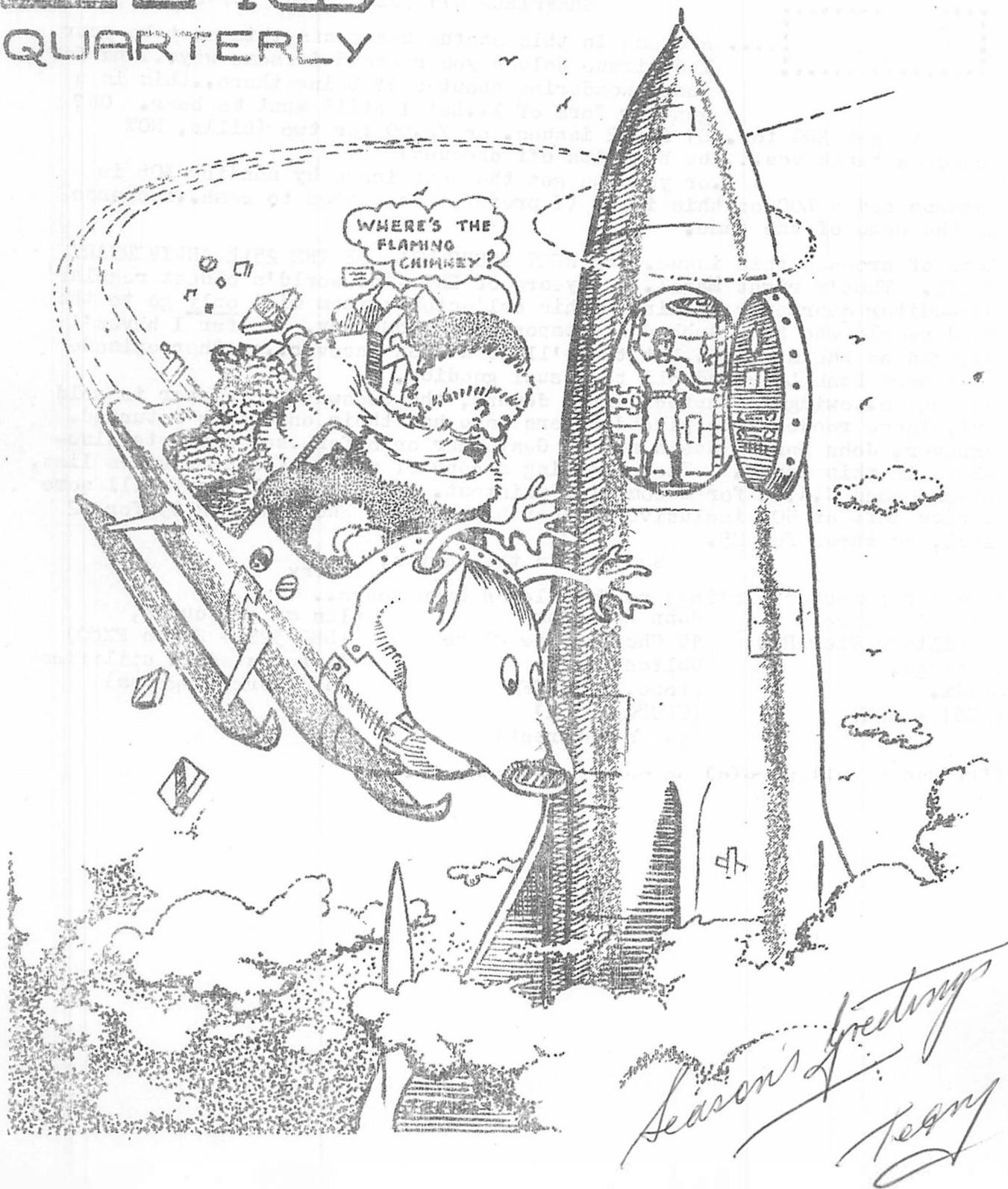


# ERG

# 85

JANUARY 1984

QUARTERLY



*Season's Greetings*  
*Teeny*

2 This is...

ERG QUARTERLY No.85  
January 1984

Editor, Publisher and Dogsboddy:-  
Terry Jeeves,  
230 Bannerdale Rd.,  
SHEFFIELD S11 9FE Ph. (0742) 53791

.....  
: P :  
: K :  
.....

..... A cross in this status box means this must be your last issue unless you respond in some way...and for those wondering about a ?? being there..this is a gentler form of X..but I still want to hear. OK?

You can get ERG for..£1 for 2 issues..or \$2.00 for two (bills, NOT cheques thank you...the bankrips off cheques)

..or you can get the next issue by sending 30p in stamps and a LOC on this issue (I prefer this method to cash..response is the name of the game.

Lots of crosses this issue...as NEXT ISSUE WILL BE THE 25th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE. That's right Mabel...25 years of ERG..The world's oldest regular one-editor quarterly fanzine. This collector's item will only go to the good people who have subbed or responded in some way. So far I haven't decided on the make-up..but there'll be a NASA bacover..another episode of Memory Bank Lane and all the usual goodies.

Apologies..owing to unprecedented demand, the Gesswat Microduper is sold out, Those readers who placed orders have had their envelopes returned. However, John Darwin has a normal Gestetner on offer..see his note elsewhere in this issue. Those wanting a copy of my book/oddment sales list, please send S.A.E. for a computer printout. ERG 1984 Calendar still some copies left at 80p inclusive of post & packing. ERGtapes 1,2,£3 for £2 each, or three for £5.

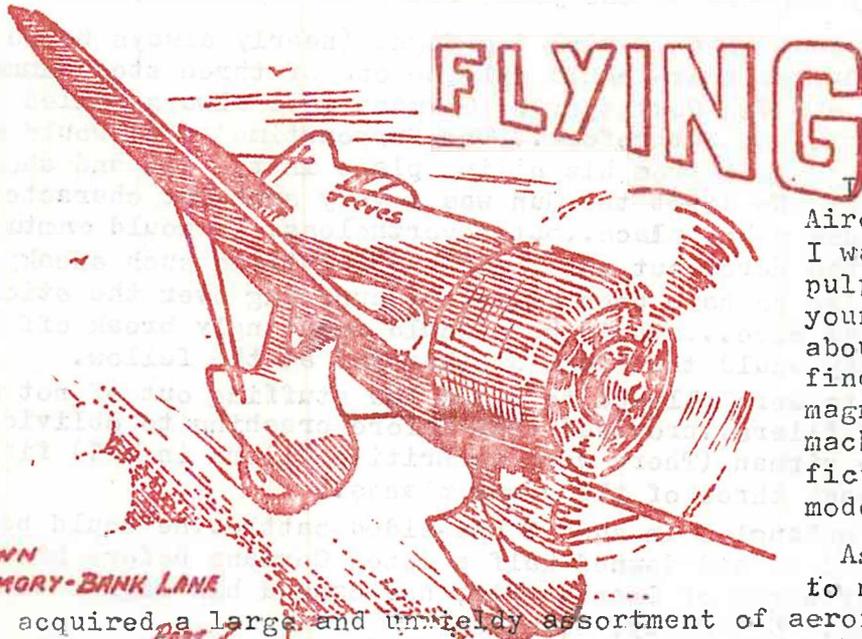
See you in the Annish, Terry

ONLY TWO computer listings so far..let's have yours..

Phil Wiltshire John R Botham  
2 Chiltern View Rd., 15 Cherry Tree Close  
Uxbridge, Walton,  
Middx. Stone, STAFFS  
(ZX81 + 32K) (TRS80 + 16K)  
(games interest)

plus me of course,  
(BBC 32K + Epson FX80)  
(interested in utilities  
and work programs)

I'll run a full page(a) as more names come in.

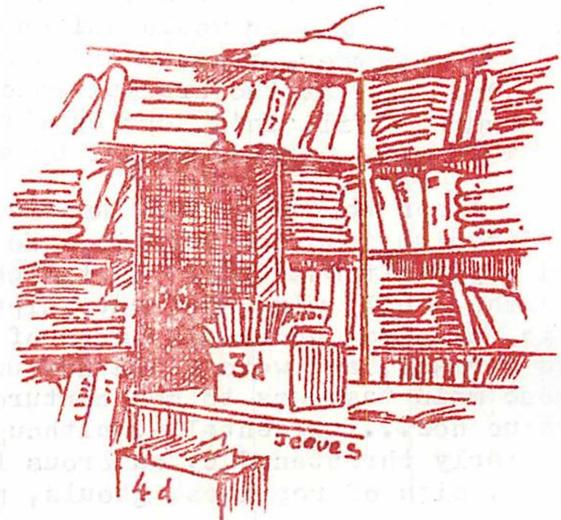


I have been an avid Aircraft buff ever since I was knee-high to a pulp magazine. As a youngster, I read just about everything I could find about those magnificent flying machines... fact, or fiction..and of course, modelling the things.

As a natural offshoot. to my SF collection, I

also acquired a large and unwieldy assortment of aeronautical publications. Many of these came from my favourite bookshop set like a jewel on the oasis of Spital Hill. It was a pokey little place, crammed from floor to ceiling with all kinds of worthless junk..first editions of Dickens, Tennyson, Wordsworth, etc. cluttered floor to ceiling..using up space where valuable pulp magazines could have been stored. An old fogey ran the place, emerging spider-like from a secret cavern among the heaped up books at the tinkle of the dorrbell. I suppose one could have run all his stock through one of those fractionating towers used to separate out various grades of crude oil..but converted to cream off the .1% of precious material from all the rubbish...but happily, this wasn't needed. The lurker in the bookpile made things easy for me by keeping all his pulp stock in a battered old cardboard box beside the door...presumably so that they wouldn't be contaminated by the rest of the junk. For many years, this carton held several copies of the Aug. 1936 AMAZING which carried Henry Hasse's great yarn..'He Who Shrank'. From that box, over a period of years, I culled a whole new world of science fiction, heaps of Hugo Gernsback's 'EVERYDAY SCIENCE AND MECHANICS', plus a whole alternate universe of aeronautical magazines.

DARE-DEVIL ACES was probably the first one I started collecting, but soon there were many others... and the fiction always had more cliches and stereotypes per column inch than a dog has fleas. All the Germans ('Jerries') were bad..and



All Allied (i.e. American) pilots were good. Admittedly, now and then one of the 'goodies' (inevitably British) would get a bit big-headed for a chapter or two..but by the end of the yarn, he would have turned up trumps.

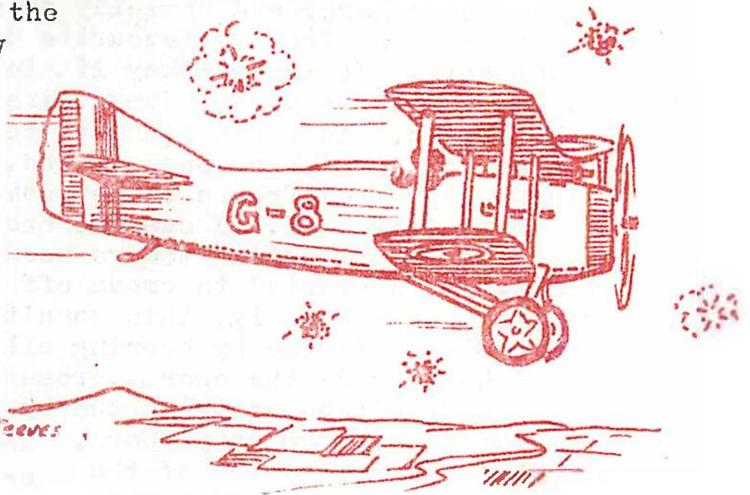
Another rule was that in an aerial dog-fight (nearly always between S.P.A.D.s and Fokker D-7's) there could only be one of three stock situations.

