to check the register when I ran off the colour...so I goofed. Shame on you for not loving Nartaz.))) You say a 'Recent LOC does not entitle the writer to more than another issue. Fair

enough, but could you define "decent" - is there a minimum LOC that'll JUST get the writer the next issue? If a scruffy, ill-scrawled note saying, "Got ERG, liked, send next" gets the same response as the writer of a fifty-page critique in depth, then there ain't no justice. (((Fie! You want me to define the difference between grey and near-grey. A decent letter is one which satisfies me enough for reasons of length, quality or subject. I'm not a go, no-go gauge. A LOC is first and foremost, a way of saying THANKS FOR YOUR MAGAZINE. If it then goes on to balance to some small degree, the work involved in producing ERG. A recent fanwriter moaned about spending TWO hours on a LOC which was then unpublished. I've spent TWELVE HOURS on ONE ille (ERG 43). Throw in typing, illing, duping, collating, addresssing, not to mention the sheer cost....and I reckon no LOCer has a right to complain if NO ONE ever has a lettercol.))) Over a few pages to the reviews - seems a lot of time (that's not a complaint, just an observation) Are there any books you don't like? Even 334 (Disch) which I couldn't read and which I imagine, you disliked, you end up saying.. "You might like it" Did you like it? If not, why not tell us why not? (((I disliked 334. But in general, I try to avoid panning a book simply because I don't like it. I disliked 'Dying Inside'..but many loved it. Instead, I try to say what it is about...and if I like it, I say so positively...but the panning of a book is not a thing to be done lightly...it is someone's brain-child))). Alan Burns. Is he serious? Let's tackle his three laws.

1. A robot is any device which can duplicate or extend an action of which a human is capable.

This means a car is a robot...

(see THIS →)



2. A robot is only capable of performing when it has been programmed by a human and is incapable of any unprogrammed act.

So...if the car is parked on a hill and through a hydraulic leak, runs away, where's the programming involved? (((I'd say a car IS a robot, as is a thermostat, or a time switch..or even a mousetrap. Simply because a mechanical failure causes an accident doesn't render it a not-robot. Otherwise, if a wiring short causes the army robot tank to blow them up while getting it ready, it would no longer be a robot)))

Chris Johnson
14 Rivershill
Watton-at-Stone
Hertford.

"I found ERG 48 up to its usual high standard. 'Son Of Martaz', I laughed a lot. I'm glad to see that there are more paperbacks than hardbacks being reviewed in this issue. Burns' Laws of

Robotics presented a useful alternative to Isaac Asimov's, which are rather too 'clean and well-ordered'. I think your spaceships look very nice streamlined, more realistic than some of Chris Foss's sort of stuff, although it's hard to compare your styles. (((Glad you liked Martaz...and the Burns laws...as you can see from Keith's letter above, I get caught in a cleft stick. Re the art...you're too kind. Foss is way above me I'm sad to say)))

ERIC G HAYER
RD No.1
Falls,
Pennsylvania
18615
U.S.A.

'The 'Oil' story is outrageous. Ed Cagle is very much missed. Hopefully, he'll be back. Meanwhile "Water" is an unexpected treat. This is the kind of thing Ed writes best. However I have to wonder if his account of breathing through a hose 14ft under water was not a bit enhanced. In the 'Silent World' Cousteau says, "A few feet down the pressure

exceeds the ability of the human respiratory muscles to pull down surface air. A man with extraordinary lungs might draw air six feet down for a few minutes, but breathing surface air a foot down is tiring for most of us" (((I seem to remember reading about a Greek slave forced to try this, and his lungs caved in at about six feet. However, it seemed a shame to edit Ed's MS on this point))) Good advice on sword and sorcery writing by Burns. Its too bad that the market created by LORD OF THE RINGS was destroyed by a glut of inferior, pseudo-Howard tales. Best of the issue was the first instalment of your duplicating series. You included some things I never even heard of and the idea of printing examples is great.

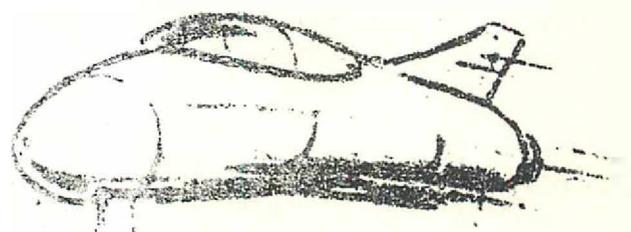
BRUCE D ARTHUR
27th Mans. Co
Fort Lee
Va. 23801
U.S.A.

