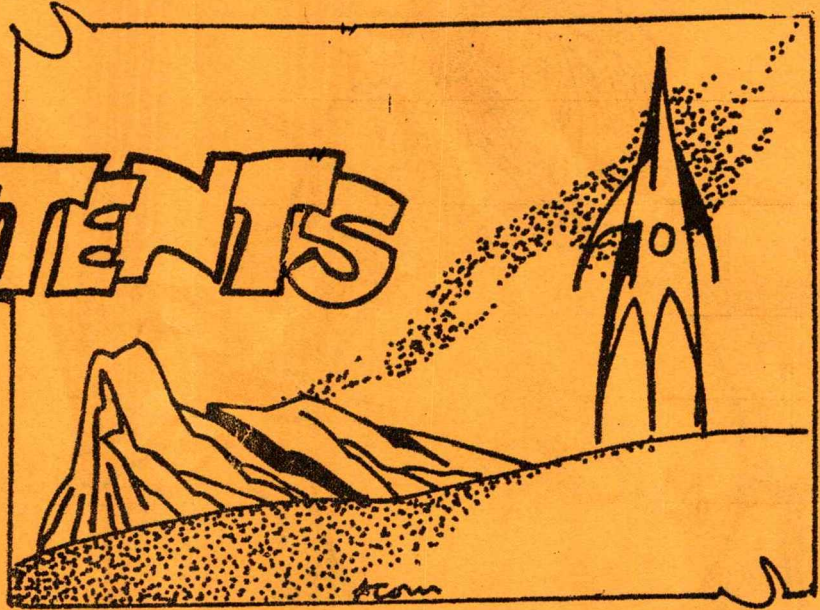




HARRY BELL 83/4

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• The fanzine that thinks
"quarterly" means four times
a lifetime

FEBRUARY 1984

Cult of the Sacred Mimeo
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MICROWAVE is edited and published by Terry Hill at 41 Western Road, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8NE
- Speak-by-wire on (0622) 20234

MICROWAVE is published as often as I can afford the time and postage, and is available for
Trade, LoC, contribution or 3x10p stamps.

This issues Ghod
Fen who put their
hands into their
pockets and helped
out with postage
(otherwise known
as ANGELS) are:

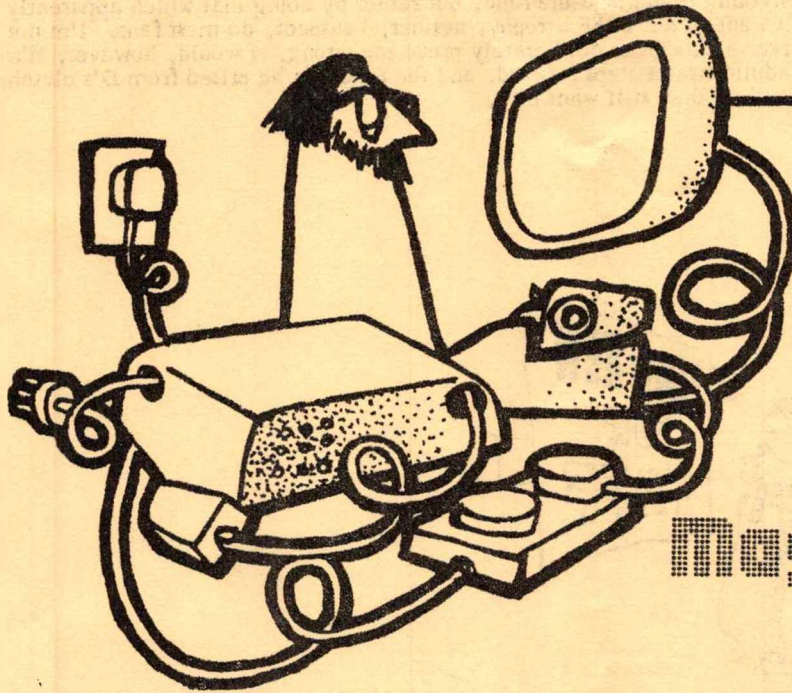
Sid Birchby
Chuch Harris
Ethel Lindsay
Ken Lake

Many, many thanks.

"We lifted through the lower thousand and two thousand-foot lanes. The lights of Tappan were dwindling beneath us."

-WANDL THE INVADER - Ray Cummings
Ace Books D-497 1961

⌘ This is almost certainly a misprint, throughout the rest of the novel all references are to Tappan. Tappan are fairly well-known manufacturers of microwaves.⌘



Magnetronics

The prospect of composing this editorial has been filling me with trepidation. "Why?", you may ask. "Editorials for MICROWAVE must be easy to write. Nothing heavy, just a couple of pages of rambling rubbish." And you'd be right, the only problem I had with the last six editorials was deciding what rubbish to ramble about.

That's the problem.

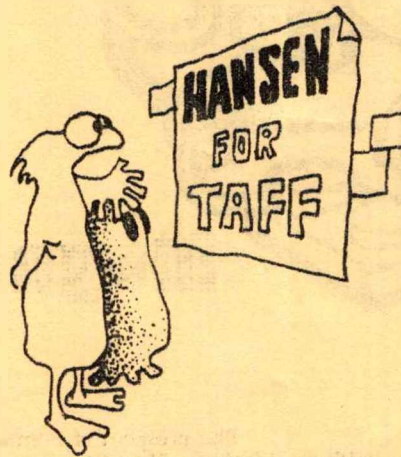
This time I have something to say that I consider important, and therefore I want to say it as well as I possibly can.

Until now, I've almost ignored TAFF. I've just accepted its existence, agreed that it serves a useful purpose, and muttered, "Maybe one day, m'lad,...." Now, suddenly, I'm quite passionate about TAFF. This is because, in my opinion, one of the candidates is a lousy choice on several counts, but seems to have gathered significant support.

It bothers me that D. West, in his own TAFF platform, states that "Most of American fandom falls into two categories: worthy, but dull, or worthless and dull." This is the person the Americans are willing to entertain? This is the person we want to send as our representative? Perhaps I can understand why the Americans may be intrigued by the prospect of meeting, in the flesh, this font of derogatory wisdom in the hope of altering his opinions. I am doubtful, since he would "be quite happy to stay at home", and, if elected, "will not give speeches, attend banquets, appear on panels, or wear funny badges." Is there any point in his going? He seems intent on having a miserable and antisocial time. His whole platform seems to be a variety of undersell, designed to pique interest by intrigue. What concerns me is that it might well work.

I've not met D. West in person, so I've not had a chance to ascertain directly his character or beliefs, as I have with Rob Hansen. In order to be as unbiased as possible, I've really tried to discover from his writings exactly what opinions he has of TAFF. After all, this is all that most Americans have to decide on. All I can find is, "Not being unreservedly enthusiastic about the idea [of taking a TAFF trip] I have framed my Official Platform accordingly", and "I think I shall be slothfully enigmatic and let everyone else get on with it". He certainly doesn't appear at all keen on the whole idea, so spending the Fund to send someone who is intent on not enjoying himself and making use of the privilege, seems to me to be a total waste. But wait,....do we have, buried in his own flyer for an issue of West reprints, D's true opinion of the importance of TAFF? "I'm doing this for my benefit.... I need the cash (not a penny of which will go to any damn fan fund)." It bears consideration.

Of course, selection as TAFF delegate means more than a free trip to the U.S., the chosen person accepts two years of fund administration as part of the privilege. As I understand it, this means looking after the residue cash whilst attempting to swell the fund's coffers. In due course, the 'winner' is handed a cheque for the current value of the fund by the outgoing administrator, who will probably ask that he/she spend no more than a certain amount on his/her trip but who has no power to ensure that he/she won't. It's just traditional to be as frugal as possible. There are no safeguards to ensure that the money is correctly handled; it all hinges on trust and tradition. My main concern is not whether D. West is the right person to send, or the right person to want to invite, but, rather, what would become of TAFF during his term as administrator. His enthusiasm for the entire venture leads me to believe that he might allow TAFF to wither away. One of my correspondents has suggested that he will "kill it stone dead". I agree that this is quite likely, not by actively doing anything to damage the fund, but rather by doing that which apparently comes naturally to him - nothing at all. I don't want to see TAFF atrophy, neither, I suspect, do most fans. I'm not saying D. will act as I think he might - he's perverse enough to deliberately prove me wrong. I would, however, like to see the bets hedged. If a suitable substitute administrator steps forward, and the fund can be prised from D's clutches, then I say the Americans can have him..... if they still want him.



THIS IS WHERE YOU CAME IN Dept.

Some of you have received MICROWAVE from the beginning, some of you came in late. Thanks to RICHARD BERGERON, I have assembled two sets of back issues for the benefit of late-comers who want to know what went on before they came in. British readers can write to me, stating which issue they started with and I will LOAN them the earlier issues (IF KEN LAKE ever returns them) for the cost of postage. U.S. readers should write to STU SHIFFMAN, 19 BROADWAY TERRACE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10040. He will then tell you how much postage to send for the issues you want to borrow.

=====
OH GOD WHAT TANGLED WEBS WE WEAVE - ESPECIALLY IN SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION
=====



by Skel

Little things....mean a lot? Well, yes, I suppose that's perfectly true as far as it goes. Yes, I can go along with that. Oh, I can think of one little thing that Cas says doesn't mean very much to her but, I assure you, it means a hell of a lot to me. No, in general, little things can mean a lot. Take 'nothing' as a case in point. Nothing is smaller than 'nothing', than zero, but if you think that a zero doesn't mean a lot, try leaving a couple off the end of a cheque the next time you clear your overdraft and see if the bank takes the same flamboyant, devil-may-care attitude. If they do, drop me their address, will you?

Little things....are also supposed to please little minds. No argument there - I mean, someone has to be buying all those books about dwarfs and elves and hobbits. No you can't really argue with these old sayings. The problem I find with them is that they're a bit one-sided. They're so positive. What they mean, when they say "Little things mean a lot", in their smug little voices, is that one should be considerate at all times. Buy your wife a rose occasionally - a small and inexpensive gesture to show that she is uppermost in your thoughts, rather than just coming home and saying, "Where's my fucking tea then?", or "Wake up bimbo - I want to know who's taken all my sleeping tablets!".

I tried something like that once, buying her flowers as a surprise that is. Never again! I was in the doghouse for weeks afterwards. The suspicious bugger was convinced I'd done something to feel guilty about. I wouldn't be surprised if she'd followed me to work in case I was having an affair with one of the bus-conductresses. I used to check my lunchbox in case she'd bugged it, convinced that I was engaging in dalliance with one of the pigeons in the park. It reached a stage where I thought I might have to admit to an imaginary affair just to set her mind at rest.... "I cannot tell a lie dear, for some time now I've been amorously and passionately involved with the entire brass section of the Stockport Ladies Salvation Army Band." "Oh," she would say, "I suspected as much when you could only manage it sixteen times each night. Never mind, I forgive you, I know how irresistible you are to women." Fortunately they repaired the TV and she forgot about me again. But I'd learned my lesson - no more small but important gestures. No way!

What they don't mean is the negative side of things. A little fart means an awful lot in a small room (at last, the secrets of the fan-o-nauts revealed - now you know why all the hard-drinking fans end up in the kitchen at parties. Someone cracked a sniffy in the lounge.). The other old homily has its negative side too. Little things also displease little minds. Not that there's anything unique about that - they also displease awesomely, staggeringly magnificent minds. Mine for instance. Now I don't have many faults, as I'm sure Cas would be the first to inform you. Still, I'm not perfect - nearly, but not quite - but a miss, as they say, is as good as a mile (If they'd asked me I'm sure I could have helped them phrase that more clearly). But yes, I do have a fault or two, three even, if you want to be picky. Chiefly, things tend to bug me. Little things. Miniscule even. They get me all twisted up inside, knotted up, like those pre-coiled telephone flexes tend to get when several people use them.

