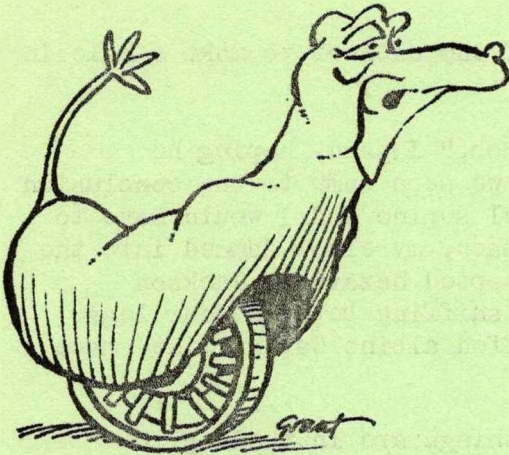


ROLL ON...



# The Grimling BOSCH

To be exact :

The Grimling BOSCH - 5, produced at an editorial whim

by  
Harry Bell, 9 Lincoln St., GATESHEAD, Tyne & Wear, NE8 4EE, U.K.

This issue is Grimwab Publication 10, is dated March 1976, is duplicated on Rob Jackson's Biltong, and has added Sticking E.

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I got a phone-call from Rob Jackson the other day.

"I'm sitting in the car outside 9 Lincoln Street with a dog and a duplicator," he said.

Both Irene and I were putting in a few extra hours at work so there was no-one at home to let Rob in with his newly - acquired, second-hand Gestetner 360 electric duplicator complete with three-drawer cabinet. His West Highland Terrier, Ben, was keeping him company but conversation with a Gestetner and a West Highland is limited to some degree.

"You'd better come and pick me up, Rob," I said, and within a quarter of an hour I was standing outside Central Office looking through the car window at Rob, Ben, and a sprawling mass of mechanical passengers.

"I seem to have overlooked something," said Rob, getting out. "There's no room for you."

Ben jumped out to show canine contempt for things governmental by peeing up against the Department's gate-post.

"If we can stand the cabinet on end, there'll be room." Rob started to probe

his assertion straight away, using the corner of the cabinet to make a hole in the lining of the roof.

"You've made a hole in the lining of the roof, Rob," I said, hoping he wouldn't get Very Cross Indeed. He didn't, but we soon came to the conclusion that the cabinet was just going to have to travel supine and I would have to wedge myself into the remaining foot or so of space, my elbow jammed into the cabinet's base. Ben's peregrinations are an accepted hazard of Jackson Transport but lodged as I was, his penchant for sniffing between your legs and perching on your shoulder like some overstuffed albino Cap'n Flint, made the trip...well...uncomfortable.

The attic at 9 Lincoln is quite large and when things are in their place there's room for several people to swing several cats, or pass the same one from hand to hand rapidly, or even play a game of darts (assuming they're prepared to accept the handicap of having the left eye blinded by the light-bulb). However, the recent generous gift of two single beds, crashing fen for the use of, meant the considerable rearrangement of the attic furniture comprising a three-piece suite, three sets of Dexion shelving, a table and two non-serviceable duplicators, and countless boxes of books, fanzines and kipple. I'm not noted for completing mundane jobs in anything remotely resembling a hurry so it was with considerable strength and agility that we adjusted the confused geography of the room to include yet another landmark.

And there it sits, radiating electric charm, giving me the old come-on. I had no plans for another BOSCH until the arrival of this seductive machine. Now, how can I stop?

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The reason Irene and I weren't at home when Rob called is that since January the Department has been operating on Flexible Working Hours. This is a system introduced from the Continent whereby, given certain hours when I must be in the office, I can arrange the rest of my working hours to suit myself. For instance, I can now start work anytime between 7.30 and 9.30 and can knock off anytime between 15.30 and 18.00.

