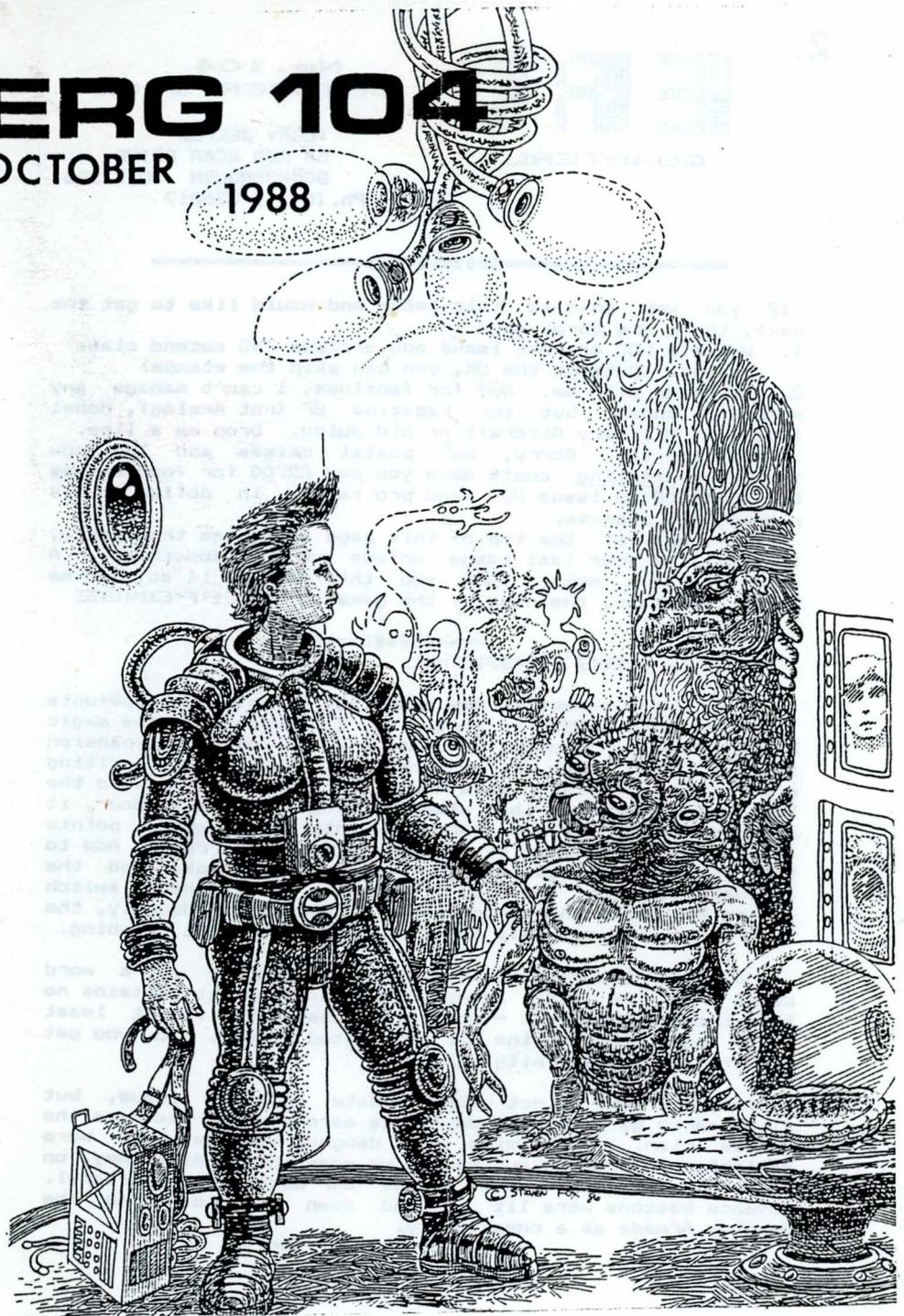


# ERG 104

OCTOBER

1988



2.



QUARTERLY

No. 104  
OCTOBER 1988

TERRY JEEVES  
56 RED SCAR DRIVE  
SCARBOROUGH YO12 5RQ  
Ph. (0723) 376817

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IF you you enjoyed this issue and would like to get the next, there are three ways :-

1. Write a LOC on this issue and enclose TWO second class stamps. (Outside the UK, you can skip the stamps)
2. By trade with me. NDT for fanzines, I can't manage any more of those, but for magazine SF (not Analog), Model Aircraft, Military Aircraft or old pulps. Drop me a line.
3. By cash sub. Sorry, but postal raises and the now increased printing costs mean you pay £2.00 for four issues UK, or \$1.00 an issue USA (and pro rata), in dollar bills please, NDT cheques.

A cross at the top of this page indicates that sadly, this will be your last issue unless you *DO* something. A question mark means "Are you interested? if so, let me know. Remember, the name of the game is **RESPONSE**

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#### MINI-ERGITORIAL

IF you were expecting new sparkling layout and typefonts from my STOP PRESS -- forget it, I've opened up the magic box and removed 'mouse', SP ROMs, and the Solidisk Expansion Board - all of which set me back £140. Reason for writing off that lolly is because the extra gubbins overloaded the Beeb with the result that after running for half an hour, it began to get uppity and change 'h' into ' at random points in the text, followed by refusal to run Stop Press. Add to this the badly organised SP instruction book, and the abysmal one for the Expansion board, it even had a switch fitted for which the purpose wasn't described. Happily, the Beeb is now its old self and runs happily without crashing.

JUST for the heck of it, I let the machine do a word count for the last issue of ERG and found it contains no less than 11,000 words - which I guesstimate is at least 2,000 more than in the old duplicated issues. So, you get more for your money with ERG.

OCTOBER 1st. is not only the date of this issue, but also marks my 66th birthday - age marches on -- as does the Jeeves' clan. Son Keith and daughter-in-law Katy were delighted to produce our second UK grandchild, Alice Amy, on July 26 (which happens to be our Wedding Anniversary). Advance beacons were lit up and down England using the Spanish Armada as a cover story.

Have a nice day, Terry



I became a film 'extra' by doing nothing! It happened like this ...

Many moons ago, Director Michael Winner decided he wanted to make the stage play, 'A CHORUS OF DISAPPROVAL' into a film - with Jeremy Irons, Prunella Scales, Lionel Jeffries, Richard Briers, Gareth (New Avengers) Hunt, Anthony Hopkins and others. He hadn't planned on 'the others' including Val and Terry Jeeves, but that's how it worked out.

Winner approached Scarborough playwright, Alan Ayckbourn for permission to turn his play into a film. This was granted, and along the way, Winner found he had been talked into filming it in Scarborough.

Advertisements for bit players and extras were placed in the labour exchange .. (oops, Ministry of Unemployment) and local papers. I duly ignored all of these as being 'mundania', but Val and her aunt Madge dutifully sent in their photographs and phone numbers. Time passed, we forgot all about it - then the phone rang. It was Martin, the personnel organiser, 'Could Val come along the following night and PLEASE bring a man - seemingly only women had applied.

Arms were duly twisted and at 6-30pm Val and I rolled up to the Bell to join about twenty other hopefuls standing around waiting for something to happen. Eventually something did. Martin appeared, handed out sheets for us to sign away eternal fame in exchange for a fiver. A mere pittance, but we hadn't expected anything, so it was sheer profit. We were then told to go and lose ourselves for an hour as they weren't ready yet.

After a gallon or so of coffee, we reconvened and milled around outside. The stars began to appear, Prunella Scales arriving in a taxi through the 'ONE WAY' signs and neatly blocking the narrow alley. Richard Briers strolled by and was duly 'snapped' by one of our band. Then came Anthony Hopkins who noticed the flustered photographer in a flummox. He kindly paused, stepped back, waited until she was ready, then gave her a pleasant smile. As I discovered later, he was extremely pleasant and approachable.

More time limped by, a cigar-smoking Michael Winner passed to and fro trailed doggedly by his dogsbody - a young man staggering beneath the weight of a huge bag loaded with scripts, a walkie talkie, pens, spare cigars and other indispensables. We moved inside the Bell whilst several sequences were shot around the pool table. Prunella Scales was

4.

perched on a stool during this, and I heard one of the crew ask her if she would like a coffee. "No, but I'd love a large brandy" she replied to his dismay.

Dusk fell, food break came and we repaired to the chuck wagon.

Brilliant arc lights lit the street, and we felt like minor celebrities as, watched by umpteen bystanders, we joined Hunt, Briers and Jeffries in scoffing hot dogs and hamburgers. It was at this point Gareth Hunt noticed one of the crew unable to squeeze through to get food, so he kindly loaded him a plate of nosh and wriggled out to pass it over.

Then it was 10-20pm and time for OUR FIRST SCENE. We were to be members of a post-theatre audience flocking round and into a door labelled STAGE -- but which in reality, led into a tiny unlit shed. Winner put us into our starting position, walked us through a couple of time, and then we did three takes. Watch out for rear views of an elderly bloke in a grey suit and a tall lady in a fun fur -- that's us. Then it was over, Winner called it a wrap, we drew our lolly and set off home. It was only later we heard how they shot further scenes the following night, using other extras -- and when the wrap was called, forgot to get 'em out of the shed when they locked up and departed. The prisoners were only discovered and released when an electrician returned an hour later for some equipment.