In fact, that's one of the 'little things' that bugs the hell out of me. I hate it when I pick up the handpiece, expecting to get several yards of freedom, only to find the main part of the phone dangling from my hand, suspended by a twisted knot of gordian complexity. God knows, it ought to be simple enough. You pick the phone up, take the call, and put it down again. What the hell do some people do when taking a phone call, for Christ's sake - the Watusi? Why do they have to gyrate through fourteen dimensions whilst telling their boyfriend how triffic he is and how simply supah it would be to go out with him that night? Can't they simply pick the phone up, agree to wear quick-release knickers that night, and then hang it back up as they found it? Surely that's not too much to ask, is it?

Mind you, it isn't only the telephone that doesn't get put back 'as they found it'. That's another of the calamities of the skelhouse. I can never find anything when I want it. All my working life I've worked in one office or another, and in that time I've brought home (the best euphemism for 'bloody-well stolen' I've yet come across) enough pens and pencils to sink a battleship.....

"Get a grip on yourself Midshipman! Make your report man."

"We've - ohmigawd - we've taken a 2H amidships, sir. I'm afraid we're going down. We're doomed, DOOMED I TELL YOU!"

"Steady son! Give the orders to man the lifeboats and prepare to abandon paragraph."

Yes, I've brought home innumerable pens and pencils. So that I'll always be able to put my hand on one when I want it I keep one of each in my fanac cupboard, which no one else is permitted to open, on pain of making me exceedingly snitty. And yet, when I want one, or the scissors, or my rubber, or anything else I keep in there, it's always missing. What I need is Master Sorcerer Sean O Lochlainn to set me some warding spells upon my fanac cupboard, only then I suppose I'd be up to my arse in frogs and toads, or rather in wife and kids leaping greenly and leggily about, a truly 'ribbit'ing sight. Actually I can understand why the kids don't put things back where they found them. I used to be just the same myself. It's so much easier just to leave things lie when you've finished with them. Why, I've only just gotten past this stage myself. The difference is that now they're my things, and it's me that can never find the sodding things. Now that I've finally started putting things away when I've finished with them it doesn't seem fair that there's now three kids playing the horses to my Augean stableboy. I sometimes wonder if my parents might have sold their souls to the devil to ensure that one day I got mine. Well, I made my bed, I suppose I gotta lie in it.

Come to think of it, that's another of the things that bother me. Probably the most awesomely trivial of them all. I HATE going to bed only to discover that the damn thing hasn't been made. I know you'll find it hard to believe of a calm and evenly tempered individual such as myself, but finding that the bed hasn't been made makes me fly into a terrible rage. You'd think it was the crime of the century, or something. My reaction is totally unreasonable, invariably makes me feel ashamed afterwards...but it happens every time. If there's anything upon the bed, anything at all, I fling it off in high dudgeon. I stomp about, growling while I make the bed and collapse into it in a foul temper. Good Lord, it's not even as if making the bed is any big deal. All we have, upon the mattress, is a double sleeping-bag and a couple of pillows - not the most complicated or time-consuming bed-to-make in the entire world is it?

I can only attribute my reaction to extreme tiredness. I mean, when I go to bed it's because I am too tired to stay up any longer. All I want to do is collapse into dream's sweet embrace. My body is at its lowest ebb and I'm simply not up to

copied with setbacks. Even after I've finished making all these excuses for myself however, I am forced to admit that even to me they don't seem entirely credible - I mean, those reasons would apply to everyone, wouldn't they? Yet I see no evidence that anyone else behaves as irrationally as I in this respect. I've never seen a copy of 'Conan Makes The Bed', or 'Captain Future and the Bed-Makers of Venus'. Can it possibly be that no one else finds being faced with an unmade bed as mortifying a prospect as I do? I suspect not. After all, the evidence, all negative, is there if only it can be interpreted. How often has Ted Tubb written his hero out of a tight corner with the phrase, "Quick as a flash Dumarest sized up the situation, and made the bed." Never, that's how often. The suspicion is nagging at me that my behaviour might be considered unreasonable. Suspicion though is not the only thing that nags at me.

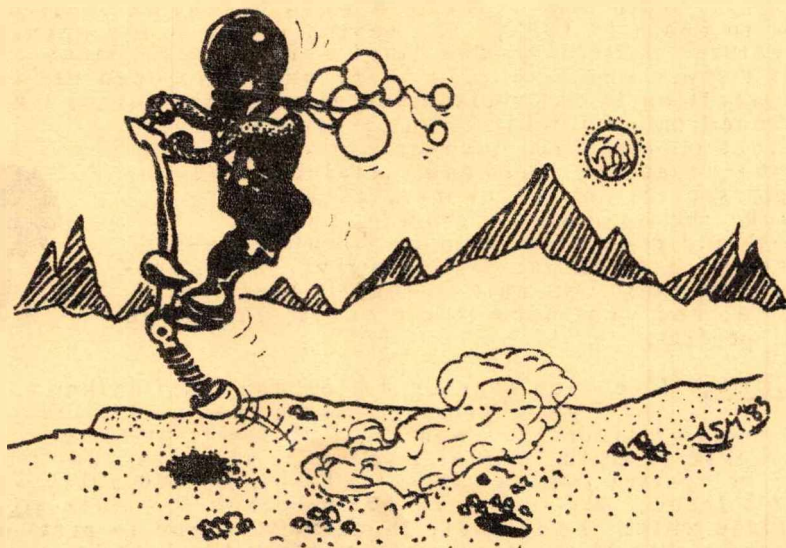
Well, I'm married, aren't I?

One thing that puzzles me about wives - well, one of the many things that puzzle me about them - is why they ever marry us. I mean, if we're that bad, why do they bother? And yet, they give you no hint that they consider you to have all the all-round competence of a mongoloid clam. On the contrary (or "Au contraire" as those of us say who've passed 'O-level' Pretension), just the opposite. They make us think we're something special. I know.

"Marry me," she said, "or I'll stick my head in the gas oven." Now wouldn't that make you feel special? How was I to know that what she really meant was that, if she'd nothing better to do, she might as well clean the oven out? Am I a mind-reader or something? "Whow," I thought, "you must really be some stuff to get this chick going like that. Move over Valentino, just watch this kid operate." God, what a dummy! What a wazzock I was!

Of course, their real opinion of you soon comes to the fore after you're married. There you are, feeling vaguely like Superman, doing some reasonably complicated job-about-the-house, like putting up a shelf or something, and everything's going wrong. Whatever it is it won't work...and she starts giving you advice, making helpful suggestions. Yep, Wonderwoman herself, who waits for you to get home from work to knock a nail into the wall to hang a picture on, suddenly she's an expert on all the things you're doing wrong. And the suggestions really put you in your place, really let you know how incompetent she thinks you are. They're all on a par with "Have you tried knocking the nails in point-first dear?", or "Are you sure you've switched it on?" Of course I'm sure I've switched the bugging thing on. What the hell does she take me for? Mind you, what really annoys me, after we've had a blazing row over her bloody stupid suggestions, is that the sodding thing invariably works ok..... after I've switched it on.

Nothing annoys me more, when I'm being a pillock, than being told that I'm behaving like a pillock. But that's my problem. What's yours?



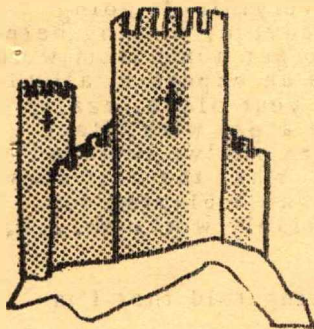
SOMETHING

and

NOTHING

Sid Birchby

ELRON'S CASTLE. Say what you like about L. Ron Hubbard, he does things in style. A recent issue of 'The Contract Journal' had a report of the latest triumph of the British construction industry--well, not quite that, more a do-it-yourself job. Anyway, there was a photo of an enormous castle complete with bastions, battlements, and pointy windows, entitled 'Sussex's Newest Castle Nears Completion'. Twenty years ago, Hubbard saw Tonbridge Castle, Kent, and decided that he wanted one. He quickly made a design that his followers could construct when they weren't busy clearing themselves, and work began in 1965. The castle is due to be topped-out in 1984, and all of it apart from the structural steel skeleton has been built using voluntary labour. At a cost of around £1M, this is dirt-cheap.

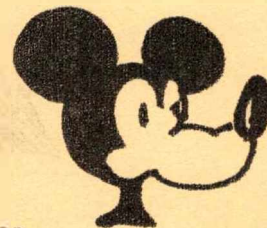


But why did he want a castle? Why not, for instance, a fleet of Rolls-Royces, like a certain little fat guru? One can only speculate. But before he became a Scientologist, Hubbard wrote some excellent sword-and-sorcery fiction, and I wonder if he is acting it out. Very few fantasy-writers have the chance to make their dreams come true, but this out-standing architectural folly is a monument to one who did.

SEÑOR WALT DISNEY. There's another great fantasist of our time: Disney and Dali -- what a pair! Walt Disney was born in the little village of Mojacar, Andalusia, and his widowed mother emigrated with him to the USA when he was 12 years old. Or so I

was told when I went to Spain in 1982. The region is now being opened up for tourism and one of its features is its cave-dwellings which contain many cartoon-like pictures. As soon as I saw them, I thought 'This must have been the origin of Mickey Mouse!'. The cave tradition is still very much alive in that area: I visited one community that reminded me of Hobbit Town: a narrow gorge with both its cliff-faces riddled with cave-entrances. But the difference was that the caves had doors and curtained windows, TV aeriels and modern sanitation; telephones, even.

A few years back, the Spanish Government became ashamed of its Hobbits and re-housed them in a brutal pre-fab estate near the village of Almanzora, a mile away. The cave-dwellers promptly sub-let their new huts to the villagers, who thought them very nice, and went back to the caves, installing colour TV from their profits.



DANIEN'S SPACE-GODS. I've been reading a biography of Daniken, and I am charmed to learn that he visited Yugoslavia for a space-god convention, won a lot of dinars at some casino, and promptly gave it to the croupiers because this was what true Socialism was about. Rubbish, of course: Daniken is Swiss by birth, and every Switzer is born knowing the value of a franc. My theory is that he drank too much slivovitz, a recipe for instant fuddle which the friendly Yugoslavians tend to press on their visitors. They call it plum brandy, but it tastes of neither plum nor brandy. It is a fierce distillation of ethyl alcohol flavoured with various esters, and it tastes like soap. They give it away on airflights. The jet engines won't take it, and I wish I hadn't.

Still, it was free, and I have fond memories of a little tavern near Dubrovnik where customers paid for a meal and then helped themselves to unlimited wine from a tap on the wall. Evidently, Yugoslavia doesn't believe that drink is the curse of the working class, and rejects the Marxist ideal of 'To each according to his need'. The revised version of 'To each according to his ability' is much more fun, provided the barrel is big enough. By contrast, the Swiss have a special problem with some of the more remote Alpine people which they stuffily try to conceal, namely that instead of beavering away producing edelweiss cheese and milk chocolate, these folk grow cherries, run illicit stills, and make high-octane kirsch, which they then consume under the shade of the cherry trees. Kirsch, you might say, is the drink of the working class.

FUNNY-PECULIAR HEADLINES can make an amusing hobby, and sometimes you will find a complete story that might have been written by the late J.B. Morton ('Beachcomber' of the 'Express'). One of my favourites comes from a 'Points of Law' column in a technical journal. It has the rivetting headline 'No. 5332: Public Disembowelling' and goes like this: 'Re. Query No. 5279, might not this practice, being carried out on land in advance of the building line, be regarded as 'development' under town planning legislation which, presumably, the planning authority could refuse?' Answer: 'The forecourt is part of the adjoining premises, and the disembowelling is performed in the course of that use. I cannot see any material change of use, so there is no development.'



