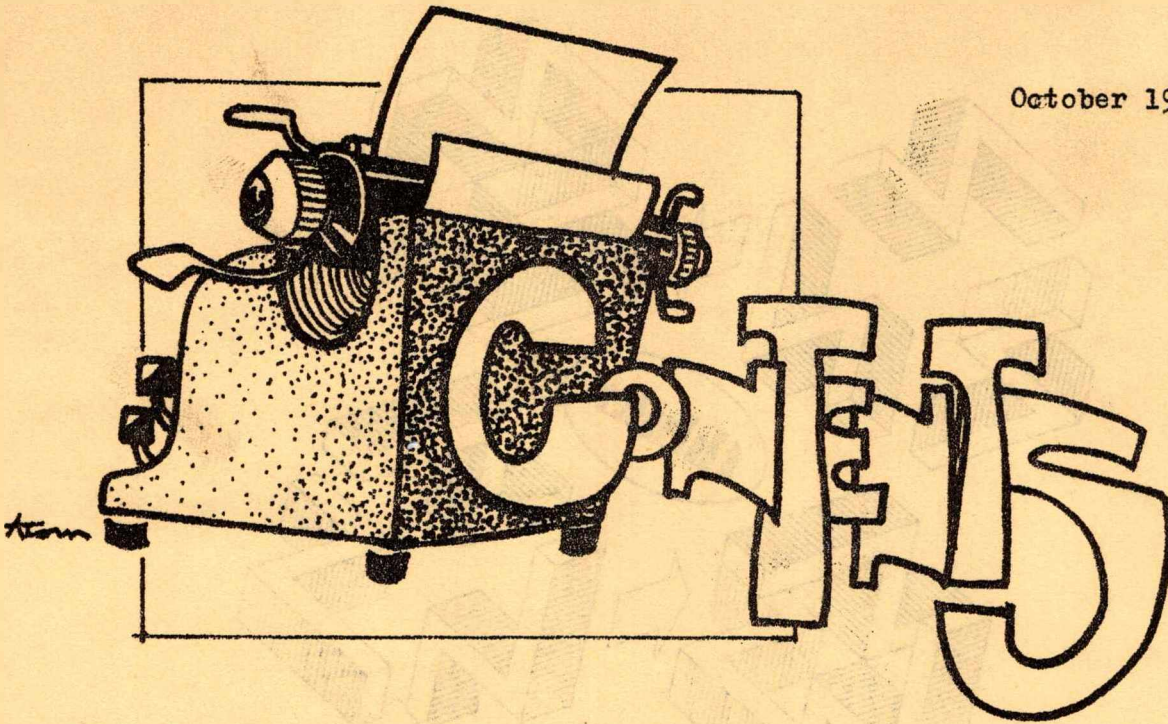


microwave

3

F. Turner '82

October 1982



Magnetronics - Editorial	1	
An Article? - Skel	7	<u>ART</u>
Nartaz Rides Again		Harry Turner - Cover.
- Terry Jeeves	10	John Cook - 26.
Tales of an Otitis Media		Terry Jeeves - 5,10,17,28,31.
Fan - Chuck Connor	12	ATom - This page, 2,6,9,15,20,21.
Today We Make Faces		
- Vinç Clarke	15	My thanks to all contributors, writers
Any Post, Dear?		and artists alike, I hope more of you
- Pssst, wanna read my mail?	18	will want to join in.

My apologies to Harry Bell, Dave Rowley and Harry Turner, but due to lack of space their work has been held over till next ish - due January.

MICROWAVE is published quarterly by Terry Hill, 41 Western Road, Maidstone, Kent. ME16 8NE ('phone 0622) 20234.) and is available for trade, LoC, contributions (written or art), embarrassing photographs, 20p (£1 Air Mail) an ish, or anything else you think might interest a loony of my calibre.

Before anyone writes in, Marg has been a great help as usual, but refuses to be credited as co-editor. "People might think I'm 'involved', and I'm not."

SPECIAL INTERLINEATION-FREE ISSUE

OOPS!

"RIGHT, YOU 'ORRIBLE LOT! Shape yourselves up! Stop sniggering at the back there, you disgusting specimen! This is a fanzine, not a flamin' 'oliday camp! And, Ghod help me, you're going to do your bit or wish you'd died trying!"

"O.K. Men Huh, whassat? Women in the ranks? I'll have to check this with the C.O. Er, while I'm gone, those of you with your own fanzines, hold them above your heads. That should keep you out of mischief. Whassat, Bergeron? Well, that's your fault, isn't it? No, Frost, you may not hold a copy of Pravda instead! Whassup, Akien? Hold one of your LoCs then, you'll be no worse off than Bergeron. Stop smirking Neale; since yours is so small, you can hold your co-editor too! And I want to see them all still up there when I get back! Now what, Edwards? You've got a sprained wrist? Jakubowski been reading you Heinlein again? Right! Anyone drops their arms before I get back gets to LoC this Urdu fanzine I got 'ere!"

- * - * - * -

"All still up there huh? Well, the C.O. says that there should be women in the ranks, along with the rest of you weirdos, winos, loonies, perverts and ink-sniffers! So it looks like I'm stuck with you. If that saddens you, console yourself with the thought that you're also stuck with me!"

"The C.O.'s gonna have a word with you all before we start this mission. So I want you all TEN-SHUN!"

"NUMBAH FIVE PLATOON, ALL PRESENT AND CORRECT AND READY FOR INSPECTION, SAH! Er, most of this lot are 4F, sir, so I wouldn't keep 'em standing too long."

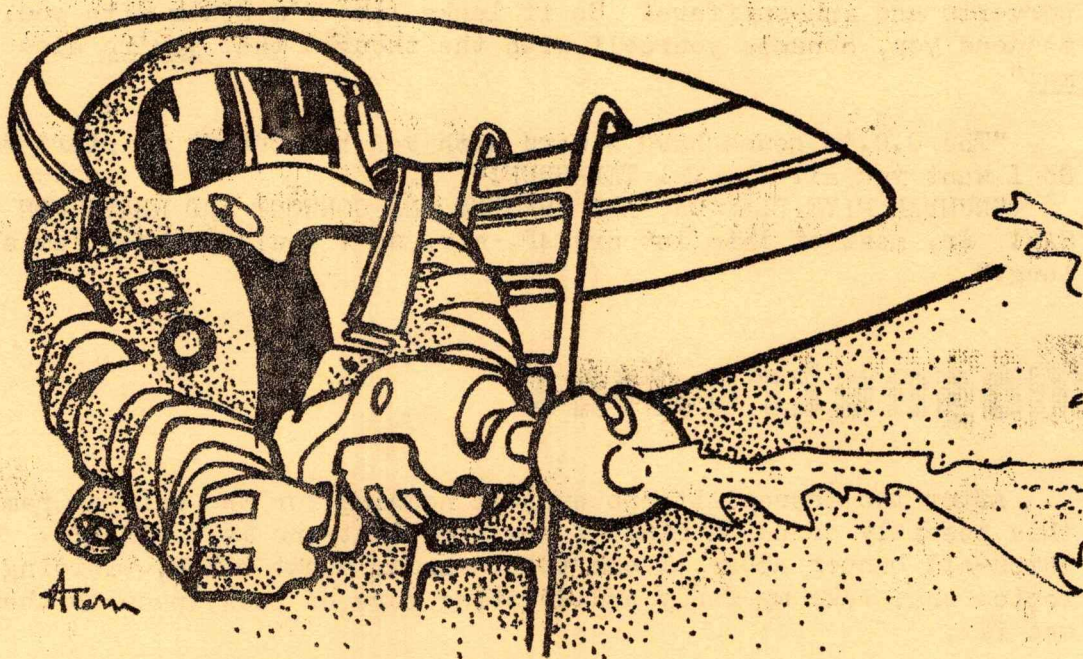
Magnetronics

After two issues with no overall heading for the written ramblings of this possibly deranged mind, I now find that one is desirable. With a catch-all banner above, I can then meander about below, visiting various topics that take my fancy and devoting more or less space to them, as I see fit.

WELCOME TO MY THERAPY

I've been told that I'm not "a writer above all else", and that I assemble collections of "bits and pieces". These things were, I admit, said about MICROWAVE ONE, but I raise the points again because I feel that there is a good deal of truth in them. I'm not a writer, never have been, probably never will be. Two years ago I didn't even write letters. At school I was awful at English because I wouldn't write at any length. If

I could say in two short paras what others wrote reams about, I as far as I was concerned, had finished. I wrote in a sort of expanded note form, being economical with words; too much so for most of my English masters - bar one, who thought that everything that I wrote was triffic, however brief. I took up the challenge, trying to get him to dislike my work, and writing some awful rubbish in the attempt; no dice, the man must have been a complete berk. One outcome of this seems to be that I now think in a sort of note form. My mind picks up trivial and useless information and hoards it, which is why I can remember to get a pint of milk on the way home but at the same time forget that it's our wedding anniversary! To be rid of some of these oddments that are cluttering up this attic that I think with (or think that I think with!) I write them down. Having done so, it seems reasonable to send them to people - you - to perhaps aggravate your grey matter. Without this form of release, I might possibly turn into a Michael Caine figure, forever approaching people in pubs and at parties with the words "'Ere, did you know ?"



LEGALISE IT!

Where the A244 passes under the A3 in Surrey, the stonework of the bridge has been vandalised. One of the local aerosol-jockeys has decorated the previously pristine grey concrete with the slogan 'LEGALISE IT'. Just that. Nothing to indicate what 'IT' was or is. Of course, this has sent my mind racing up and down all sorts of blind alleys. Legalise What? Murder? Rape? Eating People? Abortion? Smoking Strange Substances? Spitting on Buses? Flashing? The list of possibilities could go on forever, and unless someone catches the originator re-painting the fading letters, we'll never know which is correct. It has, however, given me the idea for what could be a regular feature; what would you like to see legalised? Or, stretching the point somewhat, made illegal? Let me have your views, long or short, serious or trivial and we'll see what happens.

-*~*~*~*~*

Originally, I wrote a piece arguing for the lowering of the age of consent in Britain to 14, but after reading it, my co-editor-who-refuses-to-be-called-so refused to let me print it, possibly because I backed up my argument with personal experiences. She backed up her refusal with some hefty

Eric Bentcliffe Ted Tubb/Hurst .nam/Eric Needham
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erry Turner/Eric Bentcliffe/Ted Tubb/Hurstmonceaux&Fave
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WHEN YOUNG WAS A LOUSE

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threats, so out it came. Oh well, onto something less controversial.