If I could hand-cut as well as you do, I wouldn't need to use electrostencils in my own zines (((You ought to see the superlative work Cawthorn does in TRICIDE))) I also learned some new stuff from the 'STENCILS' article. Brush stencils were something I'd never heard of before. One thing you might

mention is reproing photographs via electronic stencils. I've been doing this every once in a while, and they've come out pretty good. I always try to get a photo with fairly high contrast so it won't come out all grey. (((I'm afraid that the majority of such photo-electros I've seen have tended very much to 'spot-and-whitewash' and have put me off the idea.))) That weekly series Burns mentions, 'Man Myth and Magic' is slightly cheaper over here, but since the one I looked at didn't interest me (((Me neither))) I haven't bothered to look for any more

Graham Poole
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Cheltenham
Glos GL51 7LN

Many thanks for ERG 48 which was up to usual standars. I am basically suspicious of computers, having had fairly close experience with them. It all boils down to the fact that people not only programme them but also operate them and the operation of a computer must, I think, be one of the most boring jobs around. Some time ago, our office in its infinite wisdom, decided to prepare all accounts using a computer despite an outcry from the staff who saw their jobs either being demoted to mere coding of income and payments or the checking



of computerised print-outs which were not only unintelligible, but also frequently incorrect. The staff either left the firm or rebelled, like me, and were victorious. We are now back to the quicker, more efficient, cheaper and job satisfying method of doing it using our hands and heads. The continuation of the duplicating saga provided further help to me especially as in the next few months I shall be producing, at least one zine using one method or another. Duplicating I'm beginning to learn about. Xeroxing can be fairly sheap (I've been quoted around £11 per 1,000 pages) (((Cheap !???) but I can get covers lithoed at about £2 for 100. ((('Fraid paper and ink cost enough without my running to such exotic systems....but the firm I do the occasional illo job for is installing new machinery.....I wonder...)))

Dave Rowe
3 Lark Drive
Wichford
Essex S 12 9DH

Rising postal costs and paper shortage have certainly hit fuz pubbing, but even more so, there seems to be a great wave of apathy amongst the fans. When we were editing Blunt, contributors would promise to get their pieces to us by a deadline, and it was pretty normal to get it two months past the deadline. No wonder faneds are going over to smaller, or non-existent personalzines. (((Which makes me wonder why in your TRILL column, you mentioned all those that had folded..plus a few others which appear now and then...but not ERG which is now in its 16th year. After all, only HAVERINGS is older in the UK..so don't you support your friendly neighbourhood ERG ???))) Everyone puts down London as far as Cons go, and the first cry everytime is, "Too pricey" yet of all the cons over the past six years, London was the cheapest!!! Even when allowing for rising prices, it still stays more than competitive. Why the hell fandom isn't yelling 'blue murder' over the Season charges is beyond me (((Having been 'in' on the Our con, you should know that the poor con committee does its best...by now, its is virtually TOO LATE to waste time hollering..though some are doing..and time to dig in and make it work...which is why T O YEAR bid ing might give a committee more haggling time. As for London...nyaaah, that is one place the more I see of it, the less I like it))) Someone at Tynescon (Peter Weston or Andrew Stephenson ??) said that if they couldn't get prices comparable to Ompacon, they'd eat their hat. I think this masochistic headgear consumption should be part of the programme, preferably at the chairman's opening speech. (((Agreed...heartily)))

Roger Waddington
4 Commercial St.
Berton,
Salton,
Yorkshire

Nartaz and his ilk belong in the jungle; the mixture doesn't really jell when he departs his native vines. Robotics is a hell of a subject to cover in two and a half pages. Couldn't you let Nartaz stay unknown in Tibet and Burns have his head ((('Hose head ? Nartaz ? Actually, Alan chose that length himself when submitting the article))) The inclusion of the Cagle chronicles and John Alderson's walkabouts seem to typify just what it is about fandom that's drawing me back. Trying hard not to be too philosophical, I'd say it's this variety. The fact that from the broad base of S-F, fandom can go in any of a hundred directions (and often all within the same fanzine (((ERG of course)))

((Which must be all..thanks to all who wrote...and to those who intend to write in about this issue...don't think...do it NOW!))