I am not by nature an early riser and Irene, left to herself, would sleep the clock round (she almost did one day). The consequence of this is that instead of starting work at the old time of 8.15 we find ourselves arriving more and more at 9 o'clock. Over a four week "settlement period" we are meant to work 146 hours (although there is a permissible carry-over of 11 hours credit or debit from one settlement period to the next) and we therefore find it advisable to work later some nights to make up for arriving later.

An advantage of the system is that within each settlement period we're allowed 1½ days leave on condition that those hours are made up over the period. Never have I seen so many people running to get to work. By arriving early they build up hours and then take their day and a half leave. Me, I take the leave then think about making up the hours.

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The logo on page one is of course by Grant Canfield, as it should have said on page one. Credit where credit is due.

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CABBAGES & CONS

Gannetfandom being the enlarged (some say bloated) entity it now is, we had to make the trip to Novacon 5 in two cars. Dave Hutchinson took one lot and Rob Jackson had the pleasure of driving down with Alan Isaacson, Brian Rouse, Irene and me.

Alan Isaacson is, gnod help him, a passable substitute for Roy Kettle; he has a Kettle-type beard, talks almost as fast as Roy, and has a fund of Stories and Jokes for All Occasions (Bar-Mitzvahs by appointment). Some of you may remember him as the guy who occupies lifts at recent cons and refuses you entry until you tell him a joke.

There are times, however, when even Alan runs out of steam and it was during one of these lulls that the only incident of any note on the way to Birmingham happened. We had been travelling in silence for about ten minutes, looking out at some fairly dull scenery, when up in front we spotted a small van. Naturally, no-one commented on it, and even as we came up behind and idly noted the rear doors straining to contain a wealth of cabbages, no-one spoke. We pulled out to overtake and as we slowly passed the front of the van there was an explosion of laughter as we all saw the driver almost swamped in cabbages. They were piled in every conceivable corner of the van and the driver was visibly cringing at the thought of being buried alive.

After that, silences were sure to be broken by someone muttering "...Cabbages! BloodyHell...all those cabbages!"

The Royal Angus, new to Novacons, was an adequate hotel, the staff unobtrusive. The food was evidently very expensive and not especially good (luckily there was an excellent restaurant--Fanny's--just round the corner serving traditional English meals with piano requests) and there were times when we felt we might have to put on coats to keep out the cold.

The Con Hall had an irritating supporting pillar which always seemed to be blocking my view and there was a large empty space at the back of the Hall ideal for folk to stand around in talking, loud enough to distract attention from the programme event.

There was Roje Gilbert, boring all and sundry with his CAMRA tie and rugby tales, and being embarrassingly rude to staff and fans alike. Roje is an acquired taste which most of you will, I'm sure, never acquire. I find it difficult not to go on liking him.

These are just little moans, of course, and shouldn't cloud the fact that it was one of the best Novacons I've been to. Not a con notable for Fabulous

Fannish Happenings, perhaps, but a good one nonetheless. It may be, of course that a Fabulous Fannish Happening was responsible for my spending a large part of Saturday night asleep, fully clothed, in the bath with the bath-mat for a pillow, until Irene found me there, but that presumably is a secret not to be revealed to me. Doesn't beat sleeping in a wardrobe, though. My word, what a rich and varied life I lead!

At the Art Show, David Hardy had a selection of his moonscapes and star pictures, some of which were quite attractive, but most of which were ruined by being set in gimmicky silver "port-hole" frames.

Blair Wilkins produced a set of disorganised awkward paintings which I would have found difficult to attribute to the painter of those promising picture at SEACon were it not for the fact that I understand he has been working closely with Eddie Jones. Eddie's influence has, for the moment, overwhelmed Blair Wilkins' own style and unbalanced the strong sense of composition he showed in his earlier pictures. These paintings suffered in comparison with both Blair's SEACon pictures and Eddie's own work.