"IF YOU CAN AFFORD A BIG POWERFUL CAR"

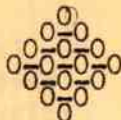
A few weeks back Marg and I went to a wedding. Liz, an old school-friend of Marg's, and now a junior ward-sister, was finally getting hitched to a Thai doctor. Liz's family have money; it didn't show so much at the church, but when we got to the hotel for the reception, the car park was full of Rovers, Jags and Mercs. My poor old Russian estate with the rust and primer detailing didn't exactly fit in. It's a dead cert that Marg was the only reason I was there; the only previous contact I'd had with Liz was to park my crisps in her duffle-coat hood in a pub. Well, with a pint in one hand and a fag in the other, what else could I do? She got her own back later, though, when she invited us to her 21st birthday party. The main event was a couple of hours of square-dancing

Anyway, getting back to the wedding; it was a posh do, (just the English ceremony - four days later they were to have the full Thai ceremony in Bangkok) and at a posh do, you tend to get posh guests. We found ourselves at a table with one of Liz's father's golf partners. I never caught his name but he was a successful business man, in the paper trade. Obviously he owned one of those Jags or Rovers in the car park, because at one point the conversation turned to the police, driving and, in particular, speeding.

"If you can afford to own and run a big powerful car then you should be able to use it as it was intended."

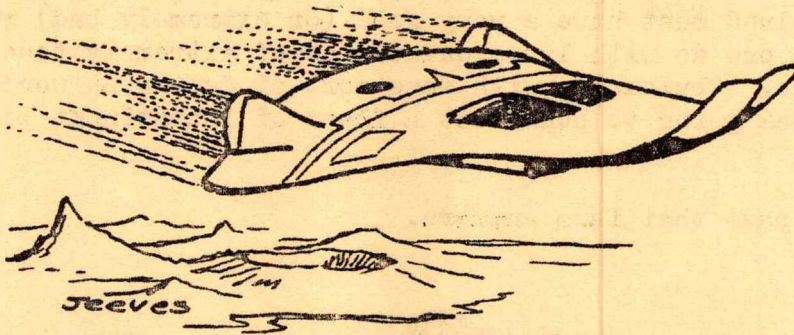
Sounds quite reasonable at first glance, but as a professional road-user, I've seen more daft antics performed by flash, 'powerful' cars at low speed than by 'popular' saloons at 70. Besides, big cars tend to be expensive and the majority of people aren't able to afford them until late in life, when their reflexes are slower and the urge to emulate irresponsible youth may be nagging them. Sure, you can probably find an eighty-year-old with the reflexes of a teenager, but it isn't common. As for the 'young image' aspect, a man I work with is a prime example; all his life he drove fairly staid cars, typical reps issue, nothing over 1500 c.c. As soon as he got a promotion, he bought a 1000 c.c. motorcycle. The company gave him a 2.3 litre car. He sold the motorcycle and bought a sports car. He is a fairly typical 'conservative' type and to talk to him he seems a reasonable person, but give him a powerful set of wheels and he's gone ---- he drives like a lunatic.

So, as far as I'm concerned, our unexpected companion at the wedding reception was wrong. Being able to afford a 'big, powerful' vehicle shouldn't be a license to use it at any speed it can manage. I don't think the 70 m.p.h. speed limit in force in Britain is right either, but, short of testing and licensing owners of big cars seperately (bringing its own problems; how do you know if the Jag that passed at 90 was driven by a legally-licensed driver?) it's a bloody sight safer!



"THROW ANOTHER MOSLEM ON THE FIRE, MARG. IT'S GETTING CHILLY"

Lord Denning went out with a bang. His last judgement before his retirement indicated that it is not illegal in this country to discriminate against someone on the grounds of religion. Oooops, that's a loophole everyone seems to have missed. I can see employers that only want white workers putting up signs like "We only employ Protestants". Companies that want cheap labour would proclaim "We only employ Hindus". Pubs and clubs could bar racial groups by choosing to discriminate against the religious group(s) that the majority of them belong to. Of course, there'd probably be an Irish pub somewhere claiming that "We only serve Quakers", wondering why business was so bad. Enough of this, Marg and I have to go and tar and feather a few Mormons.



WHAT'S BROWN, SOUNDS LIKE A BELL & IS COVERED BY THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT?

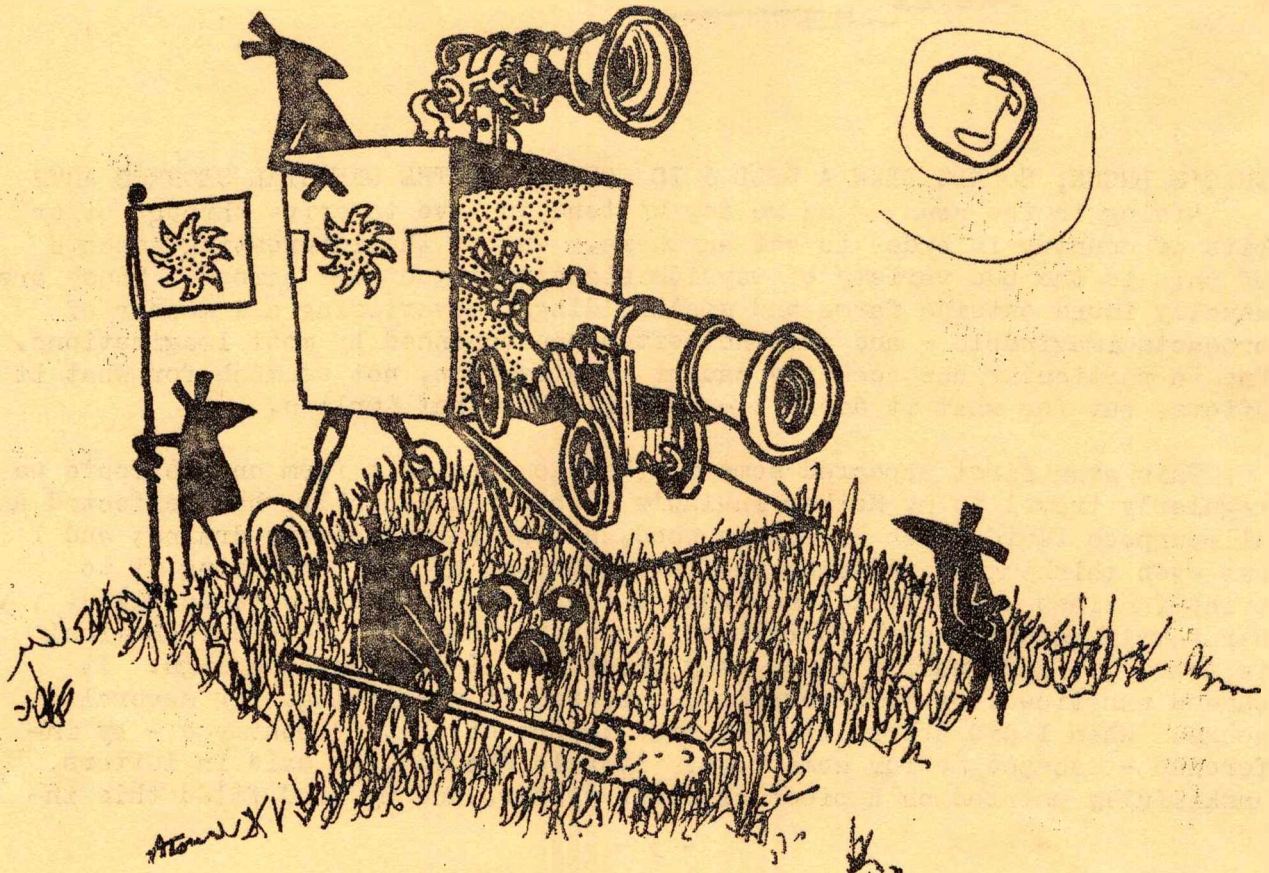
Living in the country as we do, we tend to have to drive through other bits of country in order to get anywhere. One of the interesting aspects of this is the odd variety of wayside signs that you come across. These are usually found outside farms and smallholdings, advertising all manner of products imaginable - and some not often countenanced by most imaginations. One in particular has recently caught my attention, not so much for what it offers, but for what it doesn't - and all that that implies.

This sign first appeared some months ago outside a farm on the route we regularly travel to my Mother-in-law's - who, incidentally, has perfected an all-purpose fluid which preserves wood, strips paint, clears drains; and I was even thinking of reducing the water content by 10% and using it to print fanzines . . . till I saw what a few drops did to a ceramic tile . . . Her family actually seem to believe her claim that this fearsome chemical is tea . . . and, what's more, they drink it! I digress, the sign. It passed unnoticed, or more correctly I passed it unnoticed, for several weeks. When I did absorb it, the true import of what it conveyed - by inference - escaped me for some days. 'Stable Manure', it said in letters unskilfully painted on a piece of scrap timber, and my mind filed this in-

formation with everything else - under 'M' for Miscellaneous - then lapsed back into its normal near-catatonia. What ressurected the subject a few days later I can't say, but it suddenly struck me (no, not gratuitous violence - this is essential to the plot) that if they were trying to sell manure and thought it necessary to point out that it was stable, then they must also have some that was unstable. I could see it all: Huge heaps of steaming, festering dung, humming quietly to themselves whilst cautious farmworkers crept past, fearful lest their slightest glance should cause these volatile piles to erupt with the awesome violence that was so precariously held in check.

Horrified, my mind recoiled at the dangers for all concerned with stockpiling the lethal stuff. Then it leapt forward again to the logical question; Why would anybody want to hoard such a deadly, hair-triggered substance? My first instinct would be to get rid of it, and quickly! Anyone willing to take the risks involved must have a very good (or extremely bad) reason for doing so. What can one do with large quantities of extremely touchy dung? The answer is simple. Obviously, with some sort of design on world domination, the farmer was going to construct a fleet of Incontinent Ballistic Missiles!

We don't drive past that farm anymore.



AN Article?

by Skel

This morning we were going out to buy Cas a bike. The one she'd been using used to belong to our eldest daughter but Cas had bought it from her when she expressed a greater interest in £20 than in cycling. Come to the nitty-gritty, she expressed a greater interest in $5\frac{1}{2}$ pence than she did in cycling, but £20 seemed a fair price at the time. This meant that Cas and I could go out cycling together. Ha!

Together? Only if you could call me strolling downhill pushing my mean machine whilst Cas pedalled furiously 30 yards behind screaming "Wait for me", well, if you can call that 'together' then we were cycling together. Mind you, if you'd call that 'together' how's about making me an offer for my almost complete run of FANZINE FANATIQUE?

Anyway, the bottom line is that we decided that she had to have a decent bike, so that we could have *fun* together. Yes, we older married couples need mechanical devices in order to have fun together. Do not mock. You too will wither on the vine some day. In fact, judging by the music you listen to, I'll give you about another 35 minutes.