Our next call several days later, was for 4pm at the Opera House. This had been liberally plastered with signs advertising 'The Beggar's Opera' which was supposed to be featured in the film. As a result, we had to keep turning away oodles of holidaymakers who came trying to book seats for the show. Once again time drifted by as interior shots and a national TV plug were filmed. (I hope you saw me on it, I know Dave Wood did). Dusk finally fell and we moved outside to become a crowd of theatre goers flocking across the road as the Mayor and Mayoress of Scarborough arrived. This involved the police in stopping traffic through Scarborough's busiest street each time a shot was being made. My starting point was beside Anthony Hopkins as he waited to welcome the VIPs, so after two or three trips in and out of the theatre, I remarked to him, "This acting is dead easy". Hopkins gave me a big grin and replied, "It's a piece of cake, money for jam, anybody can do it" and we had a pleasant natter as the Mayorals were re-plugged into their limousine and re-backed up the road for another take. I even got to chat up the Mayoress (Mrs Bosomworthy, would you believe??) and this time it was a tenner in the kitty.

A week later, it was the Opera House again -- at 7-30am. whereupon we were informed they had given us the wrong time, come back in a couple of hours. Then it was more waiting, until we were ushered into the theatre, plonked in plush seats and told we were going to applaud an imaginary stage show. Cameras were set up, Michael Winner's cigar steered him in, and he began examining the crowd. Then suddenly I realised he was pointing at me. "You sir, would you come down here?" He plucked me from the back row



and placed me between two dolly birds and only four feet from the camera. We rehearsed the shot, and again several takes were made. Watch out for me smack in the middle of the screen.

We did get to see the filming of the stage production at another session, and had a heck of a job to keep from laughing as Irons did his song number from the gallows steps. Repeated takes were needed as the noose, instead of hanging gracefully behind him, persisted in looping either over his tricorn hat, or swinging round to snare his nose.

We were also filmed back stage where Val and I were shot at the top of a flight of stairs as Jeremy Irons (nowhere near as pleasant as Hopkins) had to brush past us and rush down. In another scene we had to emerge from a door to back stage and were so cramped in a tiny anteroom, that Gareth Hunt who had been entertaining us with jokes, couldn't get out early enough for his entrance. I appear just before him -- and do likewise when an embarrassed Prunella Scales flees from Jeremy Irons. This involved doing an Immelman turn past script girl, Prunella and the camera before you get a stunning view of the back of my neck.

I appear in so many scenes, I suspect the film editor will go bonkers trying to link them together without having me seeming to be in several places at once. On the other hand, I may well end up on the cutting room floor, only time will tell -- but you WILL go to see the film to find out, won't you?

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## WANTED BY THE EDITOR

### ASTOUNDING STORIES (USA)

1930..JAN, MAR, MAY, JLY, AUG, SEP, OCT, NOV, DEC.

1931..JAN, FEB, JLY, OCT, DEC.

1933..OCT, DEC.

1934..JAN, FEB.

### COSMOS SF & FANTASY MAGAZINE (USA) digest size.

1953-54 Vol.1 No.2 Vol.1 No.3 Vol.1 No.4

Doc Savage paperbacks 43,95,101,102,105-8,115 on

### GREAT SF FROM AMAZING/FANTASTIC

1965/1971 Nos. 6, 9, 10, 11, 16, 20, 21.

### GALAXY NOVELS (USA) digest No.29

THE MOST THRILLING SF EVER TOLD (USA) Nos. 10, 11, 12,14,15,16,17,19,20.

### ORIGINAL SCIENCE FICTION (U.K.) 1960..NO.12

### SATELLITE SF (USA) 1958..VOL.3 NO.2

1959.. VOL.3 NOS. 4,5 & 6.

### SCIENCE FICTION YEARBOOK (USA) 1967/71 NO.4

### SPACEWAY USA Digest 1970 VOL5 NO.1

### SF DIGEST (USA) MAY.1954

### VENTURE SF (USA) 1969 VOL.3 NO.1 (May ??)

ALSO.. Gernsback Science & Invention titles.

### HARDBACKS (OR P/B EDITIONS)

THE PULP JUNGLE Frank Gruber 1967

CHEAP THRILLS: An Informal History of the

Pulp Magazines Ron Goulart 1972

SF BY GASLIGHT Sam Moskowitz

World 1968 USA

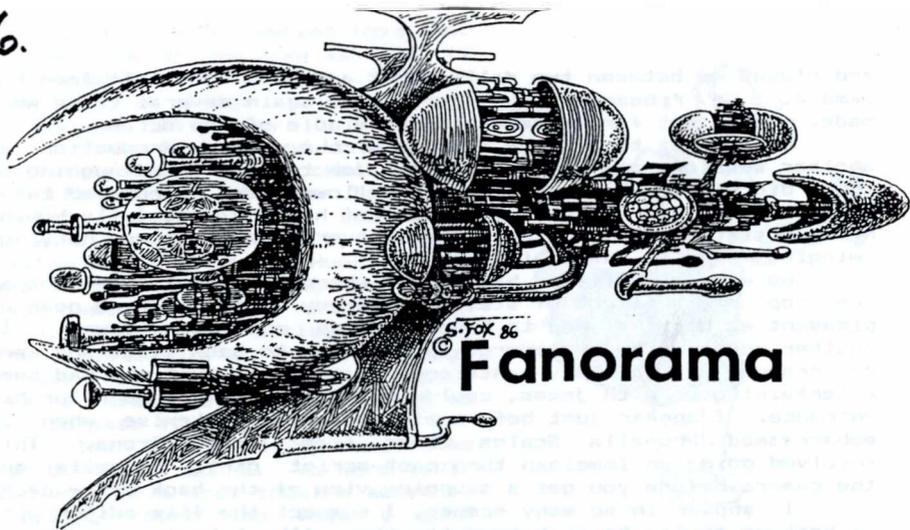
THE UNIVERSE MAKERS D.Wollheim

Harper & Row 1971USA

SEEKERS OF TOMORROW Sam Moskowitz

ANYONE CARE TO SELL OR TRADE ??

6.



BUDDING WRITERS take note of the 1988 NSF contest for stories under 7500 words - entrance fee UK \$2.00 (Payable in UK stamps), 1st prize \$25. Full details from Don Franson, 6543 Babcock Ave., N.Hollywood, CA 91606. Closing date, Dec.1988

METAPHYSICAL REVIEW comes from Bruce Gillespie, Box 5195AA, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, AUSTRALIA and is a massive 124 pages, card covers, and superlatively produced. Crammed with articles letters, one photo and one illo, it looks like a serious professional journal -- which it is, for SF. \$25 for six issues - or contributions. Well worth it.

DELINEATOR 6 is another superzine is from Alan White, 455 E.7th St.,#4 San Jacinto, CA 92383. It boasts a multi colour cover (by me), an art folio and photo (of me), plus some great art and excellent production -- fanzine reviews have cover reproductions, there are articles, criticism, verse comment, LOCs and photos. Copies for the usual, or \$5.00 cash. Highly recommended.

OUTWORLDS 57 has very good art, comment, LOCs etc. Latest ish is a collector's item having full details, questions and results of Gernsback's SF league tests. Get it for the usual or £2.50 an issue from Bill Bowers, 1874 Sunset Ave.#56, Cincinnati, OH 45238-3142. Bill is in need of a UK agent, so if anyone can help..?

LAN'S LANTERN 26 has no less than 124 well produced and illustrated pages crammed with articles, stories, verse, excellent reviews, LOCs and other goodies. Available for articles, art, or \$3.00 a copy. An utter bargain, from George Laskowski, 55 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013, USA

SCARBOROUGHCON ANYONE?? I'm wondering if any ERG readers would care for totally programless get together for drinks, natter and enjoyment of Scarborough's amenities. Date, September 1989 (repeat 1989). This is just a feeler, so if you're interested, let me know. If response warrants it, I'll sound out a few hotels.

SPACE running out for this issue, so just a sad reminder - ERG costs lolly to produce, so please respond if you'd like future issues.

Bestest, Terry

# 356 Squadron



I'm not sure of the exact date, as my memory, like the Pope, is not infallible. Nevertheless, I fancy it must have been around January of 1944 that I was posted away from Bombay's main transmitting station to join the a new Squadron in the process of being formed.

My orders told me to report to 356 Heavy Bomber Sqdn. at Piardoba up in Bengal, so I duly entrained for Calcutta at Bombay Central. From Calcutta, I transferred to a local line which got me to Karaghpur and from there I eventually reached Piardoba only to find myself mixed up with an Indian unit. 356 Squadron was actually two stops back down the line at Salbani -- which I had passed through on the way up. This misdirection was no doubt a cunning ploy to keep the Japanese from finding out that Jeeves was coming to operate against them. Happily, an Indian officer found me a billet for the night, and next day, I caught another slow train back to Salbani.

