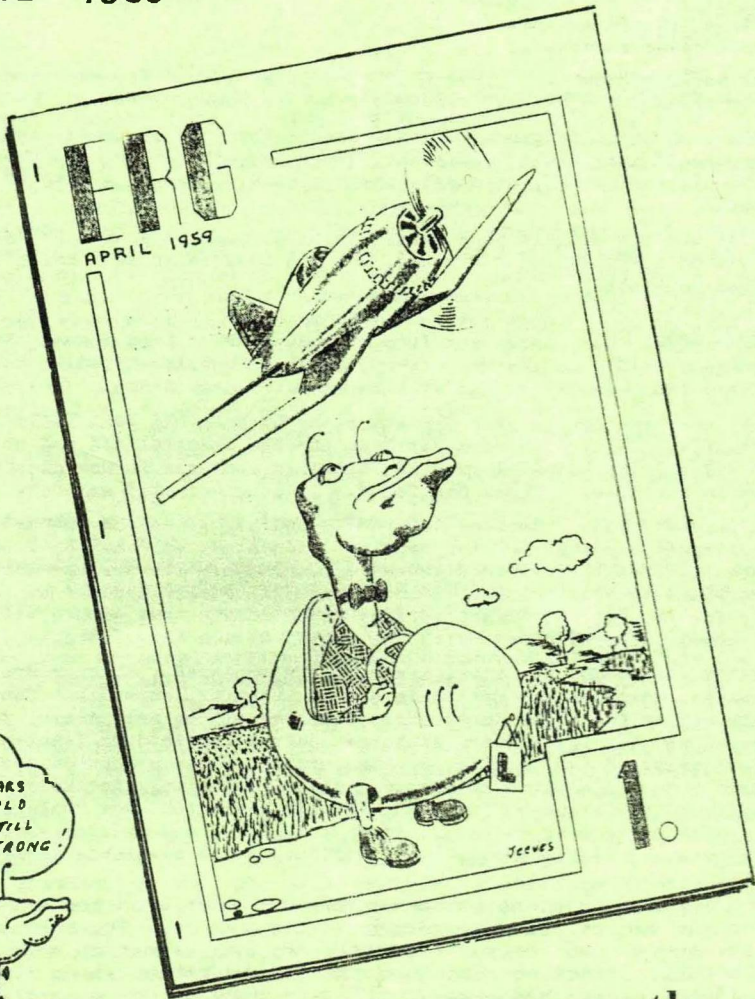


# ERG 106

APRIL 1989



**30**<sup>th.</sup>  
Anniversary

# ERG 106

ERG 106 April 1989

This 30th. Anniversary Issue comes from

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If you enjoyed this issue and would like to get the next, there are three ways in which to do it..

1. Write a LOC and enclose two second class stamps.
2. Cash subscription .. 60p or \$1.00 per issue .. and pro rata (Dollar bills please, cheques get ripped off by the banks)
3. TRADE .. NOT for fanzines, I can't handle any more of those, but for magazine SF (not Analog), Aircraft magazines other than 'sport and light aircraft types, or model aircraft mags. Drop me a line if in doubt.

A CROSS at the top of this page means that this must be your LAST ISSUE unless you DO SOMETHING. A ? means, 'are you interested as I haven't heard from you lately'

=====

## MINI-ERGITORIAL

As you can see from a close look at this issue, the Beeb is once again in for intensive surgery and this is being typed on the good old Olympia SMS. Hopefully, it will be back for next issue. (BACK FEB 89)

Life has been hectic over Christmas, my 97 year old aunt (sole living elder relative) fell, fractured her leg, and was hospitalized and operated on. We did regular hospital runs to Sheffield, but she is now discharged and back in her Home. Thank Ghu for the long run of mild weather.

On January 4th. I decided to order a new car .. so the exhaust on the Astra collapsed and cost £60 for repair. Undaunted, on Jan.5th, I ordered a new Nova 1.2 Merit and took delivery on Jan.11th. The new car goes like a dream, whips up Staxton Hill (1 in 6) and I have also managed to get it into the garage. It was tricky getting it out again, but with practice, it should become fairly simple. With the Astra, it was impossible.

THIRTY YEARS AGO, the first issue of ERG appeared. I never dreamed it would soldier on to become Britain's oldest, regular, one-editor fanzine. There are one or two older in the USA, but some of 'em only appear yearly, or have had new (or collective) editors. Only a few readers fancied the idea of an enlarged (£1) annish, so that was out. One suggested 'tapes' as a contents item. I'm not sure what was meant, but simply including the transcripts of the classic FIRST AND LAST FEM would take the whole issue .. but if you actually want tapes .. ERGtapes 1, 2 & 3 (60 minutes each of music, sounds and ERGitems plus new stuff) are still available at £2.50 ea.

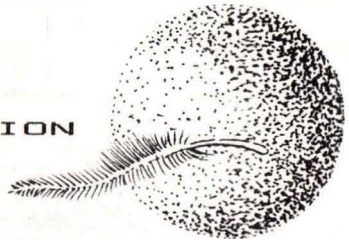
Those of you who watch TV news may have seen the shots of the IRA arms and explosives cache found at Scalbv. near Scarborough. The site is about two miles from here. and can almost be seen from our lounge window. Since we pass the spot fairly often. we're rather glad it was found. as Val has been thinking of digging up a bit of leaf mould in that area .. one careless spade. and blooey!

As noted up at the top. the Beeb is back in working order. I drove over to Pocklington. put it in dock. then collected it two weeks later. A couple of 80 mile round trips and £30. but it was worth it to have the old thing working beautifully again. Now for ERG.107

All the best. Terry

ERGITORIAL

MUTUAL ATTRACTION



I fancy the fallacy began when Galileo is supposed to have dropped a Cannonball and a conker (or some such objects of unequal weight) from the leaning Tower of Pisa, and then jumped - not off the tower, but to the erroneous conclusion that ALL objects fall at the same speed, irrespective of their masses.

Ever since then, physics text books have perpetuated the canard, occasionally making allowances for 'the effects of air friction' to allow for the easily observed fact that a cannonball can beat a feather any day of the week. Lab demos using a bit of lead shot and a feather, sealed within a vacuum tube have been used to 'prove' this, and an astronaut demonstrated that it even applied on the moon.

Codswallop! In actual fact, there are two factors which modify this entrenched position - 1. What do you mean by 'falling' (as the late Professor Joad might have said), and 2. The accuracy of measurement. Let's take 'em in turn.

1. If by 'falling' you mean 'moving towards the Earth accelerated ONLY by Earth's mass', then you are ignoring the fact that the attracted mass might affect things by trying to pull the Earth UP! The force attracting the two masses is given by the equation .....

$$\frac{M_1 \times M_2}{d^2}$$

Normally, M<sub>1</sub> (the Earth) is so much greater than that of M<sub>2</sub> that we can ignore the latter's attraction - which is where Point.2 comes in - the accuracy of measurement. Unless you have extremely delicate measuring gear, you'll never detect the difference in acceleration between a cannonball and, say, a golf ball -- especially when air resistance enters the picture.

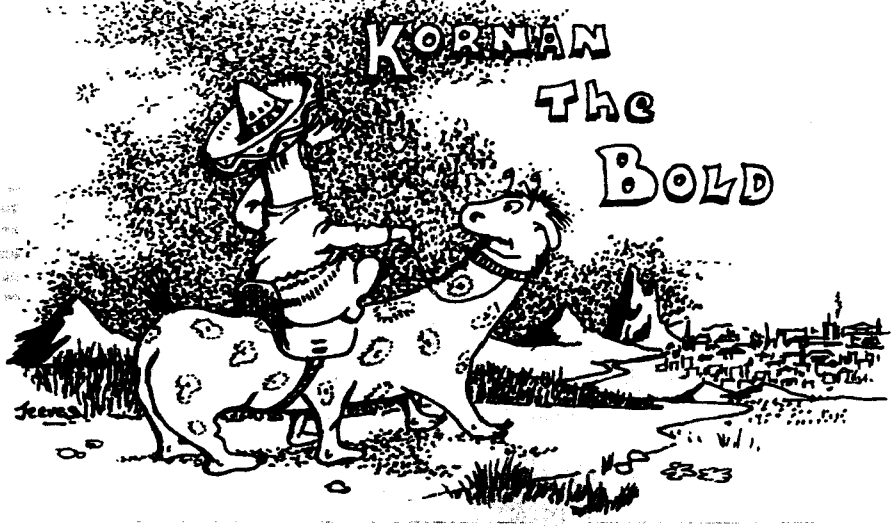
At this stage, things seem impossible to prove .. but hang on a minute. Suppose we try one of those 'thought experiments' beloved by Einstein. We take the planet Jupiter and position it a mile from Earth. Ignore earthquakes, assume both worlds are unbreakable material. Release 'em to follow gravity, and what happens? Well Earth's pull begins to attract Jupiter with an acceleration of 32.2 feet per second (just as it did the cannonball) BUT Jupiter also begins to attract Earth with a much greater force of acceleration. The combined velocity towards each other of the two planets will be MUCH greater than the combined velocity of Earth and cannonball.