So, we were to go out and buy Cas a bike. Naturally this meant that Cas was awake long before dawn could even think of cracking. "C'mon," she said, "We want to be there as soon as the shops open."

"Bloody Hell, love! We've not even gone to bed yet!"

God, talk about perseverance. If Cas had been here when the glaciers had come grinding down the glaciers would have given up and gone home. I gave up at about the 8,645th nudge. "OK," I said, "I'll get up after I've had a cup of tea in bed." God, the power! Before you could say Jack 'Brooke-Bond' Robinson I was laying back reading Eric Mayer's GROGGY and sipping my tea whilst Cas read this letter. Then she started laughing and I was hooked. "Interesting?" I asked. I knew it had to be to me/us as the

only mail that comes addressed to Cas is either from her catalogue or it's the maintenance payment from her first husband. Neither of these is a laugh-a-minute although I suppose the latter, at £4 per week for two kids, could be considered a rare jest.

"Interesting?" "Naw, it's from Terry Hill. Here....." and she passed it over. So, all unprepared, I read the first page -and I was feeling mmmmm, pretty good. Then, I turned the page..... "Arrrgh, *SHIT*!!!!"

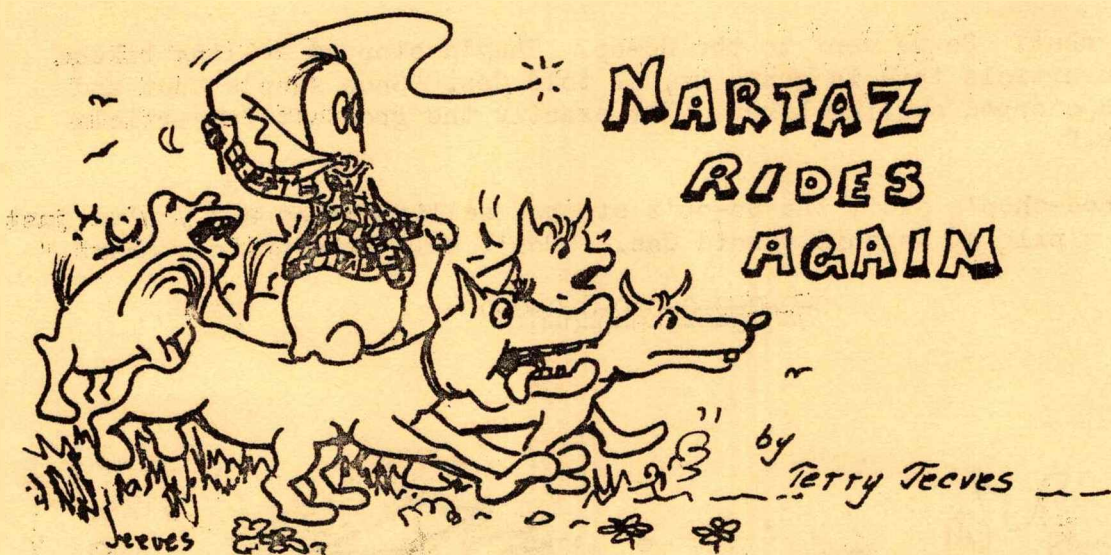
"Ah," said Cas, "You've come to that bit have you, the request for a contribution?"

Now that's it. Doomed! I'm doomed! I'll never write again. That's it. That's all it takes. A simple request for a contribution and my fan-writing career is at an end. Don't these people know what they're doing to me? Hmmm, maybe they don't. After all, I've never really explained it to anyone before. OK, let's give it a try.....

First of all, Terry, I'm not saying you laid it on too thick with all that flattery, but how on earth did you manage to type with a trowel in your hand? Swine! So here I am - someone has written nice things and asked me for a contrib. What can I do? If I say no I'm a rat. Besides which, I'm anice guy really. I want to win friends and influence people. Fan-eds too. So I say "Yes." That's it. That 'yes' is the last word I ever type. To paraphrase Loudon Wainwright III, "Muse, where are you?" Inspiration goes straight out the window. There are more inspiration-shaped holes in my windows than in anyone's. Once I agree to write something for someone I can never think of anything to write. What's more, it stops me from writing for my own zine. Every time I roll a stencil into the typer for SFD I get the guilts. "How come you're trying to write for SFD I ask myself, when you ought to be writing for Terry?" So you see, as soon as I agree to write an article for someone I can't write for them and I can't write for me either. I hope you're feeling suitably ashamed.

"Never fear." I said to Cas. "Maybe I'll get an article out of buying this sodding bike. Remember though, the best writing depends upon drama and conflict. Tension in human relationships. It'll make a much better article if we fall out, if I refuse to lash out such exorbitant sums and insist that you get a second-hand ~~heap of shit~~ machine." I can't understand it. Why won't women make these sacrifices for *art*. I should have known I'd no chance. We were walking towards the bike shop when I made this suggestion and a passing seagull jeered at me. Obviously a married seagull. Remember this Terry - my wife wasn't prepared to pedal a chunk of rust for the sake of your fanzine.

So, off we set. First of all we had to call at the shoe shop and pick up the shoes I'd taken in for repair the previous week. I'm not quite sure how this managed to become a priority. I blame Cas's misinterpretation of my response when she asked me if I was going to do this contrib for Terry.



A deep, abysmal, clinging medium black eldritch sort of murky gloom hung murkily over the smoky, tuna-dung camp fires of Nartaz and his robber band. Known as the dreaded Tush, their infamy was well wotted of throughout the length, breadth and thickness of the largest continent on the planet Gurble IV and even upon the incontinent.

For many long zerks, Nartaz and his Tush had robbed the rich.... and with utter impartiality, the poor as well. Striking without warning, they would take only the barest minimum needed to ensure them the life of total luxury to which they were accustomed. Their reputation was one of audacity, rapacity, capacity and even downright naughtiness.

But now, the aristocratic, simian-like features of the young Lord Branestroke were twisted in an agony of thought. (The young infant lordling had been found abandoned in a clapped-out VW, rescued and raised by a group of nomadic chimpanzees....hence his title of Nartaz of the baboons) On maturity, he had escaped and formed the band of robbing Tush.

Now, Nartaz brooded mightily on the problem posed by the absence of his trusty henchman and Scrabble partner, Booin. That aged villain had been captured by the townsmen in the hamlet of Sturtle when, in a drunken stupor, he had attempted to pick pockets in the local nudist colony. With typical peasant frugality, the Sturtlese had scheduled Booin's trial to coincide with their annual fiesta so that the resultant execution could add a subtle piquancy to their drab lives.

Nartaz pondered over the fire until his beard sizzled. It was not to

no avail, nor otherwise that he did so. Within three scant days, his flashing brain had produced a cunning plan worthy of the leader of the Tush. Calling his fellow cutpurses around him, he outlined his plan. Grins appeared on their honest robber's faces as they prepared for action...all that is, save one malcontent. That one, Pongalot the lookout, muttered evilly into his tankard of lemonade.

Next morning, as the peasants flocked to the village to enjoy their simple fun, the robbers moved in on the deserted homesteads and began rounding up all the untended cattle. By the time the jury had reached the carefully rehearsed and totally fair and impartial verdict of guilty, the villains had assembled a sizeable herd of beasts and were nudging the animals along the trail into Sturtle.

In the cobbled town square, the local band was tuning up. Merry villagers skipped and cavorted to the strains. Even the condemned Booin felt strangely touched as one dancer trampled heavily on his toes. The head musician, moved greatly by the tears he could see in the captive's eyes, invited the outlaw to choose a final request item to cheer him on his way. As the band quavered into the delicate strains of 'Mammy', a final tear trickled down the villainous visage of their prisoner.

It was then that the mighty Nartaz beat on his breast and uttered the full-throated hunting call he had learned at his foster-mother's tail. "Hoooooo--eeeeeyyyy" The bloodcurdling sound rattled round the rooftops and ricocheted off the roadway. Strong men wilted, maidens swooned, and even the milk turned.

Behind the cattle, the Tush cracked their whips, slapped the flanks of the motley collection of cows, calves, oxen and bull-weevils. With hoots, hollers and merry quips, they chivvied their charges ahead. Madly, the fear-crazed beasts tore through the narrow streets and burst into the market square. Peasants scattered in all directions before the hoofs of the frantically plunging animals as they ploughed full tilt into the group of musicians. In the confusion, with instruments pooping off in all directions, Nartaz swept Booin up onto the saddle behind him, opened the throttle and in a cloud of oily smoke, they rode off on the wide blue Honda.

That night, there was much roistering around the tuna-dung fires. Flagons of sparkling blog were passed about. Everyone laughed and made merry jest over the jolly exploit...all save the drunken Pongalot who sat and bemoaned the loss of such a rich haul of rustled cattle.

Finally, too much proved more than enough. Nartaz coughed gently to attract Pongalot's attention, then kicked him neatly in the teeth. In the sudden silence, broken only by the soft rattle of ivory fragments on the forest floor, Nartaz addressed his men. "Fellow Tush", he began. "Today we have done a deed which minstrels will long remember in their lays." (Nartaz liked a good lay) "A great deed, a glorious deed! Yet old toothless here

moans over the cattle it has cost us. Shame I say. I want all of you to remember this...." and here, Nartaz placed a friendly hand on the shoulder of his rescued henchman. "....a herd in the band is worth Booin the Tush".

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TALES OF AN
Otitis
MEDIA
FAN
by
CHUCK
CONNOR

When Terry sent MICROWAVE 2, I had no idea he was an amateur ENTophile. I mean, there can't be very many around on an amateur level, can there? Well, apart from your local Oto-Rhino-Larngologist, who else do you know who's into ENT?

Of course, as you may have guessed, there is no way you can produce a definitive inner ear article in 2 Quartos or less, so what I'll do is dive straight into the deep and interesting stuff: the acute and the chronic diseases of the Middle Ear Cleft. This means, sadly, that I'll be leaving out such diverse gems and tidbits as Viral

Labyrinthitis, which usually comes as an epidemic, and may be worth catching if you're into vomiting, vertigo, and ten days (or more) off sick. Or maybe you'd fancy a little Tinnitus - noises in the ear to you - usually associated with Presbycusis. No, sorry, but in 2 pages you cannot have your cake and eat it.

Okay, let's start off with the less complicated stuff like, for example, an ordinary boil. These are not strictly 'inner ear', nor are they a disease as such, but they are at least an infection, and they're also one of the first things we might come across as we travel inwards. For obvious reasons I will be ignoring excessive wax as I feel this is nothing but a cheapening of any amateur Otologist's talents.

A boil in the ear is caused by a little blighter who goes under the name of Staphylococcus Aureus, and generally takes up residence in a hair follicle. This is commonly known in the trade as a 'zit in the lug'. Like most, if not all Otitis, it can and normally is extremely painful, but is quick and easy to cure.