1. The wily, sneaky old Von Rakketyoven (Germans were always called 'Von' something-or-other..'Von Tuthrefore'...'Von Supponatime' etc) would sneak up behind the rooky pilot from his hiding place in the sun and shoot the poor clot down. No doubt the Hun was a very sunburnt character from lurking in such a hot place..but nevertheless, he would eventually get clobbered by the Hero..but not before he had tried such sneaky antics as pretending to have been killed by hunching over the stick and going into a spiral dive...stupid hero would sportingly break off the combat..and Rickety would then take another pot at the fellow.
2. Twelve Jerry pilots were allowed to knock the stuffing out of not more than three Allied fliers..provided that before crashing to oblivion, each brave Yankee airman (There were no British fliers in WW1) first knocked out at least three of the enemy planes.
3. If the hero got entangled in such a one-sided battle..he could be shot down..provided he had downed half a dozen Germans before his guns jammed, or a lucky burst of Spandau fire had caused his engine to cough into silence. Naturally, the baddies followed him down and by this time, his Spad had more holes than a colander..but of course, our hero would never get more than a mere flesh wound..and a knock on the head in the crash. When he recovered from his daze, it would be to find himself behind enemy lines and the baddy landing nearby.

The Hun would stride arrogantly forward, draw his Luger and point it between our hero's eyes (Naturally, his own weapon had fallen from its holster in the crash.) The Jerry's finger would whiten on the trigger, a sneer cross his face,...

but just at the crucial moment, our hero would hurl himself forward at the Villain's legs and bring him crashing to the floor..to be rendered hors-de-combat by a good straight left.

Then there was G-8, American master-spy-cum-flying ace and an expert at disguise into the bargain. He had two regular sidekicks..the big, brawny and superstitious 'Bull' Martin whose Spad bore the number '7' on its side, and the small, wiry, defiant 'Nippy' Weston..who had '13' on his aircraft. This trio got up to all sorts of daring japes and wheezes against the bad old Germans, and were aided now and then by the lovely R-1, a lady spy whose main task was to get captured at regular intervals so that G-8 could rescue her...incidentally, although R-1 was a lovely bit of crackling and regularly threatened by numerous fates worse than death (Zombies, moving-walls, pits of reptiles, ghouls, poison gas and the like... no hint of s-x





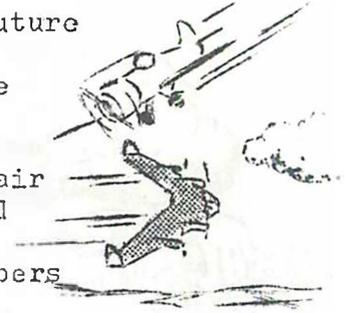
was ever allowed to sully her relations with G-8. Oh, they might hold hands a bit...when he was hauling her out of some foul, loathsome pit. Heads might crunch, blood spatter the cockpit as leaden death selected its hellish, steel-jacketed way through the fuselage, even flesh might char and flake away from a body.. but never must a spot of slap and tickle mar the even tenure of their ways. I waited in vain..R-1 was chaste, ner caught.

Not only did our three heroes oppose the whole might of the German Air Force. but they also had to contend with the evil and SF-like machinations of their arch-enemy, the Herr Doktor Kreuger. This nasty person invented ghoulish-headed bat planes, Skeleton pilots, Zombies, strange gases and in one yarn, even giant protoplasmic muscles which were grafted on to observation balloons and surrounded by artificial clouds. When any Allied pilot came along, the muscle would form a hand, reach out and grab his plane. Nevertheless, after much mayhem and danger, G-8 would triumph and the evil Doktor would get clobbered..usually by his own fiendish device. Of course, an issue or two later would see him back again..minus an arm or leg or other unimportant part of his anatomy..but with yet another sinister weapon to win the war for the Kaiser.

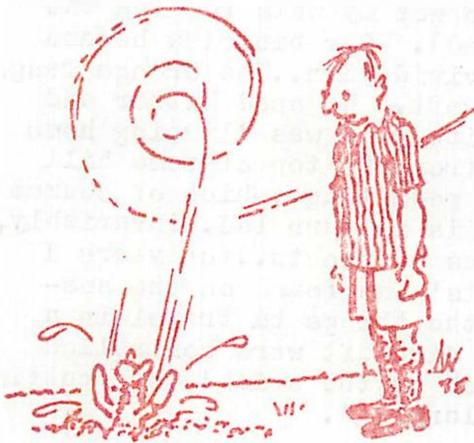
One side effect of all this activity was to get my pals reading the stuff (under threat of a bashing if they declined). Our bicycles became Spads and Fokkers...and after one particularly vivid yarn..The Orange Tango' each sported a small, orange painted model aircraft. We sped hither and yon in cycle-borne 'dogfights'. Another favourite game was 'limping home with the engine gone'..which involved starting from the top of some hill and seeing who could freewheel farthest without pedalling..which of course meant using as little brake as possible...and this in turn led..invariably, to the handiest ditch! There were other curious offshoots..for years I thought military cannons fired the type of 'shells' one found on the sea-shore..and could never understand how they got the things to travel in a straight line. I also had the firm belief that aircraft were controlled by either 'kicking the rudder bar', 'yanking back on the stick', or 'cutting the engine and sideslipping in to a dead-stick landing'.

Then there was FLYING ACES..a magazine claiming to be 'three in one'. It carried fact, fiction, and model news/plans..but strangely..it was the standard (large) size..not three times as big as the other publications. I had the pleasure of re-stoking my nostalgia fires when visiting Lynn Hickman's Wauseon home in 1980...he allowed me to handle samples from his VAST collection..including a stack of FLYING ACES. Another American model mag was MODEL AIRPLANE NEWS..which ran no fiction, but articles such as 'Make This 90-mph, Rubber-Powered Speedster'..or 'Build a Folkerts Special With Flaps and Retractable Undercarriage'. Retracting undercarriage might have seemed new to them..but nearly all my models had this feature as was evidence on each maiden landing. The real droolmaking part of such magazines was the ad section...kits, engines, accessories and everything else dear to the model maker's heart...at fantastically low prices. These periodicals also kept you informed on events such as 'The NATS'(whatever they were) where modellers met to compete against one another in flying models which looked more like coat-hangers crossed with a picket fence than 'real' aeroplanes.

On a more futuristic note was AIR TRAILS and the adventures of Bill Barnes...but for real, out-and-out future flying, then DUSTY AYRES AND HIS BATTLE BIRDS led the field. Dusty and his mates were involved in some future war against the Black Army. Dusty's aircraft, 'Silver Flash' was capable of speeds approaching the unheard of 300 mph mark..and closely resembled one of the Gee Bee air racing death traps of the day (one of which actually did achieve the unofficial record of 296mph-in 1933). His adversaries flew in (then unheard of) 'Flying Wing' bombers as they sought to defeat America.



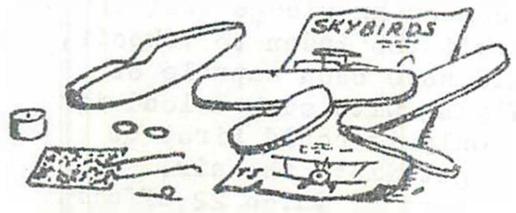
On the home front, (with British fliers instead of American) was the rather anaemic AIR STORIES. I suspect that if someone had invented a machine gun capable of delivering straight lefts and uppercuts, then all British aircraft would have had it instead of Lewis or Browning guns. Much of the artwork was by S.R.Drigin (who also illustrated SCOOPS) and his style of soot and whitewash gave the magazine a decidedly gloomy air..in fact, until I realised it was his 'dry-brush' technique, I thought all airmen were furry and had bristly chins. Another mag., AERONAUTICS, was a slick, s&c affair costing a whole 1/- and featured such high-faluting articles as 'The Effect Of Drag On High Speed (i.e. 250mph) Aircraft', or speculation on huge future airliners capable of carrying up to 50 passengers. Its pomposity quickly diverted me to FLYING which cost only 3d a week, had good stories and plans for models which actually FLEW when I made them! From here, it was but a step to FLIGHT and THE AEROPLANE. both weekly and dealing with REAL aircraft.



On the model front, my air force continued to grow. It had started when I was 10, with a stick tractor model which had come off the worst of a dogfight with a Walls ice-cream tricycle. Now, I boasted TWO F.R.O.G models which cost 10/6 each and were made of thin sheet aluminium with knock-off wings and undercarriage. Sadly these succumbed to the G forces of my favourite stunt..three loops in a row. A few such flights and the wings folded up and the model ploughed into the

deck, hell-bent for Australia. From here I moved to kit models..the best being the superb (and very intricate) AEROMODELS from Blackpool. I was amazed when my Hart biplane flew beautifully on its very first flight... but my Fairey 'Battle' wouldn't even taxi..its single elastic band not being the scale equivalent of a Rolls-Royce Merlin. A friend of mine who also made models, would cart the results to his bedroom, douse 'em with lighter fluid, apply a match and heave 'em out of the window. The sight of a model aircraft crashing in flames might have been dramatic..but passers-by complained through official channels and Pittock Trussler was grounded.

I also made 'solids'..which in those pre-plastic kit days, really were SOLID..being made/hacked/carved out of chunks of solid wood which had been roughly cut to shape...models such as the SKYBIRD range where for 6d in good hard cash, you got a mess of crudely shaped pieces of timber, a few cruelly tortured scraps of wire, a propeller-blank, sandpaper and a pair of

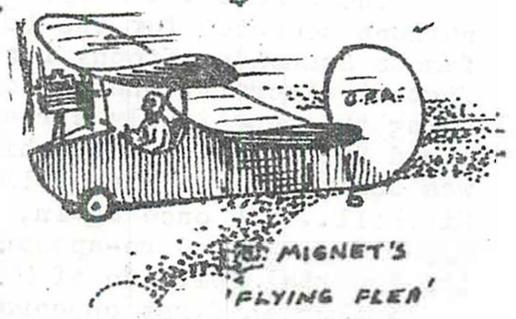


SOLID-MODEL KIT

unfinished wooden discs intended to become wheels. By dint of razor-blade, elbow grease, sandpaper and dabs of paint, along with a few slashed fingers, it was possible to create..with a lot of imagination, a scale model aircraft.