I hasten to add that the adjoining premises are part of a vetine--veterin--animal clinic, but it's chilling to realise that, if things get worse, a planning application to fillet felons cannot be refused so long as it's done at the vet's. Don't tell Maggie Thatcher.

There's just room to mention a story in tonight's paper about a tuba player in the Liverpool Philharmonic charged with being drunk on a 3-seater bicycle in the Mersey Tunnel. I'm tempted to say that a pair of red-bearded dwarfs on the other seats testify that they were sober, but let's not be ridiculous.



UGANDA, PEARL OF AFRICA. On a bookstall, I recently found a battered publicity brochure about the glorious future handed over that pleasant land. It was issued at the time when Britain look good, and Idi Amin was unheard-of. As it happens, I'd heard of him. In 1946, I was X-listed out of the army into an outfit in Kampala called the Civil Re-absorption Office, whose purpose was to teach demobilised African soldiers a useful trade. Hah! We ran a metal-working course, and on Graduation night, the instructors' houses were quietly unlocked with nicely-made keys....

But it was a good life, on the whole: a strange mixture of ancient and modern. Once, near the Mountains of the Moon, I met giants and dwarves. The pygmies were little horrors, who charged at me waving poisoned arrows, headed by one waving a tin chamber-pot for community donations. I have never since felt the same about trick-or-treat.

One day at the office, I encountered the medieval custom of Hue-and-Cry. I was sat there telling some ex-corporal how good it was to meet such a noble member of the Amin family, when there was a noise outside in the road. A rabble of citizens belted past the door in hot pursuit of a lanky individual twice their height who was ambling along serenely at a medium trot.

'What's that in aid of?' I asked the office boy.

'Oh, someone was caught stealing, and they've raised the Hue-and-Cry. For similar instances, in medieval England, ref. 'Notes and Queries', passim, also Jusserand, and the Britannica.'

'Well, thanks.' (Smarmy little sod.)

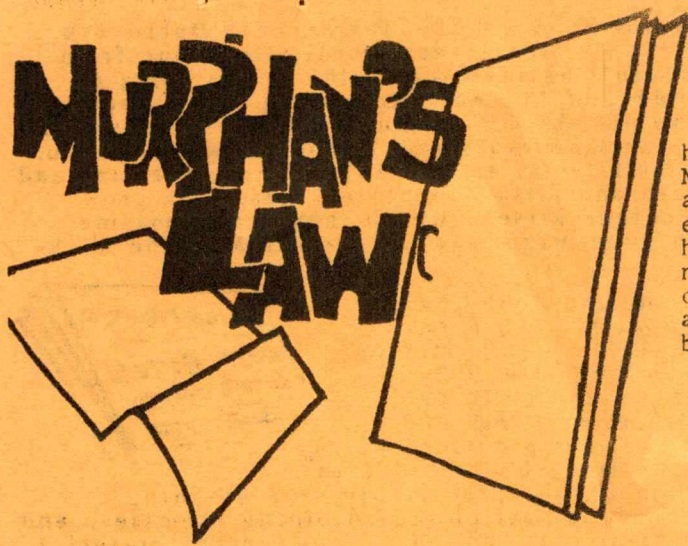
HOW TO BE REDUNDED. As some readers may know, I have fought my way up from office-boy to construction engineer and

I am now in charge of a sizeable design group with Manchester City council. Moneywise, I'd have done better as an office dogsbody, but that's another story. Recently, my masters decided that it was time to show their non-racialism, and my office now looks like a meeting of the United Nations. Not that I object: the work-output has risen wonderfully, and I dare say that after having had to train engineers of Polish, Hungarian and Iranian origin, I should not baulk at Tish Hong Phung from Vietnam or Barman Sonchaie who arrives next week from Mars, as far as I can discover. Nobody seems to know. In my office, we certainly need a barman, and I'm sure he/she will be a very nice person: Hong Phung (Tish is a generation-name) is already proving himself a real find. Like most Vietnam boat-children, he has a passion for acquiring knowledge.



But the outlook for WASP engineers is pretty dim. In 20 years, there won't be very many. I suppose we must be thankful for training our successors.

MURPHAN'S LAW



Members of the mundane community have had several published summaries of Murphy's Law to help them in the struggle against the sheer cussedness of just about everything in life. It is time that fans had an equivalent. Here is my first summary of Murphan's Law, plus some corollaries. If you can think of any useful additions send them to Terry and they will be credited to you in future publications.

1) Any stapler handed to you by a fan has only one staple left in it.

BOB SHAW

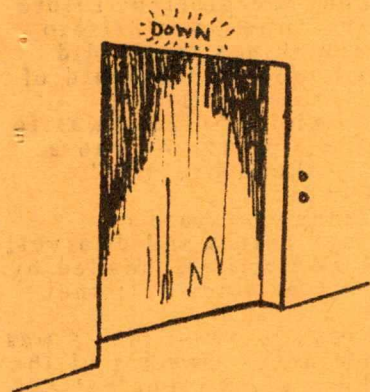
2) When your prissy old aunt, who you're trying to keep in with because she has money, picks up a fanzine it will fall open at the worst obscenity in it.

3) Con hotel waiters won't.

4) Con hotel lifts don't.

5) Con hotel managers can't.

6) If you send a letter savagely attacking a fan it will cross in the post with one from him in which he is exceptionally nice to you.

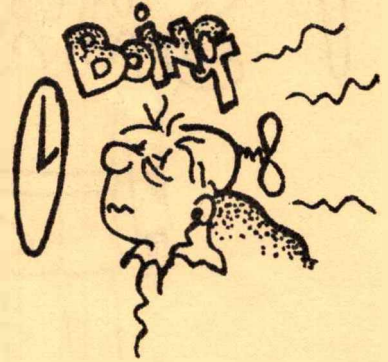


7) At a convention banquet, all the people you like are together at a different table having the time of their lives.

Cor. 1: The one seat you might have had at that table has been snaffled by your worst enemy.

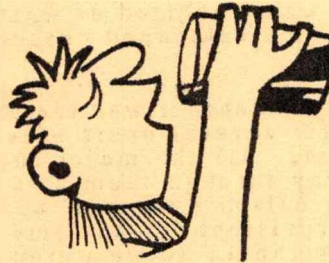
Cor. 2: If you have successfully avoided somebody throughout a con he will be seated beside you at the banquet.

- 8) The breaking strength of a fanzine staple is three fingernails.
- 9) 75% of the lifts at any con are permanently occupied by the same eight-year-old child.
- 10) Nothing interesting ever happens at a con after 2.00 a.m.
- 11) At a con you always waken up one minute after they have stopped serving breakfast.
Cor. 1: The only time you waken earlier is when you are too hung-over to eat.



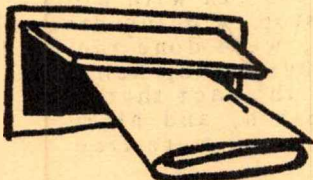
- 12) There is never time to loc a fanzine when you are actually reading it.
Cor. 1: When you get time to do the loc you can't remember any of your comments.

- 13) The amount of money you spend in a session at the con bar is inversely proportional to how much of the session you can remember next day.



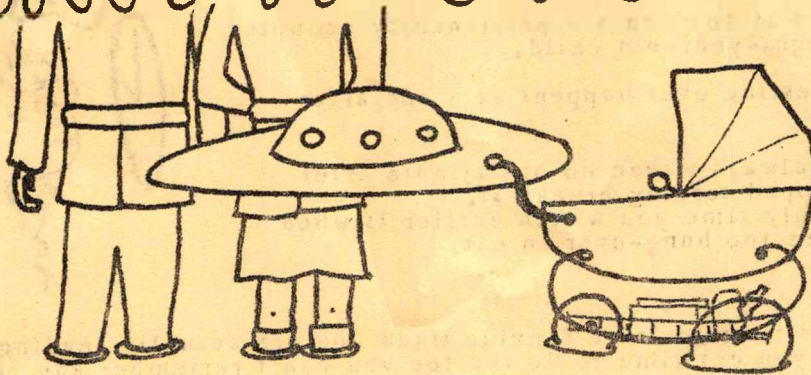
- 14) When you need reminding of a fan's name at a con he is:
(a) not wearing his badge;
(b) wearing it about the level of his fly;
(c) wearing a badge on which the lettering is illegible or microscopic.

- 15) If the sign opposite the lift on your floor of a sprawling convention hotel says, algebraically speaking, "Rooms N_1 to N_2 ", then your room number will be: $\frac{N_1 + N_2}{2}$



- 16) All postmen believe that all fans are eccentric or feeble-minded, or both.

I SAW A UFO ONCE!



Jon
Wallace

"Flying saucers were reported as well as giant planes, three-mile long rocket ships and cigar-shaped objects travelling at 500mph."
2-1-79....Daily Express

And I saw it! The weather was terrible, that night. The sky was clear when we saw the thing, but for several hours previously the snow had come down like it was going out of fashion. All the major roads were filled with abandoned cars, the taxis threading their way through them at a snail-like 40mph. We were planning to see the New Year in at Alison's parents' and so Gilraen's pram was loaded to its limit (and you could carry provisions for an army in that pram!) My in-laws live within fifteen minutes walking range, so we weren't that worried about getting there -- at first. As the time for leaving got closer we watched the snow continue to fall with some apprehension. Then, as if God looks after people who have to push heavily-laden, coach-sprung prams through ten inches of snow and don't need more of the stuff clogging up their glasses, it stopped, the clouds rolled back, and to quote a spokesman for Sir Bernard Lovell;

"The weather was very clear. One would be able to see....with the naked eye stars not normally visible." (source as above)

We had a quick drink to steady our nerves, and headed out. It was incredible, the stars shone like beacons to light our way. We could have seen them if we'd had time to look up. Charleston Street is no more than two hundred yards long, has twelve houses and a negligible amount of through-traffic. It stretched before us, covered in a lovely white blanket of snow, broken only where a few foolhardy pedestrians had passed -- and ten bloody inches deep. Our first instinct was to go back into the house, turn on the heating and watch the Hogmany Ceilidh on Grampian TV, but the thought of having to sit through that unfortified by my father-in-law's 12-year-old Scotch made me suggest that I go and scout out the bus route that crosses the top of the street. Enough buses had passed that way before the service had stopped to flatten the snow and make it passable on foot, so I went and collected Alison and the pram containing the Wallace heir, and we set off.

The trip from the front door to the bus route was hell. It took us fifteen minutes to travel a distance that Duncan walks in thirty seconds on his way to play group. I was up front, travelling backwards, pulling on the coach springs, and Alison was at the back, pushing like a navvie and yelling 'Mush!' (a quick and nasty snowball launched under the pram soon stopped that nonsense). As we got to the end of the street, a neighbour stopped his car and turfed his husky(?) son out with a cry of "Jim'll help you home Jon". I had to fight tooth and claw to stop us being dragged all the way back down Charleston Street to chez Wallace, I mean, we'd done the hard bit, hadn't we? We set off down the densely-packed snow of the bus route, hampered only by the occasional snowball in the ear from the co-pilot, and the fact that she laughed so much that she steered us into a thicker-than-average patch, and after trying 'Endeavour'-like icebreaking tactics, we had to backtrack till we were free.