Also, there is no need to panic should you perchance meet Aspergillus Niger whilst on your sunny summer holidays. Just picture the scene: clear blue skies over Costa del Expensive, an hotel (finished and with everything in working order, even the staff), sundrenched golden sands, and a beautiful crystal sea just swarming with roving bands of the above fungus looking for the nearest undefended pink and shell-like to savage. Yep, this malicious

little toadstool can very easily be picked up by swimming in tropical waters and can wind up as a ticklish situation as one of the main symptoms is a compulsive desire to scratch your ears off. Another tell-tale sign is artistically spotted debris (white based with black spots) comparable, some will say, with wet blotting paper. Tsk Tsk, I say to this! It is comparable only to Dali at his most direct, Picasso at his most pointed, and Van Gogh when he still had stereo reception capabilities.

But, this is all external canal stuff. So it's down, down, down and, bursting through the Tympanic Membrane, we come to the Inner, or Middle Ear Cleft.

Oddly enough, apart from perforations (of the non-teabag variety -- and if you've got 2000 little perforations then you need help; like yesterday) there are no bugs or germs which have made a specialization of the Middle Ear Cleft or Eustachian Tube. Sinusitis and Catarrh are confined to your nose area initially (though with a little help they can get anywhere) and although tonsils can produce a side effect in the ear, they are basically confined to the deep throat area.

No, what little infections there are normally secondary to things such as colds or other Nasopharyngeal Mucous Membrane infections, where the bugs are forced up the Lumen of the Eustachian Tube by violently blowing your nose too often. Swollen glands, by the way, I look upon as disgusting and crude, and hardly an infection at all.

So what have we to browse over? Well there are one or two little bargain goodies, and of these you have a fair choice of infections ranging from our old and quite popular friend, Staphylococci, to the richness of Streptococci, or the exotic Pneumococci -- all having their own brand of symptoms even though they are all part of the seemingly incestuous Cocci family.

But, being part of this buddy-buddy group of microbes, the result is so close to each other that it normally takes bacteriological examinations of the discharge to suss out which one has decided to pick your skull for its next place of residence. Of course, for something like this to get inside your head (or Middle Ear Cleft to be exact), then you can expect nothing less than a sticky situation -- normally in the form of mucopus.

Now, although it's easy for the infection to get in, it is a little harder for the mucopus to get out. That is, until enough of it has built up behind the ear drum so that it ruptures at its centre. Why the centre? How often have you been told about Ischaemic Necrosis eh?

While all that is oozing around behind the ear drum, other, less specific symptoms are going on; such as vomiting, diarrhoea, a pyrexia of 101 degs.F. (Pyrex oven dishes? Now you know), and sometimes the odd fit or two thrown in for good measure. Then, when the pressure builds up, it gets a little painful. I was talking to a friend about this article and he admitted to

having suffered from Acute Otitis Media. To use his descriptive prose: "It was like someone kneeling on my head and slowly shoving a red hot drill through one ear, but never managing to reach the other side. Like, painful."

The only other thing to cover, and which is really just an extension of the above (though inwards and not outwards) is Chronic Otitis Media (and that, I hasten to add, is not another name for Trekkies)

Time and space is short so let's not hang around with the piddlingly little small stuff -- go for broke! CHRONIC SERIOUS SUPPURATIVE OTITIS MEDIA WITH COMPLICATIONS!!

Intra-cranial complications are normally a direct result of infections from the Middle Ear spreading to the middle or posterior cranial Fossae. And that, as if you couldn't already guess, can lead to a brain abscess -- not the sort of biggie you can examine every day of the week, now is it?

It normally starts off with the weakest part of the Tympanic Membrane (the Pars Flaccida) being 'bubbled' into the Attic (a cavern in the upper part of the Middle Ear, geography fans). Epithelium is then produced and this forms cute concentric rings in this 'pouch', and is then rechristened a Cholesteatoma. Not a very friendly, or sociable one, this, mainly as one of the earliest signs is that the ear becomes full of foul-smelling pus. Please note that this is different from Mucopus inasmuch as Mucopus is odourless.

Brain abscessi are hardly in the normal line of work for Otologists, more the line of your friendly local Neuro-surgeon who will be about the only one qualified to give you the required Burr Hole in the skull -- and please note, I resisted temptation and did not say "a non-38 IRONSIDE Special." Then after the aspiration of the abscess, and they will try to aspire to some very big things I can assure you (though they rarely make it), all of your troubles are over. It's just a case of a common or garden Radical Mastoid operation -- a mere case of opening up and removing most of the bony walls, thus draining the suppurating air cells -- being performed, and you're as right as rain (which may just have been the thing you caught it from in the first place!)

Of course, one of the most common complications of SCSOM is Labyrinthitis. This is where the Labyrinth is infected through a Fistula in the lateral semicircular canal or through But wait! Fumble, fumble, rummage, rummage I said I would be leaving out such diverse gems as this!

Shame, I hear you say? No matter, it will just have to wait until the next time. Which could be sooner than you think.

Terry and I are going to compare notes on Lateral Sinus Thrombosis cases having the rarer Psaemic abscesses in the lungs, so, until then, keep in touch, and keep your ear to the ground.

Nearly everyone seems to have taken the approach "Let's teach Terry a lesson", after the last issue. I've learned them; 1) Don't ask Skel for an article unless you're prepared for the consequences. 2) A casual plea for contributions on specific subjects can get some very odd results (I hope Chuck checked the spelling of all those long words - and some of the shorter ones - because I didn't), as Vinç will now demonstrate

TODAY WE MAKE FACES if you'll pardon the Expression

by Vinç Clarke



The plea of my respected editor in MICROWAVE 2 for "articles on face-making and diseases of the inner ear" will not go unanswered, and if I concentrate on the former subject it's only because I feel that, like a smoker who develops a hacking bark, if he's nervous about his health he brought it on himself. Anyone who listens to those records is lucky if he isn't stranded up his Eustachian Canal without a paddle. That high-pitched whine you can hear, Mr. Hill, is Edison spinning in his grave.

Face-making is a far more interesting subject, if only because it's so little touched upon even by students of human behaviour such as Desmond Morris, Marjorie Proops and myself. Truly scientific studies on it, the sort of thing you skip in ANALOG, are scarce, yet face-making is a facet of

our relations with other people which has been well documented by such literary greats as Shakespeare - "Your face, my Thane, is as a book, where men/May read strange matters" (Macbeth) - and Edmond Hamilton - "...an odd listening expression had fallen upon the scientist's face." (Accursed Galaxy). These authors appreciate the significance of faces, being covered with lines, things falling on them, etc.

There is also Byron's all-purpose face: "The light of love, the purity of grace, The mind, the music breathing from her face...." When we get to this point, we are obviously some way removed from the primal face-making - the putting out of the tongue, the screwing up of the nose, the insertion of the fingers into the ears and the wiggling of them. There is a world of difference between this and, for instance, Abigail Frost writing a critical letter to MICROWAVE, even if the sophisticated end-result bears a certain superficial similarity.

The primal facial expression was probably a frown, and this has lingered on into the world of today. What is it all for? What is the purpose of Life, the Universe and Everything? The swift answer (to increase the royalties of Douglas Adams) ignores the fact that these questions have brought frowns of concentration to the brows of millions of people in ages past, and there can be little doubt that this would be a permanent expression on the face of humanity as well as reviewers of the BSFA if there wasn't the small matter of a survival factor fighting it; he who wandered in front of a sabretooth tiger in ages past, or tried crossing a road in the present, whilst obscuring his eyes with lowered eyebrows, didn't last long enough to finish the journey home and procreate. Thus we commonly frown only when we severely disapprove of something or, oddly enough, wish to concentrate. Time-saving readers of MICROWAVE can luckily do both together.

The Smile is the other main facial expression (I really haven't the time to explain it, Jimmy, borrow a dictionary from the local library) and can be seen in very primitive environments. It has been observed that the natives of New Guinea, when contacted for the first time, express their feelings by a broad smile. This is very odd. The reason in the minds of the natives for the smiles - being given gifts by these funny-coloured people with TV cameras for doing what comes naturally - is obvious, but why this particular smile reflex? The same set of muscles is used for baring the teeth in anger, a far more logical face-making process, and one can't help thinking that often the difference is in the mind of the observer.

For instance, when a new-born baby is seen, it has been noted that after the crumpled-red-suet-pudding arrangement of the features has sorted itself out, a stretching of the mouth in the general direction of the ears causes the fond mother to exclaim that the poor little thing's got wind, then, and appropriate action is taken. By a strange instinct, the same expression, the same flexing of the muscles, is greeted in a few short weeks by "Oh, look, he's smiling at me. Diddums den!" (Traditional)

Is a smile a throwback, a memory of the days when apemen making even more noise than a meeting at the ONE TUN gathered together to bare their teeth and bite and generally express satisfaction over some juicy mammoth they had slain? Aside from the dangerous Lamarckian overtones creeping into this, it's not likely; being omnivorous, these rough ancestors ate more bananas than mammoths. They were easier to gather. And who can grin whilst eating a banana?

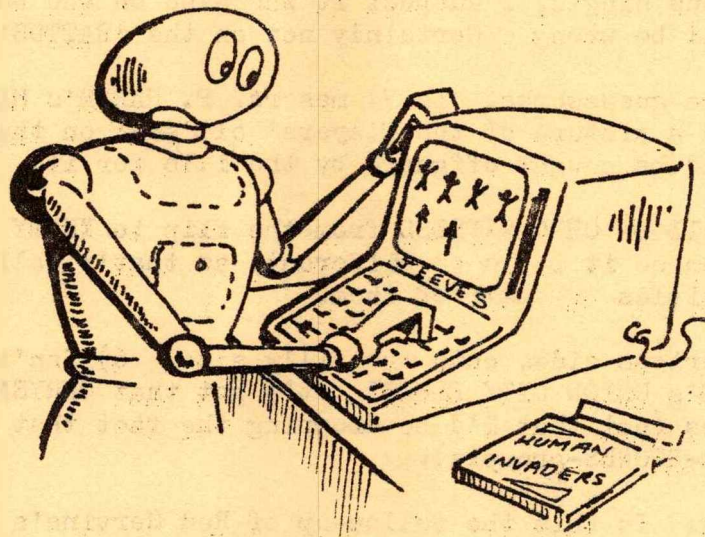
The statues on Easter Island

Well, that's silly. I've just looked at MICROWAVE 2 again, and it's lace-making, not face-making, that he wanted us to write an article about. Well, waste not, want not.

