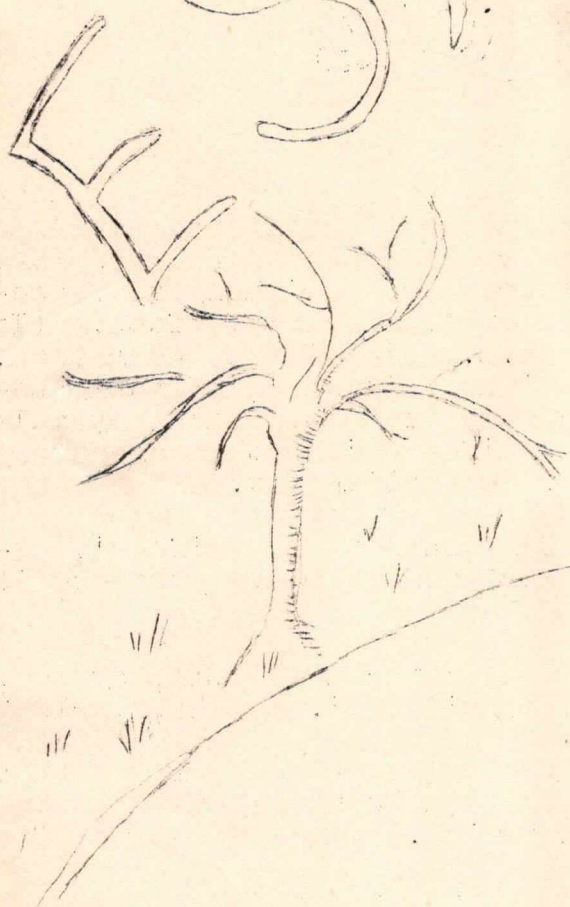


ESPERANTO

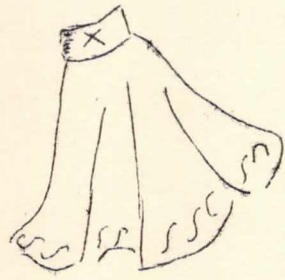
CHRISTMAS
NUMBER
1954



FANNE

TO

FENNE



Greetings ! In case you haven't noticed it, there are no less than five women fans in OMPA and one more on the waiting list It is time we agreed on a suitable term for the feminine of fan, don't you think ? We have been referred to variously as femme-fans, fanettes, fannes and, this latest from Pamela, fams. (If there are any other versions in the U.S., I'd like to hear them. M-1 ?) I, personally, have an aversion to 'femme', probably because when I was about twelve it was the fashion among my male contemporaries to refer to all women as 'femmes' in the derogatory tones reserved by them for speaking of the ruling sex.

'Fanette' puts one in mind of flannelette and 'fams', although having the virtue of being short and snappy, puts one in mind of hams.

Those amongst you who are amateur detectives will, by now, have deduced that I have a preference for 'fanne'. Well, girls ?

Not that any agreement we may come to (unlikely as that is in itself) is likely to have any influence on the rest of Fandom. Still, there's no harm in trying.

* * * * *

ESPRIT is produced by DAPHNE BUCKMASTER of 1, Grove Cottages, London Road, Camberley, Surrey, for the Off-Trail Magazine Publishers Association.

Duplication by STUART MACKENZIE of 5, Hans Place, London, S.W.1.

This magazine is seriously and constructively humourous and truthfully fictional, an attempt to synthesise an unanalysable element into the compound of Fandom.



F A N N E G E N E S I S



I notice that most fen, have, at some time or other, published their fan-life story if only in a 'potted' form. I haven't yet seen any autobiographies from my fellow-fenne though, so here's mine for a start.