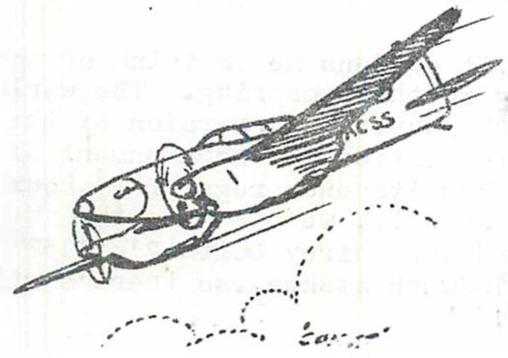
Apart from all the fiction, model-making and factual news in the magazine, the real world was busy producing living heroes and their exploits. Amy Johnson's epic flights

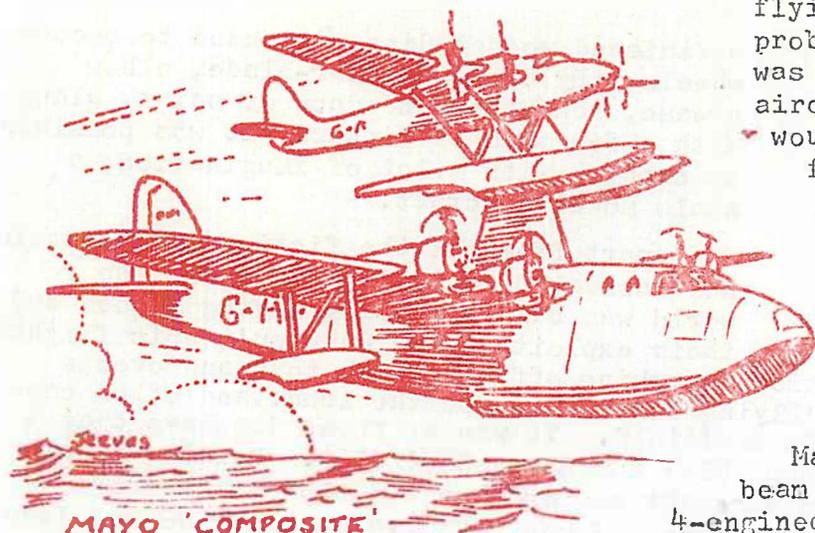
captured the public's imagination..sparking off clockwork toys and even a popular song. Alan Cobham's 'Flying Circus' toured the land..and often came to the tiny Norton aerodrome in Sheffield. It was at these displays that I saw the two 'birdmen', Clem Sohn (USA) and Harry Ward (UK). Donning fabric wings, they would leap from an aircraft and soar around the sky before completing their descent via parachute. I saw a Cierva autogyro do its jump take-off; daredevils demonstrate wing-walking, and an aircraft with a hook attached to one wing..whereby the pilot flew low and hooked up a handkerchief laid on the ground! In comic scenes, 'bandits' escaping in an open car were flour-bombed into submission, and I even saw a 'Flying Flea' revving noisily up and down the field in a vain attempt to get airborne. It was there that I made my first flight, Summer 1936, in a Ford Trimotor...it was almost ten years later, as an RAF Wireless Mechanic that I flew again...illicitly on an anti-submarine mission out of Juhu aerodrome, Bombay..and that was in a D.H. Dragon Rapide!..I managed two such sneaky 'ops' followed by numerous adventures (real ones) in B-24 Liberators before final demob.



Back to nostalgia.. with the King's Cup Air Races..where Percival Mew Gulls would battle it out with such lovely planes as the D.H.Comet..the original, twin-engined job..'Grosvenor House' G-ACSS which laid the groundwork for the same companies magnificent wartime 'Mosquito'. At the end of the war, I helped to 'mothball' many of these..wonder if they are still mouldering away in those Swannington hangars.

One summer holiday was made even more memorable by the totally unexpected flypast along the foreshore (at an altitude of about 100ft) of one of the new, C Class Empire Flying boats. I fancy it was 'Canopus', but it may have been 'Caledonia' or one of the others in that line which was replacing the venerable old 'Scylla' planes of Imperial Airways. These Empire boats underwent a wartime transmogrification into the 'Sunderland' used largely for Coastal Defence. This was not their only variant though, in those days, long-distance



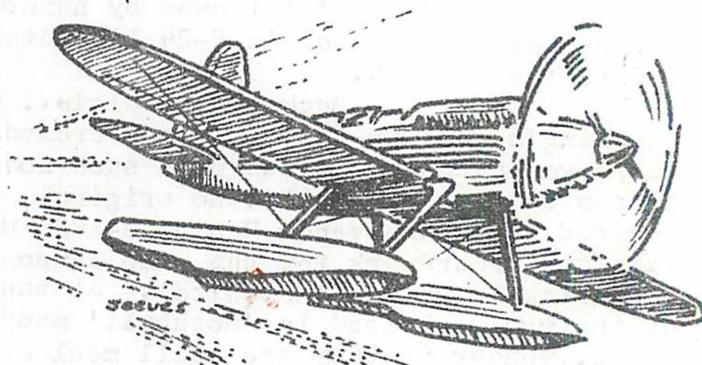


flying was one of the big problems facing aviation. It was common knowledge that an aircraft too laden to takeoff, would have been capable of flying with such a load if only it could first be got into the air. A sort of Catch 22 affair. One solution was proposed by a Col. Mayo..the result was the Mayo 'Composite'. A Short C Class flying boat (The Maia) was broadened in the

beam, and a newly-designed 4-engined seaplane (The Mercury) hoisted on to its back. With all 8 engines running, the overladen Mercury was hoisted pick-a-back into the air and released from the Maia...it then went on to establish a long distance weight record. Before you start saying the 747/Shuttle pick-a-back flights are not new after all...I'd better add that the Mercury/Maia wasn't either...a couple of decades earlier, the same idea had been tested successfully with a biplane flying boat and a biplane fighter...wonder if Daedalus gave Icarus a take-off boost?

Those were the days when nations competed for the (then) famous Schneider Trophy for the fastest aircraft..one contender being the beautifully streamlined Supermarine S6B...which was designed by a chap called Mitchell...and once again, the experience gained re-appeared in the immortal Spitfire of WW2.

Similar in first appearance to the S6B...a single-seater seaplane, was the marvellous Macchi-Castoldi boasting a pair of Fiat engines bolted back to back..and turning contra-rotating airscrews. Once they got that little lot to run long enough, it boosted the Absolute speed record to 440mph..a record which stood for nigh on 20 years!



SUPERMARINE S6B

Aviation meant something in those days...it saddens me to think of more recent events..Princess Flying boats rotting in their mooring. The world beating TSR2 scrapped for target practice..the supersonic version of the Harrier cancelled...Concord nearly so..not to mention the abandonment of our space programme. Even the BBC has forsaken its once regular 2½ hour live coverage of the Farnborough Air Show. Oh well, we did have the Hunter/Swift battle for the Speed record..and the Fairey Delta 2's 1132 mph did see the first record leap into the 1000mph stakes..so there's still some life left in the field. Viva Flying!

# EDITORIAL

Last issue, I ran out of space in which to describe how the cover was produced.. A first rough, pencil draft was transferred to scraper board and then inked in. White areas and hatching were next scratched into the chalky covering and all the other details added..including both the titles..ERG QUARTERLY No.84 October 1983..as well

as the 1984 CALENDAR logo. Since scraper board won't bend around a stencil scanning drum, the next step was to have a photo copy made, and this was sent off to the ever reliable H.J.Bridge for cutting..and as usual, it returned in an incredibly short time. It was put on the duper ..'1984 Calendar' was masked off with brown gumstrip, and the ERG covers run off. Masking taken off the stencil and new masking to cover the ERG 84 details..and the covers were run off for the 1984 Calendar. Those of you who have both ERG 84 and a 1984 Calendar will be able to compare the effect. Quite a lot of work for a front cover, but I think it was worth it.

Those of you who read my review of Hubbard's BATTLEFIELD EARTH in the last issue and were wondering where they could get a copy, will be pleased to know that Fred Harris writes to say.."We are coming very close to publishing Battlefield Earth in the UK"..and goes on to add that Stateside publication of its successor, 'MISSION EARTH' is in the near offing..so I'll tell you about that when my copy gets here.

Another of the nice things about editing a fanzine is that just when you least expect it, some reader will come across with a very generous surprise. When in MEMORY BANK LANE I mentioned a story called DREAM'S END in an issue of WONDER..(showing a battleship hanging inverted above New York) I little expected the response from goodman Lynn Hickman..he sent me a copy of that very issue culled from his precious collection. Renewed thanks, Lynn..it was a wonderful gesture.

Another delightful surprise followed my mention of a difficulty (now resolved) with my Epson printer. First Fandom member Ray Bean came through with complete photocopies of a series of article from a Stateside computer zine..and airmailed 'em into the bargain. Another one to nominate for GOVERNOR OF THE YEAR.

By the way..as European Representative for FIRST FANDOM..I'm open to applications from interested parties..in brief, you must have been active in some way in Fandom/collecting/publishing etc..prior to 1939. Let me know details if you think you qualify.

This is the second time of cutting this stencil..the first time, an unexpected fault in the material produced a black blob when duping started. I had to cut off the heading, refit it and re-type..so please excuse any substandard quality on this sheet.. ..and now to other items...

After mentioning the good people back there, it seems a good time to mention in character who isn't in the book of those whom love of Jeeves has blessed. Mike Bastraw (70 Webster St. Lazonia. N.H. 03246) are your ears burning? Many moons ago, Mike ordered two paintings from me for a total of \$3.00...they were duly sent off..and then followed a long, loud silence..with all requests for payment or return of paintings seeming to have gone into a vacuum. Now I know from his LOCs in other fmz that he still operates from the above address..and from the fact that the US postal authorities even return undelivered ERGs to me (from other people, not Mike) I know that he must have got my letters..or they too would have come back. So, if any of you happen to be in touch with Mr Bastraw (a) remind him he owes me thirty bucks..and (b) Don't let him owe you money. Pity that the odd bad apple can spoil good relations.

On happier things...Last issue, all publishers' copies were computer address via my BBC and Epson FX80 set up...this time, all bar the odd copy of ERG will have been addressed that way. Thanks to a mini word-processor, I still do the odd letter that way as well...such as a recent letter to my MP complaining about the ghastly rip-us-off Labour Council we have operating here. By the way, so far, only two names have come in of ERGbods wishing to be listed (along with their computer gear) in a future session/section in ERG. Get off the dime folks, can't list computer freaks I don't know about.

Meanwhile, my Beeb also keeps tabs of all my Hardcover, paperback and oddments on the sales lists...the current list was done via a printout and an electronic stencil...but if you want a bang up-to-date copy at any time...send a SAE stating what you want...hardcover. New pb, old pb, fan oddments etc. (This off is not open to Mike Bastraw)

ELECTRONIC STENCILS for each issue of ERG are done by H.J. Bridge (Impeccably..and FAST..often a 3day out and back time) of Rectory Row Press, 363 Kennington Lane, Vauxhall, London SE11...80p a stencil plus 20p post...i.e. £1.00 a throw up to ten stencils...cheaper rates if you want more. Mention ERG won't you?