After these few preliminary remarks, it must be pointed out that early lace, such as the earliest point lace (Punto in Aria) was made in Venice. Could it be that the interconnecting canal network was reproduced by the subconscious of those early workers - possibly that these delicate tracteries were the local equivalent of Ordnance Survey maps?

More on this some other time.

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Any Post, Dear?

The more alert amongst you may have noticed that there's no music quiz this ish, - pauses for cheering, singing and the sound of popping

champagne corks to die away - and the reason for this is simple; - ignores cries of "Well it would be, wouldn't it?" - only two people were enjoying them, me and Chuck Connor. That's taking minority interest a little too far. The quiz is dead, all that remains is to pick over the bones of the last one, which I will do with the help of.....

CHUCK CONNOR, c/o Sildan House, Chediston Road, Wissett, Nr. Halesworth, Suffolk, IP19 0NF ((who else?))

Also through the maildrop came Vin's new NOT SCIENCE FANTASY NEWS, with a little note on the back saying that we two have some really perverse tastes. Now, I ask you? With such praise as that, he really must be a good-looking, young and intelligent bloke! This of course leads me into the QUIZ -- as if anything else would stop me.....

Of the dead certainties, I can name 4) as being HUMANOID BOOGIE from THE BONZO DOG BAND (not sure if they dropped the DOO DAH by then, dropped it after their first American tour). This, as far as I know, never made it onto single (unless after their demise) but what I do know for certain is that it's the first track, side 2 of the album DOUGHNUT IN GRANNY'S GREENHOUSE.

8) No mistaking this one; INTERGALACTIC LAXATIVE by DONOVAN, from the album and flipside of the single COSMIC WHEELS.

9) This is another easy one. SOMETHING BETTER CHANGE by THE STRANGLERS. Apart from the obvious single, I suspect it was also on the NO MORE HEROES album, but could well be wrong. Certainly not on the 'RATTUS' platter.

Now, the rest are guessworks. Is 7) messrs. P. HAREM's SALTY DOG? The album I remember had a picture of the Players' old salt on the front cover (there again, I could be caught offguard by the illo for it).

1) This could well be OHIO EXPRESS from the flip to YUMMY YUMMY (the copy I know of is American so it could be different) as that's called CHEWY CHEWY -- rather inspired titles the pair of them.

That ends the serious side, onto the silly side. 6) Isn't this the follow-up to BLONDIE's UNION CITY BLUES? It's got that CHRYSALIS style, and the Harry experiences (not that I'd be dropping the fact that she's an ex-Bunny and also an ex-STONES-groupie).

And finally, 10). Is this the follow-up of Red Servine's TEDDY BARE? (Sorry! BEAR -- look, it's five-thirty in the morning, and a Sunday morning to boot!)

Apart from that, the rest are complete mysteries. Undoubtedly, I'll be

most upset if I've got some of the missing songs in my collection (like 3) for which I've been trying desperately to remember the lyrics from the ARCHIES' SUGAR SUGAR single -- follow-up was JUSTINE by the way).

← To recap, Chuck got 1),4),8)& 9) right, right? So I've got to tell you what 2),3),5),6),7)& 10) were, right? Wrong, I haven't got to tell you anything - nervously eyes character approaching with thumbscrews - but as I'm basically a nice person, I will.

- 2) "Give him a Flower" - The Crazy World of Arthur Brown.
- 3) "Sugar Pantie" - Tommie McCook & The Supersonics.
- 5) "Classified" - C.W. McCall.
- 6) "Rene" - The Small Faces.
- 7) "Where the Roxy used to be" - True Adventure
- 10) "Home Sweet Home" - L.E. White & Lola Jean Dillon.

Just to prove that some people showed a little interest, might I add that Jon Wallace got 4)& 9), Kevin Rattan got 9) and Colin Fine got 4).

So that's it for the quiz. I hear Rob Hansen's doing a rock music fanzine or something - I wonder.....

Surprise, surprise, someone in the states can write, and, further surprise, it's.....

LEE HOFFMAN, 350 N W Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL, 33952, U.S.A.

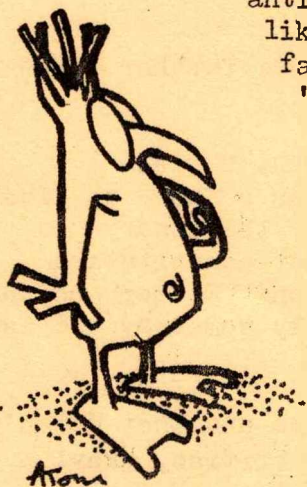
"Publish and Be Damned" is indeed an excellent motto for a fanned to live by. To be honest, I hadn't paid all that much attention to the sundry "chest-beating and soul-searching over what does or does not constitute a good fanzine". It was the reaction that caught my attention. Or perhaps the overreaction. It seems like everybody has got stomped on by somebody and is out to stomp back, or at least speak in hiser own defence.

Personally I agree with you. What goes into any fanzine and what doesn't is for the editor to decide. If s/he is into pleasing the critics, okay. If s/he is into publishing for the fun of it, that's okay, too. Unfortunately (as you point out) no matter what an editor published, somebody is bound to object. For a fanzine to be all things to all fen is impossible. I'm in favor of a fanned being as selective about what criticism s/he pays attention to as the critics are about a fanned's choice of material to run. Unfortunately it is very hard to ignore a lot of loud criticism, even when it isn't aimed directly at oneself. I quit an APA once in part because I felt that the criticism being applied to another member applied just as well to me and if it was bad for him to do what he was doing, it was bad for me to do it, so... ← Seems like a nice chap. All the sixth fandom fans I've heard from are; wish I could say the same for the current un-numbered fandom (anybody been keeping count?) Here's a representative of the 'now' fandom (although, whether he's a representative representative, I couldn't say) (Due to a typical fannish cock-up, the letter this link introduces is on the other side of the page)→

STEVEN J. GREEN, 11 Fox Green Cresc., Acocks Green, Birmingham. B27 7SD

Your editorial in MICROWAVE 2 opens promisingly, but soon degenerates into ill-founded generalisations. It's all very well to mutter "Whose zine is it anyway?", but my immediate response is simply to remind you that the admitted intent of publishing is to reach an audience, and the best way to lose that audience is by ignoring them as you appear to be suggesting, for the "self-styled arbiters of fannish taste" are as important a part of your readership, if not more important, than the unresponsive drones. If critics were as pedantic as you imply, they'd be making absurd rules about the page count or type size of the perfect fanzine; on the contrary, the advice given tends towards the argument that it doesn't matter so much what you do, so long as you do it well. Simply getting off your butt and publishing a zine is not a justification in itself for the end result, a tiny fact which seems to have escaped certain of our less literate contemporaries.

Terry Jeeves' article is the second of his I've encountered in the past few weeks (the other being in Quartz 3), and both evidence much the same flaw: Terry's prose is grammatically sound, but once the theme is outlined he rambles so far off the track it's an effort to reach the anti-climax. "Serendipity Uber Alles" makes for a workman-like space-filler; as a lead article, however, it leaves a fair amount to be desired. ((It wasn't meant to be the 'lead' article, just the one I happened to put in first after my bit. The exact order of material never really occurred to me, and the last thing I expected was that anyone would assume that there was a 'lead' article.))



On the remaining content: "Dr. Hackensaw's Secret" might have been amusing if it had managed to be original; "The Best Little Ethnic in Town" was mildly funny, if over-extended; "A Garden..." proved the highspot of the issue, hardly a barrel of laughs but fairly well-constructed and well-written (pity he writes - and edits, from the evidence of NOT SCIENCE FANTASY NEWS - as if he's been in suspended animation since the mid-50s). ((Vince has - at least as far as fandom is concerned - been in suspended animation since the mid-50s. His gaffiation was so abrupt that during his recent re-activation we found letters addressed and stamped but never mailed and fanzines that had never been opened. He's only just read the later issues of HYPHEN!))

Overall, an improvement on issue 1; hardly the most exciting zine to grace my doorstep this year, but far from the worst (I'm still trying to forget the unbelievably abysmal BRIGHTON ROCK).

((Uncanny how the bottom of the page manages to loom up whenever I'm about to start a new letter, forcing me to either type an address and one line or something like this. Got any wide, flat fillos?))

ERIC BENTCLIFFE, 17 Riverside Cresc., Holmes Chapel, Cheshire. CW4 7NR.

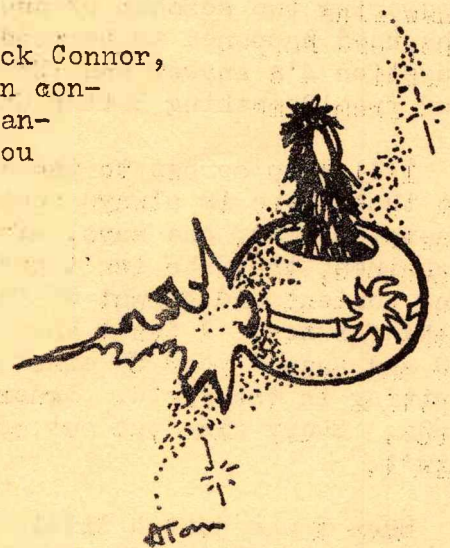
I enjoyed it, and consider it a considerable improvement over your first issue - somehow, the fact that it is now duplicated, makes it more of a fanzine; I don't know why this is, but fans have experimented with all kinds of reproduction (yeah, verily!) from the most jelly-like amoebic hecto to super-duper litho and yet, the only one that looks like a fanzine is mimeo. There was once a fanzine put out by John Roles of the Liverpool Group using edible (he said!) inks on rice paper which came close, and could be used as sustenance in dire need, but even this, didn't quite make it. \ll I've seen a copy, I didn't check whether it was edible or not, but it's still legible after all this time. \gg

I applaud your editorial policy of accepting 'anything' in exchange for your zine and I wonder if you'd care to have a few of the finger-nails I broke on those extremely staunch staples you used on my copy.... I believe there is a certain machine on the market (used by the commercial-espionage characters) which can read a folded sheet of paper, separating out pages etcetera by some very-clever methods, and I think if you are going to publish very frequently I may well buy one. I admire those staples - and if it wasn't for my being in the tool-trade I think I'd still be trying to open the mag; do you intend putting out the first 'Heavy-metal' fanzine, or something?!!

JON WALLACE, 21 Charleston St., Dundee. DD2 4RG.

Thanks for the copies of MICROWAVE 1&2. Chuck Connor, in a pocsarcd from Bermuda mentioned the zine in connection with inner ear disease, and I've been meaning to write to ask for a copy ever since, but you know how it is up here. A Gaelic speaker once asked what 'manana' meant and when it had been explained to him, he replied, "Ach, we dinna have a word in the Gaelic wi' that much urgency".