The first book I can remember reading (that should have been s-f book) was H.G.Wells' "Invisible Man", which I discovered at the age of eleven. I found it rather dull but, fantastic literature being so rare, I plodded through it. I did not live near one of the street markets which seem to have formed part of the early environment of most fen and thereby missed the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the American magazines. Even had I seen any of them it is doubtful whether I should have bought one - for the following reason: I had been eagerly snatching at such titles as "The Purple Comet" or "The Phantom Train" which appeared occasionally in comics but I soon became disillusioned about these. The former would deteriorate into a fight with purple monsters and in the latter the "Phantom" would turn out to be nothing but a front put up by criminals. Even at that age I had no interest in action stories and so the covers of the pulps would have been enough of a deterrent to me, as they have been to so many other potential fans.

Meanwhile I tried the rest of Wells', Doyles' "Lost World" Haggard's "She" and other classics. I picked up such crumbs of fantasy as were dropped incidentally into ordinary books; mysterious happenings in the Fifth Form and ghosts in old mansions.

This state of affairs continued until about the end of the war when my brother began buying the British Editions of Astounding and Unknown. For a long time I scorned them but, after continual urging on his part, I at last gave in and tried one. That, of course, was my downfall. Or up rising. How long it was between then and the time when I bought a copy of the first issue of "New Worlds", which was to put me on the road to Fandom, I do, not remember.

I bought "New Worlds" from a station bookstall, wanting something to read on the train (but don't tell that to EJC) It filled me with joy. "Astounding" was rather a heavy meal for anybody new to the field and "New Worlds" was light and entertaining. I looked out for No.2. and it was in either this or No.1. that I saw an advertisement for the British Fantasy Library, then being run by Ron Holmes.

The B.F.L. provided me with books and American Magazines

in profusion and with the first fanzine I had seen- Operation Fantast. This was really something. At last - contact with other readers! In O.F. appeared a letter from which I learnt that the London Circle met every Thursday not five minutes walk from where I was working!

Now, had I been a man this would have been the end of the story but I was (and still am) a woman and could I walk alone and un-introduced into that stag gathering? I could not.

On two occasions I got as far as the door but could not pluck up the courage to go in. Once I even persuaded my brother to take me in and we sat at the other end of the bar from most of the mob. Unfortunately my brother at that time was even shyer than I was and neither of us could think of a way of introducing ourselves. So we left.

Fate, however, took pity on me. It was announced (in O.F. I think) that a convention was to be held and would anybody who wanted to come please write to John Newman? This I could do and did not hesitate.

And so it was that, having introduced myself, I found it easy to turn up at the Whitcon in 1948 and announce myself. I was in!

Two incidents of that occasion come to mind.

The first is that sometime during the evening one of the men approached me and asked me if I were enjoying it. I replied that the trouble was that there were so few women to talk to upon which he answered immediately that that was his trouble too. From what I can remember of his appearance and even more from the content of his remark I now believe that this was none other than Ron although I was not to meet him again until a year later.