A complete BOOK OF MEMORY BANK LANE will be available when the series ends (right now, it's up to 46 pages and still growing). Those of you who would like the whole works in one bundle..watch for the offer. I'll also be selling off all the artwork originals used in the series. No panic, as the series has at least a year to run yet...but you have been warned. This will be a very limited issue of 30 copies.

I still want to trade for:- Pulp mags (especially ASF) prior to 1940. Any issue (mag or pb) of G-8 AND HIS BATTLE ACES. Some issues of Doc Savage paperback edns. FLYING ACES, Newnes FANTASY, Isaac Asinof's THE COLLAPSING UNIVERSE in hardcover, Stephen Leacock's LITERARY LAPSES..etc etc. If you have any of these to trade..contact me and quote your price.

And as this issue of ERG concludes 24 years +..remember that next issue marks ERG'S 25 ANNIVERSARY..and will ONLY be going to those who indicate in some way that they would like it. CASH, magazines, or LOCs + postage are all fine..but please..none of those letters that say.. "I enjoyed ERG very much and will be sending you a LOC in the near future" ..like tomorrow, near futures never seem to come.

Bestest... Terry

# ERGmail

For new readers, my ERGitorial comments are interposed between triple brackets..(((thus)))

All opinions expressed in this section belong to somebody.

We open this time with a (speed) record

Jeeves

breaker from...

JEAN WEBER  
P.O. Box 42  
Lynham ACT  
AUSTRALIA

" do like the idea of warnings on books, so that those who don't want to read things they might find offensive, won't get caught out..yet no one's reading is restricted by someone else. I gather this happens a lot on TV & film

advertising in some places, as well as book advertising in the USA. I recall seeing warnings in the ads for the SF Book Club for example"

(((Right on, Jean. Foods have to be labelled..medicines and so on..why not books/TV etc. I awarded you the speed record accolade because I sent off your ERG on September 9th..Sea Mail, Reduced rate..and it got to you by September 14th...FIVE DAYS....your air mail reply got here on Sep.26th ...12 days..or twice as long as sea mail. Does anyone know how this can happen..and is it worth using Air Mail ?? and of course..just room to add

THIS fanzine supports JEAN WEBER for DUFF. BRING WEBERWOMAN TO U.K.)))

RICHARD MEEHAN  
14 Redfern Rd.,  
Walton  
Stone  
STAFFS ST15 0LG

"My favourite session of this issue was MEMORY BANK LANE I find your memories of this sadly passed era particularly entertaining. It is a great pity that this kind of fiction is no longer written. I have never had the pleasure of reading the pulps you mention, but the yarns you mention sound much more interesting than most SF published today. Many of the short stories one reads today in magazines such as INTERZONE are very slow, boring tales..and seem positively dead when compared with such masterpieces as 'The Creeping Green Peril Of Pongtutti' and 'Adrift In The Stratosphere'. I may, I suppose, be comparing 'War and Peace' with 'Famous Five Go Camping' but given the chance, I think I would enjoy pulp fiction.

((( Wholeheartedly agree on Interzone...shame they cut down tress to print things like that isn't it? I don't think your comparison was right..more like comparing 'The Good Food Guide' with 'The Famous Five'. Nowadays, the SF is (usually) well written gramatically...but as for entertaining fiction, it lacks pace, plot and interest. Mark you..the old pulp yarns are also virtually unreadable nowadays...so what do we do????)))

ALAN BURNS  
19 The Crescent  
Kings Rd. Shh.,  
Wallsend NE28 7RE

MEMORY BANK LANE..Ah me, sob sob. Where now can you get a nubile damsel tastefully arranged, some SF stories worth reading, some science fact (now disproven) and a letter or two ((( ERG ????)) Not to mention the ads which make present-day marketing look models of veracity. All this for about 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>p (old money 1/6d) (((What about remainders at 3d ? )))

ALAN BURNS..contd. In your fmz review, I noticed the word 'trireme' and I wonder, did they ever settle the argument whether a trireme (or for that matter, a bireme) meant two or three banks of oars..or two or three men per oar? ((I don't know..but going on the leverage a long oar would require..and the fact that the men had little space in which to move it back and forth...I'd plump for the single bank of oars manned by two or three men as being the more likely...anyone out there know definitely ???))

TED HUGHES

10 Kenmore Rd.,  
Whitefield  
Manchester

ERG 84 arrived this am..the issue is impressive. I enjoyed the ERGitorial..I'll take one of those Gesswats..the one with the pro-mag switch..save flogging the old thinkbox for inspiration ((Sorry, INTERZONE bought them all up to suppress them as making too much competition)) Reading Mike Ashley's letter panning the old tales...his list of good modern authors included two old timers - Simak and Chandler! I can remember reading my first Simak story in an old bedsheet Wonder. I think I once told you, I picked up a few Famous Fantastic Novels in Montreal during the war. They reprinted old Argosy stories such as.. 'Polaris And The Golden Goddess' by Charles B Stilson and 'Nordenholt's Millions' by J.J.Connington, as well as numerous Merrittales. Try them for style. And they were a lot older than 'Who Goes There?' or 'Sinister Barrier'. So those old stories weren't all badly written junk. And if I seem to be contradicting anything I've said earlier, I don't give a damn. I reckon Mike Ashley was just trailing his coat to see who stepped on it."

(( Ratings of 'style' and 'quality' are notoriously subjective..many newer readers would be inclined to scoff at the yarns you cite..just as I scoff at the rubbish published in mags like Interzone and the ilk. You pays your money and you takes your choice..if there is one..nowadays, there doesn't seem to be..apart from take it or leave it))

IAN COVELL

2 Copgrove Close  
Berwick Hills  
Middlesborough  
Cleveland TS3 7BP

Your remarks on feminism are roughly what I've thought for a long time. It's probably a stereotyped image.. ('the burly lesbians' as the SUN now insists pollute the Greenham Common campaign) ((Don't they??))..but as I once said to a feminist, whether it's true or not doesn't really matter - the public image of feminism is what people react to. I did have another thought on feminism, after watching this trash about legislation against 'sexual harrassment' in offices etc. Feminists believe that no man should look at a woman with sexual desire. To a feminist, this is the prelude to the rape all men are contemplating and anyway, it denigrates women because it reduces them to sexual objects. // I don't want censorship, not at any price. What I want is a system of self-revelation where the producers are obliged to list on the cover exactly what is contained within. ((Which is exactly my point in the first place))

JUDITH BUFFERY

16 Southam Rd.,  
Hall Green  
Birmingham

Did I tell you that I am now registered with the PLR? If I did, then please tell everyone you know to go to the public library and borrow as many of my books as they can, and as often as they can (they don't have to read them..I need the money. There has also been a development in my battle with the publishers. I've been given the name of a solicitor who specialises in these sort of cases. It has cost us all our savings just to make a preliminary payment, but Roy thinks it worth it just to show the bounders we'll fight to the death. (( Good luck Judith, I support your fight all the way...have done similar myself..calling in the Ombudsman over the Local Council at one time. That made them get cracking right away after a six-month stall.))

SIMON GOSDEN  
35 Avondale Rd  
Rayleigh  
ESSEX

Consider if you will that for the last 20 years, we have witnessed a generation that has had the TV at the centre of its leisure time. Investigations in the effects of TV watching have been few and far between. Some of the most recent work has at last begun to give serious consideration to the 'power of the box'. Each individual is capable of interpreting any film or TV programme in any way. Whilst the item may have a preferred reading, it can be decoded in other ways. What this means is that individuals can interpret it in an entirely different way to that which the producer intended. This can produce at its crudest level, straightforward behavioural effects wherein violently sexual films can and have been proven to produce violent sexual behaviour. ((I agree entirely..but here is a bit more from Ian Covell's letter..))  
IAN COVELL.. 'I am fairly sure that studies of whether TV influences behaviour have proved it does not.'

(( Apart from various court cases wherein the guilty party has admitted to getting his ideas from TV..consider this.. 'Trekkies', 'Prisoner' fans and 'Blake's 7' followers all try to emulate/dress like/ or live in, the world of their idols..are they not influenced as to their behaviour? What about the morons who believe so much in their TV world, that when a character 'dies' or has a baby..they send bushels of funeral wreaths or baby clothes. Has not their behaviour been influenced? As a kid, when we fought, it was either wrestling, or with fists..nowadays it is the Kung Fu kick, or rabbit chop to the neck...so please don't tell me that TV/films do not influence behaviour...and in the extreme cases, we get the violent types,...Ian also cited the fact that one woman claimed that her son raped several women when influenced by TV...and collapsed when asked why her other sons had not done likewise. RED HERRING...many of us drink..but only certain characters get fighting drunk...thousands may see an ad for a new product, but only some people buy it. The danger is that SOME people can be...and are, influenced strongly by various media.. T.J.))  
To avoid misunderstanding..I don't mean ALL fans..simply the fanatic fringe in each of the groups mentioned..and some others)))

CHUCK CONNOR  
c/c Sildan House  
Chediston Rd  
Wissett  
Nr. Halesworth  
SUFFOLK

DMBL, especially the ad section was marvellous. Being a collector of the really awful (((Tried 'Interzone'???))), those old ads were a favourite. The Classic is the usual placing of a Bust Enlargement ad. next to one for Bust Reduction. Hedging your bets I suppose. ((Well, life is all ups and downs, you know))) Mind you, I managed to pick up some old Victorian (late) magazines..and their advertising is incredible..virtually works of art, high pen and ink detail etc.

COLIN GRUBB  
720 Manchester Rd  
Linthwaite  
Huddersfield  
West Yorks

You say you have several news cuttings where someone has got their ideas for violence etc. from TV. Surely, these cannot be taken at face value because the person is on trial and trying to avoid a sentence (((Why is it that people ignore any evidence which conflicts with what they have in mind? See my comment on the above letter))) It would be very difficult to say.



whether TV influences society, or society influences TV in this respect. ((True..but I'm concerned with something that (a) does have influence, and (b) which could be controlled. Funny you know, but people believe in UFO's on far more slender evidence...wouldn't you say those who buy 'Coronation Street' bricks..or buy their kids 'E.T. bikes' at prices inflated beyond the normal..or any of the huckstering now allied to films... are all proof positive that there IS such a connection?))) Are you sure your dis-satisfaction with modern SF is due to its 'lack of plot' or simply due to their being much more written, which results in your having to wade through more stories to find those you like. ((This is certainly one factor...but take Analog...I've been a regular reader since 1932...its level has varied, but for the last ten years, it has got progressively more boring..not only to me, but to most of my correspondents/personal friends who have been reading it for more than 20 years.))) I have recently got my hands on some 40s & 50s anthologies and whilst I agree there is a greater sense of wonder in them, the proportion of them I like is no greater than the proportion of modern short stories I enjoy. (( OK, one final point. Publisher's are in it for the money..they know what sells/is popular. I'd suggest the percentage of reprints from before 1970 is far higher than from the last 14 years. Pick up the reprints you have..and check this out for yourself. This is of course a subjective argument..we are both right on an opinion basis..and of course, popularity/profit does not always equate with quality)))