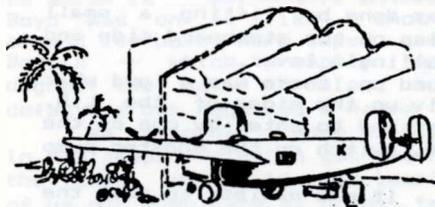
Salbani proved to be a teeming, five mud hut metropolis, whilst the aerodrome was a few miles further into the outback. It had some adobe 'bashas' (huts with thatched roofs), an open air cinema, a pair of runways, a few workshops and a set of concrete dispersal pens for the bombers. It also had a large population of snakes, termites, scorpions, giant spiders and 8" centipedes.

356 Squadron, motto 'We Bring Freedom and Assistance' (packaged in 500lb casings) shared the aerodrome with 355 Squadron, both of us operating B-24 Liberators although when I arrived, we only had four of our eventual 16.

I was put in charge of Radio Maintenance which meant I spent my first weeks crawling in and around the big bombers during the daytime, and boning up on the handbooks at night.

Boning up was essential. Our Libs had crew positions for bomber/navigator, pilot, co-pilot, wireless operator, mid-upper gunner, two beam gunners, a ball-turret gunner and a tail gunner.

Each of those stations boasted intercom points consisting of selector box, two valve amplifier and two types of headphone and mike sockets (US and RAF) plus a main amplifier on the flight deck. Then there were two remotely controlled Command frequency transmitters with a modulator unit and three receivers. A remotely controlled radio compass operable from flight deck or



navigator's desk. A large Liaison transmitter, a receiver, a power unit and a power controlled aerial. All this gear had to be checked out on the daily pre-flight inspection -- and if it failed to work, it had to be made serviceable -- QUICK!

To make matters more complicated, our workshop was totally devoid of workbenches, so my first job was to acquire some.

A quick recce into the latrine block (several large concrete capped holes in the ground) and the removal of the doors therefrom soon solved that problem. Surprisingly, no one ever enquired after the missing doors.

Gradually, we acquired more Libs and the workload grew. It was complicated by the heat. Bengal on a sunny day meant the bombers heated so much that touching the bare metal could give you a severe burn, whilst the interior temperature was off the top of the scale. A ten minute D.I. (Daily Inspection) was akin to the chain gang 'sweat box' punishment. Incidentally, even preparing to do a DI was fraught

with snags. First step was getting in the B-24s, you had a choice of three ways. One, you could crawl round the nose wheel, scramble into the bomb aimer's cubby, then along the squeeze walk and then to the flight deck. Two, if you were acrobatic, you could muscle yourself up via the rear belly escape hatch. Caution! too much weight at that end, and the whole aircraft

would tip back on its tail in a very expensive way .. a large oil drum was always inserted under the tail skid to prevent this. Finally, the preferred entrance was by opening the bomb doors. This was done by lifting a small flap on the starboard side and pulling a lever.

If the hydraulic system was topped up, there was a loud whir and the bomb doors would roll smoothly up the sides of the Lib. If the hydraulics were flat, you first had to enter by one of the other methods, power up the aircraft, switch on the booster pump and pressurise the system.

Powering up also allowed choices.. it was easiest to use the aircraft's internal system. You simply switched on the main lines, started the auxiliary power unit (a small petrol engine under the flight deck) and you were away. Life being what it is, this unit was usually out of petrol, so you had to locate some before using the machine.. An alternate power source was the ubiquitous 'trolley acc'. A monstrous trailer bearing huge lead acid accumulators (which always seemed to be flat, as no one ever re-charged 'em). Assuming it wasn't flat, one plugged this into the Lib, then started the D.I. Most tests were simple, visit each crew position and check the intercom and transmitter controls by calling up the control tower. Testing the ball turret was a bind, as you first had to open its tiny flap, scramble in and search for the foot switch. The tiny turret and my 5'11" made this a ticklish job. The biggest chore was checking the Liaison transmitter and the Radio Compass. Both

... OH, THE BOMB DOORS CONNECTED



took oodles of juice and were guaranteed to quickly flatten any power source using them if the Pratt & Whitney engines were not running.

Incidentally, that Bendix Radio Compass was a lovely job. You simply tuned in a DF station, switched to 'Compass' and the needle pointed to it. All the pilot had to do was point the aircraft the same way. Easy - until one day after a major inspection, a Lib found it was going the wrong way. The compass was pointing 180 degrees out. We checked wiring, changed the Compass, swapped the roof mounted loop aerial and offered prayers to Allah. All to no avail, it still pointed the wrong way. After much head bashing and scratching we located the fault. The mechanic who had fitted the loop after its inspection had managed to bend two locating pins so that the plug was always being replaced the wrong way round. Bent straight again, normal service was resumed.

The monsoons presented another problem. Imagine doing inspections in a teeming downpour whilst swathed in a heavy monsoon cape. Then throw in the fact that the Libs leaked like sieves. The water got in the intercom system and until all the sockets and boxes had been dried out over a fire, all you got when plugging in was a high-pitched whistle. Frying boxes was a hell of a task involving their removal, transport to workshop and heating over a brazier. Naturally, we sought other measures .. none of which worked. At this point, let me mention Flight Sergeant 'Chiefy' Boyd, a long time, pre-War career bod. Steeped in the old practices, he was striving manfully (but in vain) to master the newfangled technology. He believed in the efficacy of the old remedies - liberal use of shellac, mineral jelly and above all Bostik. We even had a song about him ...

*"Oh my name is Chiefy Boyd and I really get annoyed,  
if you don't shellac the contacts every day.  
Mineral jelly, mineral jelly,  
mineral jelly is the section's only way"*

Thuswise, we were discussing how to cope with this water problem, when just for a joke, I said, "Well there's only one way to solve it -- put Bostik on all the interphone boxes." Chiefy Boyd was on it like a shot .. "Good idea, we'll do it." So around 100 boxes were taped round the seams and daubed with Bostik -- which promptly turned rock hard. It reduced (to a degree) the water problem, but from then on, to change a defective box required a hammer and chisel!

We also had a Gung Ho Signals Officer who tore around camp in his Jeep. He often got brainstormed as to 'improvements' for the Libs, and would come tearing up to our hut to rout a couple of us out even late at night, to go and work on the aircraft. I got quite adept at vanishing into the jungle clad only in a towel whenever I saw Jeep headlights pulling up behind the hut. He had his uses though, one day, he came to me and said, "I gather you like flying" (he must have been reading my docs). "How'd you like to go on an airstest?"

I jumped at the chance, drew a parachute and harness then reported to the flight line -- where I discovered the air test involved the CO throwing his Liberator around the sky whilst doing evasive action against an attacking Harvard. It proved to be great fun, I squatted on the flight deck as we twisted and turned like an oversize fighter to avoid the Harvard. Sadly, it lasted only half an hour or so, and we duly came in to land.

"How was the radio gear, did it work OK?" asked the Signals Officer. Heck, I didn't know I was supposed to operate it all during the flight, I'd just been enjoying life. The RAF teaches

one tact and diplomacy .. "It worked fine," I replied.

Things didn't always work out so well, one aircraft caught fire from a static spark whilst fully loaded on the bomb line -- spectacular booms, bangs and live ammunition filled the air and it was only prevented from spreading to the other bombers by the prompt and brave action of a Flight Sergeant who leaped into the adjacent aircraft, started it up and taxied it away. Naturally, it was the Engineering Officer who got a medal.

On another occasion, a nose wheel collapsed on landing and the bomber veered onto the grass and worked like a giant plough .. scooping a bomb bay load full of earth.

Life had its up, downs and sideshifts, one pastime was to yank the bullets out of .5 cannon shells and use the cordite to lay a trail into any nearby ants nests. When lit, the result was spectacular -- and reduced the ant population for a while. These ants were not the tiny domestic variety, hut around half an inch long. I had often wondered why the canteen tea tasted so queer, and found out the day I walked round the back to have a look. Some twenty gallons or more were brewed at a time -- in a giant oil drum over a wood fire. This was stirred by a huge paddle, which when not in use was left against a handy tree. Sugar was added at source, by ladling in large scoopfuls .. complete with shoals of ants which infested the sugar bin. Boiled alive, they floated to the top and were then skimmed off before the tea went into the canteen!

Perhaps the strangest - and most destructive were the termites. These tiny creatures would eat any form of wood, be it tree, bush or building. Since they detested light, they would build long, tubelike mud tunnels from hive to banquet .. and keep its surface covered in mud as they munched along. One would often come across what seemed like a small bush, entirely covered in mud, kick it and see it dissolve into powder as the whole of the wood had been consumed.

Other strange fauna abounded -- Shaking out clothes before donning them was a must (I once shook out an 8" centipede). Another occasion, as I lay reading on my charpoy, I heard a scraping on the floor beside it -- that proved to be a large scorpion.