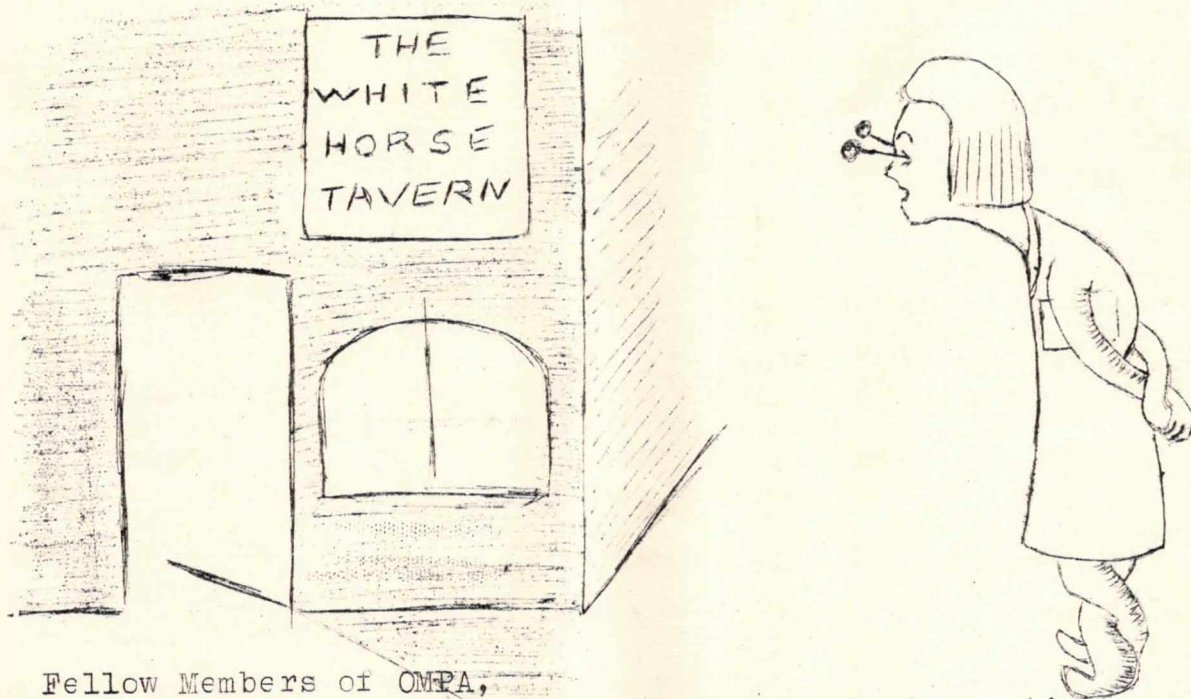
The other event occurred during a discussion that started later on. The beer (it had not acquired an aspirate at that time) had been flowing quite fast and the subject under dissection was the ethics of nudism. After a little while one of the men (not a well-known fan so don't start guessing who it might have been) remarked that it would, perhaps, be wiser to stop this discussion as not only was there a lady present but she was too young to be listening to such things! I was the only lady present and I replied that I was twenty two. This the fan flatly refused to believe but I insisted that I was then he insisted on seeing my identity card, a thing which we all carried at that time or were supposed to. On seeing it he seemed at first to be trying to make up his mind between two alternative possibilities namely: a) I was twenty two and b) I indulged in forgery. Apparently the latter seemed even more unlikely than the former because at last he apologised but for some time afterwards he would look at me in a bewildered way and mutter to himself.

After that I came to the White Horse regularly and, except for a couple of efforts which I wrote for Vinç's S.F.N., I settled

down to the inactivity for which the White Horse was so famous.

This last year's burst of frantic activity, with the production of 'i' and, now, the formation of OMPA has caught me up in its mob enthusiasm and here I am typing my first-ever stencils and hoping they make a good impression. On the wax, I mean. I'm quite cereous.

Well, there you are with my past in front of you - brother, you'd better turn round. You're travelling the wrong way.



Fellow Members of OMPA,

I feel it is my duty to mention a gross act of blasphemy which appeared in the last mailing. The truly religious among you will have noticed it already and will, I am sure, agree with me that such a ~~xx~~ heresy should not be allowed to pass unremarked.

I refer, of course, to a magazine produced by Pamela Bulmer, the title of which is quite obviously an anagram of the Great Name of GHU; and one, moreover, with the most unpleasant connotations.

Such blatant irreverence is all the more deplorable coming from one who is not only the favourite concubine of the wellknown Trufan H.K. Bulmer but has actually been laughed at by WILLIS.

What is the cause of this sudden infidelity in one so young and, hitherto, faithful? Is there corruption in the ranks? ~~Are~~ there OOGcists at work among us? Let us check this menace before it gets a hold. Already there are signs that it is spreading. Member Thorne's Omrazine was half eval.

I call on all Trufans to rally to the call and expel this destructive influence from the midst of OMPA before it is too late.

Meditation

In recent years we have become used to many forms of advertising, from the giant road hoardings announcing unequivocally that everyone uses a certain kind of petrol, to the sedately worded little appeals to vanity of a certain provincial newspaper.

Yet it is with surprise and pleasure that one comes upon a more modest and subtle form of advertising than any yet encountered, at least by this writer. In essence, it is an advertisement concealed within another.