On Jupiter, objects fall at around 190'/sec, a much higher speed than objects fall under Earth's pull. So if Earth is falling on Jupiter, (relativists could say, Jupiter is falling to Earth) the result is that the closure rate of around 220'/sec is much faster than for objects merely falling under Earth gravity.

Q.E.D All objects do NOT fall at the same speed irrespective of their mass. So next time someone says that they do, just drop 'em on a cannonball.

\*\*\*\*\*

REPRINT: Being EPB's 30th. Anniv. I thought one or two of you might be interested in reading this story from ERG No.1. It's dated nowadays, but should give you an idea of what appeared in fanzines of that era:



The black, moonless night of Krantor was falling as Kornan breasted the ridge and reined in his vroth to look down on the village nestling sleepily in the valley. His keen eyes strove to pierce the deepening murk, but in vain. With a swift, easy motion, he drew a scrap of cloth from the pouch at his waist and wiped his bi-focals. There was little improvement, and with a muttered oath, he urged his sleepy vroth into a steady trot down the trail to the village.

Kornan's adventurous spirit rose within him as he passed through the city gate, pausing only to allow his vroth to relieve itself against a post thoughtfully provided for that purpose. Strange noises caught his sharp ears, unfamiliar scents and smells assailed his nostrils. His eyes narrowed as he entered the mean streets. Here would be found robbers, cutpurses, thieves and worse; any one of them only too ready to make an easy thrull or two from an unsuspecting stranger. Perhaps such a situation could be turned to his advantage. The thought played around in his brain as if enjoying the vast expanse therein, then an age-old instinct took over. Kornan turned his vroth into a winding side street. Following the message his trained nostrils were sending to his brain, the barbarian guided his mount through a maze of dirty streets until in a particularly squalid section of the town, his hunter's senses saw the unmistakable signs of that which he sought. Scraps of torn parchment and crushed snish littered the filthy cobbles, the air was redolent with the unmistakable smell of blesh.

With one athletic bound, the warrior left the saddle. Then, scrambling to his feet, he strode to a nearby door. Throwing it open, he peered into the steaming haze within. His darting eyes took in the bubbling vats, the bottles of dark liquid, the tall heaps of old parchment and came to rest on the proprietor. The strange old crone looked like a dried specimen of one of her own

blesh. Hastily stubbing out her cheroot on the edge of one of the vats, she turned to the counter.

"Ho there varlet", boomed Kornan. "Thou canst give me three thrullworth of snish and a goodly blesh". The old crone hastened to serve him. Sniffing loudly, she shovelled a heap of snish into a scrap of dog-eared parchment. Daintily wiping her running nose on the back of her hand, she slapped a chunk of fried blesh on the pile, added a quick sprinkling of white powder and a dash of dark brown gar, then slid the lot across to Kornan. The warrior threw down a handful of coins, scooped up the food and turned away. As he did so, his foot slipped on a discarded morsel of blesh and he fell heavily against a thick-set, bearded ruffian who had just entered.

With an oath, the stranger drew back and also a bloodthirst knife. The shopkeeper screamed behind Kornan, "Take care O stranger, 'tis Ovak the Slayer". The barbarian paid her no heed, moreover he ignored her. He was busily engaged in parrying the flashing knife with one hand whilst drawing his own sword with the other. A difficult feat, even for a swordsman of Kornan's calibre, but at last it was done and the barbarian could fight on more even terms. His sword arm flashed in dazzling arcs whilst with his other hand, Kornan nonchalantly began to transfer bits of blesh and snish to his hungry mouth.

Ovak pressed him hard, but the wanderer had his measure. Gulping down the last of his blesh and discarding the wrapping, Kornan parried a foil en carte, feinted with a pas de seulle and executed a cunning pince nez. It was enough. Ovak's sword went sailing through the air. Kornan herded his opponent against the wall, "Now sercif, we shall see what you have to say." He paused, for Ovak was gazing in amazement at the scrap of parchment Kornan had tossed to the floor. The warrior followed his gaze, adjusted his bi-focals and saw that the acrid fumes of the gar had produced a chemical effect on the paper. A mysterious map had appeared. With Kornan, to think was to act, even if the two processes were separated by an hour or two. In this case, there was no delay and Kornan marched Ovak at sword point, out into the night.

They were still marching when dawn broke. The barbarian had insisted that Ovak take his turn carrying the heavy weapon, and at the sight of the sun, Ovak gladly handed it back and resumed his place at the front. At last they reached the oasis of Garm Pani and slumped wearily on a grassy bank. Ovak removed his boots to cool his feet in the water and Kornan called for two flagons of Buuz, which were brought by a dainty handmaiden. Much refreshed, they settled down to study the map.

Two hours later, they had still not managed to decypher the alien hireoglyphics and were about to give up in disgust when Kornan suddenly realised they had got the map upside down. No sooner had this been rectified, than both Ovak and Kornan gazed in wonderment, their eyes bulged and neither moved a muscle lest they disturb the vision before their eyes. At last the dainty handmaiden finished bathing in the oasis, donned her clothes and vanished into the Buuz tent. Kornan and Ovak bent once more to the map. Now the right way up, the message was obvious. Springing to their feet, they set off into the desert. For many minutes there was a profound silence over the oasis -- it was broken by soft, stealthy sound of bare feet on the sand. It was Ovak returning for his boots.

The days that followed were hard. Mile after mile of burning desert. Only Kornan's sense of direction saved them from dying in

the desert. He insisted on following the main road, a stratagem which allowed them to patronise the road side cafes for sustenance. At last, Ovak seized Kornan's arm and pointed. "See, the mountains of Ekberg. We near our goal." Tethering the vroths, they set of up a winding trail into the hills.

Night had fallen when they entered a rocky defile, the soft tinkling of cooling rock could be heard on every side. Kornan scooped up a handful of fragments, tasted them, then cast them away, muttering "Mint, I only like aniseed." They pressed deeper into the pass. Flowers grew everywhere in abundance. They had come to a pretty pass. It began to grow narrower and narrower until Kornan was forced to remove the padding from the shoulders of his jacket. Ovak, being narrow-minded, had less trouble. They were rounding a particularly narrow corner, when a rumbling crash behind hi caused the barbarian to leap for safety. Sword at the ready, nerves keyed to breaking point, he looked back - in time to see Ovak disentangle his boot laces and climb back on his feet.

Finally, they reached a stout, iron-bound door. Studded with spikes and bearing strange legends such as 'Bantha Bom' and beneath it, 'Bantha Bombannas', 'Yngvi is a louse' and 'No Hawkers'. Ovak struck flint to steel, started a fire and by its light was able to find an electric torch in his pouch. By its light, they examined the door. Within an hour, Kornan has fathomed its secret. He withdrew the peg which held it closed and the two adventurers entered. Hardly has their eyes become accustomed to the powerful floodlights studding the wal, than the door crashed to behind them.

Only Kornan's superhuman senses saved him then. Trained to detect the tread of a cat at fifty paces or the inaudible sound of a Scotsman saying 'When', they stood him in good stead now. When a mob of howling savages tore round the corner, it was not to find as they had expected, an unwarned, unprepared enemy, but a tall muscular barbarian, already straining every sinew in an effort to re-open the heavy door. It was useless, the lock had jammed. Ovak and Kornan turned to face insurmountable odds.

The fight was long and gory. Back to back, the two warriors hacked, parried, cut and slashed at the attacking horde. Kornan's sword was worn down to a dagger and Ovak ran out of curses. Bodies formed a solid wall around the magnificent pair. It grew so high that the leader of the savages was forced to call 'Kings' until it could be removed. Then the battle was resumed, but human flesh could only stand so much, at last it was over. Kornan hoisted the last of the attackers above his head and flicked him to deep square leg. Together, he and Ovak approached the oaken chest for which they had dared so much.

Throwing back the lid, Kornan reverently withdrew the original autographed manuscript of the epic novel 'Coran The Bar-barian'. Settling down with their backs against the chest, the two heroes began to read....

"The black moonless night of Krantor was falling as Coran breasted the ridge....."