Snakes also presented a problem, one seven-footer lived in a bamboo thicket just outside the cookhouse, so you kept a weather eye open at mealtimes. Another cookhouse hazard were the local vultures which had learned to swoop down and snatch food remnants from plates as these were carried to the disposal bins. A partial solution was achieved by some characters who tied strings to the scraps. The vulture would swoop, grab, pull up then do a double loop as it reached the end of the cord.

Then there were giant beetles about an inch and a half long, these flew so slowly, rather like an overladen bomber, that you could take off a chapli (sandal to you) and use it to swipe the beetle out of the nearest window. Another breed of flying insect would come after the paraffin lamps, settle on any surface, drop off their wings and crawl away - whilst on one occasion, I heard a strange hissing noise from a small tree. Close investigation revealed THOUSANDS of caterpillars emerging from a hole in the ground and crawling up the tree. When the tree was completely covered, they stopped and silence reigned. I never did find out what they were up to.

On the domestic side, we lived about thirty to a basha, and I shared one bay with a Corporal O'Hanlon from Liverpool. We made a shared table from a large board across a charpoi sawn in half. This was covered with a piece of cotton and a line drawn down to centre. Anything straying across the line became the property of the owner of that half.

Because of the intolerable daytime heat, working hours were staggered. We had a first shift from 6 to 7-30am. An hour off for breakfast, then next shift 8-30 to 11am. We then stood down during the worst heat until the final working parade from 5pm to 7pm. However, when on ops, all timing schedules went by the board and it was work until the aircraft were bombed up and heading down the runway.

Sometimes, an op would be cancelled, then the Liberators had to be de-bombed. This was a hair-raising experience the first time you encountered it. The armaments bods would open the bomb doors, place a thin cushion on the ground, then press a bomb toggle. Down would thump a 500 pounder to be rolled out of the way ready to drop the next one. By the time the last were falling about eight feet on to the cushion, you were doing your own job with crossed fingers.

Fellow personnel also had their little idiosyncracies. We had an Anglo-Indian mechanic named Biggwithers. He stood 6' 2" so nobbdy joked about his name, we just called him 'Biggy'. He could play the harmonica like Larry Adler - which annoyed me, because he was always borrowing mine.

To pass the time, Biggy made himself a laminated bow from available wood and arrows tipped with long nails. One had to be careful when walking out as frequently one of his shafts would whistle under your nose and into a tree.



Despite his skill, nobody accepted the offer to re-enact the William Tell story. Biggy also had a theory that if you correctly judged the ticking over speed of a car engine, you could time things so it was possible to engage gear without stalling it. I sat in the station three-tonner while he set out to demonstrate it. Not once did he succeed -- except in flattening the battery.

Biggy loved to drive the three-tonner to and from the W/T section to transport us hither and yon. This was OK, except that the road had two huge concrete blocks set to make vehicles slow down as they chicaned between them. These were a challenge to Biggy. Each day, he set out to take the chicane at a faster clip. He was up near the forty mark before he clipped one of the blocks and was retired from driving.

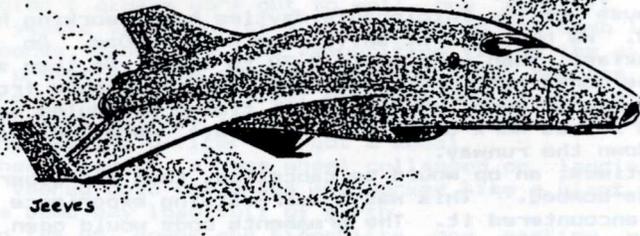
Being in the radio section, I managed to scrounge enough pieces to make myself a short wave radio on which I regularly listened to England. Lacking a dropping resistor for the valve heater chain, I used a 60W bulb. It did the trick perfectly, except for the fact that my radio looked like some weird reading lamp.

To make life easier, I ran a power line and switch extension and a headphone extension to my charpoi. With this, it was possible to lay in bed at night listening to the radio without disturbing anyone - then when I felt tired, out with the headphone, and off with the radio. It was too easy, I discovered the bearer happily listening to 'All India Radio' when I came home one day.

No doubt about it, war was hell!

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In the next gripping episode, I go on leave to Naini Tal.



ALAN SULLIVAN, 53 ECCLESTON SQ., LONDON SW1V 1PG

'SMALL MATTER', "everything a matter of probability .. that can be affected by any of our attempts to interfere with it". Gahhh! The more the scientific world pokes around and learns, the more it starts to sound like some bizarre SF plot device, only far less manageable. No doubt they'll find something to do with their new knowledge @> They have . in lasers, semiconductors and the like. Quantum theory aids their design. As for experimenter influencing experiment -- what a lovely field for psi stories. †@ I recently came across an article on 'Cyberpunk' and if it's any guide, the cyberpunk style seems to be a sort of run down 'Blade Runner' @> I think it's the last refuge of the old stream of consciousness 'New Wave' ranting. †@

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

I cannot cite a 'Bad guy's win' in SF books for Pete Smith - but how about the TV show 'Blakes's Seven' which incidentally is now being shown in America? Don Wollheim wrote to ask me if it was true the characters were all killed in the end, and I had to tell him it was true. No satisfactory explanation was ever given by the BBC, I think SF frightens them. @> My regret is that they weren't killed in episode 1 of that inept series. Blake himself was so unpleasant, no one could credit him. As for the Beeb, I suspect they believe SF is all ray guns, spaceships and (human type (cheaper)) robots. †@

HARRY BOND, 6 ELIZABETH AVE. BAGSHOT, SURREY GU19 5NX

'Due to the exigencies of editing, all the nice things I said got cut out and left me looking like a typical growler of the sort that infest fandom. Never mind though, it shows you're in control, of your lettercol. Editing letters is the job I like least because I never like taking someone's work and cutting pounds of flesh from it. @> Yours WAS a nice letter, Harry, but who wants to read me printing oodles of praise? I try to select items for further comment or interest when editing. I agree it's a shame cutting letters, but ERG does have a space limit, even more rigid in its printed format †@ The piece 'SMALL MATTER' was fascinating. First atoms were unsplitable, then protons, neutrons and now quarks. I wouldn't be surprised if there was no limit to the number of particles you can get down from the atom. @> My bet is they'll eventually find all these particles are variations of some basic energy form (a mini ball-lightning) just as steam, water, ice, frost, snow etc are all forms of H<sub>2</sub>O atoms. †@

PETE SMITH, 16 TRESTA WALK, WOKING, SURREY GU21 4XF

How did you get to appear in the Michael Winner film? I'm envious, being addicted to t'e cinema. @> They advertised for extras, Val applied, they rang her up and said "Come along -- and bring a man" .. so she took me. †@ Your adventures in the service would make a good novella even if I feel I miss some of the references. Such are the changes in our lifetimes, the war years could almost be back in the Middle Ages to many born

post-war. @> Now that is a VERY perceptive remark. I think it is probably the core of all the age-gap argument. Memories, references, and above all, the public attitude have all changed tremendously since those days. As a result, arguments flourish. Personally, I miss most of all, the dance tunes one could whistle and sing, and performers whose words could be heard clearly .. without the bang, thump thump thump of modern pop. @<

BRIAN BROWN, 11675 BEACONSFIELD, DETROIT, MI 48224

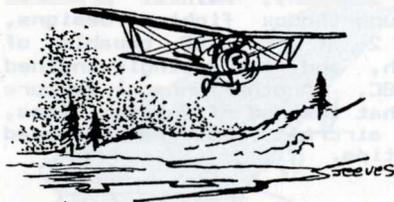
Quantum Mechanics is fascinating to read about. The two-slit is fascinating because you can fire one electron at a time through the experimental device and it will build up an interference pattern even though there's supposedly no other electron to interfere with. Change the experiment just enough to add a gate counter so you know which slit each electron went through, and suddenly the interference pattern disappears and you get a regular shot pattern. @> Not only does it point up Heisenberg's Uncertainty, but also poses the question, how does each electron 'know' it is going to be counted??@< You pass over the air-launched rocket planes of the 50s @> I mentioned 'em 4 paras from the end. @< I wonder how close to the X-15 was to the B-52's lifting capacity? @> The B-52's operational bomb load was 60,000lbs, stripped for X-15 launch it would greatly better this. The X-15's fully fuelled launch weight was 56,132lbs, so I reckon there was no problem there. @< Could they, I wonder, have stuck a bunch of JATO rockets on the X-15 and fired it into orbit? @> Sounds a fascinating idea, but it would need just as many JATO'S to de-orbit. Anyone care to comment? @<

ERIC MAYER, 279 COLLINGWOOD DR., ROCHESTER, NY 14621

I liked the planes, they're tricky, you manage to get them just right. The drawings are simple, any 'mistake' would stick out. One thing I didn't quite understand from your article - were those planes without undercarriages to actually return to the mothership and dock? @> Yes, one squadron operated entirely without undercarfts @<