Only those with an alert and enquiring mind will have spotted the offer hidden in an advertisement in the first issue of MORPH. Perhaps it is not so much an offer as a piece of information - that of how to obtain the much-sought-after and legendary NIRVANA.

One is informed that it may be obtained by contemplation of the navel.

This piece of intelligence will have been eagerly digested by those who, although having the aforementioned alert and enquiring mind, have not been privileged to subscribe to the most elite magazine of all time.

Further thought, however, will have brought to light the subtle diabolicalness of the author. In fact, no useful information has been given. One is not told, for instance, how long this contemplation must go on. Nor is it vouchsafed to us to know whether such contemplation may be used, with an equal effect, to obtain back numbers. Even more important, does one use one's own navel or that of a partner, and if the latter, should it be that of a person of one's own sex?

These and other questions will be causing many a would-be reader to tear his hair in frustration. Yet, perhaps, to ascribe all this to the deliberate intention of the author of the advertisement would be unjust. Remembering the well-known inadequacy of the brilliant intellect in matters of mundane practical importance, it is at least possible that, in writing as he did, the great BULMER, for it could have been none other, was satisfied that he was making a generous gesture to the masses or at least to the members of OMPA.

A man of lesser genius, but with a more pragmatic turn of mind would, one feels, have given the information in a

more useful form.

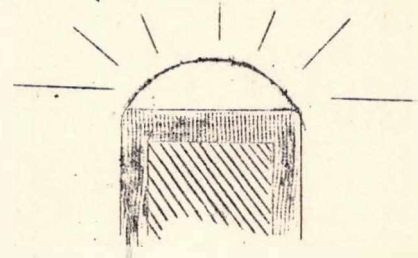
"Take a piece of white chalk and, starting at the letter box, draw a dotted line down the front door, and along the floor into your study. Close the door and sit quietly contemplating until the next postal delivery is due. Then rise immediately, cut quickly along the dotted line, stamp the doormat with the right-foot (lick your boot first), kneel with your face towards Catford, and hope. If the desired copy fails to arrive inside ten minutes, the whole procedure must be gone through again."

Something like that could have let us know where we are. Oh well, we can only wait. Perhaps the intention is to give us one clue per mailing in a different magazine each time. A sort of treasure hunt.

It would be one way of keeping OMPA going.

.....

REVELATION



Slowly and painfully he struggled out of the shackles and crawled towards the stairs that led from the dark wet cellar. There was a dim grey light filtering through a crack near the ceiling, and it was this that drew him on. Step by step he dragged himself up the stone stairs. At last he reached the top and found himself at the end of a long passage. The light was stronger and already he was beginning to feel half-alive. He crawled faster now, and soon reached the corner where the passage joined another. He turned and, at the end of this second passage, he could see the large main door of the house. As he approached it the light became brilliant and he realised that through the door was the full light of Fandom which he had been unconsciously seeking. Eagerly he stretched his hand towards the latch and in doing so, looked up. Immediately he fell back to his knees. Above the door was a sort of glass partition and through this the light of Fandom streamed.

He could not move.

He had seen the Fanlight.....

Letters

Since there are no letters for this first issue, I might as well use the space to write a letter myself to my wonderful readers. (Well, you must be if you've got this far, assuming, of course, that you started from the beginning. If you didn't then you're cheating me and I will trust you to delete the adjective from your copy. Thank you.)

First I want to say that all letters received (optimist!) will be treated as highly confidential and published in the next issue. This includes love letters but excludes proposals of marriage which will be dealt with strictly in rotation. Or just dealt with strictly. All other propositions, bribes, etc., should be sent by return of post not later than at least a day in advance, except blackmailing letters, in which case write in invisible ink.

It is forbidden to deface any drawings of nudes by the addition of such vulgarities as beanies or zapguns, but moustaches, if artistically executed, are excepted from this rule. Nudes should not be taken at their face value.

