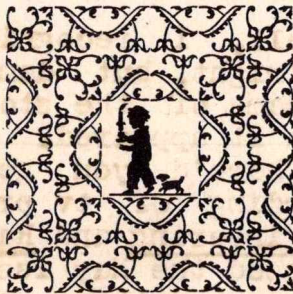


This is LARK, Vol. MCMIX, No. 486,

dated approximately August, 1953 and published by Bill Danner at 720 Rockwood Ave., Pitts-
burgh 34, Pa., to comment upon the sixty-third mailing of and distributed through the
collection of free-wheeling screwballs, y'betcha.
Association, a nicely-assorted
sixty-fourth mailing of the Fantasy Amateur Press





PULL NO PUNCHES

The more I see of people the better I like dogs.

Sixty-third mailing

BIAPAN KAMIKAZE I'm not likely to make
Eney use of this fascinating
information because fireworks are illegal
in these parts unless in the hands of municipal groups.

BIRDSMITH Well, I recognize the word,
McCain alright, but damned if I can
remember the name of the story or the magazine in which it appeared. Gimme a hint, will you?... Where'd you get the dope on magnetic recording of tv programs? I get only Audio Engineering and Radio & TV News, (though I missed the May issue of the latter) and have seen nothing about it. No doubt this process will be fine for tv, since films must be projected on to a special camera tube to be turned into electrical impulses for transmission. But for home movies I think it would be not only much more expensive than film but less satisfactory. I imagine a rather high tape speed would be necessary to provide the extreme band-width for pictures, so that the cost for tape alone would be more than for audio tape. The reproducing equipment would be quite complicated and expensive, being essentially a tv transmitter without the rf final directly coupled to a receiver without the rf front end. And have you ever seen a tv picture as good as that from 16 mm film? Even 8mm, while perhaps no sharper than tv, is free of the distortion that is always present to a greater or lesser

degree in a tv image. A good film projector can be had for three or four hundred dollars (for sound film) and is a lot easier to maintain than tape reproducing equipment which would probably cost at least as many thousands. Consider that a really good tape recorder, with a band-width of 15 kc, costs \$1000 or more, while one with a width of 8 kc can be had for about \$100. For quality approaching that of film, video tape would have to have a bandwidth of 4 mc. I'm willing to be convinced, but I can't see that video tape will ever replace film for home movies... There is much truth in what you say about movies in general and Gary Cooper in particular. "High Noon", however, refutes many of your objections to him. True, he does overcome four-to-one odds (or four-to-two, including his bride), but in this one he is no Sir Galahad. But I still think his best picture is one made many years ago, "Bluebeard's Eighth Wife", a hilarious comedy in no way resembling his westerns... You shouldn't judge all shellac by the run-of-mill 78's sold before the advent of Lp's. I have an EMI frequency test record made of shellac which looks like vinylite and whose surfaces are practically silent, either at 78 or 33 rpm. It records frequencies up to 20 kc according to the label and to my oscilloscope, though of course I can't hear that high. I believe some early Lp's were made of high-grade shellac, which probably turned out to be about as costly as vinylite. But I'm not trying to say Lp's were brought out only for commercial reasons--quite the contrary. Columbia didn't keep Lp's "under wraps"; they worked on them for about eight years until they were perfectly sure all the bugs were out. This contrasts strangely with RCA-Victor, whose

early 45's could not be played on their own player! Did you know that in 1932 Victor gave premature birth to lp's very much like the present ones except that they were a complete fizzle? To make it worse, for six months or so the only way to play them was to buy a new "console" machine at about \$300. By the time they got out a low-priced attachment everyone knew the records were no good... Much of my own stuff in Stef is "written in the stick", so it shouldn't be too carefully studied. But I don't have to tell you how much slower typesetting is than typing. Maybe that explains it... D. H. Moore is quite real. The last I heard from him, though, was when he was on his way south from N.Y. He said he'd let me know when and if he got settled, so perhaps he is on his way back to Calif. with his four old Buicks... Your system for selecting records is certainly original. I just bring a few records home from the local store (which has a pretty good stock) and, if there are any I don't like for any reason, I take them back. The dealer not only allows this, but encourages it with customers known to have good equipment.