The next hour of the journey was gruelling, and we stopped at the half-way point to rest and check that the stuff loaded under the pram was safely tucked away. The spot we had chosen to do this was on a short stretch of the Kingsway, a sort of Dundee by-pass (though why anyone would want to by-pass Dundee, I don't know). On one side was a row of council houses dark and tightly curtained, on the other, across the road was Camperdown Park, its trees laden with the weight of the fallen snow. Pretty enough in daytime, but at night, a very spooky place.

I bent to discover that everything was breaking loose and started to restack, making sure at the same time that my camera was safely stashed where it couldn't fall. Alison looked nervously at the looming bulk of the trees, its darkness contrasting with the long white stretch of deserted dual carriageway that was the Kingsway in the snow. I noticed that the brake was on, and had been since we left, and I turned to yell suitable recriminations at the driver. I was thus facing west when IT happened. Alison's eyes widened, and focused on a point somewhere over my left shoulder. Fearing ghoulies or ghosties or longleggedy beasties or something, I spun round, slipped and fell and found myself in probably the best position imaginable to observe the phenomenon, flat on my back. It was beautiful. We watched, rivetted, as the object passed over the horizon and on out of sight. Then I remembered my camera, too late.

We stood for several minutes after it had gone and speculated as to what it was. It had appeared in the north-east, and had travelled majestically across the eastern sky to vanish in the southeast. It looked like a bright point of light trailing a tail of orange light (Alison says white light, but I saw orange). Our first thought was that someone was anticipating the coming festivities and had set off fireworks, but the object moved in a straight line with no apparent change of speed, which ruled that out. Then we remembered the crash of a Russian satellite on Canada, and Skylab was either falling or had fallen. So that gave us our answer. It was space debris. We were satisfied with this explanation, and continued on our way.

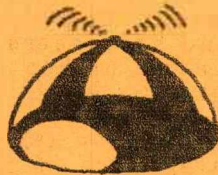
The last stretch of our journey was easy. Just round the corner from Alison's parents' house lies an establishment known as "The Lochee United FC Social Club", the "Clubbie" for short. With its reputation for cheap drink and "A guid nicht oot" the place was really jumping, the noise as we passed was incredible. This explains all those dark, tightly curtained houses, I thought. And the path was beaten wide with footsteps. Easy going indeed! We arrived, and a good New Year was had by all.

The next day was New Years Day of course, so no papers came out then. But the news reports for the second of January showed us that while we were satisfied with our explanation, other people, their minds warped by reading too much imaginative fiction no doubt, had other ideas. The "Tully" (Dundonian for "Telegraph") reported objects with portholes, things that followed people, hovered, shot straight up at high speed, things that turned at sharp right angles and landed in fields. Things that went bump in the night.

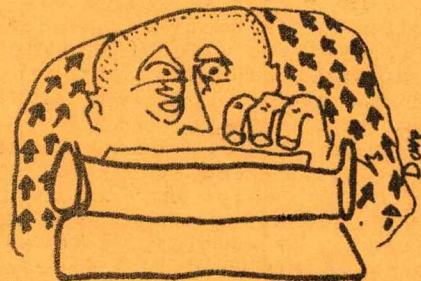
That spokesman for Sir Bernard Lovell said;
"The sightings would appear to be space debris, but we are really not sure at this stage. The weather has been very clear. One would be able to see meteorites with the naked eye and stars not normally visible."

2-1-79 Daily Express.

Well, there it is. Not very exciting, I admit, but a UFO all the same. Or a meteor. Well I know what I saw. But what did all those other people see?



FANTI-GRAVITY



Dear Sir, Due to other commitments
I must decline to stand for TAFF...

THE REAL ESTATE

LEE HOFFMAN

Would you like to know about Port Charlotte? Too bad, I'm going to tell you anyway. Port Charlotte is one of those curious phenomena that occurred in the 1950's in connection with the proliferation of real estate agents. It's a chicken & egg dilemma as to which was cause and which effect.

A large company in the business of oil exploration somehow got hold of this mess of cow pasture and mangrove swamp, platted the whole mess as a community, and started selling lots, many of which were underwater. I used to hear their ads on radio. Remembering all the tales I'd heard about the Florida Real Estate Boom of the 1920's, I scoffed smugly and said how pitiful that people were falling for that crap. Then much to my amazement I learned they had actually ripped out the mangroves, sent the cows off to market, cut canals through the swamps and used the dirt they'd dredged up to bring those underwater lots above the water level. Not by much, mind you. The high spots around town are ten feet above mean sea level.

This began roughly thirty years ago. Now P.C. is a sprawling urbles suburb-type community with its shopping district strung like sloppy beads along the highway that runs through the middle of it all. Primarily it is a retirement community for middle-class middle-western type Amurricans, though there are enough residents of breeding age to keep our school taxes rising steadily.

Despite all that, it's rather a nice place. Its main shortcomings are the heat and humidity in the summer, and the scarcity of true fannish types. (And that it has interfered with the general ecology of the area--but then that was screwed up many decades ago when the lumbermen timbered out most of Florida to ship it to Europe so people over there could have frame houses.)

One of the things I do like about P.C. is the way the environment fights back. The local "weeds" insist on infiltrating even the best kept of lawns (I've given mine back to the wild. Anything that can't grow there without my help doesn't deserve a place in the overall scheme of things.) There are forms of grass (not that kind - the othe stuff) here that can germinate under an asphalt road and sprout through the asphalt in a tiny eruption. There are frogs that, lacking adequate puddles for their purposes, sneak into my swimming pool and skinnydip at night. And a couple of days ago I saw a young alligator basking in a nearby canal just off the highway, in a spot that has a bank (money-type as well as a canal bank) on one side and a building containing a chiropractor, an optician, an insurance agency and like that, on the other.

Where I am might be called the "heart of town" being, as it is, very close to an intersection of the highway with one of the few through streets (the one that goes to the beach. Not the Gulf of Mexico but a large muddy bay.) Even so I've had raccoons & possums wandering through my yard at night, and have heard of skunks and foxes in the area. Come winter various shore birds venture up hunting lizards, which abound on the place. And I'm sure some of my neighbours would be horrified to know how many snakes I've encountered here.

I live catty-cornered across the street from (would you believe it!) a large MICROWAVE tower (which may account for the steady melting down of my brain cells). When I first moved here, vultures (buzzards) would congregate there, gazing down the highway in search of edibles. I haven't seen them lately. Now the tower is happy hangout for parakeets (budgies) descended from various escapees. (They seem to proliferate like real estate agents.) The buzzards haven't left altogether, I see them flying over a lot. They've just relocated their hangout. (I wonder how many fans have actually observed buzzards mating in their more-or-less natural habitat.)

That's all here in town (If you can call it a town. It's not incorporated. All our local government is county.)

In the outlying districts there've been lots of reports of the fabulous Skunk-Ape, which is the Florida version of the Bigfoot. One fellow even got a photo, which was printed in a local paper, although it was so blurred, one couldn't make out anything, not even the background.

* * *

When I come right down to it, I don't know much. I do assume a hell of a lot. I assume a lot of the stuff that I'm told is true. Like, I assume there really is an England. I base this partly on the letters and fanzines I get from people claiming to live there, and on the claims of persons I've met who insist they come from there, and all the stuff I've heard about England all my life. Besides, I think I've been there. I flew somewhere once and visited a country I liked a lot and some people I liked a lot, and on every hand, I was assured this was England. But for all I know I was actually flown to a very elaborate film set populated by highly-skilled and well-versed performers.

As to the U. S. S. R. I've never been there, or to a set identified as such. I'm just taking the word of a lot of other people that such a place exists. The same goes for places like Iran, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Grenada and the Falkland Islands. I have to take other people's word about what happens in those places, too. Mostly I get the word from media people and politicians. And they confuse the hell out of me.

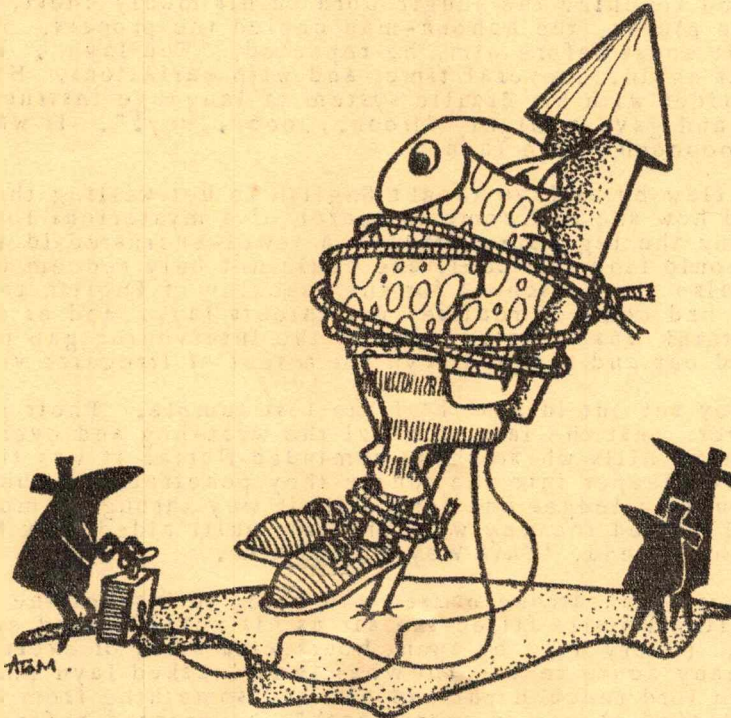
Many many years ago, I heard a lot about Nazis being tried for war crimes. At the time I heard a lot about how "obeying orders" was no excuse for committing acts that any sane consciousness should have recognised as immoral.

A few years later I heard a lot about how U. S. citizens who left this country for Canada because they felt the "undeclared war" in Viet Nam was immoral were really irresponsible and traitors to their country because they refused to obey orders.

A short time ago, I heard a lot about how wrong it was for the U. S. S. R. to send troops into Afghanistan -- no matter that the Soviets claimed certain elements in Afghanistan had asked for the support of their troops, or that they claimed anti-Soviet forces were active in Afghanistan doing things that would be harmful to the U. S. S. R. and all it stood for.

Now I am hearing how the U. S. had to send troops into Grenada because certain elements in the Caribbean asked us to, and because anti-American forces were active there, doing things that would be harmful to the United States and all it stands for.

I find all this very confusing. And sometimes embarrassing.





The scummy river waters parted and the young Lord Branestroke struggled up onto the bank, burped a couple of times, then spat out a remnant of N'Kindli the alligator before collapsing into a wound-induced coma. Thus was he found G'Dorfl the old she-baboon. Carrying the recumbent form back to her tree nest, she licked the mud from every inch of that many-scarred torso.... a process which began to arouse the ape-man. G'Dorfl quickly bound his arms and legs tight with healing vines, then plastered his many wounds with newly-gathered elephant dung. Between his lips, she forced a brew made from the tastiest grubs she could find. These healing remedies took immediate effect. In no time at all, Nartaz was struggling madly to free himself from the vines, but the wise old G'Dorfl knew better than to loose him until the healing medicaments had done their job. Many moons passed before she judged her charge to be cured. Finally she loosed the bonds. Quick as a flash, Nartaz leaped from the ant-hill on which he had been tied. Pausing only to belt G'Dorfl a haymaker, he dived back into the waters of P'Tooley to clean away the healing unguents.