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About the heading to this section. This title was chosen after due consideration and even a little thought. I do realise that it is highly original and not a little daring, but I trust you will broaden your minds and try to accept this departure from convention. The thing which, I foresee, is most likely to cause shock is the fact that (dare I say it?) there is NO PUN in it. Another thing is that it is the sort of title which is often used in -- er -- non-fannish publications. Now wait. Don't look so disgusted; I don't mean to be blasphemous. I think that all OMPA members will agree that we must face the facts of life fairly and squarely and, if such things as non-fannish publications exist, then there is no sense in hiding the fact from our neo-fans.

I had thought of using 'Letters to the Editor' but on second thoughts decided that it was too reminiscent of newspapers and would therefore not be suitable, since some, at least, of ESPRIT will be devoted to facts.

Unless otherwise stated, all material in ESPRIT is written by myself and any resemblance to a fanzine is purely coincidental.

And now, fen and fenne, let us drink a toast - to OMPA. In fact, let us have an Omperitif. Not that we need one - judging by the first mailing. I am looking forward to the next with ill-concealed ompatience.

Au relire.

THE ROAD TO FAN DELAYED

By Ron Buckmaster

When I was twelve, science-fiction was already the cream in my Percy F. Westerman coffee. At school my home was a bedside locker two feet square and pocket money was half a crown once a blue moon. Every Saturday afternoon I walked four miles to Dover and made a beeline for the Americans stall in the market. Here I read frantically until Nemesis in a market apron with significantly jingling leather pouch approached. Three penn'orth of my heart's blood would then purchase immunity for another hour and an Astounding redolent of ink - fresh ink. One mag was all I could buy but my elastic-sided conscience allowed me stealthily to exchange the last week's, inside my coat, for another ration to satisfy my ravening hunger. When the market closed I would stagger, drunk with my power as the Gray Lensman, to the steps of the square (where David Copperfield once stood) eager to rape my new acquisitions.

Nothing can ever be so poignantly sweet again as the heady scent drawn into my ecstatic nostrils at that moment, accompanied by the soft shri-i-p of inkstuck pages. Homo Sapiens is definitely not sapient when he deserts such innocent pleasures for an adult world of petrol fumes and the agonised scruch of maltreated gear-boxes. (Ashworth has a lot to answer for?)

But I was not content with merely reading s-i and fantasy. Three nights a week after lights out in the dormitory, my voice was to be heard telling stories. We used to take turns at it. 'Tarzan in the City of the Future' ran for six months while 'The Vampires of Guston Cemetery' never did finish. It is possible that the effect of this last tale was heightened by the fact that Guston Cemetery was actually visible from the dormitory window!

As soon as I left school I joined the Army and since then have had the doubtful honour of being the only fan in Chepstow, Aldershot, Bury (Lancs) Petersfield, Swindon, Colchester, Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, Rhodesia, the Belgian Congo, Somaliland, Eritrea, Abyssinia, The Sudan and Egypt. In fact I began to think I was the only fan in the world.

I stayed in the country of the blind until, one wintry day, on leave, I went to visit my grandmother. Now grandmother never left me a penny, but - the results of that visit!

THE BUS STOPPED AT THE CORNER OF WENDOVER WAY.

A moment later a raincoated, ferly figure sat beside me and opened an American ASF.

"You like that stuff?" I asked, tentatively displaying a BRE.

"Well, as a matter of fact", (would he say 'Well it makes a change from Westerns'?) "I never read anything else - Neither do I - gabble - George O. Smith - gabble - Isaac Asimov - gabble gabble - White Horse Thursday nights - gabble - Welling station got to go

now. See you next week."

My body left the bus two stops later and plodded its sedate way homewards.

My mind, though, lit out for far planets and pastured new. There it gambolled madly like a newborn lamb, afire with the wondrous, implausible, rightness of life.

Part of me is still up there cavorting. Another part has been a fixture at the London Circle and at all the Cons ever since. Some low conniving on my part secured a posting to Woolwich as a Christmas present for 1948. Further conniving secured me the only femme fan then at the White Horse as an accomplice in the first Trufan marriage, thus combining two hobbies in one swell foop.