Eddie had his usual large display of studics and original book covers and did well in the auction, but I can't help wishing that he and the other artists exhibiting would stop showing only paintings for book covers. Eddie's reason obviously is that he is a professional cover artist, but doesn't he do any other paintings, without the big empty space for the title? Dave Rowe assures me the Art Shows at the Belgian cons have a variety of art on display and I know the Americans do too. They have real Art Shows, not just Book Cover and Potential Book Cover Shows.

Coming back to Newcastle we had no cause to regret that Rob's car has no radio or cassette player; Alan and Brian sang the whole of the Who's "Tommy."

BOAKBOAKBOAKBOAKBOAK

Because Alan and Brian didn't come with us to keep us amused we let Ian Williams drive part of the way to Gray Boak's Blackpool Tan Con in February. Rob bravely agreed to give Ian some practice in failing his driving test while Dave Cockfield, Irene and I sat mute with terror in the back. To be fair Ian put in a creditable performance, driving at a careful three miles per hour, until he decided to present us with a display of his expertise at the downhill slalom. After several rather similar versions of careening down both sides of the road at the same time Rob decided that slaloming was best suited to snow and skis and took over the wheel once more. Rob, a much more experienced driver, demonstrated that driving with the hand-brake off is infinitely preferable to the Ian Williams method.

In the weeks since BoakCon I've been wondering how I was going to tackle the phenomenon of that convention. I don't really believe I can do it justice in a conrep. The whole weekend was a resounding success; with nothing but a bar, a pin-table and a fruit machine to keep them amused, some thirty-odd fans had the time of their lives (with the possible exception of Ian R. Butterworth).



The atmosphere was reminiscent of the cons I went to in the mid-60's and I rediscovered a convention activity I haven't indulged in since I started to go to cons again; it's called Going Outside. At Gt.Yarmouth, Bristol and Buxton part of the fun was in getting out to see a small piece of a town I'd never seen before; since NOVACON-3, apart from brief forays into inferior curry-house territory, Irene and I haven't budged from the hotel the whole weekend. I particularly regret not even attempting to see Coventry Cathedral. If it's done nothing else BoakCon has shown me the errors of my ways. Unfortunately, I suspect the area round Owen's Park will be pretty dull so MANCON-5 may not be the time to try out my new policies.

IMPERIAL MIRTH?

In 1972 Gannetfandom took it into its collective head to organise a mini-con. Some of you may remember the Gannetcon fiasco -- the con never got beyond the talking stage. Penman made a fool of himself by putting out press releases, and Brian Temple made a name for himself by writing up the whole affair for John Piggott's "Turning Worm 2"

But out of that came TYNECON-74, one of the most successful Eastercons in recent years.

Since TYNECON we've been toying with the idea of holding another con, but on a smaller scale. Gray's Fan Con encouraged us to believe that there really is room in the fan calendar for another con, alot less organised than NOVACON, but with some programming to break up the weekend. Hence SILICON. Hence the enclosed flyer.

When we first approached The Imperial Hotel we thought it might be stuffy, expensive and cramped. It isn't; the manager almost fell over himself trying to be helpful, the room rates, taking into account current hotel rates and what you get for your money, are very reasonable, and we've been given the new wing of the hotel for our exclusive use.

I can't over-emphasise the excellence of this hotel -- I firmly believe the Imperial Hotel is the best convention hotel I have ever been to. I hope British fandom has a nose sensitive enough to sniff out a good con. We will give you a good fun con -- so fill out the form, OK?

We're willing to fill the new wing of the hotel -- about 100 fen. This is just about the right number for the type of con we visualise, but is rather more than the 60-80 that Ian Williams says (in SIDDHARTHA-7) was "the attendance of Eastercons about the time Harry Bell got first involved in fandom." I didn't come out of the Ark, Ian, Sunshine : the first Eastercon I went to was Yarcon 66 and the registrations, at least, reached 133.