Nartaz was soon swinging his way through the leafy jungle. Once more the call of "Hoooo...ooo...ey" could be heard curdling the milk in the coconuts as the mighty lord swung from creeper to creeper along familiar routes. Down in a mighty arc swung the jungle king..and up again in a graceful arc, terminating with a solid THUNK as he went splat into a fast-growing punkah tree which had sprung up in the fairway during his illness. Nartaz awoke to find his head being supported by the first white man his eyes had ever seen. He struggled erect and eyed the slim, dark-haired khaki-clad figure. His new found friend touched a strangely bumpy shirt front and said.... "Me Jayn". Reaching out and touching the jungle Lord on his manly chest, Jayn added "You Nartaz". Eager to please, the baboon-man copied the process. Placing his large hand firmly on the soft chest before him, he repeated, "You Jayn". Finding the sensation pleasant, he did it again...several times and with variations. Half an hour later, having made great strides with his Braille system of language instruction, Nartaz threw back his head and gave a mighty "Hooo...ooo...eey!". It was followed by an ullulating "Ooooooooooooooh" from Jayn.

The days (and nights) flew by as Jayn taught English to her willing though rather tired pupil. Nartaz learned how she had come in search of a mysterious lost temple, played with gold, and housing the legendary OMPAR, a jewel-encrusted idol. Jayn explained that if only she could find this idol, she could not only redeem the mortgage on her old home, but also open a school for the teaching of English to immigrants ... a direction in which she had come to realise, her talents lay...and as often as possible. With Nartaz, to think was to act...even if the intervening gap took several hours to bridge. He reached out and grabbed Jayn for a spot of irregular verb study.

The following day, they set out in search of the lost temple. Their path took them across P'Tooley the river, past the lair of N'Ezi the wart-hog and over the gently rounded swellings of the upland hills whose shape reminded Nartaz it was time for further studies. Deeper, ever deeper into the jungle they penetrated. They crossed rivers, traversed narrow mountain ledges and forced their way through almost impassable thickets. The jungle Lord led the way with unerring skill aided only by the frequent signposts bearing the legend, 'This Way To OMPAR'.

Suddenly, the young Lord Branestroke paused and knelt to inspect the jungle sward. A strange eerie trilling whistle filled the air as his gold-flecked eyes peered myopically at the greenery. (Every day, he spent hours with a set of exercises designed to sharpen his already acute senses.) "What is it?" asked Jayn peering at the ground. Quietly, the jungle lord reached out and plucked something from the grass. "Not often you find a four-leafed clover on secret path", he grunted before moving on like a silent bronze statue.

Scarcely a month later, the path led into a clearing. In the centre stood a vine-covered pyramid of gold-plated straw surmounted by a tastefully carved plaque bearing the legend 'OMPAR'. Beneath it had been added, 'No waiting, come straight in'.

The two explorers tiptoed into the dark interior. "Do you see what I see?" asked Nartaz. "Yes", answered Jayn... "But what do you see?" "Nothing", replied the baboon-man, "It's too dark". Smoothly and effortlessly, Nartaz ripped away Jayn's skirt, rubbed two handy sticks together and ignited the flimsy material. Stuffing the burning garment into a handy vase, the jungle warrior saw a jewel-studded statue on a golden throne. He reached out with both hands. Jayn was a fraction too slow, and so it was some time (and several abstract nouns later) before Nartaz looked over her shoulder and said, "We must collect all those jewels." Quickly, they pried out every ruby, amethyst, diamond and topaz. To carry the haul, Nartaz quickly improvised a sack from Jayn's blouse, and after a further brief delay, they staggered out of the temple into brilliant sunlight.

Facing them in a ring, stood twelve of the largest pygmies Branestroke had ever seen.

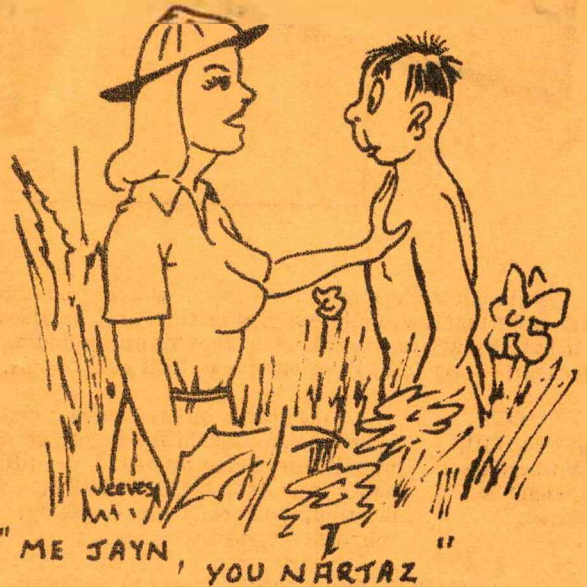
Fast as K'Spaaki the lightning, the agile Nartaz leaped back into the grass temple, dragging the jewel sack with him. With one deft move, he pushed the sack up into the rafters and hoisted the golden throne after it with a muscle-cracking effort made possible only because of the secret exercises taught him by an ancient Tibetan Lama (or maybe a Llama). He had barely smoothed back the straw ceiling, when in burst the pygmies... they had been detained a while as Jayn had insisted on introducing herself to each one. Their leader glared at the baboon-man. His menacing visage clearly indicated that he wasn't interested in being introduced to Nartaz. He wanted the treasure, and he wanted it fast. Fearlessly, the young Lord Branestroke spread wide his arms to show their emptiness. Then, defiantly throwing back his head, the baboon-man gave his great war cry. "Hooo...ooo...eey".

It was a mistake. With a slow groaning, creaking, sliding sort of noise, the golden throne slid from its hiding place and crashed with unerring accuracy onto the head of Nartaz...crushing him hideously into the floor of the temple.

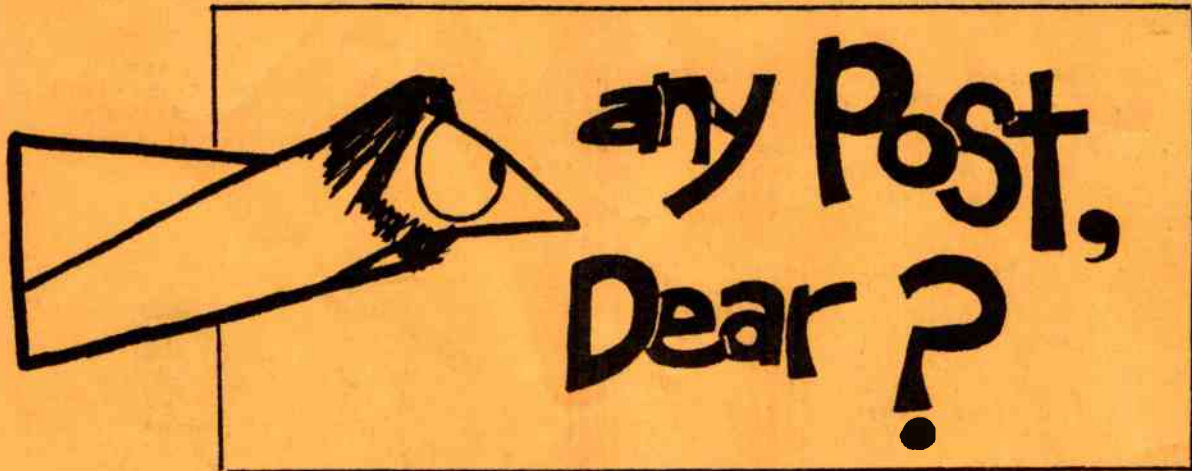
"Clearly," said the head pygmy, "This illustrates that people in grass houses should not stow thrones."

With that, he went outside to introduce himself to Jayn.

TERRY JEEVES



I must be losing my touch.
She didn't even kneel me.....



Welcome once more to the loccol where the rambling aside sparked by something in the last ish is more likely to see print than the well-reasoned critique. (I should add that all comments, good and bad, are passed on to contributors - at this very moment they're either adding you to their Christmas card list or out buying a set of brass knuckles.) Lotsa letters this time - so let's get started;

DAVE WOOD,
Oddwove Hall,
Somewhere near
the r-send of
Nowhere.

Auspicious moments never come in small doses. Having spent the last eighteen days peering at myself in the bathroom mirror I shambled down to breakfast this morning to find myself surrounded by birthday cards and other assorted goodies...namely the sept. FC SF with my name in it AND MICROWAVE 6... Thank you for such a wonnerful wonnerful birthday present! But why, you are of course asking, have I been examining my physiognomy so closely in the mirror? Ah, well you see...

On the 1st of August a certain James M. Ashworth (can't be the one we know - he's never been certain in his life;) attained his Fiftieth! Birthday that is, not fiftieth word for ROT 6! Now I met him on Aug the 2nd and oh, ghod, talk about the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire! I know I hadn't seen him in over 20 years but... The stooped shoulders, the snowy white hair, the palsied manner in which he grasped his glass of tonic water, the quavery voice, the difficulty in stringing together a coherent phrase. No wonder, as Ted White notes, he seems to be writing with "so much being said, both in and between the lines". He's not much time left! He won't last for three articles. Anyway he seemed quietly proud that he'd reached fifty.

I didn't say much about it, just kept creeping away to the pub bogs and standing for a while in front of the mirror examining my fresh unlined face, pulling the eye lids around for a quick check on the condition of my balls, sucking in my stomach, ordering another pint of Gnats 6X and striding casually back to the table.

"I'm 47 in three weeks;" I smiled and flashed my eyes at Hazel.

"Ah, that explains it. Mal and I were just noting how incontinent you are getting!" And she turned to Brenda, my wife, and patted her hand in consolation.....

Quirks in one's life? Don't know about that. Refusing to buy a typewriter? Writing to Dave Langford? I suppose quirks are a bit like personal superstitions. My mother-in-law for example will never put a new pair of shoes on a table or open an umbrella in the house. My wife always has an aniseed ball after a meal. Think about that! We go out for a three-courser with wine and all the trimmings and she finishes it all off with an aniseed ball! This turns the inside of her mouth red and has the waiter wondering where the smell of Pernod is coming from. Did we order a glass and he forgot to put it on the bill etc.....

There is a terrible sadness about Virginia Hinkle. Maybe Ted didn't tell it right, maybe I read it wrong, but in the end I felt Ted was a very guilty party in the episode; as indeed we would all have probably been. Here was a human being crying out for help, for some sort of relationship, some other human anchorage and yet she got short shrift from at least one person she was turning to for help. She didn't realise it and Ted couldn't see it. At least that's how it came over. We get a very detailed description of the woman's "surface area" her looks, her complexion, her physical attributes. We are told that she asked Ted to accompany her and the two children on their days out. But Ted refused, he says on the grounds that they had nothing in common. But there was something in the writing that suggested this was a sexual reason; that if Ted had been attracted to her on a sexual level he would have gone ahead and agreed to her invitations. Maybe if that had been the case Virginia wouldn't have ended up as she did. Then maybe not. Maybe the woman did have ulterior motives but a little initial kindness might have helped. After all she was taking his kid out.....

¶ That approach to Ted's piece came up a couple of times in other letters. Joy Hibbert did her usual thoroughly unbiased dissection - which should qualify her for her Girl Guides Amateur Psychologist badge - with such style and

restraint that I waffled it.)

PHILIP COLLINS,
7 Colchester Road,
Leyton,
London E10 6MA

My favourite article in MICROWAVE 6 was "Misfit Credibility" by Steve Gallagher. A great laugh. It also gives me an excuse to relate an experience I once had with a particularly persistent insurance salesman. I was at college at the time and somehow this salesman had wormed his way into my room. He talked on and on and left finally after about half an hour after I had promised to think over what he had said. He told me as he left that he would be

back the following friday. So come that day I made bloody sure I was a long way away hoping this would discourage this pest. No chance however. The next day I was just settling down to some work when there was a knock at the door and in came the salesman; except he wasn't sure if he had the right address or not. "Ah," he said. "You're not Philip Collins, are you?"

"No," I said, trying my best to look horrified at this gross insult.

"Thought not," said the salesman, and left.