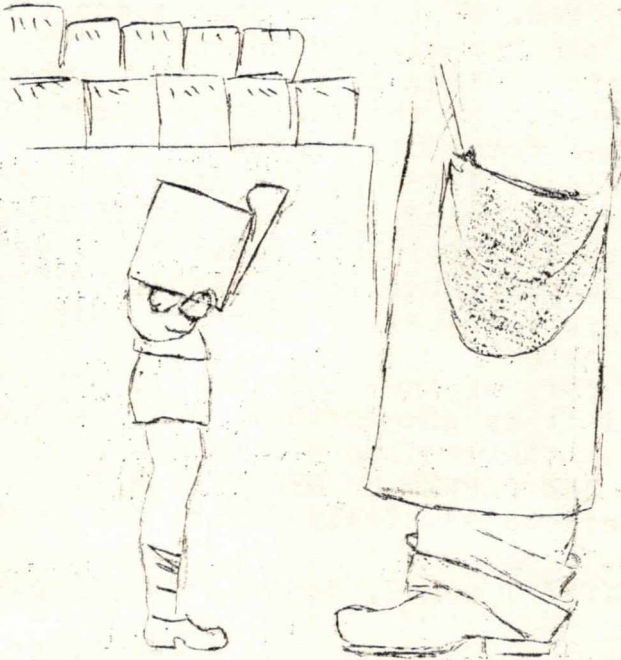
Her insatiable feminine curiosity enabled me to lure my sister Pamela to the White Horse. And just think - if I had not you would never have had the pleasure of reading UGH!

I tried to complete the fan family by bringing my brother Eric along, once to a con and once to the White Horse, but now he has strayed from the fannish path and gone to live in Coventry.

My own fanatic will not be very profuse for the next year because I am attending an intensive course in computers and servo-mechanisms. This course must also provide an excuse for the non-completion of my own design of taperecorder. When that is completed bells will chime in joyous abandon and fandom will resound with the cry,

BUCKMASTER IS A GENIUS

* * * * *



CRITIQUE

At the risk of being accused of sex discrimination, I am going to say that I thought 'Caprice' and 'Ugh' were two of the most entertaining contributions to the first mailing. Ignoring, for the moment, the contents, and concentrating on front covers alone, is it significant that these, the only two so far from the female side of OMPA, were also the only two to portray a woman on the front?

We are used to hearing from men that only men can really appreciate feminine beauty. They (men) are the best hairdressers dress designers, painters of beauty and writers of poems on beauty. Yet here we have twenty two productions from the men of which, only two show any artistry in this direction - one is hiding in the inside pages and the other is covered with confusion at finding itself on the front cover. On the other hand, there are only two contributions from the women members and both of them, that is 100% of them, have a boldly romantic (if that's the right word) front cover. Incidentally my own cover for this mailing was done before I noticed the foregoing facts and not in order to keep up the percentage.

There is one possible explanation which I can foresee coming from the men. It is that we women are not sure of the value of our writing so throw in something that we know will be appreciated just to divert attention. In fact the traditional feminine characteristic of relying on visual appeal. To this I would say that both Marie-Louise's saga of relatives and Pamela's account of her Northern Ireland visit, were both of a highly fannish standard in my opinion.

Still on the subject of covers, I found Dysteleology's most amusing - the versatile actions of Ving's triangle men are a constant novelty (or is that paradoxical). And Morph's cover was very well designed - a most pleasing shape indeed.

MY FIRST REAL CONVENTION was the most original con-report I've read and it is fast becoming time that conreports were original. Good work.

ZYMIC I liked, especially the Rules for Family Parties and the example of Faan. Instalment Plan sounds interesting. Let's hear some more about it.

In spite of its ghastly cover the contents of AAAH are extremely readable in Trufan tradition. I am agog to know what happens next.

Nigel Lindsay's piece I left till last as, from the first few paragraphs, I judged it to be a serious piece about birds. How wrong I was!

NOW AND THEN was most entertaining. Are we going to hear about the Scottish Dancing as well?

STEAM and DYSTELEOLOGY were up to their authors' usual standard. 'Nuff said.