CHAPTER PLAY The most interesting item in Tucker the mailing, but there isn't much I can say about it, except for Chapter Seven. I knew there was nothing original about an article on place-names, but had no idea until now that a book had been written about them... I well remember "Citizen Kane", which was shown here despite the fact that we have a Hearst (there's an e in that, Bob) paper. One of the remarkable things in it was the makeup on Welles, which actually altered the contours of his face as he aged... I have a little book called "Murder Manual" that you would probably like

ELFIN #4 For Pete's sake, Coswal, can't
Coswal you do anything about those wa-
ter-logged spots that appear on almost ev-
ery page? I should kick, though--all I read
is the article on Stratemeyer, which I found
interesting because as a boy I read several
of the Dave Porter books, a number of the
Rover Boys, and some of Roy Rockwood's.

THE FANTASMITH The Lovecraft story is
Splawn little better than the bit
of fan-fiction that follows it, and if the
"Talk With Mr. Bradbury" is an accurate re-
port Bradbury should steer clear of such
things in future.

FANTASY AMATEUR Noted
Officialdom

FLOP #2 If pew means sloppy and hard to
Wells read, like this issue of Flop, I
can't imagine how your Stef got that way.
The impression is slightly less clean than
usual because ink had dried on the rollers
(see the last Lark's Appendix) but at least
it's all readable... Glad you like the com-
bination of mimeo and printing. I'm going
to keep on experimenting with it.

GROTESQUE #3 Noted
Martin

HALLUCINATIONS It's far from invisible,
Shapiro Hal--in fact, it's pretty
good mimeo work...Some years ago teen-agers
here had a game they called "wrinkle-fender"
which consisted of driving two cars at top
speed in opposite directions and seeing how
close they could come without touching. Two
of them touched once, killing half a dozen
kids. The only good thing about the crash
is that it put an end to wrinkle-fender...
What do you mean, "Same name as used in THE
QUIET MAN..." I haven't seen the picture;
is there someone with my name in it?... If
you mean those classified ads on "The First

Page" they are absolutely bona-fide. Why don't you try ordering some prayers and see for yourself? Norm has sent me some more which may appear in Stef... ~~There's~~ nothing new about the idea of a car with an electric motor on each wheel. All I added was the gas-turbine-driven generator... Sure, if you're satisfied with the quality of a low-cost tape-recorder (or do you have an Ampex, you lucky stiff?) there's nothing wrong with recording Lp's on it. But I've tried it with my Pentron and the quality can't compare with the original discs... It's Norman Matson, not Matheson, who finished "The Passionate Witch".

HORIZONS 54 It's entirely possible that Warner the father may have been right about that speedometer. I've always taken with a grain of salt "evidence" in whodunits based upon watches or clocks that stopped presumably at the moment of death. It's possible, of course, but it would be necessary to know that the timepiece was accurate to begin with. There is less reason to trust a speedometer in a wrecked car, since the pointer is not mechanically connected to the driving shaft, and a slight jar can move it in either direction. Most pointers are now damped, it is true, but such movement is still possible. In the days before they were damped the speedometer could be made to show top speed momentarily by hitting the case with the hand. ... Well, Harry, you've never said what Bogen amplifier and what Jensen speaker you have. But even if they are the very best you're not even approaching high-fidelity if you're still using that ancient pickup with the osmium stylus that lasts you a year or so. As with a chain, an audio system is as good as it's weakest link, and

such a pickup is a very weak link, indeed. If, by a "Garrard turntable" you mean a changer, get one with a good pickup that uses interchangeable styli, not one with a chuck for conventional needles. If you really mean a turntable, congratulations. For playing Lp's there is no need for a changer which is just another gadget to get out of order. When you do get a better pickup though, you're likely to find your records badly worn by your osmium plowshares. If the more heavily-recorded grooves show a whitish appearance you certainly will. And I still maintain that music is sound, but that the sound that comes from the average table-model player, with its high inter-modulation and harmonic distortion and limited frequency range is not music. Some of the hi-fi bugs you mention do go to extremes. I've used a sapphire for about six months of average use, but it's not good for much more. And the final test of an audio system is the listening test, of course. That is why I'm so well pleased with the equipment I now have... So I guess both If and Stef are plagiarizing the Hagerstown Globe of 1879. Good thing titles can't be copyrighted, isn't it?... For the small town you claim it to be, a lot of peculiar occurrences occur in Hagerstown.