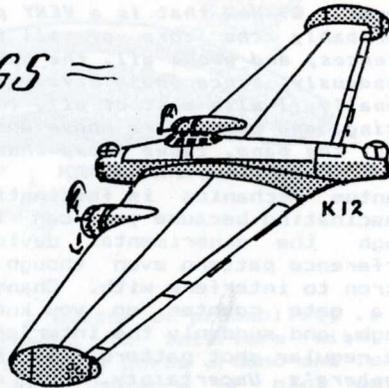
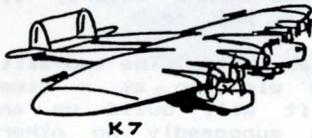
HARRY ANDRUSCHAK P.O. BOX 5309, TORRANCE, CA 90510-5309

As you may or may not know, the US Air Force has confirmed that the new B-2 'Stealth' bomber is in the form of a flying wing. The trouble with this, is the flying wing is quite unstable, unless you add a long vertical tail. But that would increase the radar cross section. So the B-2 will use an elaborate computer controlled fly-by-wire system to stay horizontal. @> ERG, first with the news, see this issue's Weird and Wonderful for a drawing of the B-2. As for fly-by-wire, many modern fighters use such systems as they would be virtually uncontrollable by ordinary pilot systems, so that shouldn't handicap the B-2. To my mind, the real question is are aircraft type bombers any use in the first place? They are slow, vulnerable, need long runways and are harder to conceal on the ground than missiles. @<



Letters continued on page 24

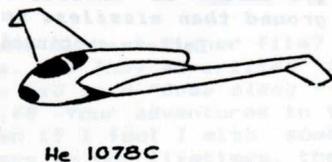
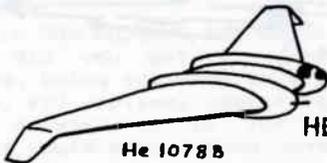
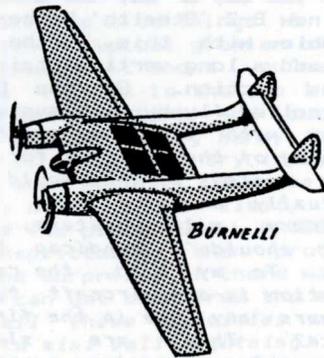
## == FLYING WINGS ==



The futuristic aircraft of fiction have often tended towards the 'flying wing' design, the history of aviation is studded with attempts to achieve this aim. Among the advantages of such designs are structural strength, low drag, and simpler construction. plus of course, the fact that if the fuselage can be dispensed with, you have that much extra weight freed for payload. The drawbacks include difficulty of stabilisation, lesser manoeuvrability and the limitation of vertical crew space dictated by wing aerofoil section. An early Armstrong Whitworth design springs to mind, and the Avro Vulcan might be an entrant, but this is really a delta wing with a normal fuselage. The Westland Pterodactyls in an earlier W&W also qualify, and there have been some other notable successes in flying wing design.

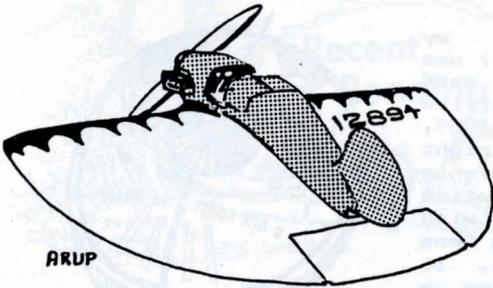
The Russians tried several near approaches, the BOK-5 tail-less single seater of 1937 had no tailplane and a trapezoidal wing. Their giant bomber of 1933, the Kalinin K7 carried 10 men and almost 20,000lb of bombs in a huge, six engine wing - but with twin booms supporting its tailplane. A configuration also used in the post-war Burnelli (Cunliffe Owen) transport!. In 1935, the smaller 2-engined Kalinin K12 was nearer the mark, having one huge wing and a small central fuselage pod.

In Germany, Heinkel produced two unorthodox fighter designs, the 2-jet P.1078B capable of 636mph, and the single-engined P.1078C. Another unusual feature was that instead of vertical fins, both aircraft featured drooped wing tips.



There was also a war-time saucer-like (builder unknown) light aircraft using a two-blade tractor propeller,

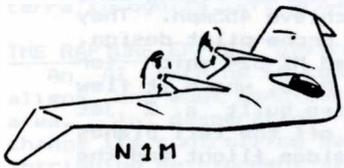
but I haven't found any other details .. except it was not unlike the Arup (derived from 'Air Up') invented by Dr. Charles Snyder who claimed it 'couldn't get in a tailspin because it had no tail'. It first flew in 1933 and had a speed range of 23 to 97mph.



ARUP

However, it was Northrop in America which made real progress with

these futuristic designs immediately after their Incorporation in 1939. The N1M was an all wing (apart from a small, pilot's nacelle) using two pusher airscrews driven by a pair of 750hp Lycoming

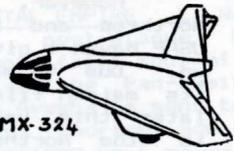


N1M



N2M

NORTHROP



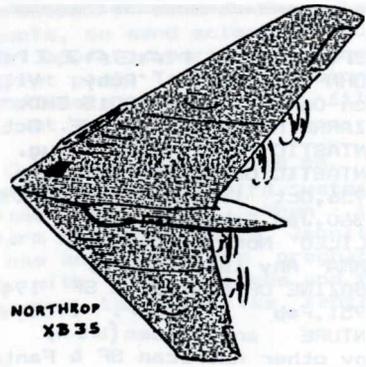
MX-324



XP-798

engines and having drooped wing tips. Its first flight came accidentally when it hit a bump during taxi trials. More powerful engines were fitted and many successful flights made. Northrop passed the details to the USAF, and this led to the XB-35 (2 prototypes and 13 evaluation machines). Four one-third scale models were built designated N9M and the first full-size XB35 long-range bomber flew in 1946.

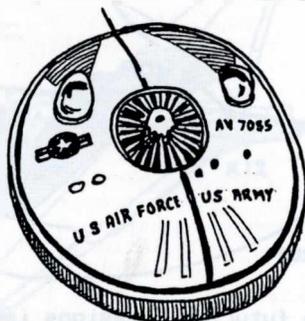
Its crew of seven sat in a centre section nacelle, there were six electrically operated gun turrets (four remotely controlled) and the aircraft was powered by four 3000hp Pratt & Whitney engines, each driving a pair of contraprops. All-up weight was 209,000lbs and span 172ft. 14 YB-35 development aircraft were ordered. Two of these were converted into YB-49s with B jet engines, and one into a YRB-49A with six jets. Sadly, a follow up order for thirty was cancelled. Next time you see 'War Of The



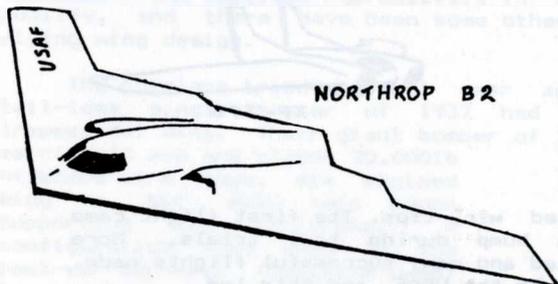
NORTHROP XB35

Worlds' watch out for one of these monsters dropping an A-bomb on the Martian force field.

Of true saucer shape (though my drawing makes it look more oval) was the Avro Model.1 Avrocar, a two seat experimental platform that first flew at Malton, Canada in December 1959, although it had been purchased outright in 1955 by the US Department of Defense and had the US Army designation VZ-9-AV. It later underwent wind tunnel tests and flight testing at Ames Laboratory, Moffett Field, in 1961. It was powered by 3 turbojets turing a centrally mounted fan to create an air cushion for take off and normal aerodynamic lift was attained in forward flight .. just how forward flight was achieved is another mystery.



In 1943, Northrop produced the N2B (XP56) flying wing fighter using two co-axial pusher screws to achieve 455mph. They also built three full size glider models of a prone-pilot design, the MXP-1001 as a prelude to the rocket-powered MX-324 which for its test flight, was towed to altitude by a P-38, where it flew for five minutes. Ever inventive, Northrup also built a 2 jet wing with strengthened leading edges to cut off the tail planes of enemy aircraft! This one crashed on its maiden flight and the design was not followed up.



However, Northrop and the USAF haven't given up. Due to make its maiden flight later this year, is the Northrop B-2. An advanced technology, 4-seat bomber of flying wing design and costing around \$240,000,000 each!!

Despite all these near-misses, designers seem fascinated by the idea, so it looks as though we may yet see a viable aircraft using this futuristic layout.

### AMERICAN MAGAZINES WANTED

by JOHN WINDER, 'Ruby Villa', 170 St. Osyth Rd., Clacton-On-Sea, ESSEX CO15 3HD. Ph. (0255) 420453

BIZARRE MYSTERY MAGAZINE Oct & Nov 1965, Jan, 1966

FANTASTIC 1957, July & Aug. 1975, Aug.

FANTASTIC UNIVERSE 1953, Jun. 1954, Oct 1955, Oct

1956, Oct 1958, May & Aug 1959, Mar, Jul, Oct, Nov, Dec.