The best things about MORPH were the front cover, already mentioned and the limerick which I thought very ingenious. As for the introduction part, I'm inclined to agree with Potter that these things are much alike from everybody. Yes, I know I've done the same thing myself in this issue. My only excuse is that some people seem to like them anyway.

Hi-de-ML. Good trufan stuff but would have been easier to read if folded and used the other way as most foolscap users have done. INCANTATIONS impressed me as a little pompous. Ken, you appear to have completely missed the point of Joy Goodwin's piece in 'Ugh' and to have taken it seriously! The "I cannot speak" theme has been satirised by ~~taking it~~ interpreting it in a completely literal fashion. The revelation that she cannot speak, not, as one expects, for some sinister reason, but simply because she has lost her tongue, is a true fannish anticlimax.

PLATFORM. The convocation idea is not a bad one but personally I'm not interested because our holiday is more or less fixed for next year. I should think that the greatest contention will be over the date. I believe quite a large proportion of firms have fixed holidays now which means a lot of people will be disappointed. It may however develop into small groups of fans taking their holidays together. One fan could advertise to the effect that he was having his holiday on such and such a date and would any other fans care to join him? This could result in a dozen or less getting together which would require little or no organisation and, after all, do you spend much time with more than a dozen people among the hundred odd at a con?

As for Catatonia this could have been a lot more readable if it had had a little more continuity. This sort of zany metaphor I find amusing - I particularly liked 'desert infected sand' - but did you have to spoil it with a surrealistic plot?

HOW. I enjoyed this. And how! Must have taken quite a bit of research unless you are an expert gardener. Very smoothly done.

It's a pity GALANTY was rushed for the first mailing.

There is some interesting material on page two that could have been written up into something really fannish. As it is it is just wasted. But it's not too late. Why not tell us some more about those characters you mention?

BURP. Hastily ignoring the title, I will say that the idea of sticking a newspaper picture on the front cover is (as far as I am concerned) original and I didn't recognise it as such. Maybe I'm dense but I couldn't see the point of the bus running sheet joke if it was a joke. The spaceship account was amusing but would have been easier to read if you hadn't bunged it all into one paragraph. To be fair though, I find that quite a lot

of people are guilty of writing things in long chunks which tend to make me lose my place. Which brings me to

~~ITTA ALPHA~~. I like the chatty style of this especially 'A Day in the Life of a Fan'. I'm not clever enough to guess the origin of the title but I'd like to know what it is.

IB TENEBO. Now I know all about Chelsea and in spite of the apology I did like those illos especially the first one.

VIGNETTE. I'm getting near the time when I have to rush to get the stencils out on time so I can't stop to give V the serious consideration it no doubt deserves. I will just say that I liked best 'These Words that Walk' and 'Hypothesis'.

NEEDLE. The trouble with film (or book) reviews is that they make me feel frustrated that I haven't the time or the money to see (or buy) them.

GOLGOTHA. I enjoyed the account of mountain climbing but both sides of the back page left me cold.

ARCHIVE. Yes my copy was readable - just. (Far be it from me to say anything on the subject of reproduction - I've just heard from Stuart that half my stencils have had to be recut) Anyway the content was very entertainign.

Io. The only comment I have on this is to say that I didn't like the tone of 'S.C.Comment', and I hope the S.C. are going to be allowed to defend themselves in the next issue.

MEDI-EVAL. In my copy atleast the new kind of stencil was not much of a success.

TWIN SET. I read through this wondering when it was going to start which it did half way down the second page. After that it was interesting.

Well, that's all my opinions on the last mailing. I've done them, as I said above, in a rush and its probably full of typos. If I've put the name of your zine in small letters or worse still left it out don't think its a deliberate insult. I shall be lucky if this turns out tobe readable.

Here I would like to say that most of the legibility of ESPRIT is due to Stuart who has been good enough to recut some of my stencils as well as running them off, in spite of having two of his own mags to put out.

* * * * *

HOW DID BULMER FEEL WHEN A HUNGRY GESTETNER VANA ?

* * * * *