THE END

# To Russia With Love

Those of you who would like to venture further afield for your next SF Convention or symposium might consider Soviet Russia and be interested in the following details from Boris Zavgorodny who writes to say:-

"21-22 January 1989 saw the meeting of Council of USSR SF Clubs in Moscow. The meeting discussed various current problems (also about publication of its materials). The Council decided to take a part in the following Conventions:-"

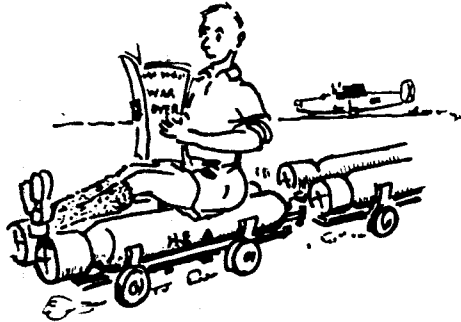
1. 'AELITA' 12-14 MAY 1989  
Write to.. USSR-620219 SVERDLOVSK, GSP-353  
ul. "8 MARTA" - 22V  
Magazine "Ural Stalker", dept. Science Fiction  
Bugrov, Vitaly Ivanovich (Ph.51-09-71)
2. THE MOSQUITO SPOT July1-31 1989  
(The Summer camp of SF aficionados)  
Write to.. USSR - 334514, KERCH  
ul. Borzenko 25-45  
Tsemenko, Andrei
3. SOCCON Sep.4-10 1989  
Write to.. USSR - 327000, NIKOLAEV  
ul. Admiral Makarov 58-24  
Kurits. Leonid Issidorovich
4. SOVIET-AMERICAN SF FANS MEETING Mid Sep. 1989  
Write to.. USSR - 252156 KIEV  
ul. Kurchatov 18- 287  
Sidiuk, Boris Vasilievich (Ph.518-89-11)
5. NOVOCON 23rd Sep.1989  
Write to USSR - 350062 KRASNODAR  
P.O. Box 933  
Petrenko, Anatoly Ivanovich  
  
or USSR -350020 Krasnodar  
ul. Dzerjinsky 11-89  
Liventsev, Alexander Vladislavovich

"First time ever organisers of these meetings would like to accommodate foreign SF fans etc. However, not having experience enough in receiving foreign guests, organisers don't know what needs to be done on bureaucracy level. Perhaps the way out would be through travel bureaux? Everybody wishing, could know details at the addresses listed above"

So there you are, why not combine a Russian holiday with a Russian SF Convention?

=====

# "So Long Salbani"



Having reached the lordly ranks of the three year men, it only remained to last out one more year for me to reach the exalted status of a tour-expired airman and thus qualify to be sent home.

It didn't work out that way. Sometime in 1945 part of the war came to an end when Germany surrendered. If you go by the publicity, the tv films and even the history books, the whole shooting match ended right there. To set the record straight, IT DIDN'T. Our 'forgotten war' continued. Bombers were still going out to attack the Japanese - and coming back shot up and with blood all over. We could fully understand the rejoicing in Europe, but not why we had been forgotten.

The BBC recently ran an excellent series on 'REACHING FOR THE SKY'. In the episode on War In The Air, it dealt at length with the European theatre, then when Germany surrendered, it gave a brief coverage to the Americans operating B-29s 'in the Far East'. No mention that the RAF were there. Indeed, we are now so forgotten that they didn't even remember to call us 'the forgotten airforce'. I have found this blind spot exists in most air-war histories of WW2 -- everything ended with Germany's surrender. They only mention the Japanese War because they can't ignore the atom bomb.

I mention this rankling memory because it has a bearing on what happened next. Naturally, we greeted the news of German's surrender with delight. Now it should only be a matter of time before the Japanese surrendered and we could all go home. Meanwhile, preparations began to uproot 356 Squadron from Salbani in the wilds of Bengal and shift it down to the Cocos Islands.

When a Squadron moves, it often does so, like Gaul, in three parts. The advance party goes ahead to prepare billets, supplies, runways, service facilities and the like. Then the main body of personnel and aircraft make the move. Finally, the 'rear party' cleans up all the odds and ends, and rejoins the Squadron. By some quirk of fate, I was chosen to join the rear party.

Packing commenced, ops were suspended and then the atom bombs were dropped on Japan. Our war was over! However, the mills of the gods - and of the RAF, grind very slowly. Once started it takes an age to stop 'em. Instead of setting off home to a heroes' welcome, our move to the Cocos was still on.

The advance party departed, the main Squadron followed in due course. Left behind was a skeleton crew, one Liberator, and me. I packed all my gear, loaded it into the Lib and the inevitable happened. It went unserviceable.

I can't remember what vital part gave up the ghost -- main spring, spare flint or a perished elastic, but whatever the cause, it took a MONTH to sort it out. During this period, my parachute had to



be recalled to for repacking. Most annoying, as I had used the pack to house a load of spare clothing etc. I had to disinter that before getting a replacement 'chute. However, in some ways, this month was pleasant. With no aircraft to service, I was on something closely resembling unpaid leave. Unpaid, because the Accounts Section was now on the Cocos Islands and my docs were down there with 'em. By dint of loud complaints and pleas of agony, I twisted a few rupees out of the Accounts section of 355 Squadron and thus survived until the day finally dawned when our Lib was ready for a 6am take-off.

We all squeezed aboard the B-24 which was already jammed solid with all our kit. My resting place was on the flight deck beneath the mid-upper turret. Engines were run up, brakes released and the heavily loaded lumber lumbered off down the runway. It just made it off the end, and we settled down for the long, first leg to Ceylon, which was later to become Sri Lanka and home to Arthur C Clarke (I got there first, Arthur!)

Eventually, we reached Ceylon and flew low over endless trees of an incredible green. We circled the aerodrome and landed at KKS. Don't look for it under that name on the map .. its real name was Karkasanturai, but KKS didn't tie your tongue in a knot. We stayed overnight at KKS, then next morning, after another long, nail-biting takeoff, we headed out over the Pacific for a tiny little group of coral islands some empty thousand miles away. It's at moments like that you begin to hope you gave the Radio Compass a good servicing and that the Navigator got straight A's right through his training.

The flight from KKS to the Cocos takes about eight hours in a Lib and during that time Nature can start calling with a very loud voice. Nowadays, when flying in a modern Jumbo 747, this poses few problems. You simply climb over 43 pairs of legs, invade the stewardesses proximity zone, shin over the meals trolley and walk half a mile to the toilet. A short thirty minute wait for some dolley bird to have a shower, home perm, manicure and put on her nail varnish, and you're into the comfort station.

Not so in a Lib. With fiendish ingenuity, the all-important 'p' tube was located just behind the two beam gunners. To get there from the flight deck meant climbing down onto the cat walk, inching along it between the assorted girderwork, then climbing through a tiny hatch, circumnavigating the ball turret, passing the beam gunners and then answering that call before their amused gaze.

Miraculously, I managed all this without any accident. It was on the return trip along the catwalk that disaster struck. Edging sidewise between two upright girders, I was shaken when they both closed in and seized me like a huge vice. It was a moment or two before I realised that they hadn't moved at all. Instead, I had caught the release lever on my 'Mae West' and triggered it. The darned thing had inflated and jammed me neatly between the girders. I had no idea how to deflate the thing, all I could do was gaze down through the gaps between the bomb doors at the Pacific Ocean some five thousand feet below.

It was at this moment, that Nature called to the Wireless Operator. He appeared at the other end of the catwalk, saw my predicament and came slowly forward to help me.



Disaster.2 raised its ugly head. His Mae West caught and triggered in just the same way. There we were stuck like a couple of corks in a two-ended bottle.

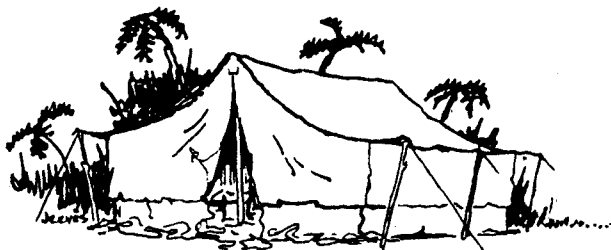
Eventually, by dint of pushing, prodding and squeezing the Mae Wests, we got 'em deflated and normal service was resumed. I settled down on the flight deck and began to hope that we didn't have to ditch, as the floatability quotient of my life jacket had now reached zero as a limit.

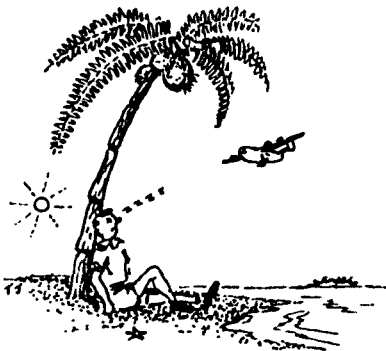
Time passed, and by great good fortune, we located the Cocos, made a couple of orbits and began our approach over the lagoon at one end of the runway. We were not heartened to see the remains of a half submerged Liberator in the water - memento to a pilot who had touched down half a mile too soon. Our skipper did a better job. He put the Lib down like a feather -- on one of those metal strip runways. It was a good landing, but the sound inside the aircraft was like a clash between half a dozen steamrollers, however it seems that was normal. The B-24 slowed, turned off onto the taxi strip and to a dispersal pen. I was safely on the Cocos.