1960, Jan, Feb, Mar.

GALILEO Nos. 1, 3, & 16

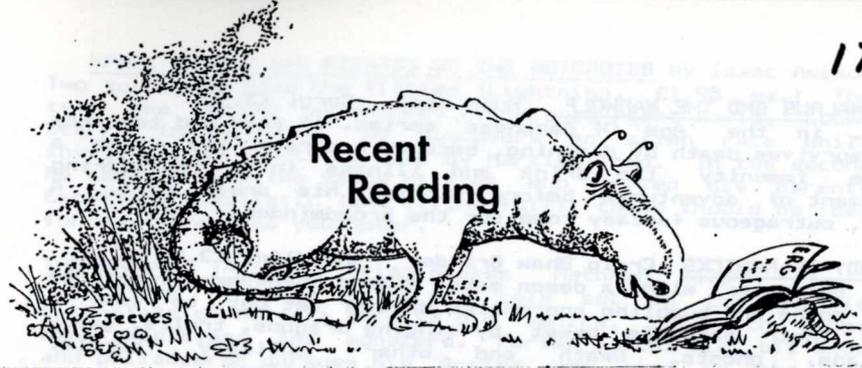
GAMMA Any issues (U.S.A)

MAGAZINE OF FANTASY & SF 1949, Fall 1950, Winter/Spring

1951, Feb 1952, Apr. 1963, Nov

VENTURE any issues (U.S.A)

Many other American SF & Fantasy. magazines required



TIMEFALL James Kahn Grafton £3.50

Lon brings Joshua Green a jewelled skull, 70 million years old. It sets Joshua, his wife Di, and Lon off to seek a city lost in warped time. Joshua meets android Jasmine who tells him he must save the world from a terrible doom. A 'lost civilisation' yarn of the early SF style before Earth had no more terra incognita left around.

THE RAPTURE EFFECT Jeffrey A Carver ORBIT £3.95

An AI machine is conducting an interstellar war with unknown aliens, and must conclude it before Earth's colonists reach the area. In desperation it calls on an ill-mixed design team to change its controlling parameters and so allow it free rein. Intriguing development with some fascinating characters.

THE CRYSTAL EMPIRE L. Neil Smith Grafton £3.95

In a post-plague Europe, Sedrich creates proscribed inventions, falls foul of the Cult and loses a hand. Years later, as the Pan-Semitic ruler is at war with the Arabs, Princess Ayesha is sent to America as a bribe bride, where she encounters Sedrich, now a revered member of an Indian tribe with his inventions well along. A strange, fragmented tale, but full of interest.

DANCER'S LUCK Ann Maxwell Orbit £2.50

Sequel to FIREDANCER sees firedancer Rheba (who carries a multi function snake in her hair) and aide Kirtn seeking to return a shipload of slaves to their home worlds. This time they take home Damien 'The Luck' in a journey beset by fascinating incidents.

ENDGAME ENIGMA James P Hogan Century Hutchinson £6.95

The Americans are suspicious of weaponry aboard the giant Russian satellite holding 12,000 people, so send scientist Paula Blake and Agent McCain to retrieve a spy's report. Captured, they become pawns in a fantastic Soviet plot. Taut, near-future, topnotch SF that could even become the basis for an 007 film. Definitely one for my 'Recommended' list.

UNQUENCHABLE FIRE Rachel Pollack Century Hutchinson £5.95

Set in the world of today with the addition of weird customs, superstitions, occupations and curses that work. When the All-Powerful sends Teller Lightstorm to Poughkeepsie. Jennifer sleeps through his performance and has an immaculate pregnancy thus finding herself in conflict with both friends and the strange forces of her world. A humorous, Lafferty-like fantasy with a light touch.

THE WALRUS AND THE WARWOLF Hugh Cook Corgi £3.95

4th. in the 'Age Of Darkness' series. 16 year old tearaway Drake survives death by drowning, becomes a pirate and gains a strange immunity to drink and illness in a bewildering assortment of adventures before winning his dream girl. A lovely, outrageous fantasy romp for the broadminded.

A MALADY OF MAGICKS Craig Shaw Grinder Headline £2.99

An encounter with a demon makes Wizard Ebenesum allergic to magic, so he and bumbling apprentice Wuntvor set out to seek a cure. Their path is beset by singing dragons, trolls, geedy magicians, ghosts, Death and other unlikely perils. Pratchett-like humour in an entertaining fun fantasy.

PAVANE Keith Roberts Penguin Classic £3.95

Re-issue of the superlative collection of stories set in an alternate timeline where the Armada and England under the Catholic Church is an agrarian land with little technology, steam transport, semaphore signals and in fear of the Inquisition. A strangely twisted yet credible kingdom, ideally suited as a shelfmate for the author's 'Kiteworld'

THE EYE OF THE QUEEN Phillip Mann Grafton £2.95

2076 AD, Earth's FTL exploration is hampered by 'Species X'. Then a Pe-Ellian ship arrives to take Marius Thorndyke and aide, Tomas back to Pe-Ellia. They are gradually introduced to the strange facets of the Pe-Ellians and by hints of 'The Mantissa'. A refreshingly different change from endless conflicts, fascinating and hard to put down.

ARC OF THE DREAM A.A. Attanasio Grafton £3.95

A tiny alien from the fifth dimension arrives to contact dolphins and whales but is picked up by young Donny. Endangered by being moved, the alien confers superhuman powers on several humans so they may work together to replace it by the sea - a task complicated by its growing schizophrenia.

MASTER OF PAXWAX Phillip Mann Grafton £3.50

The Galaxy is ruled by the powerful and genocidal Eleven Families one of which is scheming against the Paxwax Dynasty. From their refuge world of Sanctum, the endangered species plan their fight for survival by using as their pawn Paul Paxwax; whose life is further complicated by his love affair. Imaginative and intriguing with fascinating aliens.

CLASSIC SCIENCE FICTION Ed. I Asimov Robinson £4.95

Ten short novels from the 30s with such gems as Lovecraft's 'Shadow Out Of Time', Bates' 'Alas All Thinking' and my favourite of that era, 'Seeker Of Tomorrow' by E.F. Russell and Leslie Johnson. There's De Camp's, 'Divide And Rule', Weinbaum's 'Dawn Of Flame', Gold's 'Matter Of Form', and even Campbell's 'Who Goes There?'. All these and other cover-copping yarns in a mammoth 700 page volume which is not only a gift at the price, but should be on every SF lover's nostalgia shelf.

FANTASY ALL-TIME GREATS Eds. Silverberg and Greenberg is another massive 430 pager (22 yarns) from Robinson at £4.95. Poe, Bierce, Lovecraft, De Camp, Kuttner, Bradbury, Sturgeon, Bloch and other SF stars offer tales such as 'Gonna Roll The Bones', 'The Golem', 'Snulbug', 'The Words Of Guru', 'A Gnome There Was'. If your tipple is Fantasy, then don't miss this one -- and if you'r impartial - GET BOTH

SPACE RANGER and PIRATES OF THE ASTEROIDS by Isaac Asimov. Two juveniles from the fifties (Lightning, £1.95 ea.) They tell the daring adventures of Science Agent David, 'Lucky' Starr. In the first, he discovers an alien race whilst investigating deaths caused by Martian food. In the second, he tangles with the space pirates who killed his parents. Exciting, simplistic (and cliché-full), these should be ideal for any SF-minded youngster.

THE MALACIA TAPESTRY Brian Aldiss Methuen £3.50  
Re-issue of this colourful tale set in the ossified city-state of Malacia akin to old Venice, but with winged men, magicians and monsters. Perian de Chirolo, bit actor and philanderer pursues his Armida and aids in the new, society-changing photo plays. Treat yourself if you missed it before.

THE DELUGE DRIVERS Alan Dean Foster N.E.L. £2.95  
3rd. in the 'Icerigger' trilogy. Ethan Fortune is first railroaded into staying on the ice-planet Tran-ky-ky, then on a hazardous mission to check out a mysterious hot area -- which proves to be a large scale genocidal tampering with the climate. Nicely plotted and full of incident.

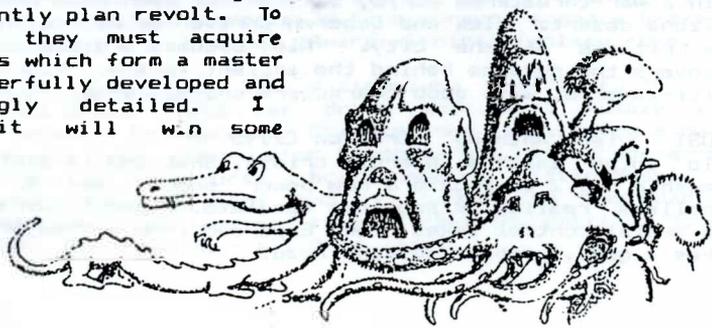
TWO more 300+pp anthologies from Robinson priced at £2.95 ea  
Isaac Asimov presents SUPERMEN has 12 tales of such characters as a telepath, warrior, redeemer, a man with a psionic arm and other gifted beings including vanVogt's tale of aliens resuscitating an evolved human.  
Isaac Asimov presents INTERGALACTIC EMPIRES gives you 5 yarns covering their rise, fall and occasional hiccups. Both volumes are crammed with 'name' authors and are excellent value at the price. Ideal items for the true SF buff and collector.