IRUSABEN #11 For you and the others who Silverberg have asked about Homo Tewler I'll quote from my first publication for VAPA, which was called A Dangerous Thing. "In 'You Can't Be Too Careful' H. G. Wells maintains that we haven't yet reached the condition of homo sapiens, but are merely what he calls homo Tewler. If you want to see how right he is, read the book."... Thanks for "The Laws of Science". It's an excellent bit of British humor, which per-

sonally I like.

LA VIE EN FANDOM Noted--and a good thing

Carr I've no desire to read
it. Page three is illegible.

LIGHT #54 Lamb doesn't mention the U. S.

Crouch airmail stamp in two colors
showing a plane upside down. Being no phil-
atelist myself I don't recall whether it was
that 1927 Lindberg stamp or not. Only a
few sheets were circulated and they are
quite rare... Sam: You might be interested
to know that letter of Geo. O. Smith's is
indirectly responsible for my being here
with y'all now. A subsequent issue of ASF
published a letter from me on the letter-
head of the U.V.F.M.Co., listing some of
its machines. Virginia Blish (then Emden)
saw it and, in renewing a long-lapsed cor-
respondence, suggested I might like to join
VAPA. I did, and this is the result... The
Picayune Intelligencer is the name of the
paper Fields is shown reading in "The Bank
Dick". Seems to me that Lompoc was preced-
ed by East or West or something. Knowing
Fields, it was hardly just plain Lompoc.
As you recall, the hotel was called the
"New Old Lompoc House". And the story was
by "Mahatma Kane Jeeves". I have a fat
pocket-book biography of the Great Man,
but it seems to be mislaid. If you haven't
read it you should by all means look it up.
It's full of interesting dope and has a
number of stills from his pictures... Per-
haps, Les, those cork screws are used for
assembling life preservers. Howinhell do
you get that slightly used toilet tissue
rolled up again? What are the prices of
those prefab waacs?

LOOKING BACKWARD Noted

Graham & Carr

MASQUE COMBINED WITH BURBLINGS The FAPA
Burbee & Rotsler members

I have met personally are: Venable. That doesn't fill much space, does it?

MOONSHINE Noted

Woolston

THE POLAROID DIARY The first-run houses Hoffman downtown are showing 3-d pictures like crazy, too, but I haven't seen any yet. The few movies I see are at the neighborhood theatres, for I refuse to go so far out of the way to pay \$1.25 to see any movie. Pittsburgh's city fathers are trying to make it a ghost town (even though a beautiful one) for parking on most streets is prohibited 24 hours a day, including Sundays. So I co-operate and stay out whenever possible, which is almost always. It is probably significant that just when the parking ban went into effect several "Parking Authority" garages, charging exorbitant rates, opened up. When and if the 3-d pictures come out to the sticks I shall see them, perhaps... Let's see, now: In addition to a daily job at the radio shop, night school, messing around with painting, horseback riding, and putting out an occasional (very) publication--well, what the hell do you do to fill up your time, Lee?... Yeah, I've heard of the new-type refrigerators, but am not much interested. Until my decrepit old '34 model goes completely haywire (it requires an occasional kick now) I'll struggle along with it. ...Well, what did you do for the little old lady? Did you give her the next size smaller than the 42, or did you show her a tube manual?... Hudson Specialties (Gernsback) is still selling WW1 surplus microphones... I've not read "Sword In The Stone" but I do have "Mistress Masham's Repose" and "The Elephant And The Kangaroo", both of which I enjoyed immensely.