The Cocos (or Keeling Islands) are a small group of coral islands roughly midway between Ceylon and Australia. Being just South of the Equator meant I had just crossed the line for the third time (the previous two times being when sailing round the Cape.) The self-styled King of the Cocos was a bloke called Cluny-Ross, but I never got to meet him. Our aerodrome was on West Island, a chunk of coral some five or six miles long, blinding white and boiling hot in the tropical sun and covered with umpteen palm-trees, but hapily, NO mosquitoes. However, we did have giant land crabs!!

Another hazard proved to be coconuts. The chief product of the Cocos is copra - dried coconut meat. So palmtrees were everywhere and the nuts on them were not the puny grapefruit sized bewhiskered affairs one sees in England. Oh no! Lurking in its normal habitat at the top of a lofty palmtree, the wild coconut is about twice the size of an Association football and tips the scales at some 15 pounds. NOT the sort of thing you want to head lightly into a goalmouth. Consequently, when walking around the Island, one had to keep a watch on the ground to avoid land crabs, and another heavenwards to dodge falling coconuts. Not all wartime hazards came from the enemy.

I shared a rather cramped tent with four other airmen, but the eaves' ingenuity struck again. I liberated a spare tent. We inverted this, worked it underneath ours and then pulled its walls up. The walls of the normal tent were raised high on poles, and the two tents joined together. This gave us a tent where one could walk right to the eaves without bumping one's bonce and as a bonus, the lower tent roof which now covered the floor made a perfect carpet for us to walk on.





About a hundred yards away was the beach. Lovely white sand and even a reef which not only kept out the sharks, but provided a handy diving board into a small lagoon. We even had one or two small octopi in residence, but they were more scared of us than the reverse.

Being a staging post on the route to Australia, concert parties occasionally passed through. Strangely enough, I had never been on a station where one of 'em performed. That pleasure was always somewhere else. The Cocos proved no exception. Gracie Fields came through, vanished into the Officer's Mess (they temporarily removed its sign, 'The You've Had It Inn') and was never seen by anyone of humble rank for the rest of her stay.

Life was rather idyllic in many ways. When I reported in to the Signals Section it was to find that during my long absence back at Salbani, my job had been taken over by another NCO. The war was over, everything was being wound down and nobody wanted to organise work for extra bods - they were too busy dodging work themselves. This left me with more idle time for swimming, wandering around, tea swilling in the canteen or spending long hours on the beach, alternately swimming and sunbathing with the odd nap in between. Three and a half years of tropical sun had given me a hefty tan and a skin impervious to sunburn.

No work and all day in which to do it in a tropical Paradise wasn't too hard to take -- but then I was summoned to the Orderly Room and handed a slip of paper. Was it work? Was it a posting to Japan? Was I courtmartialled? Years of undetected crime flashed before me ... Nothing so unpleasant. My REPATRIATION PAPERS HAD ARRIVED! After three and a half years overseas. I was due to go home.

Moving in the RAF is a difficult task, not just a matter of packing one's kit bag, cancelling the milk and kissing the CO goodbye. First, one must get a Clearance Chit signed by every Tom, Dick and Harry on the Station. It doesn't matter if you have never been near any of the places involved, you still have to visit Instruments, Armoury, MT, Cookhouse, Stores, Medics and so on to get someone to sign your chitty. All this is to confirm that you haven't borrowed bombs, howitzers, 200 tins of corned beef or a couple of nurses and forgotten to return them.

Finding all these places (and someone willing to sign your form) is never easy, even if it does sound like (and closely resemble) a king sized scavenger hunt. On the Cocos, it was made harder by virtue of everything being spread around the perimeter of the runway, temperatures being above the 100 mark, and no transport unless you could thumb a ride. As a result, it took me three days to collect a complete set of autographs -- and even then I cheated on one or two by signing them myself. Finally, the Clearance Chitties were all signed and the Orderly Room babus could think of no further valid reason to keep me on the Cocos ... so the journey home began to shape up ....

# Letters



ALAN BURNS 19 THE CRESCENT,  
WALLSEND, NORTH TYNESDIE NE28  
7RE

Despite your computer troubles, your issue is its usual creditable self. @> Most of it was done on my old Olympia SMS. With this issue, I'm back to the Beeb @& Re 'Carry On Jeeves', it is well known that in some rivers when the summer comes along, fish and frogs sink into the mud and hibernate until the waters return. It reminds me of an excellent story by P Schuyler

Miller in the days when Astounding was worth watching out for.

In 'The Good Old Sumertime' was about this chad who wondered why the Venusians had never developed a civilisation. He trained and armed them @> 'Civilisation ?? @& and found the reason was that in the dry season they sank into the mud and hibernated. With what we know now, it would be dry indeed! @> That was March 1940, I didn't get that issue until after the war, and had never heard of that when I found the frogs. One lives and learns. @&

GEN LAKE, 115 Markhouse Ave., LONDON E17 8AY

What you must know

about 'pop' music is that, because Tin Pan Alley ensures it changes all the time, every five years or so a new generation grows into the beginnings of musical awareness with an indoctrination of this or that type of noise as 'normal'. Every now and then there's a genuine musical breakthrough; those I can personally identify as musically meaningful are: ragtime, New Orleans jazz, New York Swing, Bop and the Beatles. Each of these has seen and will see again 'revivals' such as the late forties rad and Skiffle craze. @& Ah, but

'classical music' just keeps going -- and you can whistle most of it. @& When Wendy Carlos started producing classical music on a Moog synthesiser it was regarded as traducing the sound of real instruments. From the Moog, have come all those crappy keyboards, electronic rhythm tracks pre-recorded and thumping away without human intervention, the death of the voice as a musical instrument and hence the varying kinds of soulless noise that today passes for young people's music. @> racket is still a racket be it perpetrated on a clavichord, Moog or keyboard. @& I cannot resist saving one unkind thing to you: Terry, you talk of the ease with which you can correct errors, but I'm afraid the result belies you. I'm told there are word search programs which mean you can type errors, but the machine corrects them - as almost all yours are simply typos (rarely errors of fact) such a program would make ERG vastly more readable. @> Costly, too. Correcting errors is easy, spotting them in the first place is the tricky bit... but don't the missed ones add character? @&

PHILIP MILTNER, 2 CHILTERN VIEW RD., UXBIDGE, MIDD #68 2P

I must agree with the point where you say that nowadays it's 'to hell with an interesting story'. So many authors and script writers seem to forget they are writing to entertain. That most of us want to get away from the real world for a while and be hero in a fantasy world. On the same theme the shops nowadays seem to open for the benefit of the employees, not the customer. Gone are the days when there would be, "Sorry sir, we haven't got it, but we'll get it in the

next day or two." Now all you get is. "If it's not on the shelf, then we don't have it." @- Too true, the Electricity Board sent a letter to Val's Church (which opens three times a week and had sent them these times). "We will come to meet your meter on X-day" Naturally, not one of the open days, and not even a time given. They simply expected someone to go and open the church at 9am and sit there until their man arrived. @ On the artwork of books, why is it they run a series, then make the covers about the same? @ Well the idea is to make people notice that there are other titles allied to one they might buy. You get interested in one, and see it has accompanying stories. What gets up my nose is Analog's current art. Hideous cover figures and virtually all the interiors are heads or figure groups which tell you NOTHING of the story @

ETHEL LINDSAY, 69 BARRY RD., CARNOUSTIE, ANGUS DD7 7QG

I enjoy your snippets about life in Scarborough, but would like more of this - how about some description of life at the Writer's Circle? @ Well it is chock-a-block with book, radio and TV writers and you have to show published work to get in, but they are a very friendly crowd and really sour one on. @ Arthur Thomson is in hospital to be treated for emphysema, so if anyone wants to send 'get well cards'... @ 17 Brockham House, Brockham Drive, London SW2 1S the address @

ROGER WADDINGTON 4 Commercial St. Norton, Malton N.Yorks YO17 9ES

Re your plea to modern artists, I had noticed the tendency for faces rather than planets, but was quite ready to point out the covers as the last refuge of that Sense Of Wonder. I was pulling out covers to illustrate and had settled on the Jul.88 Analog as the best example - beautiful alien cover by Janet Aulisio and a suitably spatial inner illo for the Bill Johnson story, what did I find but a double-page spread of nothing more than a more-than-life-size eye. Point taken I can hear you say! I can remember more memorable artists and illos even from the sixties - Virgil Finlay, Gray Morrow, Dan Adkins we might have Dave Hardy now ((( His June.88 cover was garish. ))) but even he's been tempted down to Earth. When did it change, when was it decided that space wasn't worth the candle anymore? I suspect something in the way of various movements that grow and die in the greater Art world; but only an artist could tell us. (( I suspect it's part of the 'Emperor's New Clothes' syndrome where only the 'Cognoscenti' can (or are allowed to) know what is what. ))

Re electronic tags, did you see the recent furure when it was suggested they could be used to keep track of old people in homes? ((Not so daft, really. My 97 year old aunt is in one, and some of the occupants wander off the grounds unless either locked in, or given 100% supervision. Seems reasonable to me. We had ordinary tags in hospital and that seemed reasonable too. I suspect it's that Permissive/We want Freedom group who oppose such things. ))

HARRY BOND Ramsay Hall, 20 Maple St LONDON W1P 5GB

As a member of a different generation let me give my view on pop. Just as you get all kinds of fmz from rankest crudlines to superb quality stuff, do doct pop music vary. Like many another thing, it's worth thinking about before condemning an entire group. The stuff you get on Muzak tapes in stores tends to

to be nothing but the blandest crud. The more cerebral stuff -- like the more literate SF, to draw a risky analogy, - doesn't tend to be the stuff you first encounter. Endless Stock-Aitken and-waterbuffalo in supermarkets is guaranteed to turn anyone off pop music. ((I agree it isn't ALL crud, but you try to find ANY music other than pop on the radio .. you'll be lucky. Only 5% or less is worth hearing and often a piece which starts well inevitably degenerates as a voice starts groaning or shrieking. Anyway, would you listen to 20 minutes trash to get ONE minute of good stuff ?))