For those of you who can't make up your mind whether or not to register for Silicon, come and talk to us about it at Mancon; if after listening to us

extoll the undeniable virtues of The Imperial you still can't make up your mind, we'll get Ian Williams to tell you about his novel or have Alan and Brian sing the whole of 'Tommy' and 'The Rocky Horror Picture Show' to you. Then you'll sign....

BUT NOW FOR SOME LOCS, EH?

Mike Glicksohn           The main thing that kinda bothered me a wee bit in  
141 High Park Ave.      your report of the Bank Holiday trip was the apparent  
Toronto                   assumption that a trip of this sort needs a purpose  
Ont. M6P 2S3             more intrinsically worthwhile than drinking with one's  
CANADA                    friends. Perhaps I missed the subtlety of your remarks,  
                          though: but it did read as if you'd've thought the week-  
and something of a loss without such totally unnecessary activities as rowing,  
climbing and hiking. This is a bit hard to reconcile with my own view of the  
universe and with my recollections of English fans, so maybe I read it too  
quickly or something.

(( It's one thing to set out on a trip with the avowed intention of  
getting stoned and taking a brisk walk between jars, quite another  
to zoom into the country with a group of people, all desperately  
keen to climb everything in sight, who fall foul of their own  
insatiable thirst and then sit round muttering about wasted time.  
Not to worry, the lesson is well learned, and future trips will I'm  
sure be carried out with a proper perspective. ))

Victoria Vayne           Your trips and pub-crawling sound like typical fannish  
P.O.Box 156 Stn D        travels; here in Toronto we don't pub-crawl but do end  
Toronto                   up in inexpensive restaurants quite a bit. Here the  
Ontario                   rage is footfesting, long, long walks punctuated by  
CANADA                    coffee in restaurants. Or, as we now do in winter,  
                          long drives in Toronto fandom's only car out in the  
wild country north of the city.

(( Gannetfandom's passion is for curries. Newcastle is particularly  
well-endowed with fine Indian and Bangla Deshi restaurants and once  
or twice a month -- usually after a NESFIG meeting -- we troop up  
to The Bangla Desh and partake of the best curries in town, if not  
in the country. Whenever we go to a con it's always a shock to  
discover that the standard o' curry-houses in other cities falls  
far short of those we're accustomed to. The worst curries in  
Newcastle are ten times better than anything we've been able to find  
elsewhere. ))

Graham Poole            I read 'Hard to be a God' yesterday and thoroughly enjoyed  
23 Russet Road          it, basically because it was stimulating. I could well  
CHELTENHAM              imagine this book as a film -- I wonder if anyone has  
Glos.                    thought of that. There wouldn't be too much trouble over  
GL51 7LN                special effects or technology, in fact it would be  
relatively simple to film. I doubt if it would be called SF by the masses



though, more of a political fantasy with lots of parallels with Earths past and present.

Darroll Pardoe  
24 Othello Close  
HARTFORD  
Huntingdon  
PE18 7SU

You're right of course: 'fandom as a whole' doesn't exist. I can see a point in people actively planning ways to get new people into an organisation -- the BSFA, say -- but fandom is nothing but an amorphous collection of people with vaguely the same interests. Where do you draw the line at membership of fandom? Is everyone who's a fringe member of a sf club or has been to a convention once a fan? How do you attract people into something so amorphous as that?

As for fanzine fandom now, that's a different matter. Active fanzine fandom is a small, and fairly tight, group of people. Mike Glycer estimated the total, worldwide, at around 500, which is about right, I should think. How many active fanzine fans are there in the UK? 50 perhaps? But we don't need to attract people into fanzine fandom. Quite a few new faces appear for a while, then drop out: a few of them stay. Fanzine fandom has been growing steadily for the last ten years at least, and already it's so big that nobody can be in touch with all of it at once (would you believe, there used to be such a breed as the omni-APAn, who was in all the APAs at once). A flood of new recruits we don't need. I'm not saying we should discourage new blood; far from it. But active recruiting isn't necessary.