BERNARD EARP

21 Moorfield Grove  
Tonge Moor  
Bolton

When I first came into fandom and saw reviews of all the fanzines, I thought, 'Wouldn't it be wonderful to get all the 'zines'. What I didn't

realise back then, was that 'zines have to be earned. One has to contribute articles, LOCs etc. ((Very true, Bernard..but many people NEVER see that point and expect eternal copies for no response at all))) So, the accused named a book or film! Well that was only what set them off. If not the book/film, something else would have acted as a trigger. (( OK, so let's not bother to control liquor sales..because something else will make a driver have an accident)))

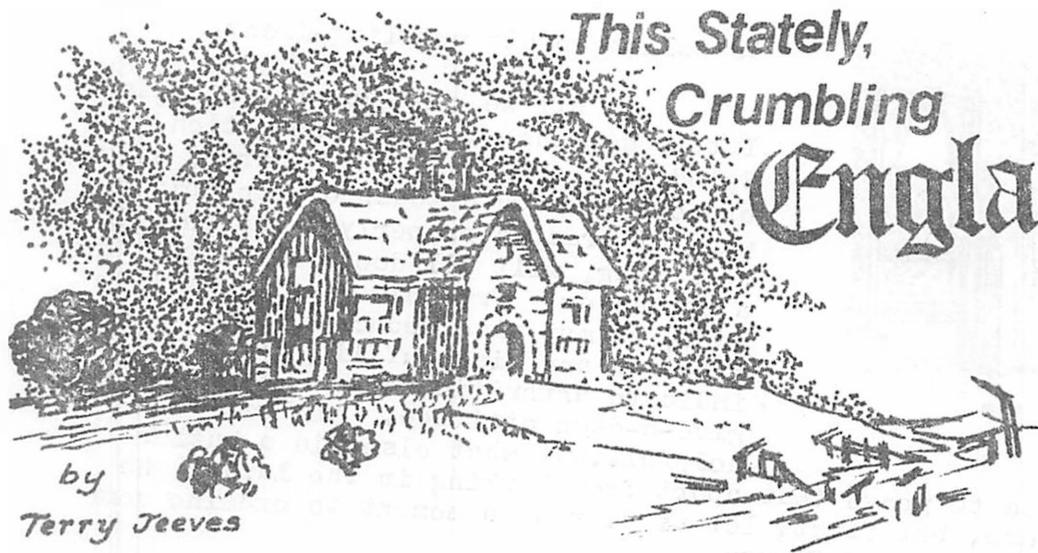
Perhaps the precise crime would have been different

but I hold that there would still have been a crime. Once you start, where do you stop and who is to draw the line? ((Look, chum..umpteen things can lead to murder...but banning guns has kept down a large segment of that activity. You can't stop ALL things criminal..nor can you lay down explicit definitions (can YOU define SF?) but we should make some effort to control what is obviously contributory...e.g. guns...and media by at the very least, a labelling/age system. As for the old canard..'how do you define or judge'...the way all law is...arbitrarily. Is it illegal to do 31 in a built up area..but OK at 29? Is a man wise at 18 than 17.99 The answer is we have to set some sort of a mark.))) DMBL is the best part of the 'zine, you have a r.i.c.e flowing style that shows your obvious affection for your subject and seemingly effortlessly conveys this to the reader.

(( Well as I always say, 'philately will get you a stamp collection..and in your case, you get the next issue of ERG. Now you others out there, take a note from Bernard's book...and respond. Remember, next issue is the one and only 25th Anniversary issue..and will NOT go to any on the doubtful list. Bestest, Terry )))



# This Stately, Crumbling England



by  
Terry Jeeves

One of the unchanging facts of life is that some things are never what they used to be. I realised this when I happened to read one of those old Gothic mystery novels written between the wars in the leisurely days of the thirties. Suddenly, I realised just how much the world has changed since those halcyon days when I read the lines...

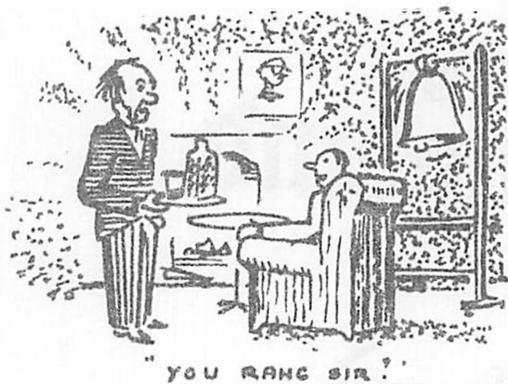
"He rang the bell for the butler...."

Now how many of us have ever done a thing like that? For that matter, why the hell couldn't the butler ring the bell for himself? Just a lazy flipping lot, these butlers, and in any case if you did ring a bell for the butler, the Butler's Union would call the lot of them out on a demarcation dispute within five minutes..you know the sort of thing...'Only a butler may ring a bell'

Whilst on the subject, just what did a butler do anyway? Did he buttle? I presume so, but did you ever see buttling defined? ..or declined or conjugated or whatever it was we used to do with all those French and Latin verbs. Should it be:- "I buttle, you buttles, we butttled all three? Or is the correct version..'buttlo, buttlas, buttlat, etc.? Nobody ever comes straight out with it, the butler lurks in his pantry and we read on through the ever-deepening mystery.

He rings the bell for the butler... and within a scant twenty minutes or so, the door creaks slowly open (all doors creak in this sort of story, oil hasn't been invented) and in totters the butler. He shambles across the thick pile of the carpet (carpets were always piled up somewhere, never laid out flat) and stands beside Lord Elpuzz. He coughs gently to awaken his Lordship, "You rang milord?" Which is a daft question as why the heck has he come if the bell wasn't rung?

"Ah yes, Splodgers" (Another common name for a butler might well be 'Jeeves') "Would you bring me a whisky-and-soda?" Splodgers retreats, the door closes silently behind him (During that twenty minute delay, he dug an oil well in the backyard, sturck oil and refined a canfull) and re-opens a scant half-hour later to reveal the butler bearing s silver tray laden with whisky decanter, soda syphon and a sparkling glass made of the finest cut-crystal. With a discrete cough, Splodgers places these on an occasional (well, not very often) table beside Lord Elpuzz and withdraws



to polish up his buttlng-irons.

All we can gather from this little sequence is the information that Splodgers (or Jeeves) is a darned slow old cretin with a touch of bronchitis who, if treated properly by having his bell rung, will oil doors and double as a bartender. From his query about the bell, we may also deduce that he is a bit deaf and his shuffling gait would indicate arthritis, corns or a don't-give-a-damn attitude. All very helpful..but what else did a butler

really do? I propose to prove that apart from lurking in the larder, he did a heckuvva lot more, but first, let us digress a moment to examine some of the other people around Lord Elpuzz.

First, there was the valet, a man who got paid to undress people. You try doing that job nowadays, and you'd get arrested..pity really as I'd love to be valet to Brigitte Bardot or Raquel Welch..and at a rock bottom rate..just enough to cover bare essentials for instance. After the valet came the scullion..but she never caught him as I gather she performed some sort of skulduggery in the scullery...a place where the old skulls were kept, perhaps? According to most books, scullions were always being got into trouble by their masters...which only shows how democratic the aristocracy was in those days..always ready to share a bed with a working girl. Then, there was a man servant who served the men, and a maid servant who served the women. No doubt there were some interesting variations on this theme.

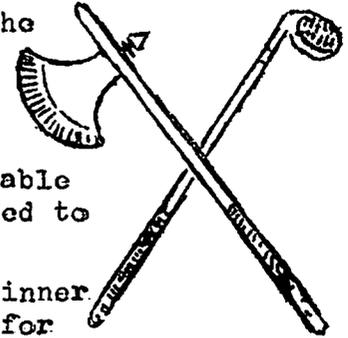
Another famous character was 'Jock' Strapp, an old and trusted Scottish retainer. He looked after the keys to the Manor and after her Ladyship when Lord Elpuzz was away. As a sideline, he emptied fag ash out of the suits of armour at regular intervals or helped out the gillie in his gulleys when the fish needed washing. Scattered around the grounds in positions suggesting they were alive, you could always find a gamekeeper or two, presumably their duties were to supervise fun and games in the Mansion, hand out 'Snap' cards or 'Monopoly' sets or an aphrodisiac (etc.,) to keep the guests happy. Incoming letters were transported to their recipients on a silver salver (whatever that was) along with a sinister Malayan kris with which to pry them open (remember this item). Nowadays, the postman shoves the mail through the letter box and the dog promptly chews it to ribbons. House visitors were beseeched to stay for a month or two and could only escape by using a hacksaw and chisel..or on production of a valid Death Certificate (theirs). Nowadays, mine host is damned glad if his guests buzz off before tea time, in case they hog all the crumpets. Very fond of his crumpet was Lord Elpuzz.

Hunting, shooting and fishing were favourite pursuits of Lady Elpuzz who loved to gallop off with her chief groom for a day's riding on the moors. Adept with a shotgun, she could whip out a Purdy and down a brace of gamekeepers in a flash and as to fishing, well, her Ladyship made it her personal duty to ensure the pantry was well stocked with trout, sturgeon, and the odd whale or two.

His Lordship invariably had a large country seat and would delight in showing it to his friends. The place generally had an East Wing, a West Wing and lacked only a Certificate of Airworthiness to get it airborne. Secret passages enabled guests to escape to their own bedrooms in case of fire and as a special treat, Lord Elpuzz would occasionally allow visitors to slide down the banisters flanking the Great Staircase. Such places were buried deep in the country and could only be reached along a narrow road which traversed a raging torrent by way of a rickety wooden bridge. There was but a single telephone line (which was easily accessible via a pair of steps kept handy for the purpose) and a handy mains switch allowed the power generator to be put out of action in a twinkling.

The hallway was festooned with suits of armour and the trimmings of many a battle. Battle-axes, halberds, moustache-cups and empty beer cans rubbed shoulders (or edges) with Helms, crossbows, frinkles and other impedimenta.

No such clutter is to be seen in the modern home. Successive depredations by Labour councils have taught the home-owner that survival is the name of the game...so that today's domicile is stuffed to capacity with hats, raincoats, gum-boots, life-jackets, distress rockets and an inflatable dinghy...plus all the other paraphernalia needed to cope with an English summer.



In those never-to-be recalled days, a dinner gong would give the early warning signal for guests (such as werewolves) to change for dinner. A second gentle tone would cause the visitors to shuffle silently and decorously to their places at the table. How dignified was the meal...soft-footed waiters (specially imported from Pakistan) served courses and retrieved dishes. Stiff white table napkins, candlelight glinting from the cut-glass and silverware. Above it all, the hum of genteel, intelligent conversation as the aristocracy discussed burning topics of the day or matters of momentous import.....

"....ought to send a gunboat up their river bai Jove"  
 "Yes, jelly well teach 'em to be civilised"... "Ooch Mr Smethers, you are a one..." ... "Do you know, Colonel Chotapegg thinks the world of his ordinary soldiers...He assured me the Army would be lost without its privates."

Beaming glassily from the head of the table sits Lord Elpuzz himself. Toying negligently with a hogshead of brandy on the one hand and his secretary, Miss Phitt on the other, he converses simultaneously both with her and with his wife..