14

CHUCK CONNOR C/O Sildon House, Chediston Rd  
Wisnet, Nr. Halesworth, Suffolk

....Haven't read any of the SF mags in quite a while, but I have to admit my tastes run to the old 40s 50s trash with those terrible covers..usually with something huge, evil and definitely alien, just about to make off with the bint in the micro-bikini and bubble helmet, while the big, macho-machine is loading up his .44 atom-cannon prior to removing parts of the said alien. Some nice imaginative stuff in that lot, but they're not realistically correct for this day and age. Which is more important, reading a book for enjoyment or so you can carve it about looking for symbolism? Silly question, I know, but there are people out there who read for destruction as opposed to reading for pleasure. ((( Fair enough I suppose .. until they get so numerous as to convince the writers that they can only sell by pandering to such bods .. dare I mention 'Hugoes' ???)))



VING CLARKE 16 Wendover Way, Welling, Kent DA16 2BN

I'm afraid it's very difficult to go back to the old adventure-type stories. The early Niven yarns are the best recent example. The modern reader is a helluva lot more sophisticated than he was (or we were) years ago. Then it was OK for a professor to construct a rocket in his back yard yard and go zooming off to fight the invading Thangs 'cos they were incredibly evil and wanted to rule the Universe. Nowadays, the reader will want to know not only how the professor managed to assemble the 2 million parts of his rocket, but also require a run-down on Thang psychology. (((No I don't want those old yarns, they're unreadable today (though I saw 'John Beynon's' Martian tales are being re-issued yet again this month), but I would like to get back their verve, action, joie-de-vivre and story/plot content as compared with today's bland, lifeless story fragments - where the only vehemence is on the writer's pet message.))) Totally agree with you on modern art-work though. It's a shambles. Can't say much on the Indian travelogue as I am completely astounded at the extent of your memory - even if it's been assisted by diaries. (((No diaries, just the fact that the incidents I relate stuck firmly in my memory. Can't you recall many such incidents in your life, yet not think of what came before or immediately after them?)))

VING also asks for help in locating Quarto duplicating paper...."Good old quarto paper which is revered in the London area not only because of fannish associations but purely because it looks a darn sight better than A4 is being discontinued totally. Can you help at all - please...? (((No need to praise Qto to me, I stuck with it right up until ERG moved over to print. Try Millway or Chapman's of Ledbury .. unless..CAN ANYONE OUT THERE HELP ???))

GOOD Artwork If any of you have a favourite pulp cover which you would like painting in oils -- with lettering removed, I can tell you that Ted Hughes can do you a superlative job either from a colour photo, but preferably from the original. Some of the top SF writers (such as Hal Clement) have bought his work. Prices around £50, contact him at... 10 Kenmore Rd., Whitefield, Manchester M25 6ER

INFORMATION I have a heap of books on SF films, plus story indexes for many SF magazines and quite a few aircraft listings. If you have a query along any of these lines, mention your query in a LOC, and I'll try to help. No guarantees, but I just may be of use.

WANTED by the editor.. KRAZY KAT KOMIX 1, 2,3 and 6 onwards reprinted in Holland. Also Pogo comic paperback anthologies. S.F.YEARBOOK No. COSMOS SF & FM 1953/54 Nos.2,3 & 4 GALAXY NOVELS. No.29 SF DIGEST May.54 SATELLITE SF 1958/59 Vol.3/2 3/4 and 3/5 buy or trade ...

SALE Send S.A.E for lists of paperbacks, hardcovers, magazines etc.



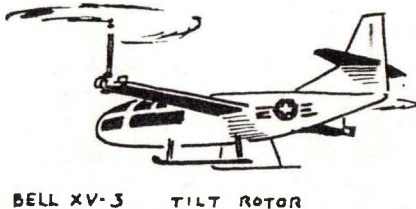
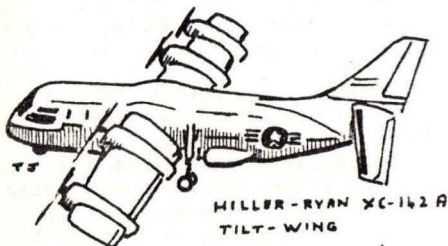
# V.T.O.L.

If we accept the early balloon ascents, Vertical Take Off and Landing is itself older than powered flight. However, once the Wright biplane arrived to bring true powered (and guided) aeronautics, the ever-growing variety of flying machines demanded long take-off or landing runs. There have been quite a few STOL (Short Take-Off and Landing) designs, but the vast majority of expensive aircraft require long and expensive runways at each end of every flight. Yes, I know flying boats didn't - but they needed calm seas or sheltered bays well cleared of all flotsam. They also had added difficulties when being serviced whilst ferrying passengers to and fro was tricky. Moreover, such sites were usually remote from large cities.

Rotating wing, autogyros and helicopters solved many VTOL problems, but are generally too slow, lacking in passenger capacity and range and are expensive to operate. The catch is that they need a power source to lift and hold them in the air whilst also propelling them forward.

The military requirement for VTOL is slightly different. Dispensing with a runway means that aircraft can operate from almost any flat surface near to the battle front thus allowing heavier payloads and shorter reaction time, plus the advantage of not depending on a highly vulnerable runway. Helicopters can and do play a good part here, but are limited in range, speed and payload. In this instalment of W&W I'd like to mention some of the many attempts to solve the problem.

One popular and oft-tried system which has many variations is a rather ghastly hybrid of aeroplane and helicopter. Machines using this system have two (or more) engines driving huge airscrews. Either the engines, or the whole wing and engine assembly can be rotated so that the airscrews give a vertical lift at take-off. Once airborne, and they are gradually rotated to a horizontal position as the machine accelerates into a normal wing-supported mode. Most of these designs worked, but suffered from the difficulties inherent in rotating wings and/or engines whilst supplying fuel piping, control lines etc through the axis of rotation. A further complication was achieving a normal landing with horizontal airscrews as they had very little ground clearance in this position. Two such machines were the Hiller-Ryan XC-142A and the Bell XV-3 but there were many others which flew or staggered



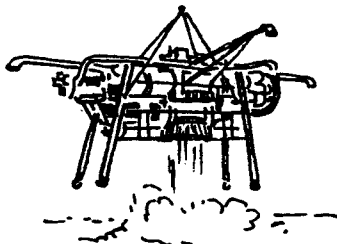
into the sky. One of these is now on order for the U.S. Marines, the Bell - Boeing V-22 'Osprey'. It has two rotatable engines driving huge airscrews. Such machines can outperform helicopters, but are still slower in speed and lacking in payload when compared with a 'normal' aeroplane. In some designs, the airscrews have been dispensed with and jet engines installed. This gives a much greater speed and solves the landing clearance problem - but still leaves the complicated fuel and control problems.



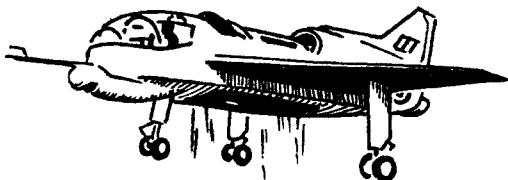
PIASECKI VZ-2P

TEST RIG

Some rather weird ideas have been tried. The Piasecki VZ-2P was a test rig which employed two airscrews operating in a ducted fan system at each end of a vaguely car-like chassis with the driver-pilot between them. I doubt that there was room (or energy) spare for any payload other than a pack of sandwiches. Probably even weirder in appearance, totally lacking in aerodynamic grace, was a test rig flanged up by Rolls Royce to test out their ideas. Two jet engines were mounted a few feet apart so that their thrusts met and were diverted downwards to provide lift. This arrangement was balanced by 'puffer' jets at the end of long pipes. This incredible contraption became airborne, but because of its uncovered metal girder frame and piping all over the place, became known as the 'Flying Bedstead'. Whilst its two engines could lift it without trouble, there was no provision for movement in any direction other than that provided by any available wind. In effect, it was almost a 'powered balloon'. Not long after this strange entry in the VTOL stakes came an entry from the Short aircraft Company, who until then had been more famous for their large flying boats such as the 'Sunderland' and its forbears. Now they had taken four small Rolls Royce engines, banked 'em together for vertical lift and added a fifth for providing horizontal propulsion. The resulting Short



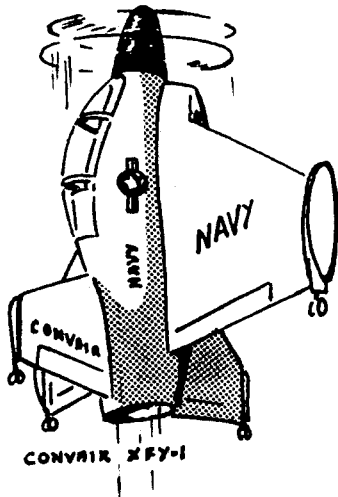
SC.1 was a stubby, delta winged aircraft which could land and take off vertically using its four jets, then power up the fifth to zoom away for reasonably high speed flight. The snag was the weight and fuel penalty incurred by the four lift jets -- totally dead weight during the normal flight mode.