Eureka, I thought. Got rid of him at last. Not so. Two days later another knock at the door and once again it was the salesman. Before I could once again deny my own existence he said "You are Philip Collins, aren't you." I had to admit shame-faced that I was. As he still hoped to sell me some insurance the salesman refrained from striking me about the head. He didn't sell me any insurance though. He who laughs last.....

On a more serious note your reply to Pamela Boal's fascinating and really rather moving letter was at the very least unnecessary and really offensive. Why couldn't you have given the respect the letter deserved by giving a serious reply? (I didn't actually have anything to add to either position (Elda's or Pam's), and I wanted to 'break the mood'. Well, as so many of you have told me, I sure did that.) I'd like to use one of Pamela's points to relate something. A little over a year before I was born my mother gave birth to a child, a little girl, which died soon after birth as she wasn't strong enough to support herself outside the womb. The doctors wanted to dissect the child to see what had gone wrong and so quickly shoved a piece of paper into my mother's hands asking for permission. Mum, still obviously very upset and emotionally distraught, signed the paper just to get rid of them. The doctors obviously wanted the child as soon as possible after death, but when Mum talks of it today she is still bitter about their lack of thought and compassion.

(I got a fair bit of flack over my thoughtless throw-away remark after Pamela Boal's last letter. The one person who's feelings I wouldn't want to hurt, and who had most cause to be offended, however, took a different view;)

PAMELA BOAL,
4 Westfield Way,
Charlton Heights,
Wantage,
Oxon OX12 7EW

Hot line from Hades.... "Corpses have their feelings too you know, please feel free to make jokes about them, he-he, heeeee."

MICROWAVE 6 must have crossed in the post with my card to Vinç complaining that darkest Kent was altogether too silent and waiting for the explanation was bad for my nerves. Thanks for the zine which is number one in my poll, ashamed to say I too forgot to get around to voting. With the feed-back you get, you need votes too! (Every little helps, as the little dog said -

remember that in a year or two.)

Thanks for the offer of the all-over mud pack (though a young Adonis to apply it may have tempted me more than did the offer of a woman) but, as I get a little irate with those who seem only to use fandom and zines to ride their personal hobby horses to death, must decline the offer. (I think I could probably guess one of the names running through your mind, Pam.)

Smaller type is a little hard on ancient eyes, so, yes please for my druthers, double spacing and preferably white paper. As the contents are more important than appearance to me I'm not one to chide editors over the matter (as long as I can read it) but when it's good I like to say so. Your lay-out is GOOD. Quality illos well spaced and used. (I'm afraid I can't afford to double space all the time, Pam, but what I can do I will - Produce one extra-good-repro copy on white stock. ok!)

(Before we get into this next letter, I'd like to point out that I don't have a monopoly on Born Again Fifties Fans, OldPharts or whatever you want to call them. I publish full addresses, so anyone can try their luck for articles etc., and I know of at least one U.S. publishing giant who wanted to know how to get pieces from them. Just write and ask, nicely. (WAW and I do have a verbal agreement over HARP though, if that will save you any trouble.))

TERRY CARR,
11037 Broadway Terrace,
Oakland,
California 94611,
U.S.A.

Many, many thanks for sending me not only the latest issue of MICROWAVE but also the previous one, the annish; I do appreciate the extra trouble and expense. MICROWAVE is a real eye-opener to me, not just for the reasons all the other oldpharts, otherwise known as fannish legends, have already told you -- i.e., it's so much like a '50s fanzine -- but also because it so successfully blends the old revenants with current fans. Why, to judge from MICROWAVE, one would think there was no friction between generations in

fandom... which is really as it should be, because we're all here to have fun. Oddly, I even like it when you present material -- by both old and newer fans -- that isn't very good: genzines have always been composed largely of instantly forgettable material, so this just strikes me as being In The Tradition.

One thing that I haven't seen commented upon in these last two issues is the fact that you write very well yourself. In fact, I wish you'd write more for your own fanzine -- I'm not wishing for you to turn it into a personalzine, it's just that since you do obviously have a way with words I'd like to see more stuff from you. Maybe you could do an article in each issue aside from your editorial natterings; I suspect that would improve the overall quality. (I was surprised to see my name appear in the recent PONG poll and very surprised to see it in that category, but coupling your remarks with the presence of your name in the list of voters, leads me to say "J'accuse!")

Nor do I mind the compressed typeface you've used in this latest issue. What the hell, I can read it -- Ving does a fine job on the reproduction -- and if it will enable you to publish within your means, that's a plus.

LeeH's piece made me wonder what writers do mean when they write of "corn" being grown on the banks of the Nile. I read a lot of stuff about ancient Egypt and most all of it seems to be by British writers: if they haven't been meaning the kind of corn I think of when I see the word, then what did they mean? I admit I've sometimes had to wonder about this.

Skel's piece is an example of how to write an article about how not to write an article. We've seen this sort of thing done far too often before, usually by writers of no talent; Skel certainly isn't one of those, so I wish he'd write a real article for you. (However, I loved ATom's cartoon at the end showing the last stage of the Tower to the Moon of Beer Cans. Did anyone else realize what it was about, though?) ((-ATom tells of a time when Walt ran a cartoon of his that he didn't think was quite funny enough. Walt told him "If one person thinks it's funny and writes in to say so, then it was worth putting in" I agree.))

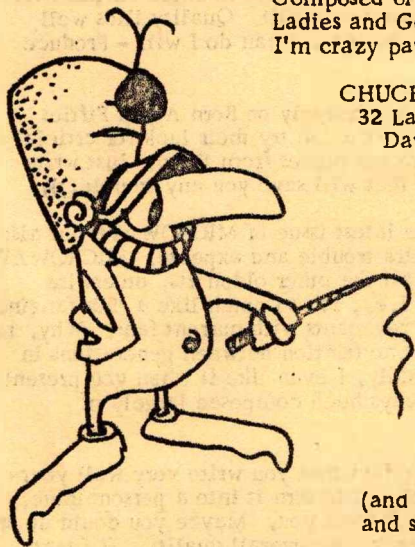
I was a fan of Sid Birchby when he was still writing as "Phoenix", so of course I like his column. And as others have said, the fan-column composed of separate snippets is a throwback to the past, but it's a form of columnizing that shouldn't be totally neglected. I liked Sid's second thoughts about the aliens' level of civilization in The Day the Earth Stood Still in particular. I suppose we were all a bit brainwashed when it came out, even we people who read the stuff, by grand adventure tales of Galactic Troupers et al. In actual fact, heroes like those of E.E. Smith or Edmond Hamilton would probably be the barbarians of the cosmos, the next millennium's Conans.

Ted White's column was easily the best piece in the issue, I thought, especially the narrative about his disturbed neighbor. He's doing some thoughtful and moving writing about the "real world" lately (his column in the new IZZARD being another example), which probably isn't even in response to those who criticise him for writing about nothing but fanwriting: Ted's had a good range of topics and styles throughout his fan career. ...I'm not quite sure I agree with his denunciation of the Trimbles for selling out to the Hubbard horde, though. If the Trimbles did launch their campaign purely for money then of course I'd say Ted's right, but that hasn't been proven to me. On what basis does he assume they didn't really like the novel in question and why does he "wonder if they've even read it"? Bjo has said, in LOCUS as I recall, that she did and that she enjoyed it. I'm willing to grant her the right to have lousy taste, but if so I'll certainly maintain my own right to deplore it. Seems to me that Ted is simultaneously over and under-estimating his opponents here. (So what else is new in fan arguments?)

As is usual in MICROWAVE and most other fanzines, the lettercolumn was a delight. I always turn to the lettercolumn when I get a fanzine that's new to me, in order to find out what the readership is and what they've thought of the previous issues; your readers seem to be a diverse lot, not to mention a motley one, and evidently they like what you're doing. So do I -- please keep it up. Mal Ashworth, I see, still writes entertainingly out-of-control letters, and Chuch Harris is as enjoyably off-the-wall as ever. Some things don't deteriorate, and that gives me hope.

One thing I do wonder about these ancient fans who come back to us: Where have they been in the intervening years, and what have they been doing? Mal Ashworth's piece in the annish told us something about him (but not enough, really), yet I'd love to know about the last fifteen or twenty years of Ving's life, or Chuch's, or any of the oldfans redux. What do fans do while they're not fans? --A good chance for them to write about the "real world" and how it contrasts with or complements our demimonde.

((Talking of Chuch being "enjoyably off-the-wall", here's the loccol's own sub-column. Composed of bits of letters to me, Ving, ATom & Walt, individually or in combinations. Ladies and Gentlemen, may I present the one and only Chuch "I used to be a mural, but now I'm crazy paving" Harris!..!))



CHUCH HARRIS,
32 Lake Crescent,
Daventry,
Northants.

I must say, clottie, that you cocked up that lovely little David Steele quote, "Don't be deceived -- he's not half as nice as he looks." It won't register with the readers who aren't aware that it referred to Norman Tebbit M. P. -- a man cursed with such an evil and malevolent face that he makes Dr. Phibes look like Uncle Holly.

Still, I guess you made up for it with that lovely Chuck Connor intro to the letter column... "Scrotum the wrinkled retainer" indeed!

And where is A Vincent? I know he is lurking in the background, turning handles and pulling strings, but that's not enough. Dust him off and push him up front as the main attraction. I wonder why he's never attempted a series of memoirs? He's full of fascinating dirt on the London O and I, for one, would be proud to contribute towards a fund to pay for his defence lawyer.

Well now, I was planning on a self-denial Week to Help the Destitute. I would shun the sordid pleasure of the Adonis Massage Parlour this week, (and perhaps it will even help me read the new typeface without a magnifying lens), and send the money to you instead to help Spread the Word.

I felt pretty good about that. To hell with the Super Oriental Session (with King Prawn Crackers, Waterbed, Sweet and Sour Noodles, and CHINATOWN MY CHINATOWN on the stereo). Instead I will lift up mine eyes unto the Hill, and help angel some of the next issue's postage...

But...wait...just a minute.....what's all this filth...this open sewer of religious intolerance....incitement to hate the kind gentle loving and tolerant disciples of Almighty Roscoe, and proclaiming a foul allegiance to the false Ghu!:

Terryll love, how could you do such a thing? It has been proved time and time again that Ghuism is blasphemy: a non-existent Godhead cherished only by the dregs of fandom....Verger Degler, Archbishop Wansboro' and Antipope Ashworth with his horrid scarlet hotpants.

Do not be tempted, my son. Spit on their vileness, (spit twice on Mal Ashworth, he's really vile), and join the righteous ranks of Roscoe. ((I'm sure Mal didn't expectorate so high on your spit list!))

Proof, you ask? Listen, every single Ghuist fanzine since the beginning of Time, has folded, No Ghuist -- nary a one -- has written THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR, owned a mint April '43 ASF, joined the NRVANA Waiting List, or gotten a leg across Koo Stark, or.....

A sign you want? Indisputable proof positive? Right! Take (figuratively of course), take the finest, the greatest innovation, the absolute jewel of MICROWAVE: Miss Elda. Study that Dave Wood cover. Pore over it. Now, note that exquisite dusting of freckles enhancing the perfection of the inner thigh. You see the SIGN? The True Significance? YES! YES! YES! they depict the EXACT SHAPE OF ROSCOE'S MIGHTY PADDLE!!!!!!

Proof positive!!

On your knees, dog. Recant, repent and find enclosed a mere £2 -- the paltry difference between the Super Oriental and the mundane Standard Session. So there.

I seldom get more than a faint yearning for tobacco now. I thought pot might be an acceptable substitute so, a while back, I joined a little syndicate to grow some. Our offices are all open-plan and punctuated by tubs of greenery hired from Rentaplant. John Morrison, hophead, got some seeds from Holland. I germinated them, raised tiny seedlings and took them to work. John ripped out African Violets, Monstera, and whatever and planted the seedlings instead. They did quite well too.....until the Rentaplant maintenance man arrived, ripped out the nasty weeds and replanted African Violets, Monstera, etc.