PRIMAL There is probably some good stuff Miller in "On Sensation", but for some reason I found it tough going. Though I plodded through it the net result was just as though it were double-talk. Maybe I just wasn't in the mood.

SKY HOOK #17 Now that you've read it, do Boggs you still think that Fantastic Universe is one of the magazines you'll get regularly, Redd? I got it because I make a practice of picking up any VINI I happen to see, but wasn't much impressed. The typography is good but the printing and paper don't do it justice. Two and even three blurbs are too many. But of course the contents are what count; though it may not be strictly science fiction Russel's little tragedy is the only really good story so far as I am concerned. The rest vary from fair to common hack. Maybe it will improve, I hope... Speer's article contains a lot of good advice, but I have a sneaking idea it won't do any good..."Show of Shows" is available here, partly on WDTV, which I got with about three ghosts, and partly on WJAC, whose picture is torn up a large part of the time by strong interference. Nevertheless I did enjoy it for some time, especially the burlesques of silent and foreign movies and things like Coca's strip tease act, which I saw twice. But for a few months I didn't turn the set on at all (except on Wednesday nights when a friend who likes the rassling comes over) and found I didn't miss it. So recently I sold it and have no intention of getting another..And I can vouch for the fact that Moore's letters are usually long ones, though not so long as the one I printed. I have three of them and two postals on hand to answer if he ever settles down somewhere and gives me

his address.

SOMA #3 Noted

Splawn

PRISON PLANET Read with interest in view
Tucker of the curious history you
gave in Chapter Play. Did Space Trails have
any future, or was this the only issue? Not
that I give a damn.

STAR ROVER #8 The usual nice duplicating
Splawn job, but there's not much
I can say about it.

TARGET FAPA This is the best mimeo work
Eney I've seen from you yet, Dick.
Done on an Army typer and mimeo? Looks as
though that session with 214's (whatever
they are) might have done you some good...
See my remarks on Irusaben for the explana-
tion of Homo Tewler. Better yet, read the
book. I think you'll like it... Well, there
are some monstrosities on the highways here
too, but they're only a drop in the bucket
compared to the standard Detroit barges.

UNASKED OPINION, ETC. So, Gertrude, you
Carr. are another of the
ones who never glance at the toc in Stef.
Otherwise you'd know that I do not think
up all the ads myself... If I can find it
in all this mess I have a little ad from N
LK that nicely illustrates your point about
modern "selling techniques". "Regimented
stupidity" is good--we're well on the way
to it now... Don't be silly, Gertrude. I
wasn't "quibbling" about bulk being the on-
ly criterion for activity. I doubt if the
Sears catalog would be eligible (though I
can assure you it's more interesting than
a lot of stuff that gets in). What I was
bitching about was your including a bunch
of single sheets and counting them as sep-
arate publications (instead of binding them
together as you do now) and then using the
number of publications as an index of ac-
tivity.

WIRE SCULPTURE Did somebody say something
 Rotsler about catalogs?
"612" Ugh.
Higgs

The campaign of a battery powder promoter to discredit the Bureau of Standards has hit an all-time low with the publication in Cars of an "article" describing his "fight" for the product. This article is typical advertising throwaway stuff, complete with testimonials, but it is presented by the magazine as its feature article with an editorial blurb about its great importance. The promoter himself seems proud of the fact that he is largely responsible for the firing of Dr. Astin by a (to put it kindly) misguided Seretary Weeks.

If the present investigation does not fully justify the Bureau's findings in the matter and bring about the reinstatement of Dr. Astin it will be not only a great miscarriage of justice but a great triumph of high-pressure advertising over scientific method. By the time you read this the investigation may have been finished or it may not, but right now it is evident that the increasing interest in automobiles has brought out entirely too many magazines about them. The preceding issue of this same magazine had a "column" by Melton that was merely a wordy advertisement for his museum of old cars. When such stuff as this and "battery rejuvenator" testimonials are sold to the public in place of legitimate reading matter it is time to call a halt--in fact, a cut-back is in order. I'll never buy another copy of Cars but of course that won't do any good. Educated by radio and tv commercials, the GAP will probably snap it up eagerly.