SHORT SC.1

Over in the U.S.A. other unlikely methods were under investigation. Two particularly hair-raising designs came along to cause the test pilots to look closely at the small print in their contracts .. and insurance forms. Both of these aircraft were 'tail sitters'. The Convair XFY-1 stood on a cruciform tail, each fin of which carried a small castor-like wheel for moving the machine around while on the ground. It had a vaguely delta wing, and up at the sharp end were two contra-rotating airscrews. This system did away with the engine torque which would otherwise have spun the whole machine around like





Similar in concept at least as far as spending its ground time on its tail (apart from early flight trials conducted using a normal undercarriage and horizontal take off) was the Ryan X-13 'Vertijet'.

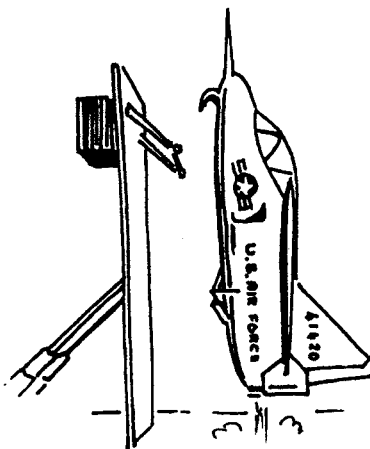
Once its flyability was certain, the undercart was replaced by a couple of metal legs and the whole affair suspended on a vertical platform by means of a large nose hook. Once again, the pilot had to lay on his back while running its jet engine up to thrust. Landing was akin to the Convair .. with the added difficulty of hooking back onto the platform.

Happily, such death traps vanished into limbo when the superb Hawker 1127 came along. This used a single vectored-thrust engine whose efflux could be changed by swivelling outlets from straight down for lift-off to horizontal for normal wing-borne flight. It had one engine, a near supersonic performance, could carry a payload plus armament and soon became the incomparable Harrier .. and achieved that almost impossible feat joining the Canberra (B-57) as a UK design to be built and operated by the American forces. Sadly, the supersonic version on the drawing board fell victim to the Labour Government's axe -- along with the other worldbeaters, the High Speed Bristol 188 and the state-of-the-art TSR-2. Concorde itself survived only by skin of the penalty clauses in the Angle-French contract -- only to be sabotaged by American anti-Concorde lobbyists ... a Group which would never have been heard of had the first supersonic airliner been built in the U.S.A.

Since then, the Harrier vectored-thrust principle has seen many other developments both in the U.S.A. and Russia. A marvellous aircraft, but it still looks strange when doing its party piece .. and even flying backwards!

a child's top. This machine actually flew! The pilot climbed up to his seat where he had to lay astronaut-like on his back. The engines were started up and had sufficient power to life the machine vertically into the air. Once at a safe (?) altitude, it was then nosed over into horizontal flight.

The really hairy part came when the pilot had to reverse the process as the aircraft had no horizontal landing ability. Instead, it had to be nosed up into a stall hung on its propellers, and then the power was eased off to allow a backwards descent to a landing. Guidance was via a rear-view mirror and radion contact with a monitor aircraft. Can you imagine the casualty rate had this been handed to the average service pilot?



RYAN X-13 'VERTIJET'

= ~ ~ =



**THE BLACK SWORD** Terry Brooks  
Orbit £2.99 This sequel to 'Magic Kingdom For Sale/Sold' sees Ben Holiday lured back to the real world, then on returning to his kingdom, it is to find it taken over by Wizard Meeks who has assumed Ben's features and throne. Cast out and unrecognised, Ben's only hope is to find his love, Willow and capture the Black Unicorn. A fantasy of witches, treachery, kobolds and magic.

**ROBOT CITY** Michael P. Kube-McDowell  
Orbit £2.99 First in a new series by different authors, but using Asimov's Laws Of Robotics. Derec awakes, memory gone, on a robot-run, mining asteroid. The place is attacked, he is captured by aliens, escapes to a robot hospital and then to

a city of free robots. The root of all his problems lies in a mysterious key, in an improbable, fast moving yarn which reads like Part.1 of a serial with Derec yet to find his identity or where the mysterious Katherine fits in.

**DREAMS OF STONE** Jonathan Wylie Corgi £2.99

Young Gemma leaves her royal heritage to travel to the South Lands in search of the old, lost magic. Along with her go traveller Arden, Innkeeper Zara and others. They face perils, adventures (and flashbacks) in this first 'Book Of The Unbalanced Earth' from the writers of the 'Servants Of Ark' trilogy.

**INTO THE OUT OF** Alan Dean Foster N.E.L. £3.50

A rift has opened between our world and the void of 'Out Of' allowing through an onslaught of the many-shaped shetani monsters. Oikeloki of the Maasai gains the aid of FBI man Josh Oak and salesgirl Harry in a journey of terror to foil the evil forces seeking to destroy everything. A 'real world', real time horror fantasy.

**SIGHT OF PROTEUS** Charles Sheffield N.E.L. £2.99

In a society where people may change their shapes to suit fashion, someone is creating illegal shapes. Bey Wolf of Form Control is called on to track down an illegal chromosome code. His trail of scientific investigation leads to a top figure in gene-shaping and an incredible plan for mankind's future.

**PROTEUS UNBOUND** Charles Sheffield N.E.L. £2.99

Errors in the shape-changing processes are killing people whilst Bey Wolf is driven to near madness by hallucinations of a 'Dancing Man'. This time, his trail leads into the pirate territory of The Kernel Ring and contact with a wildly different life-form. Take your pick, both of these ex-promag serials are top-level hardcore SF, so you can't go far wrong with either - so get both.

**2061 ODYSSEY THREE** Arthur C. Clarke Grafton £2.99

The monolith has turned Jupiter into a second sun, Lucifer...and declared Europa as 'off limits' When a hijacking causes the spaceship Universe to crash land on Europa, her sister ship 'Galaxy' busily exploring Halley's comet is diverted on a rescue mission. Intelligent life is discovered on Europa, Hal and Dave Bowman have very small parts in this bland extension of the series .. and there's a hint of an Odyssey 4 in the offing.

**DEATH ARMS** K.W.Jeter Grafton £2.99

The 'Fear' has depopulated L.A. leaving only a handful of 'rems', many living off wild pigs in the sewers. Legger arrives, is involved in a killing by SCRAP agents, meets the rems, is hunted by mutants and pursued by a 'smart' bullet.

A cyberpunk saga of blood, violence and esp powers as Legger is forced to complete a mission uncompleted by his father.

THE DEMON HAND : Greyhawk Adventures.3 Rose Estes Penguin £3.99

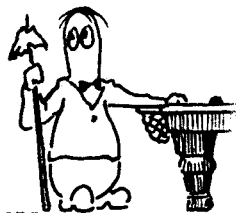
Mika (possessor of a demon's hand) and allies, Lotus Blossom, Hornsbuck, plus a pack of wolves seek to release Princess Julia from a spell which made her a wolf. They get sidetracked on a mission to regain two magic stones, a task made more hazardous by the Demon Maelfesh. Third in the series set in the magical world of Greyhawk. Lightly humorous fantasy trekking.

BENSON & HEDGES SNOOKER YEAR.5 Ed. Terry Smith Pelham Books £5.99

Being a regular player and fan of TV snooker, this 190pp Qto size pb comes like a breath of fresh air among the press of heroic fantasies. Crammed with colour photos, black and whites, quotes, a glossary of terms, rules for both snooker and billiards plus articles on drugs, snooker women, amateurs, different world venues, dossiers on the top players, results and amounts of prize money, how rankings are earned and much, much more. A wealth of dip, enjoy and come again information. It should be on every snooker fan's bedside table.

CAT MAGIC Whitley Strieber Grafton £3.50

Maywell seems a quiet town, but it hosts Brother Pierce's Cult and a 'Covenstead' headed by the witch Constance. Outcast scientist Walker works on killing creatures, then resuscitating them - thus provoking action from a powerful cat creature. Into this setting comes Amanda, a settlement of fairies and elves - and a human revival. A mix of SF, fantasy and horror.