DESIGN AND DESIGNING Burden, Morrison & Twyford Longman £6.95

Intended as a student's aid, Part.1 covers the history, advertising, awards, exhibitions, cultural impact and the reasoning behind designs and their development. Part.2 deals with the actual task of designing with ideas, examples, projects, graphs, methods etc. Quarto sized and JAMMED with photos and colour artwork, thi is a must, not just for students, but for any artist. It simply makes you want to put pencil to paper and have a go.

LORDS OF THE MIDDLE DARK Jack Chalker N.E.L.£2.95

Book 1 of a series in which the Master (Computer) System rules the Galaxy keeping humanity subservient. Indian Hawk and a Chinese girl independently plan revolt. To succeed, they must acquire five rings which form a master key. Powerfully developed and convincingly detailed. I reckon it will win some Awards.



HAUNTED James Herbert Hodder & Stoughton £10.95

Psychic investigator (and debunker), David Ash comes to Edbrook, the Mariell house, to unearth the truth behind a haunting. Instead, he meets inexplicable events and an escalating menace to his life and sanity. Even the Mariells prove to be not what they seem, his own psi powers emerge, and the tale builds to a horrific climax. Once started, you'll not put it down.

WILDWOOD John Farris N.E.1. £3.95

Strange creatures live in the isolated backwoods. Whit Bowers, his son Terry, old war-buddy Arn Rutledge and his wife enter the area - They encounter winged humans, strange creatures, a train from nowhere, Nikola Tesla and a timebound enclave in a timebound enclave avoided even by aircraft. Violence and terror in an unusual setting.

iINTERZONE The 2nd, Anthology N.E.L. £2.95

15 tales culled from the magazine, not so much SF as fantasies of experimental writing - mainly on the interaction of people and society (usually violently decadent). A wide range of styles, but too many plotless fragments. Not my cup of tea, but if you like Interzone, here it is.

EYE Frank Herbert N.E.L. £3.95

A stunning collection of stories by the master including the superb 'Dragon In The Sea', aliens in a mortuary, star travel, colonisation, possession, an excerpt from a Dune Guidebook and many others. A foreword talks about filming Dune and there are some excellent wash drawing by Jim Burns. Don't miss it!

HIGHWAY HOLOCAUST Joe Dever Beaver £2.50

A multiple choice, role-playing book, where aided by random numbers, you must guide your group across the USA overcoming surviving sundry threats, violence and battles. First in a new series aimed I suspect, at teenagers.

THE TRAIL OF CTHULHU August Derleth Grafton £2.95

Based on the Lovecraft Mythos of Elder Gods, these five stories cover the fight by Dr. Shrewsbury, Andrew Phelan and others against the monstrous Cthulhu and its minions. Rich Gothic horror, and, dare I say it? even better than HPL's yarns.

THE MASK OF CTHULHU August Derleth Grafton £2.50

A further six stories, mainly from Weird Tales, using Lovecraftian settings to give depth and authenticity to their horror.

WHORES OF BABYLON Ian Watson Paladin £3.95

In a war-threatened world, Babylon has been re-created in the Arizona desert. Alex and Deborah arrive and become involved with the rituals of the city. Alex becomes a slave and gradually uncovers the purpose behind the ancient facade. Fascinating and multi-layered, with good characters and suspense.

GHOST Piers Anthony Grafton £2.95

To solve Earth's energy crisis, Shetland is sent out on the timeship Meg.2 to locate a new power source and a chess game parallels reality as problems escalate. A ghost joins the action and mental control takes over. Expanded from a 1966 IF yarn, this makes a good, problem-solving read.

SPELLS Ed. Asimov, Greenberg & Waugh Robinson £3.50

A round dozen tales of spells and magic - a killing society, an evil stone, a Fafhrd tale, an 'invisible' boy, a ghostly warrior, revenger, a pun story, betting and beating the Devil and other highly readable yarns making a total of 350, large-size pages.

KINSMAN Ben Bova Methuen £11.95

The jacket says 'first published in Great Britain 1988 by Methuen' (what about Futura and Sidgwick & Jackson editions in 1980?). Junior Air Force officer Kinsman has his heart set on space. This is the story of his problems, promotion and perils - sited in the near future, it could easily be the tale of a real character. Excellent, compelling hardcore, one of Bova's best. Recommended to all lovers of real SF

CITY Clifford D Simak Methuen £3.50

The collected 'Astounding' tales of the Webster family, Jenkins the faithful robot. The title yarn sees man desert Earth, then to the planets, a new philosophy, a Jovian paradise, an aid to ant evolution and others .. a 1982 re-issue with 'Epilog' added. Oldies, but good as ever.

OFF-PLANET Clifford D Simak Methuen £10.95

Seven tales from the magazines (1944-1972), with off-planet locales. Among them you'll meet the creators of the Solar System, a world of addictive music trees and other strange flora, another planet where knowledge is stolen, a composite alien monster, and an alien trading contract. All highly readable, real stories. (i.e. not 'fragments') told in Simak's warm, credible, human style. Excellent stuff

SAM McCADE William C Dietz New English Library £2.99

Ex-Space Navy bounty hunter McCade is coerced into tracking down the defecting Bridger - with the added snag that someone else wants him killed. The trail leads to deep space, pirates aliens and numerous clashes before all is resolved in this fast paced space opera. (First of a series??)

THE MAN WHO PULLED DOWN THE SKY John Barnes N.E.L. £2.99

The Orbital Republics oppress Earth and are moving in on the Confederated of Outer Colonies. Saul Pareto is sent Earthside to foment rebellion. His mission brings battle, atrocity and heartbreak but makes for a taut novel as well as showing violence can get out of hand.

HOMUNCULUS James P Blaylock Grafton £3.50

England 1870, St. Ives is building a spaceship aided by Keeble, maker of perpetual motion devices. There's a mysterious hunchback, a burglar who steals plans for a sausage machine, and a skeleton-piloted airship hovering over London, bearing the homunculus, whilst the Trismegistus Club suspect magnate Drake. Stir well and you have an unusual (Award-winning) fantasy romp.

THE MOON GODDESS AND THE SON Donald Kingsbury Grafton £3.95

Space-besotted Diana seeks her dream astronaut, Russia is taking over space, Entrepreneur Charlie Bond is building a new space system - and hires gamesmaster Limon Barnes to produce a game to end war. He constructs a brain-washing 'Little Russia', but then a terrorist triggers WW3. Ignore the improbable characters and historical padding- this is rattling rattling good 'real world' SF Recommended - all 500+ pages.

WISE WOMAN R.A.Forde New English Library £12.95

Whilst a child, Keri sees her mother raped by a barbarian warrior. Fleeing to sanctuary with King Gradlon whose regent, Tiernan has plans of his own., Friend of the King's daughter, Keri grows up in an atmosphere of barbarism, decadence and intrigue. A non-SF historical (woman's) romance.

ANCIENT LIGHT Mary Gentle Legend £3.99

700+pp sequel to 'The Golden Witchbreed'. Lynn Christie returns to Orth with Agent Molly Rachel of Pan Oceanic Developers who seek the lost technologies of the long-gone Witchbreed. The current generation of Ortheans are bickering, wary and un-cooperative, so Lynn must walk a tightrope between aid and exploitation.

THE GUNSLINGER Stephen King £6.99

Volume 1 of 'The Dark Tower', a collection of five magazine stories in which the mysterious last gunman seeks the enigmatic Man in Black across a blazing desert in a trail of unusual characters, violence and sadism. Once reached, his goal opens the way to another.

TOOL OF THE TRADE Joe Haldeman Orbit £3.50

Defecting Russian spy, Nick Foley is hunted by both KGB and CIA because of his power to command people. But how do you catch someone who can convince you he's someone else, and to go and kill yourself? Taut, convincing, 'real world' SF and a rattling good read.

LIEGE KILLER Christopher Hinz METHUEN ££>%0

In a post-nuclear future, humanity lives peacefully in orbital colonies - until two 'corpsicles' are revived. They are deadly Paratwa killers, one mind controlling two bodies. They are the tools of Codrus, another Paratwa ruling genius who seeks to subdue mankind. To track down the monsters is a Herculean task. Sheer sustained tension and mystery make this un-put-downable. Excellent!

SEVENTH SON Orson Scott Card Legend £10.95

In an alternate, 19th. Century America, hexings, dowsing, witchings and the like really work. Alvin, seventh son of s seventh son also has powers but is continually menaced by water and other dark forces. He also has a 'Shining Man' mentor and trouble from the local pastor. First in the trilogy of Alvin Maker, this covers his boyhood in a beautifully painted word picture of early American life.