To his wife..."Yes m'dear"

To Miss Phitt..."Perhaps a fur coat or a flat in town??"

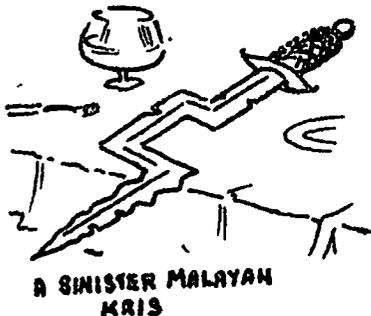
To his wife..."Yes m'dear"

His Lorship's head is swinging from left to right and back again like a Wimbledon tennis addict. This, coupled with the brandy as well as the progress of his financial finagling with Miss Phitt cause his head to spin. His blood pressure mounts..the spinning increases..with a sudden gasping gurgle, Lord Elpuzz slides gracefully beneath the table. Naturally, the other guests are too well bred to comment upon this and the temporary

absence of his Lordship is soon forgotten in the general jolly brouhaha.

An hour or so later, the guests adjourn for a stimulating game of ping-pong over their port and someone stumbles over the recumbent body of his Lordship. The ghastly truth is revealed...I quote...

"A sinister Malayan kris had been driven forcibly into His Lordship's torso. Entering between the third and fourth ribs on the right hand side, penetrating both lungs, severing the windpipe, perforating the aorta, stopping the heart, damaging the liver and finally emerging through the left clavicle, it had probably brought death almost immediately, if not even sooner....."



At this stage, one of the guests removes his false moustache to reveal that he is really that great amateur detective 'Ruffles' who always steps in to help out the FBI, Surete and Scotland Yard whenever the going gets tough. He stoops over the corpse..(at this point, a strange eerie trilling whistle is often heard)...

"Dead," exclaimed Ruffles as he straightened to face the guests. "Probably killed by this sinister Malayan kris which has been left in the body...the only weapon capable of going through all those organs in one trip." He paused for effect, and amazed whispers ran around at the unerring diagnosis of the great detective. Ruffles glared around.. "That means that someone here is a murderer!" he hissed through a small gap between his tightly clenched teeth.

Immediately, there is a clap of thunder, a storm breaks, rain pours down and a flash flood takes away the bridge. Someone cuts the 'phone line and the emergency light generator grinds to a halt. They are isolated with a homicidal maniac in their midst. Ruffles follows up clue after clue...each one leading to yet another body. Eventually, when all the guests have been killed, he has managed to narrow down the suspects. Ruffles knows who has done all the crimes....

He rings for the butler.... Splodgers probably did the old boy in because he was fed up with answering bells and carting booze. Naturally, he admits everything..before whipping out a sawn-off howitzer and wiping out Ruffles.

As I said, that's what the butler really did.

We don't have stories like that any more.

T.J

~~~~~  
An earlier version of this epic originally appeared in Ethel Lindsay's excellent.. 'Scottische' around 1968..but since fandom seems to change over every five years or so, probably not many ERG readers will have been able to experience the excruciating pleasure of reliving those old days. TJ  
~~~~~

Want a Gestetner duplicator? John Darwin has one to sell..contact him at 0742 667077 for details. Probably the best time would be during the day if you can manage it...but you can try evenings if you like.



WEBER WOMAN'S WREVENGE Jly '83 18 A4 pages hiding behind an off-putting cover and spattered with some more of Julie Vaux's doe-eyed efforts. Jean says the cover depicts a a woman (barbarian) defending her home and family. To me it looked more like she was about to sacrifice her offspring for dinner (What's that dead body in the background?). Editorial on Jean's personal troubles and a touch of discrimination and rape. Next comes an item on women's role/place..another on women as second features in SF and Fantasy yarns..there to be rescued etc. Kim Huett describes how she was humiliated (by men) but doesn't say what she did to merit the activity. More details (in a lighter vein) on Jean's hospitalisation and a stack of letters cleaving to rape, sexism, medical and more rape etc. in a LOC, Joy Hibbert euphemised.. "If I had decided to start a family.." To me that means first get married..but to her it is equivalent to getting pregnant'. Finally the issue rounds off with reviews of books by women and reviewed by women. If you're into sexism/rape/castration and such activities as the putting down of all men because some are no good..then this is your bag. In its favour...it has VITALITY..and Jean has something to say isn't of just drivelling on as so many faneds do. and of course..JEAN WEBER FOR GUFF  
 Jean Weber,..address as in LOC, Col...get it for trade/LOC/etc.

WHIMSEY.1 14 A4 pages from Jeanne Gomoll, 409 S Brooks St. Madison, WI 53715 USA...Another femizine..but more lighthearted. Editorial on Jeanne's living place, personal history, likes-dislikes etc. Very much a perzine as this rambles pleasantly along for all but the last half page wherein one meets a couple of LOCs. Nice, easygoing and friendly..and it doesn't slam all men as being an inferior race.

THE MENTOR..45 Convention Issue. 56, Qto pages from Ron Clarke, 6 Bellevue RD Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, AUSTRALIA. There's Chandler writing on Ellison (highly entertaining and informative). A short fiction item..better than most fanstuff. Two conreps..a corny cartoon and the conclusion of a fan fiction serial (!), then you're into masses of LOCs and an excellent set of book reviews. The Chandler is good, the LOCs likewise, but the reviews are perfect for both length..and content. NOT airy-fairy, clever-clever, but down-to-earth and informative...leaving YOU to decide if the title might be good or bad. Nice issue...get it for \$2 an issue..or the usual.

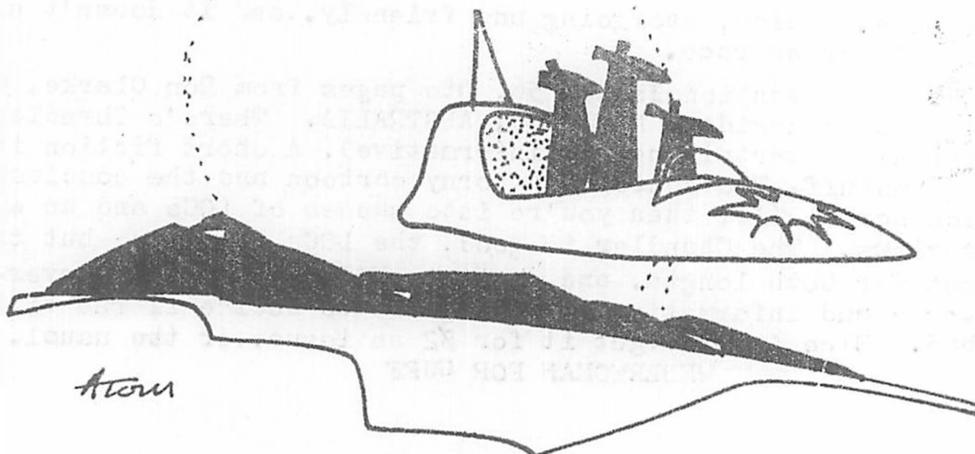
WEBERWOMAN FOR GUFF

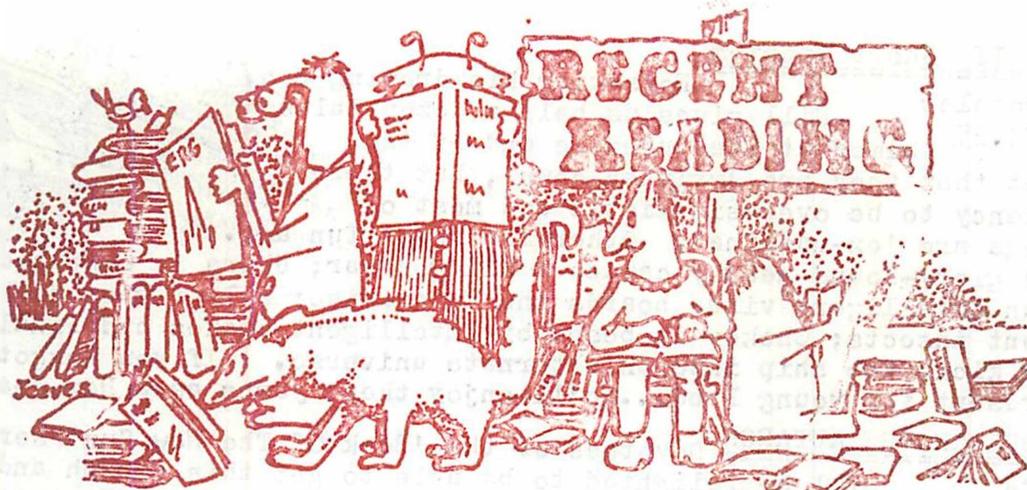
AD NAUSEAM 2 56, pages Offset, from Kevin Rattan, 23 Waingate Close, Rawtenstall, Rossendale, LANCs. This is Vector-sized, but the resemblance ends there..this isn't dull, dry, s&c stuff, but light-hearted and interest grabbing. Read about a fear of spiders...a chapter of accidents ..3 LOCcols (though I'm not keen on their fragmentary layout..the Locs seem more like comments on the 'interjections') There's a natter on Cons, book reviews of just the right length and style (Steve Gallagher) and even a bit on turkey processing! Gallagher also has an excellent diatribe against cinema presentations..I'd nominate him for fan writer of the year. More letters, a VD panic/treatment and a dig at the BSFA wind up a very good issue. Not a lot of art, but what there is neatly rounds out the zinc.

WALDO 7 32, A4 pages from Eric Bentcliffe, 17 Riverside Crescent, Holmes Chapel, Ches CW4 7NR Fun, friendly and fantasy without a trace of KTF or bickering in the modern style. Subjects include a hilarious piece by John Berry, a ditto by Mal Ashworth on con-going, editor's natter, pieces by Chuck Harris and Dave Wood. A lettercol and a piece by Hazel round out a superlative issue. Illustrations are profuse, EXCELLENT and hand-cut on stencil by the two undisputed masters of the trade..Jim Cawthorn and Arthur Thomson. All the old names which brought delight to the fifties are here..and all ready to repeat the process for the 80s. Eric only has a few copies...but he might let you have one for (say) 25p postage. The artwork alone is worth the price of admission.

OUTWORLDS 34 24pp. Qto. Mimeo The return (well it is rather irregular) of the long-lived zinc from Bill Bowers, 2468 Harrison Ave, Cincinnati, OHIO 45211...Letters are neatly interspersed among the articles..one telling of how to photograph a pregnancy..a couple of writers ramblings, George Martin and Alex Krislov..and Dave Locke splitting the difference by expounding on fan writing...two cartoons and a striking cover illo round out a neat mixed bag..get it for contrib or response. (I always wonder how one gets a first issue by the latter method)

MORLUG 3..A5, photolith, 19 pages (well he forgot to count the cover) from Steve Lines, Dol Guldur, 6 Woodroffe Sq., Calne, Wilts. SN11 8PW. Plenty of illos, some fan 'verse', a scattering of letters and various natterings on fanzines and things dear to the heart of the group which puts it out. The main slant is to Gothic fantasy and horror..but NOT in an overdone off-putting way. This is lighthearted and obviously a labour of love. Give it an issue or two and it will be a zinc to be reckoned with.