PLASM Charles Platt Grafton £2.99

Anton Five awakens in the underground caverns of Cthton. Along with a small band of criminals he wanders the labyrinth experiencing violence cannibalism and other terrors. Running parallel are his adventures on Minion a proscribed world where sexual violence is the norm. He struggles for survival on both levels as events unwind in this follow up to Piers Anthony's novel 'Cthton'.

BROTHER AND OTHER STORIES C.D.Simak Methuen £2.95

An introduction implies that 'John D. Campbell' gave Simak his start in SF. Then come four medium length yarns of his usual high (and folksy) quality. The title story concerns a brother who went to the stars whilst staying at home. Then there's a tale of time travel, followed by a group of people trapped in a house hidden in dimensions. Lastly, 'Kindergarten' presents an alien device making gifts as a prelude to education. I much prefer Simak at this length and this is a real feast.

THE ELFIN SHIP James P Blaylock Grafton £3.99

Cheesemaker Bing trades with the elves, but when the trading post is destroyed and an elfin airship appears, he sets off to do his own trading - along with assorted companions. He meets skeletons, goblins, dwarfs and magic in a lovely, fairy-tale fantasy -- with not a Dark Lord or heroic swordsman anywhere in sight.

VENGEANCE OF ORION Ben Bova Methuen £3.99

A pantheon of time-travelling humans pose as gods. Orion is the superhuman puppet created by 'Apollo' and wakes to find himself a Greek slave. He rebels against the 'god' who killed his love, Athene and is involved in the Trojan war and the famous 'horse' as well as the fall of Jericho. A historical adventure with a science fiction slant, and second in a series of Orion.

SLAUGHTER MOUNTAIN RUN Joe Dever Beaver £2.50

A role-playing yarn set in post-nuke USA. As Cal Phoenix, Colony One's Champion you must rescue a captive from the clutches of Mad Dog Michigan's band. First come - background, rules, parameter settings, basic kit and weaponry. From here, varying scores send you zig-zagging to and fro through the labyrinth of the book (with illustrations). Great for game buffs if that's your tipples. This is second in a series of solo adventures

TWO new juveniles from Century Hutchinson under their Millenium series imprint. Both are hard-covered and priced competitively at £6.95 each.

**PROJECT PENDULUM** Robert Silverberg For Project Pendulum, identical twins Sean and Eric are shuttled to and fro between past and future, in ever larger swings as they head for Time Ultimate in 95 million years. Each swing is longer than the last by a factor of ten and we follow their adventures in a series of flashing vignettes as they oscillate further and further away from their starting era. I'd fancy it rather hard going for many youngsters.

**A DARK TRAVELLING** Roger Zelazny

This uses a parallel words theme, 14-year-old (part werewolf) James Wiley's father vanishes via the transcomp to one of the 'dea bands'. Setting a Golem to guard the base, James and his friends Barry and Becky set out on a rescue mission, using Becky's powers to travel between worlds...one of which triggers James' shape-changing before they find themselves in the middle of an uprising. I reckon this one is a much better bet as a gift for any aspiring young SF reader.

**THE MOVEMENT OF MOUNTAINS** Michael Blumlein N.E.L. £2.99

Compulsive eater, Dr. Jules Ebert and lover Jessica leave their crummy city to work on the planet Eridis where the short-lived, moronic Domers have been created for slave labour in the mines harvesting the wonder drug, Mutacillin. Jessica seeks to synthesise the drug and sympathises with the Domers - who begin to acquire intelligence via a virus. Director Guysin has his own perverted reasons for not wanting this. A good read, highly medical, plenty of sex and no sadistic all-powerful villain lurking round the corner.

**WEAPONS OF CHAOS** Robert E Vardeman N.E.L. £4.50

The complete trilogy - 'Echoes Of Chaos', 'Equations of Chaos' and 'Colors Of Chaos'. Aliens launch a chaos weapon which leaves a trail of death. Millennia later, archaeologist Halson is driven off a 'dig' when its sun goes nova. He mounts an expedition to find a suspected alien starship which might have escaped and finally, a third expedition to locate the weapon itself. Taut, excellent space-opera with excellent characters and good plot. One of the best yarns in ages -- and you get all three yarns for the price of one. BUY IT!

**THE KING OF IS: DAHUT** Poul & Karen Anderson Grafton £3.99

Volume three of the fantasy series set in ancient Rome and telling the deeds of Centurion Gratillonius. Having risen to power, become King and wed the none Gallicinae -- thwarting gods and men on the way, he is now called on to wed his own daughter, Dahut and refuses at peril of his life. I'd recommend you to read the notes and name list (at the back) to aid you in knowing about characters and places.

**NEVERYONA** Samuel R Delaney Grafton £4.50

Eponymous city of golden spires in the land of Neveryon to which flees Pryn on the back of her dragon and experiences many strange adventures and meets equally strange people along the way. A highly detailed novel, second in the four part Neveryon series set in that magic land.

**THE SEA AND THE SUMMER** George Turner Grafton £3.99

The Ice Caps have melted, sea levels have risen, and now the Long Winter approaches. An actor and a historian look back to the early days and the lives of Mrs Conway and her sons when they fall from the elite ranks of the 'Sweet' to the ghetto-living 'Swill' and the 'protection' of thug, Billy Kovacs. It is around Kovacs this story of a possible and degraded future revolves.

**THE MENSA CHALLENGE** Ken Russell & Philip Carter Futura £2.99

If, like me, you enjoy battering your head against a good puzzle, then here are 99 of 'em. Word teasers, letters, crosswords, numbers, memory tests, calculations, logic etc. and etc. Enough variety to satisfy the most demanding puzzle solver. Ideal material for whiling away a long train journey or idle moment - but be warned! a high I.Q. is needed to go with your pencil and paper .. and you could become a Mensa member -- read, struggle ... and enjoy.

THE SILVER CROWN Joel Rosenberg Grafton £3.50

Third in the series 'Guardians of the Flame' where Professor Deighton has sent his game-playing students into their game world. The land of Home is prospering under Karl's rule, but the slaver Ahrmin is seeking to stir up war whilst the elfin kingdom of Therranj is laying claim to the lands. Between the two enemies, humans elves and dragons must struggle to save their realm. The first in the series was a refreshing change, but now it tends to drag a bit.

OUT OF PHASE Piers Anthony N.E.L. \$6.95

Proton is a world of science and technology. Its alternate, Phaze is one of magic and monsters. Magician Bane exchanges his personality with that of robot Mach and is aided in Proton by alien Agape. Over in Bane's body, in Phaze, Mach teams up with shape-changing Feta who can be unicorn, girl or hummingbird. Against opposition from both worlds, they seek to regain their own bodies. A highly refreshing change from evil Dark Lords in a king-sized paperback.

THE ENIGMA SCORE Sheri S. Tepper Corgi £3.50

On the planet Jubal, only the Tripsingers can guide caravans along the route between the sentient crystal Presences. A new musical score allowing passage has been created - but it also offers proof of the crystal sentience. The BDI overlords seek to suppress this and a suspenseful conflict ensues between the overlords and Tripsinger Tasmin who has only a handful of helpers. Taut, well-written, idea-full and satisfying SF. Recommended.

COME DOWN INTO DARKNESS Clare McNally Corgi £2.99

When Doreen Addison moves her Children's Home into an isolated house in the woods, unusual happenings begin. There's a handsome stranger, a horrid 'caretaker', a dream lover and a child with an invisible playmate. There's also a weird woman in black who works her evil as children vanish and terror escalates in the usual manner before all is revealed.

THE GATE TO WOMEN'S COUNTRY Sheri S Tepper Bantam \$6.95

In the post-troubles of the 23rd Century, art and science flourish in the women's cities whilst male warriors plan great battles in their segregated barracks. When Stavia meets Chernon, he seeks to wheedle Councilwoman's secret from her in an involved tale of a strangely skewed society interlaced with a Greek tragedy and written in a way reminiscent of 'Picturesque Speech & Pattern A tour de force, but I preferred Ms. Tepper's 'ENIGMA SCORE'.

DESOLATION ROAD Ian McDonald Bantam £3.99

Wandering in the Martian desert, Dr. Alimantando finds the settlement of Desolation Road. Gradually, it grows as it collects a motley assortment of unusual people - a downed flyer, a mechanical genius, a criminal on the run, a baby-wanting grandma, and others. The style is that of an omniscient onlooker using a mixture of Bradbury's 'to hell with science' and Lafferty's off-beat humour. You'll love it or loath it, depending on your tastes.