(Actually I was a bit relieved. Too many people were going nudge-nudge and our security people would have been very very rough indeed if they'd heard about it. John finished up addicted badly to Do-Do tablets bought over the chemists counter and had to go away to be dried out.)

Father Bridge, hearing a murmur of voices from the other end of the church, genuflected to the Sacrament, rose from his knees, and walked down the knave of St. Whoozits to the porch, where the whole of Kent TruFandom stood, waiting uneasily in the unfamiliar surroundings.

"It's a little late," he said, nodding towards the Confessional, "but...."

The trufen paled and looked at each other in amazement and horror.

"Er, we're not....we're Ghuists, dad, er father," said Vincent. "It's about the electrostenciller you advertised....."

"Ah! yes," said the priest. "It's down in the undercroft." He glanced at the feather of smoke rising from Terryll's cupped hand. "If your friend has finished his cigarette...."

Terry looked around wildly for an ashtray and dropped the offending butt into the tiny holy water font built into the wall. "Triffic," he said, "Birdbaths yet."

Father Bridge led the group along the aisle towards the crypt, all the warm golden loveliness of Miss Elda bobbing along beside him.

"Dya dig the Sunday Times, pops?" she said.

"Er, yes...." said the priest bemusedly, trying hard to keep his thoughts away from the rampant sexuality of the blond goddess beside him.

"Dya dig 'meicryptovestimentaphalia' last week," she said. "It's a love of sexy black underclothes. You got saucy black Y-fronts under that black hassock, hmm?"

"It's called a cassock, my child, and I will pray for you."

He pulled a dust sheet from the work bench to unveil the electrostenciller.

"Ninety knicker for that," said Art.

"Extortion," said Miss Elda.

"We only want the machine, not the real estate," said Terryll.

"Eightyfive," said the priest.

"Eighty, and a free sub to SFN," said Vinz. "Blessed are the poor for they will inherit the earth."

"Done," said Father Bridge, "and it's the meek my son."

One to each corner, they carried their precious burden down the aisle to the porch.

"Fanks, farve," said Arthur. "Pax vobiscum."

Father Bridge stared at him in astonishment. "Yes," he said faintly. "Pax vobiscum, my son."

"Peace on Sol 3," said Terry, not to be outdone.

Miss Elda ran one finger sensuously around the priestly tonsure. "Goodwill to mellow fen," she whispered.

The priest shook his head wonderingly as Kent TruFandom vanished into the night. Somewhere, in the sombre hills behind the town, a lone coyote howled.

Saddy, I had my foot down in the fast lane of the M6 on the way home from Coventry, (no, I haven't seen the Cathedral yet....but there's a very good Sainsburys), when the red calamity light came on. Middle of nowhere.... hard shoulder....up bonnet....fanbelt in shreds...."O bother! Carruthers" as Skel used to say.

"You said you were going to get a spare belt, plugs and points to carry for emergencies?" Sue said.



"I meant to, but I haven't got around to it yet."

"Brilliant, --and typical. Find the damn card and I'll phone the A.A."

Empty glove compartment and find card for her.

"Did you know, Dad," said Samantha from the back seat, "it's almost impossible to flush a grapefruit down our toilets?"

"Shaddup."

Sue looks at card. "Did you know, Dad, this expired two weeks ago, and you haven't renewed it?"

Pause for silent prayer... Sweet Jesus in the morning... invoke blessed St. Jude patron saint of the hopeless, the helpless, and the half-witted. Recall horrendous time in London when the RAC didn't even want to know when I phoned for help after a shunt....

"Look," I said, "phone the AA, quote the membership number, the car details... '80 Escort... the fan belt stuff, and see what he says. Just don't mention the date."

We'd pulled in by one of those emergency phone boxes so no problem.

"Did you know Dad, you can do it with a pair of tights. It says so in the handbook," says helpful daughter.

"Love," I said, "I could strangle you with a pair of tights."

Silence.

Sue returns. "They're on the way --sort of. There's a footy match on at Coventry and they are a bit tied up. Be about an hour."

Settle down with DAILY MAIL X-word -- I hate bloody crosswords -- whilst Sue reads NSFN.

"Sometimes," she said, "you sound like a combination of Alf Garnett and Archie Bunker. You go on and on and on about*Thoats the way they go on about Blacks...under the fond delusion that you're being funny. I think you're prejudiced."

In this family "prejudiced" and "paedophile" have about the same X-rating.

"Garbage," I said. "Didn't I sort Sean out for saying "Ban the Boat People...Sink the Irish Ferry....?"

"Yes, and then you told the poor brat some idiot crap about your father's fathers were kings once in Ireland. So, I told him they were actually kosher butchers down the Old Kent Road...."

"Now who's prejudiced?"

Decide to change subject. "Wonder what Himself meant about my letters? He says 'difficult to extract these gems' or something...."

Sue turns page to find letter. "Nothing wrong with his memory," she says. "He's obviously thinking of my engagement ring, dear, --gems few and far between, poor quality and not very bright...and probably nicked from somebody else in the first place."

"Mum, tell us again about how Dad bought your ring in the pawnbrokers..."

Turn round and shoot withering glance at daughter -- who doesn't even notice.

"Dad, is Brendan Murphy a Thoat name?"

"Huh?"

"He's in the paper. He went into a shop at Bedford, put on two Welly boots and ran off with them."

"So?"

"They caught him a little way down the road 'cos he couldn't run very fast. They were both for the right foot, one was size 9 and one was size 11 and stuffed with paper. Was he a Thoat, Dad?"

"Just play your tranny, dear."

"Dad, is Sean a Thoat?"

"Whaaat!!!!"

"Well, he's not very sharp. He forgot my birthday last week. A girl feels very insignificant when her twin brother forgets her birthday."

"The tranny, love."

Morose silence again. In rearview mirror spot flasher on AA van drawing up behind us. Clean-cut, smart, pleasant, but very young driver gets out with a big smile and a fanbelt. We'd only waited less than half an hour, but he was very sorry for the delay.

Sulky daughter gets out sharpish, bats her eyelashes and favours him with her first smile of the day. Probably our ration for the weekend.

"He's a THOAT," she mouths at me silently.

Ignore her: proffer AA card.... trying to keep thumb over the date....but he barely glances at it. Much relief because I thought he'd spot it and drive off into the sunset leaving me to the tender mercies of the motorway cowboys and highway robbers. Wife and daughter already clowning about as if HRH Prince Charles had come to fix the bloody car, and was going to pop them back to Windsor afterwards to see the baby and take tea with Di.

AA Adonis dives into engine compartment, daughter hovers, and I get back into car out of the wind.

30 seconds and apologetic AA man arrives at door.....wrong fanbelt.

"You told the catcher '80 Escort," he said. "You wouldn't have known Ford changed the whole Escort ranges in that year. I brought the belt for the new Escort, but we need one for the old one."

"O yes, we would know," said Sue, "we have a Ford Marketing Expert in our very midst...."

"Not to worry, says Adonis. "I'll tow you off the M6, down the M1 to Junction 18 to the garage."

He fixes on tow rope and Samantha gets back into car. "His name is Graham," she says. "He likes Shaking Stevens and Fun Boy Three. He plays golf, but he's not very good. He comes from Solihull and he hasn't got a girlfriend."

"Wow!" I snarl.

No more problems. he towed us off: found the garage and the belt: fitted it, checked the coolant, wiped the windscreen, and watched the fan when I started the engine.

"Should be O.K. Sir," he said.

"Yes,er,..., thank you very much. I'm sorry I was such a lot of trouble."

* "Thoat" has been substituted here and elsewhere to avoid offending a simple, gentle people. We apologise if this offends Thoats.

"No trouble at all, Glad to be of help." He paused a moment. "Er, you'll pardon me mentioning it, Sir, but I noticed on the M6 that your Membership card had expired.we're not supposed to..... you really should renew....."
"YES!" said Sue. "TONIGHT!" And the grateful, pink-faced and not quite as smart as he thought ninny drove off.

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I don't have much antipathy to insects myself, --I can pick up spiders barehanded, (but not too big), but slugs are Evil personified to me. I don't mean the little tiny ones that used to creep under the back door at 170, or even the smart black ones in their tooled leather outfits, but the vile monstrous BRUM slugs that we'd never previously encountered before we came to Daventry.

These are ENORMOUS, -Slug Giganticus --as big as a small pork sausage (Sainsbury size). They are brown with a sort of orange frill that touches the ground, and a pale corpselike white belly, ---far far more horrifying than anything ever pictured on an AMAZING cover. They hump through the garden, weeping vileness, inexorable as death itself, enough to give Bellamy the heaves, or send St. Francis up, gibbering, on the refractory table.

I have tried Everything...meta fuel, Slug-It murder pellets, napalm, human sacrifice, machine gun emplacements on the patio, ---even scooping them up on a shovel and binging them over the fence when the neighbours weren't looking, (but all this brought on was a Fortean phenomenon of twice as many flying slugs coming in the opposite direction), but I feel I am losing the battle. This morning there were slime trails inside the pentacle which protects the back door. I sleep with bunches of wild garlic tied to my five extremities.... but who has faith in herbal medicine in this day and age? If, on our next meeting, my handshake seems damper and clammy than usual, pull off the middle bunch and see if I'm a pseudobod. The flame gun is in the garage; the "-" file in a leadlined box in the loft.

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((well, I don't suppose anyone will volunteer to follow that, so I'll just push this brave looking soul from Dundee up onto the stage.))

NIALL McA ROBERTSON,
47 Collingwood Street,
Dundee
DD5 2UF

The new typeface is fine, but there's something wrong with the spacing between words -- not enough, I suspect. The words are fine too, though I think you've hit a groove that might become a rut unless large infusions of Ashworth are taken nightly. As usual, the best contributors are veterans, this time Hoffman & White, whose style I'm getting used to. I have a proposal for him - LRH & the Scientologists are an unending source of

fascination to me as well, but there's no definitive book on the subject. Why doesn't Ted try to write the definitive history? Sure there are risks (& I can see Ted convulsed with laughter at this understatement) but.... a garish cover and sensational blurb from Stephen King could shift it in mega-units. I'm sure we're all 'suppressive persons already....
((Good idea. If it did nothing else, it would mean I could stop trembling every time the doorbell rings in case it's Elron's boys. It's infectious though - even Sid has started writing about him. HELP!!))

((Now, for all of you that are itching to get the word 'tasteless' into your next LoC (very popular last time), this should tempt your palate.))

JOHN MITCHELL,
341 Custer Avenue,
Evanston,
IL 60202 U. S. A.

I appear to have come in late on the discussion of how babies should be cooked, but as it seems some of the earlier contributors have children, I thought I'd add my two ~~years~~ cents worth.

While deep fried baby in batter can be a toothsome dish, an overstrong oil or leaving the meat in too long can overpower the delicate flavor, just as in cooking baby scallops. My personal recommendation is to treat the baby as one would a suckling pig. Roasted whole, with an apple placed in the mouth and the skin basted to be crisp and flavorful, baby will make a perfect centerpiece when served at solstice feast on a platter with roasted potatoes and carrots.

((Okay, now we move on to someone who has a bit of trouble with punctuality; his first LoC covered the first three issues, and his last dealt with four and five and arrived too late to get into six!))