One of the people in my office is a building-restorer. At the moment he's the proud possessor of a 16th century timber-framed farmhouse which he was given for virtually nothing by the farmer who owned it. It's in pieces, in storage, and he's trying to find a suitable bit of land to re-erect it. The people who moved it for him (for about 15 miles) are a three-man outfit who specialise in such jobs. They moved Alan Garner's house for him (The Old Medicine House, which Garner has renamed Toad Hall) but say they'll never do Garner another job; apparently he made himself very obnoxious during the re-erection (admittedly he was doing the paying) and architectural opinion has it that he's ruined the old building with the way he messed it about during the rebuilding.

WAHF: Sam Long, Gil Gaier and maybe one or two more whose letters have slid into oblivion in the attic. Sorry about that, but thanks anyway.

.....ooooo000000ooooo.....

I've been thinking about Darroll's letter and have decided that while at the moment I agree with his sentiments on recruitment to fandom there was a time when I wouldn't have agreed and it is possible that there could come a time when I would disagree again.

It was John Barfoot who got me into fandom in late '64; it wasn't too long after he gaffed and moved to London in 1966 that I realised I was the only person in the area pussuing what had become a fascinating but now very lonely hobby. And it was then that I began a rather frantic attempt at recruitment

to fandom which proved fruitless and was soon replaced by a desire to meet people in other spheres of interest. I took up amateur dramatics, oil painting and got engaged. Had a good time. I'm still having a good time even tho' my social life now revolves round Gannetfandom almost exclusively, but it is the social aspect of fandom which intrigues me. Should the Gannets ever break up, I might make another brief attempt at unearthing new fans, but I'd soon be looking round for other interests, and GATIA would loom large. We interrupt this broadcast to bring you a very late LoC from:-

Milton F. Stevens, 14535 Saticoy St. #105, Van Nuys, CA 91405, USA

Terry Hughes is wrong on a couple of points. There is at least one US fan club which does meet at a bar, the Little Men in Berkeley. They've been meeting at Brennan's for at least ten years. Also, there is an incredible variety of bars available in any large US city. In practice, our bars are pretty much segregated by race and by social class. Within each race/class aggregate, there are dozens of sub-categories. In South Los Angeles, there are several Cajun bars which only serve light skinned Negroes and will not serve dark skinned, kinky haired Negroes. In Van Nuys, there is one bar which caters mainly to heroin addicts. (Before I became involved with police work, I never thought about heroin addicts drinking. Some of them are virtually alcoholics in addition to being heroin addicts.) There is even one bar in Santa Monica where you can go to play darts. It's a very dangerous bar and many people have been done in by stray darts.

Out of the 550 murders in Los Angeles last year, about 100 to 125 involved barroom fights. Just about all of those were in lower class bars. Lower class boozers seem to be fiercely territorial, and they strongly object to bar patronage by people of the wrong race or class. Of course, our government tells us that we should be a raceless and classless society...but not really.

((Thankfully, we don't have that kind of problem here. We do have working class pubs, of course, some of which are still in the spit-and-sawdust era, and we also have Working Men's Clubs which are often almost the optimum in luxury, but the traditional British pub usually has a number of rooms including the public or saloon bar where workmen can drink (and play darts and dominoes), and the lounge or smoking room where you'd have to be dressed and where you could take the missus on a Saturday night. Lower pubs are becoming more "posh" and don't have a public bar.

The race problem in bars is virtually non-existent in Newcastle, largely because most of our coloured population is Pakistani and they don't drink. There's more of a problem in places like Birmingham which does have black bars but I've never seen one and don't feel qualified to say more.))

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PRINTED PAPER ONLY from Harry Bell 9 Lincoln St. GATESHEAD Tyne & Wear, UK  
Next issue will probably be GRIMTAB. This is your last issue unless you Do Something.  
.....  
Is all for now, *Harry*