### 1984 YEAR BOOK OF ASTRONOMY

200+ parge size pages with a shade over half of them crammed with details of what can be seen in 1984 along with notes on how and where to see it. Monthly charts and information for both N and S Hemispheres - planets, lunar phases, eclipses, comets etc., are all covered along with diagrams and ephemerae.

Part 2 contains essays...on the new La Palma observatory; the Europa enigma; possibilities of a trans-Plutonian planet; the Galaxy's core; An astronomer's diary; using giant variables to probe the Galaxy; How the night sky of 50,000 AD will appear; and an essay on Halley and his comet, the latter dud back next year. Part 3 rounds off the volume with lists of miscellaneous astronomical data plus a list of local societies.

Professional and amateur astronomers will find this a mine of information and the astronomy-interested layman will find plenty of thought-foddor in the articles. Only one minor quibble..I'd like a few more (and clearer) photos and explanatory diagrams...the expert may not need them, but to a tyro like myself such lily-gilding is invaluable.

### PAWN OF PROPHECY

A preamble explains how there were seven gods, with one of them (Torak) stealing the Orb of Power. War ensues, the Orb is regained, then handed to the Riva clan for guarding against Torak's vengeance. Several thousand years pass, and we take up the story to follow the adventures of young Garion as he accompanies story-teller 'Wolf', Aunt Pol, and Durnik the smith on a quest for the Orb which has been stolen. They are joined by 'Silk' and Barak (who closely resemble 'Grey Mouser' and Fahfrd). As their quest proceeds, Garion, (who has a talent for always being at the right place to see or overhear things) discovers suprising facts about his companions..and about himself.. The magic is never overdone, nor are the villains allowed to lurk around every corner. Quibbles? Well the textual journeys do not match up with the maps (the group heads South to locate someone who has fled to the Nort'..and a tower is similarly misplaced)& 30+ miles is rather far for a 'nearby' village. Otherwise, a very well-written fantasy with excellent (and not overplayed) characters .... compulsive reading, and the good news is that there are no less than FIVE titles in the series..so if you're a fantasy addict...I fancy you'll enjoy the lot. Look for it among CORGI titles at your local bookstore.

STAR TREK II Short Stories

William Rotsler  
Sparrow £1.25

Forsaking his drawing pen:

Bill gives us half a dozen tales aimed at the juvenile end of the scale..not that they are 'written down', but there is a tendency to be over-simplistic and most of the endings are 'ex-machina'. Otherwise, have fun as a retired glory-hound nearly causes a Klingon war; Uhura is captured by rebels; an intelligent virus boards the Enterprise; a lost race enslaves intelligent insects; Chekov is beset by intelligent snakes and finally an ion storm kicks the ship into an alternate universe. If you forgot a last minute present for young Fred...he'll enjoy these yarns as a New Year gift.

THE CITADEL OF THE AUTARCH

Gene Wolfe  
Arrow £1.95

Devotees of the 'Book Of The New Sun' series will be delighted to be able to get this fourth and final (?) volume in paperback. Former apprentice Torturer Severian raises a dead soldier, is sent on a mission which leads him to the 'Last House' which has levels in different time zones. Sundry adventures befall him before an unexpected destiny unfolds. All the colourful characters and rich tapestry are here..but the yarn wanders more and seems rather padded out..by 'story in story' as in the Kai Lung tales of Branah. However, it goes without saying that if you got hooked on the earlier parts, then you will enjoy this one as well.

THE COMPLETE BOOK OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY LISTS

Maxim Jakubowski & Malcolm Edwards

Granada £2.95

350, A5-sized pages  
jammed with an

uncountable number of lists... 'Comic Strip Artists', 'Brothers & Sisters', 'SF Lawsuits' and 'Cult Movies' rub pages with 'Long Story Titles' ('Time Considered As A Helix Of Precious Stones' is too short for inclusion), 'SF Cliches', and 'Great Aliens', plus many, many more. Among the joys (or uses) for such a book, may be listed... 1. The sheer fun of reading it. 2. The delight (or chagrin) at finding a title included (or omitted). 3. Its use as a work of reference. Sadly item 3 is greatly hampered by the lack of any sort of classified index...so finding a specific list is very much a lucky dip. Nebula and Hugo Awards are here.. 'In J kes', 'Gimmicks', even 'Invisible Films'...but how come Bonestell, Schneefman and Rogers are missed from 'Leading American SF Artists'..when Lehr, Maitz, Whelan and the Dillons are included..I've never heard of any of 'em. Oh well, that's part of the fun of perusing this work..but I'd still have liked a generalised index.

2010

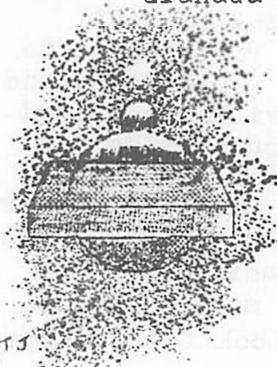
Arthur C Clarke  
Granada £1.95

A Russian spacecraft whose crew includes three U.S. scientists, is heading for Jupiter to recover the

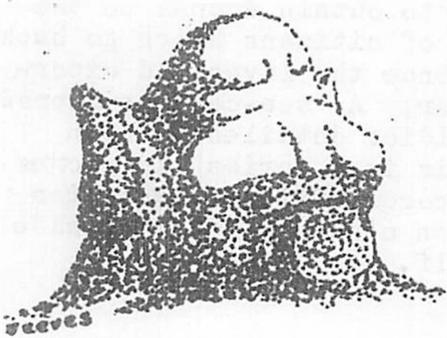
records of the ill-fated Commander Bowman's 'Discovery'; if possible, to salvage it, and to investigate the monolith. Numerous surprises await..a Chinese mission aiming to beat them to the Discovery; the re-energising of Hal; life on Jupiter and its satellites and even contact with Bowman.

To say more would give away too much of the yarn, but all the underplayed Clarke magic is there, with all the character's nicely explored and developed. As a founder member of the Clarke 'addicts club', I can heartily say, 'Don't miss it'. Will there be a sequel (The epilogue is titled '20,001')..who knows? ..but we can always hope.

(\* 2010...Michael Whelan did the cover...now I have heard of him)







KRULL  
 Alan Dean Foster Corgi £1.50  
 \*\*\*\*\*

A novel of the film from Columbia. The Krull world is blessed with two suns, troubled by mediaeval, inter-kingdom strife and the depredations of the 'Slayers' from the Fortress Of The Beast. Prince Colwyn of Turdor is uniting his kingdom with that of Eirig, by marrying the Princess Lyssa..but the ceremony is disrupted by 'Slayers'.

Aided by the seer Ynyr, Colwyn sets out to overthrow the Beast..and along the way acquires various forms of aid...the magic 'glaive', Reil the Cyclops, a band of escaped convicts, the incompetent magician

Ergo The Magnificent, and various other helpers. The book also contains eight pages of 'stills' (which sadly prove that the filmic Lyssia is a rather po-faced character as opposed to the more interesting one of the story). I must admit that these have put me off the film...but I found the yarn an enjoyable 'quest' saga...and the characters were well brought out and without the usual overload of baddies around the place. If you like sword & sorcery..then I feel pretty sure you'll like this one.

A DIRECTORY OF DEALERS IN SECOND HAND AND ANTIQUARIAN BOOKS  
 In The British Isles 1981-1983 Sheppard Press Ltd. £9.00

I heard of this and bought a copy to help me locate bookshops which may lie along my wanderings. It's so useful, I'm listing it here for those who love to browse. The main attraction is a geographical listing which gives the dealers by area..look up York and you have 'em. Sadly, not all; some dealers seem a bit shy. There are alphabetical indexes .. by dealer/shop name: by subject classification: by town. All keyed to the main listing which also gives any specialising done by the dealer. By some quirk, 'Phantasmagoria' is in..but 'Fantast (Medway)' isn't..(Come on Ken..let 'em know about you!). If you get around the country as I seem to do these days, then this is a MUST....an invaluable aid to book-hunting..of course, if you prefer to write, then this book may well help you trace that title you're after. For a bonus, there are also short lists of book-binders & repairers, book auctioneers and a list of periodicals about books. Sheppard also do similar volumes for North America, Europe, and South East Asia. You'll have to order a copy as your local dealer probably won't stock it..the ISBN No. is...0 900661 21 6 Get a copy, and next time you're out for a run and the wife says 'Let's go to Xyz'...look in your handbook and manage to drive past all the local bookshops.

LORD OF DARKNESS

Robert Silverberg  
Gollancz £9.95

This mammoth, 550+ page saga sees Silverberg turn from SF to the mainline theme (based upon a true incident) of sailor Andrew Battell. Elizabeth 1 is now on the throne, and emulating his father and brothers, Battell goes to sea. We follow his marriage, loss of wife and child and embarkation on a quick voyage to raise the money to wed a second. The 'one year voyage' is extended beyond his expectations..and along the way, Battell is marooned, imprisoned numerous times, beds various women, slavery, shipwreck and a host of other troubles befall him...including his fleeing into the jungle and being taken by the dreaded Jaqqas. Silverberg has written the yarn in the first person.. a difficult task, but one which he carries off brilliantly. Not only does this make one enter fully into empathy with Battell and his era, but it also allows the whole background to be taken as granted, without any tedious 'explanation'...Silverberg skilfully handles his material so that when a new word or custom is encountered ('new' to us, but old in usage) he leaves us in no doubt as to its meaning...we get the full flavour of the period, 'warts and all'. The jacket calls this a block-buster..I fully agree.

THE PRIDE OF CHANUR

C.J.Cherryh  
Methuen £1.95

Feline, Pyanfur Chanur (skipper of 'The Pride of Chanur') is loading cargo at a neutral spaceport when a strange (but intelligent) creature escapes from the alien 'kif' and takes refuge aboard her ship. The kif attack and pursue the Pride through interstellar 'jumps'. Taking refuge in an asteroid stream, Pyanfur opens communications with her alien..who proves to be human and for some strange reason, of inestimable value to all. Things slow down considerably until she makes her escape bid..but even then, there is little tension and all the menace seems rather 'offstage'. Throw in the tongue-agonising names...kif, knn, stho, chi, gfi and I found the yarn unwieldy and slow-paced. I did wonder if the Pride's crew were all feline to allow of a bit of inverted chauvinism..but this is academic as they never really come alive. Sorry, but not on (in my estimation) of Cherryh's best.

LITTLE, BIG

John Crowley  
Methuen £1.95

Smoky Parnstable walks through dreamlike lands to wed Daily Alice Drinkwater, member of a large family dwelling in an isolated house and living off undisclosed income. Alice is party to a strange magic (One brother can photograph invisible beings, another traded with them to acquire power over the local girls...and thus increased the local population). Gradually, their strange 'Tale' unwinds..talking fish and birds, labyrinthine side issues and overall, a fairy-tale world appears. Reminiscent of a less-menacing 'Gormenghast', this isn't an easy read...it has a massive 500+ small print pages..but if you persevere it's a delicate feast of fantasy and strangeness.