M1:- When I was just starting up the Dundee SF society, I had to go to the Dundee University accomodation office to see about getting a place to have it in. I dressed in a decent pair of trousers and put on a tie so as to pretend that SF fans weren't weirdos. His office, once I'd got past his secretary, was quite plush. You know the sort of thing, antique wood panels on two of the walls, bookshelves on the third and a picture window on the fourth. We almost needed an intercom to converse across the leather-topped mahogany-inlaid desk (actually, the antique finish was a bit new looking. Hardly surprising, considering that the building has only been up ten years). The man himself looked quite at home in these halls of academe, tall, distinguished, greying at the temples, immaculately clothed in a beautifully cut three-piece suit, he looked every bit the professor



(actually, the professor of my department wears off the peg black suits, looks more like an undertaker, strange innit, no? Sorry). He was quite polite, and asked a few genuinely curious questions about the society, and our love of SF. As we talked, he paced, pausing occasionally to admire the fantastic view up the Tay Valley visible through his window. Not to be outdone, I got up and wandered over to his well-stocked bookshelves for a browse. There, I discovered that one whole row turned out to be those fancy covers that you can buy to put your paperbacks in if you're ashamed of them. My curiosity was aroused. Pausing only to make sure that he was still looking out of the window, I reached up and took one down. 'Chariots of the Gods', I took down another, 'Spaceships of Ezekial'. As I was looking in horror at UFO Digest, he turned and saw me. A slow smile spread over his face. "I saw a UFO once," he said.....

But I don't really want to say any more about issue one, comment on that will be really out of date, by the time you get it. But issue two....

Good to meet another self-confessed politically apathetic fan. I once thought about starting an apathy party (Oh God, not the apathy party joke...)

When I wrote the draft for this, I said that there was no way that I was going to attempt to answer any of the questions in your music quiz. I went on to ask if you realised that you'd destroyed an ego carefully built up by answering two seasons of questions on Mike Read's Pop Quiz. But Graham Shepherd happened to be reading this zine over my shoulder and said that question 4's answer was 'Humanoid Boogie' by the Bonzo Dog Band and that 9 was from 'Something Better Change' by the Stranglers. OK?

I'll leap across to the letter column now. God, that Abi Frost. Why is it that there is always someone who thinks that they are the arbiters of all taste, I mean, she says, after wittering on about the style and format of fanzines, that she isn't one of those people who witter on about the style and content and format of fanzines... Still, I must admit to a certain sympathy for her. I don't know how old she is, but I think that if she is over 20 and hasn't read SF since she was 11, then she's missed some of the best writing in the field. Ignore her misguided comments on copying zines of the '60s. Every zine put out copies something. The first one was new, the rest ain't.

When I was just a little baby, I was perfect. (this is hearsay, you understand) Chubby cheeks, blue eyes, blond curls (aaah). My mother used to have to chain me to the pram in case I was stolen. But I had one flaw. I was stricken with the dread affliction known in Dundee as "The Earick" and to more southern areas as earache. (Yes, middle-ear infection) This manifested itself every night for a week, just after Mum and Dad got to sleep (of course). I would scream and scream and scream etc. all night ... unless Mum picked me up and cradled me in the protection of her arms and walked the floor with me. I was taken to the family doctor and seen by the junior partner, a young MD completely sure of himself. He gave me eardrops. These

didn't help at all, in fact, they seemed to make me worse. The Doctor was called out, this time the senior doctor came himself. He was a large bluff man with half-moon glasses perched on the end of his nose. He looked at me, looked at the ear drops, cried in a wrathful voice, "These are no damn good!" and threw them at the wall, leaving a greasy stain on the wallpaper, which would be there to this very day, if they hadn't knocked the house down in '63. Anyway, as I said, the screaming went on for about a week. Until... One night, (early morning, really) Mum, her will and nerve sapped by exhaustion and the constant yelling, cracked. She bounced me down, none too gently, into my pram and gave the handle a couple of fairly massive shakes. Much to her surprise, I went out like a light. Terrified in case she woke me again, she tiptoed out and went to bed, most relieved. Morning broke, bright and clear, we slept on. My father arrived home for lunch to find us still asleep. Mum, worried, came to the pram and found me sleeping like a baby (well, I was!), my head gently cradled by the pool of yellow pus that had come out when my eardrum burst. Terrified calls for the doctor, who, when he arrived, calmed down my mother and told her, "Mrs. Wallace, you've given the wee bugger a bit of peace. Best thing you could have done." The drum subsequently healed perfectly.

Or was it something along the lines of:-

"Middle ear infections are commonly found in North Sea Oil divers and divers who operate in similar conditions. The constant exposure to water and high pressure conditions make the inner ear unusually susceptible to infection by various organisms, the chiefest and most dangerous being the gram-negative bacillus, Pseudomonas Aeruginosa..." If so count me out, that's all I know about the subject. Now, coagulase-negative Staphylococci species, that's different... ((I admire the courage of people that use long words as if they know what they mean . . . or do you just make them up?))

If I haven't said somewhere in there that I liked the zine, then I should have, a promising second issue. Two in a row. Gosh!

((And now to a lady who bears me no grudge for rejecting her con report I hope!))

JOY HIBBERT, 11 Rutland St., Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs. ST1 5JG

Liked the editorial in relation to your editorial policy - though I will, of course, continue to criticise. However I disagree with your political attitudes. There are far too many people with your attitude, and you are responsible for the political situation. We would have been out of the 2 party trap years ago if people like you hadn't considered that one vote didn't make any difference, or worse still the 'a Liberal/Ecology/Independant vote is a wasted vote' attitude. ((To the best of my meagre political knowledge, we wouldn't be in the '2-party trap' if the Whigs (Liberals) hadn't voted proportional representation out some time back.)) Remember that if you don't vote, you can't complain about the political situation. Without getting into the fanzine debate, I must admit that I do prefer duplicated fanzines, they seem to have more character somehow. I like the lines, ((Interlineations, dammit!)) but shouldn't the lines stretch

right across the page?

Liked Terry Jeeves' article.

Remember that a lot of people don't know the significance of 666. ((Which lot, of which people?))

Liked those two awful puns. I'm not surprised it's Anon. Write some more. We could do with a new funny fanzine now that '2nd HAND WAVE' seems to have gone the way of all flesh.

Ah, Margaret, how good it was to see such a good story from you. You have my congratulations. Keep it up. Promise me one thing - please don't write an article about trying to get duplicating ink off Terry's clothes. Apart from being uninteresting, it would also be without an ending (you can't get duplicating ink out of clothes - not without using bleach at any rate). By the way, not to nit-pick or anything, but as far as I know it's only Crosses and such like that would be objected to.

Please, no more obscure music quizzes. ((Your wish is my command, dear lady.))

I see that Margaret's wetness (as described last LoC) is not confined to the female gender. I offer the same advice to Vin~~g~~ as I offered to Margaret - if they want it doing, let them do it themselves. You don't really need to concrete it over, I'm sure pavement slabs would do. ((Can't even get them, Joy. I asked for half a dozen for the front garden for my birthday. That was in May, and it's still bare earth out there! - M.)) That's what we've got in our garden, such as it is. But I think I'm going to take one up soon. I threw a cherry stone into the garden last summer, and it seems to have taken root. I'll probably take up one of the stones, and move it into a bigger space so it's got room to grow. I'm not usually one for gardening, having managed to avoid it for many years at my parent's house, but I'm getting quite attached to this little cherry tree. However, if I may ask Vin~~g~~ one teeny question - when can I expect some cherries?

Bob Shaw's friend can't really be into astrology, or he would understand the basic flaw in all astrology which defines people solely by their sign of the zodiac without taking into consideration, when they were born, where they were born, or at what point in their sign it was.

There's no need to be so condescending to Arnold Akien's suggestion that you and Margaret should be co-editors. But I suppose men can't help not wanting to give women their rightful credit. After all, she might get ideas above her station, mightn't she, ((Already have - M)) and then perhaps she'd be editing the fanzine, and you'd be doing the housework and looking after the child. Still perhaps you'll get over your insecurities sooner or later.

TERRY JEEVES, 230 Bannerdale Road., Sheffield S11 9FE.

A nice cover...once I got past the heavy duty staples which fastened the whole shoot firmly together (Luckily I have a 3ft crowbar and a hydraulic jack....but the polished dining room table will never be the same again)

Agree entirely with your comments that an editor should publish whatever takes his fancy....obviously, if his readers don't like it they will drop away like flies (most embarrassing) and leave him with a greatly reduced mailing list (and an equally reduced postal and paper bill). Get ideas and help from readers by all means....but DO YOUR OWN THING....otherwise where's the fun in pubbing your own ish??

Loved Dr. Hackensaw's secret....and the little trailer tucked on the endnow if I can persuade you to reprint the saga of Booin from ERG, it would fit right into that vein....or is that all in vain??

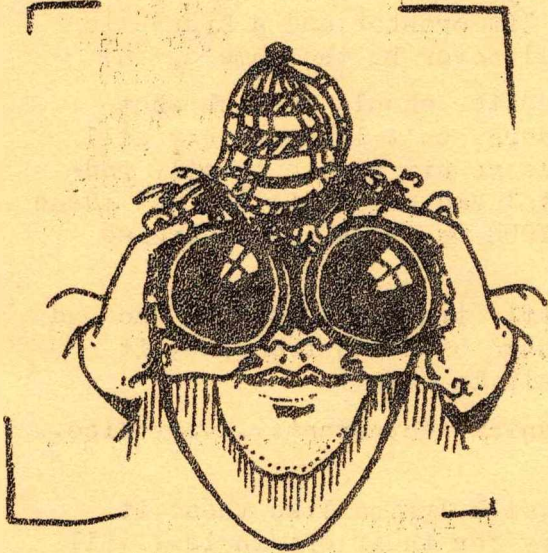
Also enjoyed Margaret's account of the Rumanian restaurant....very nice.. ..something to get your teeth into.

Which brings me to the "Band Played On"....with lyrics like those, it ought to be "Banned from Playing On". My entry for their origin is....all pop music. This you can take, and do unmentionable things with.