MADONNA E.Kelleher & H.Vidal Star £2.99

'The Woman' is the resuscitated incarnation of evil, Richard Bloch falls beneath her seductive spell as does his girl Annie and sundry others - While priest struggles vainly to halt the saga of sexuality, horror and death

A PLACE DARK AND SECRET Philip Finch Star £3.50

15 year old Sarah refuses to believe her father is dead, then half-mad Sherk, kidnaps her and strives to brainwash her into becoming his own lost daughter, Margaret - a plan which involves terror and murder as it escalates to a climax. I reckon this would make a film to outdo Psycho.

THE ZENDA VENDETTA Simon Hawke Headline £2.99

4th. in the Time Wars series in which two opposite-minded bands of time travellers vie to decide the fate of the world. This time the scene is 19th Century Ruritania, it involves the famous 'prisoner' contemporary characters and a deadly, seductive agent 'The Falcon' in the usual round of plot and counterstroke to decide great issues.

LIGHT YEARS Gary Kinder Penguin £3.50

In 1975, Eduard Meier claimed to have encountered travellers from the Pleiades (4 hours travel) and produced a series of the usual (foggy) photos of their UFOs (None of the inhabitants). This book tells the 'true' story. The photos haven't been 'processed', but having taken such pics myself, I know that means little. However, if you're a saucer nut, then this will give you another powerful argument.

LOVE AND WAR Ed. M.Weis & T.Mickan Penguin £3.95

Dragon Lance Tales.3 A further ten stories of the land of Krynn. Various authors contribute a wide range of sword and sorcery fantasies using the background created by the editors. Some superb artwork - uncredited, but I fancy it's Steve Fabian. I find this collection format much better than one long tedious saga.

EARTHWORKS Brian Aldiss Methuen £2.95

In an overpopulated world of concentration camps and inhumanity, Knowie Moland becomes captain of an 80,000 ton freighter which encounters a dead man in an anti-grav unit. In a fit of madness, he wrecks his ship and encounters an Underground movement. I'm not sure what Aldiss had in mind, but you may sort it out.

DERVISH DAUGHTER Sheri S Tepper Corgi 2.75

Jimian Footseer, Shapechanger Peter, Chance and Wizard Queynt find many deaths caused by dream crystals. After delivering the town of Bloome from an insatiable weaving loom, they tangle with the dealers in death crystals. Intriguing, amusing, excellent characters and situations in an enjoyable fantasy and a welcome change from heroic sagas.

SIGN OF CHAOS Roger Zelazny Sphere £2.99

Continuation of the Amber series. Merle Corey, son of Prince Corwin adventures in the lands of Shadow and Amber amidst Alice In Wonderland fauna and other strange characters. Amber addicts will be delighted.

SWORD & SORCERESS.2 Ed. M.Z.Bradley Headline £2.99

A second collection of heroic fantasy yarns with something for everyone and ideal for those who prefer the compact short story to drawn-out sagas.

AIKI John Gilbert Grafton£2.95

New York is a pit of violence and Government rules by drugs and circuses. Teenager Biabi seeks revenge for a dead brother and meets martial arts master Capitan as the peace movement Aiki opposes the State.

THE DRAGON IN THE SWORD Michael Moorcock Grafton £2.95

John Daker, Eternal Champion, trapped in a dimensionless plane outside of time, seeks the beautiful Ermizhad and the key of escape from the wheel of infinite incarnations. He voyages on a dark ship with a blind helmsman, through the slave stalls of the Cannibal Ghost Women to a confrontation with Evil.

SOCCER: Coaching Tips From THE STARS David Scott Beaver £1.99

Diagrams, strategic moves, cartoons, coaching, becoming a pro', all time 'greats' and much more. With Christmas approaching, this title should make an excellent gift for a youngster.

WINDMASTER'S BANE Tom Deitz Orbit £3.50

David Sullivan has second sight and travels an invisible track between worlds to become a pawn of the Windmaster, an evil usurper among the Celts. His only protection, a riddle's answer and an enchanted ring

WOUNDHEALER'S STORY Fred Saberhagen Orbit £3.50

Vulcan made 12 swords of power, Mark seeks the sword of healing, held at the White Temple, to cure his blind son, but must contend with Baron Asintor and the evil wizard Bursalaa.

TOOLMAKER KOAN John McLoughlin Orbit £3.99

Before it died, spaceprobe 'STRUGGLE' detected a strange mass. Rival spacecraft investigate and clash - then a Third Power steps in with a surprise for Humanity.

THE SMOKE RING Larry Niven Orbit £3.99

Analog serial, sequel to 'The Integral Trees' about the lost colony living in the giant trees in the gas cloud of a ring nebula as they seek information locked in a derelict starship - but the starship's cyborg has other ideas.

INFERNAL DEVICES K.W.Jeter Grafton £2.95

A mysterious Ethiopian brings Matchmaker Dower a strange device - others try to steal it and Dower finds himself involved with a mysterious Cult, automata and the earth shaking effects of his late father's arcane devices.

THE FACE Jack Vance Grafton£2.95

Fourth in the 'Deacon Princes' series sees Kirth Gersen track down and wreak vengeance on Lens Lague - whose monstrous plans allow Gersen yet another form of revenge on an overbearing banker.

**THE WARRIORS APPRENTICE** Lois McMaster Bujold Headline £2.99

Miles Maisieith, noble and of warrior family, fails his Academy entrance, so sets out to investigate his girl friend's origins and ends in a web of galactic intrigue. Bujold at her best.

**THE RUNNING MAN** Stephen King N.E.L. £2.99

In a future of slums, dope and sadistic TV, Ben Richards' daughter's dying of influenza. To pay for medical treatment, he signs on for a rigged, TV death Hunt in which he must survive 30 days. An old theme, but King gives it added menace.

**BRIGHT AND SHINING TIGER** Claudia Edwards Headline £2.99

Runa has powers, but is feared as a witch. Cast out, she wanders and finds the fortress of Silvercat Castellum with its weird defenders whilst the tillers will make her ruler in exchange for protection.

**BLACK WIZARDS** Douglas Niles Penguin £3.99

Sorcerers usurp the High King as guided by Bhaal, God of Death, ogres, and zombies move in. They are opposed by Robyn and her new powers, as well as Prince Kendrick in a pact with the Goddess. Book 2 of the epic Moonshae fantasy trilogy.

**SPIDER WORLD: THE DELTA** Colin Wilson Grafton £3.50

Sequel to Spider World 'The Tower' Niall and his beetle allies head for the delta regions to locate the source of the Spider Lord's power which can bring dead to life. Aided by Bill Doggins, they travel in spider balloons and fight flesh-eating trees to a final battle.

**STAR OF GYPSIES** Robert Silverberg Orbit £3.99

The Romany are the pilots of the galactic wide star lanes, but have lost their legendary home, the Romany Star. Yakoub, once and future King of the gypsies seeks a return to former glory, but things don't go according to plan.

TWO superb (and mammoth) anthologies from Robinson -

**SHORT HORROR NOVELS £4.95** Ed. Mike Ashley has 10 yarns in its 500+ pages. They cover compulsion, Gothic horror, hauntings, vampires, the supernatural, witchcraft, ghouls and others, in as wide a variety as anyone could want.

**BEST NEW SF.2 £5.95** Ed. Gardner Dozois crams 29 items into its bulging 678 pages! There's a summation of the SF Year, a veritable 'Who's Who in SF' line up of authors, and a closing list of 'Honourable Mentions'.

Both volumes feature brief biographies with each tale. How Robinson so it at the price, I do not know, but these two volumes must be the best value for money on the SF market.

**DEMON LORD OF KARANDA** David Eddings Bantam £11.95

Third in the Mallorcan saga of sword and sorcery in which Garion seeks his baby son kidnapped by Zandramas who plans to use the child for her evil ends. Garion Belgarath and others, guided by 'The Orb' follow the trail, fall foul of Emperor Zakath and escape to face Zandramas before shape-changing witch, Polnedra comes to their rescue. Book 4 is to follow in this epic fantasy series.

## LETTERS .., Contd.

L. SPRAGUE de CAMP, Villanova, PA People ask why I don't write any more Harold Shea stories. At the time of Pratt's death, he and I had talked of sending Harold to the worlds of Persian and Indian myth. The reasons is that the Pratt-de Camp collaboration differed significantly from what either of us did alone. With my present experience I could fake the collaboration; but it would be hard work, and I have enough projects of my own to keep me busy.

Your RAF adventures remind me that in the war, the losing side is that which out-bungles the other. During the Hitlerian war, for 3.5 years as a Naval Reserve officer assigned to engineering duty, I navigated a desk and fought the war with a flashing side rule. I worked with Heintzein and Asiaov at the Naval Air Material Center in Philadelphia. Compared with many, I had it easy; nobody shot at me. But I can cite bungles, too. Once the director (a reserve officer and ex-paint salesman) told a lieutenant to put cardboard skirts on the UV lamps by which the lieutenant was testing the sun resistance of paint samples. Thinking this was just another of Mason's goofy ideas, the lt. did nothing. Next day, the director said: "Hey, I told you to put skirts on those lamps! Don't you know they're liable to make you sterile."

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