DOWN RIVER Stephen Gallagher New English Library £10.95

Plain clothes policeman, Nick Frazier is wavering over reporting the sadistic bullying tactics of his partner, Johnny Mays, when Johnny goes missing whilst hassling eight-year old car thieves. Then begins a mad saga of revenge on all those in Johnny's little black book - and that includes an old girl-friend and his partner Nick. Not SF, but a gripping, modern-day tale of horror and violence which would make a film to rival the legendary Psycho. If you go for realistic, escalating menace, then this is for you.

THE WYRM Stephen Laws Sphere £3.50

The centuries-old gibbet in Shillingham village is to be moved - but something hideous lurks beneath it. It's 'Keeper', Frank Warwick fails to halt the move. His daughter, Christy meets writer Michael Lambton, an affair which rouses the hatred of local nutter-cum-rapist, Rifkin. Then the gibbet is removed releasing the deathless creature beneath and a saga of blood, horror and violence begins.



TIMELAPSE David Nighbert Headline £3.50

Anton Stryker, killed and now resuscitated as a synthetic 'superman', has the mission of slaying his killer Tessarian. With Hersule (a man sharing a Hellicat body), he travels in the sentient craft Nefertiti -- and stumbles on a strange world controlled by 'The Voice'. Betrayal, capture, torture and time travel beset his path in an excellent, action-packed adventure yarn -- with Anton finally finding his own incredible origin.

THE GREEN MAN Lynn Abbe Headline £2.99

The jacket tells me the old king is dead and his throne disputed. "The ancient gods of Cymry wait patiently for the time is coming when a new hero will be chosen... The blonde witch Alison Hafwvnder, last High Priestess of Avalon and her foster sister Wildecant, the dark-haired daughter of mystery whose own mystical powers lie hidden deep inside, are caught in the dangerous games of gods and men. Set in 11th Century England and with some nice illustrations.

DOOM OF THE DARKSWORD M.Weis & T.Hickman Bantam £3.50

2nd. in the Darksword trilogy:- The jacket says... "Born without magic, Jorman was denied the throne of Merlin, and for years has lived among outlaws .. now, wielding the powerful, magic-absorbing Darksword, Jorman returns to the enchanted Kingdom that once was his home, to win revenge and claim his birthright. Joined by the scholarly catalyst Saryon, the young sage Mosiah and the trickster Simkin, he confronts the shattering secrets of his past."

ROBOT CITY, 2 'SUSPICION' Mike McQuay Orbit £2.99

Second in the series continued by various authors and using Asimov's robots. Transported to the ever-growing Robot City, Amnesiac Derec and Katherine are accused of murder, but the robots refuse to divulge information. Derec seeks to discover his past, to establish their innocence and to save the city from its own programming. An on-going space 'serial' plus a short but striking art section.

INHERIT THE STARS James P Hogan Grafton £2.99

A totally human, but 50,000 year old corpse in a highly sophisticated space suit, is found on the Moon. Dr. Victor Hunt is called in to co-ordinate a massive investigation to resolve the enigma. Then other incredible discoveries are made on Ganymede including a long-dead alien race of giants, before the problem is cracked. 1st in an excellent hardcore trilogy.

ABDUCTION Jenny Randles Headline £2.99

A rather biased 'objective review' by a 'top UFO expert' on reports of abduction by aliens (who seem to have many different species). Numerous cases are quoted - it seems they can stop engines, halt time, hypnotise people and walk through walls. There's also a bibliography and 'Chronology of Cases' which includes the premier of 'Day The Earth Stood Still' and the 'Journey Into Space' radio play. If you're a believer, then here's a load of material for you.

THE WICKED AND THE WITLESS Hugh Cook Corgi £3.99

5th in the 'Chronicles Of An Age Of Darkness' .. jacket quote, "Sean Kelebes Sarazin, one day to be called Watashi, came to the city of Selzirk in search of power - to fulfil his destiny and rule the Harvest Plains. But his comfortable life as a hostage in the cool and shady city of Voice had left him ill-prepared for the life of war, intrigue and wizardry that awaited him."

DREAMS OF FLESH AND SAND W.T.Quick Orbit £3.50

Berg is tops in computer security systems, his ex-wife Calley is tops at breaking into them. When ailing Bill Norton of the giant Nakamura-Norton conglomerate becomes unhinged and seeks immortality by entering his persona into a giant computer, they are called on to try and extract him. A fast-paced and gripping cyberpunk novel of a violent, computer based society. I enjoyed this immensely - good plot, nice story and no bosom-beating.

THE FALL OF FYORLUND Roger Taylor Headline £3.99

Second in the 'Chronicles of Hawklan' Not being an S&S fan, the jacket tells me that ailing King Ngoric has imprisoned the much-loved and respected Lords, Eldric, Arinndier, Darek and Hreldar. He has suspended the ruling Council of the Geadrol and formed his own High Guard. His adviser, Evil Lord Dan-Tor is determined to destroy the peace. Healer Hawklan, holder of an Ancient Power is called on to confront Dan-Tor. A 461pp epic Fantasy for lovers of the genre.

THE KHYBER CONNECTION Simon Hawke Headline £2.99

Sixth in the Time Wars series in which one side seeks to preserve peace, the other to incite warfare and chaos. This time, the setting is India in 1897 with characters such as Winston Churchill and Gunga Din. Rambunctious Finn Delaney, Andre Cross and Lucas Priest of the Temporal Corps are once again in action against the baddies in another attempt to change history.

ETHAN OF ATHOS Lois McMaster Bujold Headline £2.99

Athos is a womanless world and homosexual Dr. Ethan Urquhart is an obstetrician in a Reproduction (in vitro) Centre. When their ova stock runs out and needs replacing, he is sent off-planet to get new stocks. A mission which puts him face to face with women and headfirst into Interstellar intrigue involving a hunt for an escaped telepath. Fast moving, highly readable space-opera.

ABOVE TOP SECRET Timothy Good Grafton £5.99

The premise is that alien spacecraft sightings are being hushed up because admitting their existence could overthrow religion, science and even Governments. To support his thesis, the author supplies reports and documents from all over the world. Sadly of 38 (people) photos, only two show unlikely UFOs. A confirmed sceptic might query why UFOs flit to and fro so pointlessly, are impervious to shells, vary in their radar response .. and above all, why they bother. However, if you're not a doubter, this hefty, 588pp volume will give you a whole load of 'facts'. The final decision is up to you.

MOON OF ICE Brad Linaweaver Grafton £3.99

It is a world where Germany won the WW.2. American editor Whittmore is about to publish a book by Goebbel's daughter Hilda in which she uses her father's diaries to expose the horrors of the Nazi regime. Naturally, the Nazis wish to prevent this. Written largely in diary form, it is a history of perversion, obsession and cruelty.

THE DISAPPEARING DWARF James P Blaylock Grafton £3.50

Sequel to 'The Elfin Ship' sees Cheesemaker Bing, the dog Ahab, Professor Wurzle and Miles the Magician set off on a treasure hunt, which also becomes a search for a missing Squire who has been whisked away by the evil dwarf Selznak. They encounter monsters, magic and goblins as well as plenty of food and ale in a light-hearted, amusing fairy-tale full of lovely characters and situations.

A DIFFICULTY WITH DWARVES Craig Shaw Gardner Headline £2.99

Verse 1 in the Ballad of Wuntvor. Remember Wizard Ebenezum, so allergic to magic, he can't stop sneezing? Now the trouble is spreading to other Wizards, so Apprentice Wuntvor is sent in search of a cure - along with a unicorn, Tap the Brownie, Snark the dragon and Hendrik with his club, Headbasher. The trek is a lovely romp beset by sadistic apprentices, a rhyming demon, seven obnoxious dwarves plus some outrageous puns and punctured cliches.



Jeeves

THE DRAGON LANCE SAGA Book.3 Thomas & DeZuniga Penguin £5.99

A slick, full-colour, quarto sized picture version of Dragon Lance Saga Bk.3 "adapted from Bk.1 of 'Dragons Of Winter Night', Volume 2 of the Dragonlance Chronicles" Sounds complicated, but here are all the old favourites. Raistlin, Tanis, Caramon etc., in 70+ excellently drawn and strikingly coloured pages bringing to life one of the Weis/Hickman fantasy adventure sagas. For 'comic' fans, much easier than reading several thousand words of narrative.

STARBLOOM Redmond Wallis Purnell £1.99

'Jip', a new mind-blowing drug is flooding Earth. 18-year-old Jon Ordway of the Planetary Narcotics Bureau finds himself captured and taken to its origin on the planet Sacron. He is briefly rescued by reporter Shalee Wong who seeks a story on the drug. They are betrayed, and find themselves involved in an interstellar plot aimed at Earth. First tale in a new, fast-moving, juvenile space-opera trilogy

AZURE BONDS Kate Novak & Jeff Grubb Penguin £3.99

Female mercenary, Alias wakes to find her arms covered with strange designs. Naturally, she sets off on a hazardous trail to seek their cause. She is accompanied by a halfling bard, a magician and a lizard man. A perilous journey beset by the pitfalls of five evil opponents. An exciting fantasy set in the 'Forgotten Worlds' series background.