Then I thoroughly enjoyed Vin^o Clarke's piece...I too have a garden... which like Tennyson's babbling brook, seems to go on forever...especially in the grass growing season. To be accurate, not only does it go on forever... but also UP. Without a word of a lie, when I'm in the greenhouse I look down at the roof of our house way off in the distance. As so rightly said by Vin^o, I sweat pints growing things...which are then cheaper in the shops ...viz, this year not ONE of my carefully nurtured tomato plants grown from seed exceeded 6" in height...so in desperation I went out and bought some more mature plants. However, I must be fair...this year we shall have saved POUNDS from the garden. We had six weeks of hefty strawberry harvesting... I have already bunged umpteen pounds of raspberries into the freezer, plus numerous jars of jam. ((In the freezer!!)) Also bags of gooseberries... and we have yet to hit the blackberry season. We had our first cucumber this week, radishes did well, and from the three types of beans up there (broad, runner and French) we have now started adding to the diet. The onions, spuds and sprouts all look healthy, tomatoes will soon be ripe, and the apple trees are so heavy with fruit I've had to go round staking up all the branches...heck, even the pear trees has fruit for the first time. As for the cherry tree, that has done us proud...and even the onions are nearing stringing time. Now if all that doesn't add up to a large saving on the housekeeping bill, I'll eat my own cucumbers (I grow 'em but I don't like the things).

Vin^o also mentions neighbours...funny, we have some of those...several sets on each side. Next door above has a red car and a moustache (not a red moustache) and that's all I know about him. Next to him live a couple of Poles who for the last three months have been digging a huge mine in their back garden. At the other side, we have a bank manager who has the unusual

habit of playing pop records at full blast whilst 'singing' to them. I'm thinking of having him put down.



Do you realise that Joe Nicholas gets mentioned some $12\frac{1}{4}$ times in your zine? Well 12 times actually...but one letter writer said something about 'an obscure critic'.

((I didn't need to know that, Sir. kindly leave the stage. (On the left, in your honour, John Cook's impression of that rare creature The Joseph Nicholas Spotter.) Perhaps next issue will be Nicholas-free. Abi Frost seems to be getting more plugs than she deserves too.))

LILIAN EDWARDS, 1 Braehead Rd., Thorntonhall, Glasgow. G74 5AQ

I've found it hard work getting my rusty LoC-omotive wheels going again after my enforced layoff (Ghod, sounds like Ray Buckton (I hate the fannish Ghod)) and a frighteningly, though also gratifyingly large pile of fanzines has been piling up on my dining room table, all sullenly displaying desperate appeals for response. Why then does MICROWAVE get such an incredibly instant response (for me, that is); the answer is very simple, namely Vin's piece on gardening.

I hate gardening. Let me put this quite plainly; I loathe, detest and abominate horticulture, agriculture and anything that involves the propagation of greenstuffs. Gifted with 2 parents (unusual that) whose humble abode and front, back and side garden I still share, and whose main pre-occupation from February to September is talking about the greenfly content of the Xenoxia (or something like that), it's a joy to discover someone whose ideas as to the correct treatment of gardens (i.e. decimate the damn things!) so closely approximate to mine. The only flaw in Vin's otherwise exquisitely-crafted article is that he thinks gardening has its compensation. He's wrong. I have never met anyone interesting over the back fence while gardening, though as our garden backs onto a grazing field, this is perhaps understandable; nor is even putting down weedkiller as much fun as you might anticipate, for nearly all the patent brands seem to require, for some unknown reason, rain within three days of use, otherwise the grass shrivels up. The only time you can guarantee drought in the west of Scotland is three days after putting down weedkiller.....

I enjoyed the 'feel' in toto of MICROWAVE a great deal, a relaxed, laid-back feeling that is I think preferable to the sort of angry polemic zine Ms. Frost and her ilk no doubt support.

← From a Glaswegian lady to a Gentleman who has been variously described as 'a loony' and 'Joy Hibbert's live-in sex toy' but I wouldn't spread scurrilous rumours, would I? Anyway, he must be a nice bloke, he liked it!

DAVE ROWLEY, 11 Rutland St., Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs. ST1 5JG

Is this really MICROWAVE 2, what happened? Not that I'm complaining. Liked the editorial, you tell 'em. If they don't like it, go elsewhere and leave us alone. You keep doing it your way and you'll be doing OK by me. (Not that I'm setting myself up as an authority on fanzines. Read a lot but never produced one). But you've got a satisfied customer here.

Terry Jeeves missed a biggy. What about Alexander Graham Bell causing more interruptions and put-offs thus depriving the world of a vast amount of unborn geni??

Liked Margaret's offering. Hope nobody was eating when they read it, or something might have gone down 'the wrong way'. Then they might have ended up 'coffin'.

Thanks Vinç. An outside chance has leapt into favourite for a local fan's non-attendance of UniCon 3. I had forgotten about the battlefield disguised as a garden.

At last someone who admits to being against Scottish Fandom. ← (Not me, that was Abi Frost (who else?)) → I had heard about these people but had believed they were just a figment of imagination. I ignored the boos and hisses we received at the ChannelCon bidding session. I was among the six at the back whose votes had not been tallied. We all voted for AlbaCon 2.

Vinç - keep your copy of the Enchanted Duplicator handy, you never know when you will need it again. I spent 3 years in the city of sercon and only after another 2 years I think I'm on the outskirts heading in the right(?) direction.

← Even sercon types drop everything to read MICROWAVE, and that of course includes....

MIKE ASHLEY, 4 Thistlebank, Walderslade, Chatham, Kent. ME5 8AD

There's something rather timeless about MICROWAVE 2, what with all these names like Sid Birchby, Vinç Clarke, Terry Jeeves, and scarcely a mention of science fiction, I'd swear it was a fifties faanzine reincarnated. And then Walt Willis's confession that he hasn't seen an Analog for years - well, whatever next! ← (I could try to persuade Forry Ackerman to admit that the term 'Sci-fi' was a bad idea....) →

Actually, MICROWAVE was refreshingly readable, and I think you've done a goko (now that's a good typo - one thing about this electric typewriter, when my fingers go off on their own I end up typing some incredible alien sentencesd - you see, one crept in there). Where was I. Ah, yes, goko - what the hell was that supposed to be. Ah, good. Yes, you've done a good

job. I must confess rather boringly that I don't enjoy reading faanish-stuff now as much as I used to, as I tend to get most of my enjoyment out of some musty old revelation about some musty old sf/fantasy writer, but MW did come as a refreshing change from my usual browsing. It also came just as I was away on holiday, so it made a complete change in that respect.

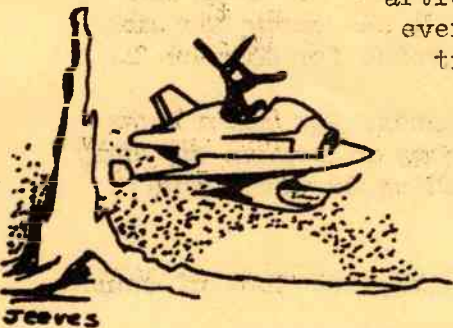
((The position of Opening Batsman last ish seems to have gone to our next writer's head; so I'm burying his letter here. Let him work for his egoboo.

KEVIN K. RATTAN, 23 Waingate Close, Rawtenstall, Rossendale, Lancs. BB4 7SQ

General first: it's a lot more substantial, and that is a definite improvement. Generally, thoroughly on the 'right' lines, in the sense that you seem to know what you want, and are getting there - ignore those who would tell you to produce their kind of zine, and produce the best that you can within the limits and values you set yourself/hold. And you have such GOOD taste in LoC-printing.....(modest, shy and retiring, I ain't!)

Publish and be Damned! : Agreed with most of the comments on Fandom, and 'judging' zines values, but I'm afraid I'm one of those nasty political animals - but I do try to keep it out of zines - after all it is SF fandom, and should, surely, be present only incidentally, not as the focal point of zines or fandom.

Serendipity Uber Alles: Actually you should have those funny ' dots over the U, but I'll not quibble too much... The article is, as ever with Terry, neat and enjoyable. However, on this occasion I think he errs by making it a trifle too short, or perhaps empty would be a better description. It meanders along nicely, but seems to me not to come to a point, or even provide new information. Really it's just a page filler, but fortunately one in the long-established, pleasant Jeevesian mode.



Dr. Hackensaw's Secret. Oooouuch! That hurt.... And the next one, too. I wonder if I was too hasty in saying I liked bad puns.....

((Chuck Connor recently gave me a copy of an American punzine called 'PUNS UPON A TIME', which contains some very good artwork, some good puns and some bad puns. Ask me nicely next LoC and I'll lend it to you.))

The Best Little Ethnic In Town: Sorry, but this was a disappointment. I feel that it should have worked gently up to the conclusion, allowing the reader to think back and realise what clues he hadn't understood, instead it was obvious from the second paragraph, and unfortunately, not very funny in its handling.

A Garden etc: Recently saw an article by Vin^o dating back a looong way (I think it was in Operation Fantast), and this was just as entertaining (or should that say well written or something, whatever, it was of the same quality). However, here my conscience (and if I'm not careful, Joy Hibbert, too) strikes me, as I can't say I approve of the somewhat sexist comments (no, that's not just out of fear of Joy, I do genuinely agree with Womens Lib). Whatever, ignoring that and just looking at the fannish content of the article, I'll take some convincing that Vin^o has really been away that long - did he change his name and operate on the fringe, perhaps.... ((I don't think so. It's probably mere fannish whim that prompts him to sign letters 'G. Pickersgill'.))

Any Post Dear: Ignoring the wonderful taste etc. - there are a couple of things I want to comment on. Firstly, is that end comment of Abi Frost's for real??? ((Unfortunately yes, I couldn't invent something like that, and even if I could, I wouldn't have the guts to claim someone else said it.)) I find it almost impossible to believe that anybody could make such a mind-blowingly opinionated and downright stupid comment on zines. "hope it's more of a real fanzine" - it really sets the teeth on edge. What for f+++s sake is a 'real fanzine' - somebody please enlighten me what an 'unreal' fanzine is. ((Some form of spirit duplication....possibly Hectoplasm?)) I suppose in this context it's one that suits Abi Frost's view of life the universe and everything and conforms to whatever 'standards' she wants to plug. As I can't remain polite on this topic, I shall move on.....

to Jimmy Robertson. Er, I can't help but think you've over-reacted to this one. It is a pathetic little letter, attempting humour at your, and other's, expense and really, you shouldn't have taken it so seriously, or even printed it all. However, as you did, when ADN comes out, I'd like you to see if you can spot which of Jimmy's suggestions I've taken to heart, eh, wot? Seriously though, it isn't pleasant to send such a letter to somebody who puts in work to produce something. It is possibly better not to respond than to treat it so contemptuously, never mind go and do likewise, I shan't say what he should do, and where he should go. I dunno, Possibly he even meant well... better for all concerned, I think, if you'd ignored it, or simply answered personally.

((I wasn't actually taking Jimmy seriously. I found his letter probably the funniest that came in, not so much for what he said but for the fact that he said it all. The reply was Marg's and I printed the whole thing uncut because I felt it said a great deal about Jimmy and his opinions.

Talking of Jimmy reminds me to return to the rest of the comments from....
CHUCK CONNOR, address as before.