EASY TRAVEL TO OTHER PLANETS

Ted Mooney Arena £2.95

Melissa works with (and has been seduced by) a dolphin. Her lover Jef is also having an affair with (married) Cecilia, whilst her mother who is a terminal bronchial case, plans to coax her boyfriend away from his wife to comfort her last days...and she is also interested in Jef's brother...oh yes, and Melissa's friend Nicole is pregnant by Diego, but won't marry him lest she lose her free TWA travel pass. Jef also has a twin brother Kirk. If all that sounds a bit like your favourite soap-opera, take heart. It is also blessed with a touch of fantasy (no hint of space travel) and abrupt changes of venue and narrative tense. Plenty of explicit (and rather crude) sex sequences, use of drugs...in short something to please every one of the 'new thinkers( and lovers of experimental and innovative writing. Make up your own mind about it.

26 HABITATION ONE

Frederick Dunstan  
Fontana £1.75

The 26th Century, all Earth is desolated save for the 1200 barely literate survivors living a bucolic existence on the tower-encircling disc of 'Habitation One'. Then Librarian Settle discovers a strange artifact (a gun) and a horrific chain of events ensues as an attempted rape brings a sadistic revenge...necrophilia and cannibalism follow, along with open warfare between priests and Council. Each problem-solving attempt worsening the situation. Niggles? Where did 'yo-yo' come from to replace 'Bouncer? Where did the angel come from? Can humans with broken legs and shattered spines perform as indicated? Nevertheless, a first novel of great impact..Mr. Dunstan is only 22, so I suspect we have a new SF star rising in the literary firmament.



THE VANDAL

Ann Schlee  
Magnet £1.50

Technology has reached the point where individual memories can be eliminated by means of 'The Drink' which limits recall to three days. Essential items are recorded in a computer-like 'Memory' before retiring. 16 year old Paul rebels by setting fire to a public building and is sentenced to do welfare work.. which puts him in contact with a family which can remember past events. Using contraband paper, he makes memory-jogging notes and further rebellion follows. This is a juvenile..and sadly, will probably only appeal to boys since the token girl is very much off-stage. A pity, as I found the yarn more compulsive than many an 'adult' novel with a down-played 'menace' which proved all the more powerful for being understated. Real 'what if?' fiction to make one think about just how society might be made to tick if those people who 'know what is good for us' ever got into power.



THE HAMLYN BOOK OF HORROR AND SF MOVIE LISTS

Roy Pickard  
Hamlyn £1.95

No apology is needed for yet another 'list book' in the case of this little gem. For openers, it has a Contents page which allows one to find items without a long hunt. Then again, it sticks to its film theme and is thus a handy reference-cum-quiz-setting-or-solving book. Perhaps its greatest advantage is that there is little of the irritatingly subjective..'Fred Bloggs 97 Favourite Film Titles", but objective (and therefore useful) compilations...Movie Award Winners, Star Trek episode, Frankenstein films, Cushing's films, King Kong's Statistics, Running times, Box Office winners(in terms of dollars), Price films, Poe films, Pal films, cameramen, composers, stars etc and etc. There's even a 16 page photo supplement. In short, if you have any interest in Horror/SF movies, then this is the MUST title to have on your shelves alongside 'Future Tense', and Strick, Frank and Haining works. A steal at the price.

BATTLEFIELD EARTH CALENDAR... Many, many thanks to Fred Harris for sending me a copy of this superb job... a large-sized painting by Frazetta of a scene from the book, and beneath it, a monthly tear-off calendar section which includes birthdates for many SF notables..heck Don Wollheim and I have the same day (Oct.1) but he has 8 years start on me. If you'd like a copy (\$4.95 + \$1pp)(say 7 bucks)..write to..1984 SF Calendar, PO Box 147, Fountain Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90029, USA. Renewed thanks, Fred..your letter arrived two days after the calendar..it'll look great in the den.

THE GOSPEL FROM OUTER SPACE

A first glance made me think this was a 'send-up' joke book..until I discovered the multiplicity of cartoons Robert Short Fount £1.50 are there to point up the text (as well as catch the eye of the browser and sweeten the pill). Not that much sweetening is needed as this is a serious (rather saccharine) attempt to link SF ideas with 'religion'. As an established atheist, I disagree with the basic premise that life must have been started for a 'meaning'..and don't accept the author's view that atheism means 'nihilism' and an anarchy of 'anything is permitted'. My own theory is that since we have seemingly long lives, we should try to make them as enjoyable as we can both for ourselves and others.

Mr. Short follows the 'we're going to hell in a bucket' theme with technology rampant. In a muddled and dogmatic vein he takes chapters on '2001', 'outer Space', 'Close Encounters' etc, and uses quotations and cartoons to show that life's meaning and purpose is to follow God. Enjoy the cartoons, give the book to anyone who does 'have religion', but for me..I have yet to receive a satisfactory answer to...'If God must have created Man as Man didn't just happen..then who must have created God?' (Incidentally, what sort of Narcissus would create a humanity whose sole purpose was to praise him?)

DEMON

Unprecedented storms lead to the release in Ivor Watkins a Welsh valley, of a dormant elemental. It Futura £1.95 operates through the sub-normal Dewi (who uses words such as 'leviathan'). Anyone mistreating him meets an inexplicable end. Engineer Casson has various escapes..which are further complicated when a disaster frees the inmates of a mental prison. Characters tend to be cardboard, their deeds improbable (but fitting to the story). The whole yarn is a gripping epic of horror and violence ... skilfully enhanced by the relentless build up of the menace. The ending is rather weak and flaccid, but otherwise, a rattling good thriller.



FLOATING DRAGON

Strange killings, the escape of an 'intelligent' poison gas cloud and a multitude of characters Peter Straub Fontana £2.50 fill this yarn..not to mention young Tabby Smithfield and Patsy McCloud who both possess psi talents. A 300-year old menace (which operates on each generation) is seeking out descendants of its original enemies..this, alongside the random depredations and hallucinations caused by the gas. You'll need a card index to keep tabs of characters; narrative viewpoints and scene changes, but once you get the hang of it, it's a real block-buster of over 600 pages. My only quibble is that one never quite pins down from which angle the threats are coming.

TWO LAST-Minute items. McGraw Hill have introduced a new range of micro books and allied program tapes..including one for 9 year olds! Mainly for Dragon and Spectrum..but a couple of items are in BBC Basic. Now I'm waiting for 'em to do one on BBC Assembly or Machine Code. Prices are reasonable..and in many cases...tape and book are to be used together.

ITEM 2..is a postman-killing, 153 page! issyue of Eric Lindsay's mammoth world trip report. Only 100 copies so order early from 6 Hillcrest Ave, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, AUSTRALIA. No price listed, so contact Eric for what will surely be a collector's item..but sadly, not a single illo (no, not even a married one, Mavis).

GUEST REVIEWS...by Michael A Banks

MICROREF QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE: WORDSTAR

Educational Systems Inc. Wilmette. Ill.

Learning a word processing program as complex as Wordstar is very

tine-consuming, and certainly cannot be done in one sitting. A full course in Wordstar takes over 16 hours! Because of this, many users prefer to learn as they go, studying the basics of the program, then jumping in and creating documents by studying individual features as they go. Whether your approach is to learn to swim by jumping right in, or to follow through the entire Wordstar course before working with Wordstar, you'll find this little guide very handy. It eliminates the need for wading through page after page of the manual, seeking one bit of knowledge. The book (4 1/2" x 9") is spiral-bound and so constructed as to hold itself up in a convenient reading position. After an introduction, an illustration of the main Wordstar Menu and some preliminary notes and summaries, the book breaks down into such main topics as, 'Using Block Operations', 'Headings and Footings', and 'File and Disk Maintenance'. Under each topic, the appropriate operations are summarised, with the necessary keystrokes illustrated. Also included are a review and a summary of commands. The reader can access information by topic by either using the Table of Contents and Index, or by flipping through a series of Tabs like those on the pages of personal telephone directories. If you have Wordstar and don't yet know it like your own keyboard, you'll find this reference guide very useful. (M.A.B.)

THE FOOLPROOF GUIDE TO SCRIPSIT WORD PROCESSING

+++++

Jeff Berner Sybex Press 179pp \$11.95

If you have had to teach yourself how to use a word processing program without

outside help, you'll appreciate a book such as this. Not that all documentation for word processing programs is bad or difficult to understand, but most of it is lacking in one way or another. Out of necessity, documentation is written before many users have had a crack at the program. It thus misses potential rough spots in a program that users may later uncover.

'The Foolproof Guide' is just what the title implies. It takes the reader through SCRIPSIT for TRS80 Models 11,12 and 16, step-by-step, assuming no prior knowledge of SCRIPSIT on the part of the reader. Of course, this does not restrict the book's audience to neophytes; if you already have SCRIPSIT, you'll find this book to be an eye-opening guide which covers the potentials and problems of Scripsit well. The book is set in large, easy to read type, supported by illustrations showing relevant screen displays that the user will encounter. Topics covered include everything from the simple, 'Formatting A Diskette' and 'Opening a Document', to the complex 'Base Document Preparation and Merge File Preparation' and 'Personalising Keys'. A handy 'reminders and Tips' section rounds out the book. Recommended. (M.A.B.)

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THIS HAS BEEN ERG85 For January 1984.

Remember...the next issue, April 1984...will be ERG's 25th Annish.

Get your review material...and orders for copies..in early.

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THE JESUS INCIDENT..Herbert/Ransom..£1.20  
SONGS FROM THE STARS..Spinrad..90p  
BLIND VOICES..Reamy..80p THE UNCERTAIN MIDNIGHT..Cooper..80p  
CINNABAR..Bryant..60p  
PAWN OF PROPHECY..Eddings..£1.20 COMPLETE ASTROLOGY..OKEN..£2.50  
COMPLETE ASTROLOGY..OKEN..£2.50  
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STEVE JACKSON'S SORCERY (boxed pr. of books..'The Sorcery Spell Book'...&...'The Shamutanti  
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THE VANDAL..Ann Schlee..80p HABITATION ONE..Frederick Dunstan..£1.00  
EASY TRAVEL TO OTHER PLANETS..Ted Mooney..£1.50 THE PRIDE OF CHANUR..C.J.Cherryh..£1.00  
LITTLE, BIG..John Crowley..500+ jammed pages..£1.50

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Mainly as new/good unless otherwise stated

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CYBERNIA..Cameron..60p NOVELLA 3..Ed. Bova..70p  
THE YEAR'S BEST SF 7 & 8.. Ed.Harrison/Aldiss..70p each  
SF HALL OF FAME.(The Novellas)..Ed. Bova..70p  
THE CYBERNETIC BRAINS..Jones..50p..(shabby)  
STALKING THE WILD PENDULUM..Bennov..90p..('cosmic consciousness')  
THE SECRET PEOPLE..Wyndham..70p INFERNO..Niven/Pournelle..90p  
BRAINRACK..Pedlar/Davis..80p JUPITER PROJECT..Benford..80p  
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