Certainly a much-improved issue over issue 1. I said that 1 was pleasant; I can now say that with issue 2 you've made a very good progression to a well-balanced zine. I was quite startled to tell you the truth, and thought you handled it (the progression that is) rather well.

Nice to see Terry Jeeves moving out of his ERG now and again. First QUARTZ and now MICROWAVE. His style is very amusing and, I suppose because of his teaching background, well-written and informative (if somewhat 'odd').

Could suggest the use of tomatoes instead of cheese with the scrambled egg, as the effects, especially when using fresh ones, produces a near-perfect linear curve if they've been first gently massaged in white wine. I should point out that, for the sake of purity, TESCO's ultra-cheapo vino cpllapso should not be used. There again, to keep in line with Einsteinian thinking, might I also suggest that for a near perfect doppler effect that both the tomato and the eggs be submerged in liquid methane for about 1.769 minutes and then brought together with only the slightest hint of rosemary, or maybe even a little thyme -- though some have suggested using sage, all I can say is stuff it.

Dr. HACKENSAW's SECRET. Okay, okay, you sucked me in with this one. What a bloody awful pun! -- In fact the pair of them were! K-ris! Look, write to Alan Marshall (on second thoughts maybe it'd be better to write to Glen Warming) and see if you can find out who used to do the really disgustingly bad puns for SFPEAR when it was going.

BEST LITTLE ETHNIC IN TOWN. Okay, okay, that is it. I thought there might be some straight article in the zine, but it seems I was wrong (apart, of course, for AND THE BAND PLAYED ON -- and can I get an extra point for saying that that comes from WAR's BALL OF CONFUSION???) ((No. You've beaten everybody else hands down and now you want bonus points?))

ANY POST, DEAR. As you've now come up against it, I can say 'yes' to the fact that the level of response is abysmal at the moment. I suppose that is why most of my copies go in trade (be it SF or Small Press) and apart from the usual 'regulars' there seems to be very little response from the 'new side' of the readership. I try to LoC any mag I receive, mainly out of some feeling of politeness and that, I suppose, leads me into the comments of Jimmy Robertson. Two things to start off with; 1) Grow up, & 2) There's more to fandom than the BSFA -- which is the only place I've ever demanded my right of reply, especially when it was asked for in the first place.

Sarcasm, apart from being the lowest form of wit, is also an art form. Either use it as such or not at all. I doubt very much if there's room for a Picasso or a Dali styled version.

And as for being delighted to drop you a line at the merest rumour of a chance of publication then I suggest you can the crap. At the moment I'm out of the country (which you might or might not have known about), and that means my mail comes in batches of 14 or more letters/zines/whathaveyou per time. I try and clear as much as I can because, as the unwritten law goes (and it must be one that you also abide by as well) 'available for trade and/or LoC'. When I'm foreign based I have naff all to trade, so therefore I LoC. Is that a crime??? Or maybe it's a tinge of envy, perhaps? Personally I hope so, because I would gladly change places with you. Mind you, it does seem a little odd, wouldn't you say, that both your 'targets' are out of the country. ((You could be dealing with Jimmy's comments more seriously than they deserve. I must admit that although I did raise a little chuckle at his letter,

it has caused me - at least temporarily - to file him under 'pathetic little nerk'. This view is subject to change without notice - but not without good cause.

Having got that off my chest, let's move on to a few comments from our cover artist, from one of several letters - mostly concerning jazz music and my attempts to wheedle something out of him.

HARRY TURNER, 10 Carlton Ave., Romiley, Nr. Stockport, Cheshire. SK6 4EG

Dear Terry: After a nail-busting struggle to prise open those massive staples, I had to admit defeat & retreat to the tool box for a large pair of pliers before I succeeded in getting MICROWAVE TWO into a readable shape. Yet after all the effort, I found myself virtually hovering over the pages, not really making contact with the contents. It wasn't physical exhaustion that was the problem; more a growing awareness of a yawning fannish generation gap. I guess I've hopped in & out of fandom too often and each time i gafiate, the mundane world seems to offer more attractions - or it could be that the distinction between the two states of mind gets more blurred with old age. (But don't let that heresy sap your resolve... you've a long way to go yet).

Since I know little about the mysteries of lace-making & infections of the inner ear, and lack the urge to find out more, you are spared any 2-page contributions from me. And while I could bore you for several pages on a subject of more immediate personal concern, like partially-sighted fandom, I won't. My conscience is eased by the thought that you have already stirred up other survivors with more literary pretensions than me (not only AVC and young Birchby, but Ghod himself!). ((Sadly, nothing from Ghod this ish, I understand he's probably been playing golf. I have hopes for the future though.))



BILL TEMPLE, Flat 1, 20 Grimston Gdns., Folkestone, Kent.

MICROWAVE 2 arrived at the end of Forry Ackerman's 3-week stay in Folkstone, quite a lot of it in our flat. I made the mistake of showing it to him. He was interested, asked if he could borrow it, partly to make a note of some addresses, particularly, I think, Walt Willis's. I made the mistake of lending it to him (before I'd read it myself). And then he shot off to Trieste with it. Hence request for another copy.

Terry Jeeves article about the significant scientific discoveries originating from simple chance occurrences reminded me of a recent dream I had. It was one of those Eureka dreams in which The Secret Of The Universe suddenly flashes upon one's mind. I was struggling (not for the first time) to solve the Riddle Of The Sphinx, to justify the ways of God to Man, why the innocent suffer & the guilty go free. And awoke with the Answer, a simple equation; The Universe Equals Accident. So there's no such thing as injustice. We're all at the mercy of accident. Born by accident. End by accident. This may explain the imminence of my 7th grandchild. The coil mysteriously disappeared. To paraphrase Hamlet, this mortal coil was shuffled off.

I find it difficult to continue in this vein. Since I estimate that 50% of my little grey cells were washed away by my brain haemorrhage, I, who once had a modest reputation as a wit, can now claim only to be a half-wit.

← Sadly, as co-ordination problems make writing an arduous undertaking for Bill, this may be his last LoC for a while. Hopefully his health will continue to improve and we will hear from him again in the not-too-distant future. →

MAL ASHWORTH, 16 Rockville Drive, Embsay, Skipton. North Yorks.

I must say that I am filled with envy over the fortunate position of you young fans of today just launching out on a fanzine publishing career; I mean there is just so much Good Advice about. Everywhere I look I see mountains of Good Advice telling you what you ought to be doing and why what you are currently doing is such a load of crap. Sometimes, even, whole fanzines are devoted to this admirably exhortatory exercise; and it is all on such a sublime and elevated level too - these Wise Counsellors never make the mistake of being so crass as think of actually setting you an example. Telling you what you ought to do is obviously so much better. In my day, y'see, we were pretty deprived of Good Advice and all that and had to muddle through as best we could, learning from whatever insignificant examples happened to be around - zines like HYPHEN and so on. Yup - you don't know how lucky you are.

On the other hand, perhaps one might, just occasionally, be mildly tempted to retort to some of these paragons of literary virtue "Why don't you put up or shut up?" - or perhaps rather more politely: "I'll show you mine if you show me yours". Maybe you will have guessed from the foregoing that your Editorial delighted me; I thought it very sane and sound and exactly right. It is your zine. Make sure you have fun with it; and if it turns out lively and entertaining and goes on improving (as it seems very likely to do) it certainly won't lack grateful readers; and if you lose an Arbiter or two along the way, well you'll just have to wipe away a tear and bear your loss like a Trufan.

I enjoyed Terry Jeeves' piece for its whacky divergent thinking; I love the idea of panes of baked cow dung in our windows. Well, in the abstract that is. I mean in reality it could get kinda noticeable in a hot summer, I suppose. This was a fine piece, one of Terry's best.

As for "Dr. Hackensaw's Secret" I don't know whether to tell you or not and the only thing that persuades me is that Vince has almost certainly done so already. I mean, I feel very tentative about this; if we antique geriatricians are going to come crawling from der voodvork out and start messing about in 1980's fandom we can't be saying "Oh we already did that a long time ago - only better" all the goddamn time. But the truth is that that punchline "This is the way the world ends, not with a bang but with a Wimpy" almost exactly duplicates one of (I feel fairly certain) Bob Shaw's; the only difference is that his version had sausages in it too so that the world ended not with a banger but with a Wimpy. Ah well. Leonardo probably said it first anyway.

Other things I enjoyed: Margaret's bit about the kebab house - "a tall, lumpy building with a curiously placed lightning conductor"; and your comment that the response to your first issue quiz had been "underwhelming". You have touched my heartstrings so much that I feel I must attempt at least two of the questions on your latest quiz. No 2 which goes "Chewy, chewy, chewy, chewy" ad infinitum is obviously the STAR WARS theme tune and No 9 "Doncha like the way I dance, does it bug you.....Stick my fingers right up your nose" is incontrovertibly Mantovani. I shall, however, in my usual modest fashion, not bate my breath while awaiting my prize.

And to top it all a very fine lettercol too. I particularly liked Sid Birchby on the Time Machine and the Wheel Tappers and Shunters club - now there's a theme for a new Yorkshire Television science fiction extravaganza. And it was really nice to have news (Bob Shaw's letter) of ex-NEBULA editor Peter Hamilton. The idea of him sitting in his office all these years and doing lots of other boring things while really dreaming all the time about publishing another s-f magazine is delightful. But he'll have to be a lot more hard-headed next time around; in the old days, for instance, he did once say he might commission me to write him a cover story. In fact - I wonder if I can hold him to it, come to that? (No, in case you're wondering, it can't have been that that killed INTEREXTROZONE).

←← This time I'm determined to put the WAHFs where they belong, not tucked in at the last minute on the contents page;
We Also Heard From:-

Skel, "There's too many of these intellectualuals in fandom who can read without moving their lips."

Rob Hansen, "...one of my early fanzines received a grand total of four LoCs...."

Sydney J. Bounds, "A letter from Sid Birchby! One of the real old timers... and news of Peter Hamilton...and a letter from Walt Willis...who will you dig up next? (Please make sure they're still alive.)"

Alan Burns "...I can write at length on the acheivement of high vacua, either by mercury pumps or the examination of the outpourings of certain neofen, which acheives the lowest pressure I find difficult to decide."

Dave Rowley (again), Harry Turner (again, twice), Chuck Connor (again, plus three or four pocsarcds, two 'phone calls and a 26-hour visit), Joy Hibbert (again), Dick Bergeron, Terry Jeeves (again, twice), Arthur Thomson, John & Joan Newman (who subbed), Pete Presford (who 'phoned as well, later), and Colin Fine.

About six pages ago, I began to wonder if this lettercol was ever going to end. Now it's done and I find it hard to believe it's over. Thanks to everyone who wrote, and although I'll have to WAHF more next ish, please keep on writing.