STEVE MOWBRAY,
1 Eaton Close,
Broughton,
Chester
CH4 0RF

Speaking as someone who took three months to build up the courage to give blood, and then only with the help of several persuasive blood donor friends, I must say I admire your willingness to give a kidney. I've always been a coward when it comes to people messing about with my insides, and my confidence wasn't helped any when after my appendicitis operation I had to stay in hospital for three miserable weeks instead of the usual three or four days due to 'complications', with the consultant coming out with such cheery phrases as "When

I first started, thirty per cent of 'em (meaning appendicitis victims) used to die, you know."

Great.

.....another 'Nartaz' masterpiece. Brilliant... Let's have more of these works of genius. Are these ERG reprints or MICROWAVE originals? I hope they're reprints, as it means there are lots more still to come. ((They're reprints. I haven't been crediting them as such 'cos Terry hasn't been too clear about issue numbers and dates.))

I didn't know ATom wrote as well - a fan of many talents, it would seem. I really enjoyed this ((The GDA story in No. 5)), particularly the ending: could it be true, I wonder. Is publishing it as part of a not-terribly-serious story a bluff on the part of Mr Hill, thinking nobody would take it seriously. That's another thing I think We Should Be Told.... Anyway, I hope we see some more G.D.A. stories in future MICROWAVES. ((You listening, Arthur))

Mal Ashworth's ramblings: tell him to expect a letter bomb any day if he doesn't finish the damn thing off.



DAVE ROWLEY,
11 Rutland Street,
Hanley,
Stoke-on-Trent,
Staffordshire
ST1 5JG

I don't usually comment on artwork, but I found the cover of M6 a bit much. I don't think that adding fuel to Elda's reputation (enhanced(?) by the latest BSFG newsletter) is a good idea. Don't tell me she actually agreed that you could use her name on the cover. If so, I'm afraid she can't have very much selfrespect. ((She not only agreed to having her name used, but she saw the illo before I ran it. You tell her how

much self-respect she has or hasn't got - I'll send you a card in intensive care!)) I mean, it looks as if she's deformed in the shoulder region, and where did she get those extra-long fingers from? Don't you think that this sort of thing lowers you to the 'Page 3' standard of our so-called newspapers. Aren't we in fandom above these cheap ways of increasing our print run? And as for suggesting that Pamela Boal and Elda Wheeler participate in nude mudwrestling, one can only answer that this must be some kind of sick joke. As for the advert on page 5, is this another attempt at cheap humour?

On to the actual articles. I once wrote a 'love letter' which was almost totally made up from song titles. Well, at least laughing at you means you're good for something. I hate people who brag about their bargains but I think you wasted your money if you're going to use the new typer for M as I, (who am only slightly short-sighted in my left eye and not enough to warrant having glasses) found the new typeface difficult to read... it got so bad that I had to cover the page with a sheet of paper and reveal a line at a time. "Class extinction" furnished me with a grand total of 5 points. Coincidence but I've read M6 today (19-8-83) and who should be on "Unforgettable" on Channel 4 than Chicory Tip (terrible mimers too). They did do 'Good Grief Christina', how about that then? Many thanks to Lee Hoffman for yet another insight into the American way of life. "The Best Laid Plans" displays yet again Skel's talent for the fannish ramble. Sid Birchby's column is interesting but I can't think of anything to say about it. Steve Gallagher manages to fill 2 sides without a mention of Saturn 3 or the BAD group.

Ted White - well, I can't quite be sure, but was Mrs. Hinckle set up, or was this 'planets lining up' the straw that broke the camel's back? Either way, Bridget's father gets Bridget back without the 'fringe benefit' of her not-so-stable mother. As for the Hugos being 'bought' even as far back as '67 I must admit it did surprise me, but then again, I like to believe the best in people. Until proven wrong, that is.

((This might be a good point to say that I print only those bits of letters that interest me and that I think might interest you. Space consideration also plays a part; most times I edit this column down at least twice - sometimes more. Just in case any of you were wondering where the rest of your immortal prose went.))

MARC ORTLIEB,
G.P.O. Box 2708X,
Melbourne,
Vict 3001,
AUSTRALIA

Sigh. Hush puppies... They were on the banquet menu at B'Hamacon II in '81. I also got the explanation that they were fed to the dogs to keep the little buggers quiet - though, I gather that there is another explanation. You see, if they're not made properly, they are reputed to have the same texture as the shoes of the same name. Grits I didn't get to try, though Merlin Odum described the fun that Southerners have in telling Northerners about the Grit Trees, from which grits are gathered every harvest time. (They are, no doubt, distant kin of the spaghetti bush. The local government TV station, the ABC, once did a lovely April the First programme on the blight that was spreading through the spaghetti vines of central New South Wales, and they were so convincing that one real estate agent contacted them figuring that he could make a good deal on the spaghetti-worm-infested farms.)

Despite my complaints previously, I enjoyed Sid's column, though I am tempted to ask what a celery glass is. I've clearly been away from the Old Dart too long.... Is it the sort of thing that one has next to the plates of thinly sliced cucumber sandwiches and Brown Windsor soup?

His suggestion for conventions "by invitation only" is all very well, but they can backfire. I went to a convention where I was one of five attendees. (The fact that the convenor was feuding with his household at the time, and that they, the one fannish household in Adelaide, had decided to throw a three-day party coinciding with his convention might have something to do with the attendance figures.)

Proof of the feeling that all knowledge can be found in fanzines (sooner or later) is found in Steve Gallagher's piece. I'd been watching a programme on domestic pets the other day, which showed a trainee guide dog's first encounter with a hedgehog, and I wondered at the time whether the spines were sharp enough to stop a human from picking up a hedgehog. There in Steve's piece was the answer to my question. Sigh. We don't get hedgehogs here - more's the pity, and though echindas are just as cute, they aren't found wandering through the local gardens, unless you live in the vicinity of the Black stump.

Nice to see Ted talking about something other than fanzines or the history of fandom. I enjoyed the first piece, about the end of the world, and the piece about BATTLEFIELD EARTH brought a smile to my lips too. About two months ago I was pulled up by a clean-cut bloke who asked me if I was interested in doing a questionnaire, which consisted of three questions, mainly to do with how happy I was with my life. I figured him for a Jehovah's Witness, but, after I'd finished the questionnaire, he invited me to have coffee and biscuits at the Scientology establishment just down the road, at which point I mentioned that I'd read some of Hubbard's sf, and that I considered most of his



other ideas rather similar, i.e. medium to bad sf. They didn't bother me after that.

I tend to agree with you on humour. I feel that virtually anything is a proper topic for humour. I do though reserve the right not to laugh at jokes that I find offensive. (Irish jokes, to me, seem to be funny, and inventive. Baby jokes are terribly sick, and so funny. However, the Italian jokes that circulated here fifteen or so years ago I found offensive. Still, I wouldn't try to stop anyone telling them, though I would advise them to avoid such topics in Calabria.) (That's it. One man's meat etc. If you start insisting that jokes should not offend anybody, then humour will end up at the level of nursery rhymes. Bland, twee and boring. Yeeeeeeeeaacccchhh! How do you tell the difference between an Australian wedding and an Australian funeral? - There's one less drunk at the funeral.)

JOHN D. OWEN,
4 Highfield Close,
Newport Pagnell,
Bucks.
MK16 9AZ

....it's a nice issue, full of nice little bits and pieces. Star attraction was probably Steve Gallagher's piece, which had me rolling in agony for a while. It's the sort of ridiculous thing that people do get themselves tied up in at sometime in their lives, maybe more than a few times, if they are like my wife!

We had an analogous situation recently, when we returned home after work one evening to find one of Pam's catfriends' stuck on our shed roof. This cat belongs to a neighbour and scrounges food off Pam all the time. And it's absolutely enormous, a big, fat, flabby grey puss, with all kinds of things wrong with it - like arthritis, and neuroses by the score. We knew as soon as we saw it that we'd have to rescue the bloody thing, since the only way it could get down was by a tricky route that that cat would not attempt in the dark.

So we tried to reach it from a chair alongside the shed - no good, just earned me a growl and an attempt at biting the hand that feeds it, etc. So we dragged out the ladders from inside the shed, Pam got up on top of the thing and tried to calm the animal enough to pick it up. She got the growl and spit routine too - served her bloody right, too, encouraging the damned thing in the first place.

Next we tried a cardboard box. Any cat I've ever known, you produce a cardboard box and they automatically climb into it, whether you want them to or not. Not ol' Fats - he was having nothing to do with that. By this time, half the neighbourhood was at their windows watching these two silly sods chasing a cat around a shed roof, and the pair of us were trying to look anonymous, disappearing Smiffy-like into our coats, etc.

Finally we figured out that there was only one thing that was going to take Fats' mind off his predicament for long enough for us to get him down, and that was to feed him. Saucer of food was dutifully brought out, placed in the box, Fats promptly climbs in the box, and is totally oblivious to everything for the sake of the sensation of Kit-kat sliding down his gullet. Resisting the temptation to heave the whole bloody shebang, box, food and cat, into the pond, I took the box off Pam and deposited it carefully on the ground. Fats took not a blind bit of notice - he had a couple of mouthfuls still to finish.

Next night we arrived home to find him up there again - this time he got sight of a waved fist under his nose and sod all else. He was gone by morning, so I guess he took the plunge himself this time.

((That was almost a word-for-word account of what our cat did a few years back - no chance of that now, though; the stupid animal's gone agrophobic on us! Which is silly and sad; also sad is this:))

RICK SNEARY,
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Calif. 90280
U.S.A.

Thank you for sending copies of MICROW AVE # 5 & # 6-- I am very sorry I haven't responded before this--- or in more detail as your zine deserves.. When I first opened it my first thought was it was a rebirth of SCOTTISHE-- which was the only fanzine I have seen in late years with an ATOM cover.. (It would never have occurred to me to think back to '-... but then, Thomson was not using electric stencils.) -- On glancing through, I noted the list of old fannish names and thought, "That's nice. Some British fan has taken to reprinting some of the great works of the old days.'... And, as I didn't read anything for a few days, I went on believing that, and told friend Len Moffatt about it.. -- Looking more, I still thought so, but groused mentally that you hadn't been clearer about where your material appeared originally.. When I finally got to read some of it, I couldn't have been more surprised and pleased.. - You really were pumping life back into 7th Fandom (by my reckoning, 7th Fandom was the period between the end of QUANDRY, and the break-up after the LonCon/WSEFA feud) and using the original cast.. Lovely to see Willis and Ashworth doing new stuff.. - And something from Clarke... You really ought to write a long article on how you got these old fans who were not only GAFIA, but apparently outright gone, to do anything. ((Getting me to write a long article is like trying to get Joe Nicholas to stop walking on water, but the answer is simple; you send them a non-vitriolic fanzine, a few cheerful 'are you still alive?' letters, and then ask or hint, without pressure (or in Walt's case with a little pressure, but that's another story).))

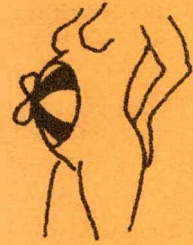
Speaking of which, I'm not really here either.. I died a year ago, and what spirit has remained, is hardly strong enough to carry on, even if I had a ghost writer... - Actually, increasing health problems of myself and my 93-year-old Mother, makes it nearly impossible for me to find the energy, much less the time, to even read fanzines, much less do any fanac.. I am more and more extremely tired, even as now, when I just get up, and the effects of this and continuous depression makes doing anything either hard, or seemingly pointless.. I won't bore you with more of my troubles, but I see no hope of things getting any better, or my doing any more than a little reading.. As interested as I am, I haven't had the energy to finish reading either of your zines.. and the stack of unread zines grows... But, unlike most gafiates, I'm not doing something else.. I'm just sitting and feeling wonderfully sorry for myself. There is so much I would like to be doing, but I have gotten so tired it is hard to think at times.. New problems keep coming up, and they seem like they are over-whelming me.. It gets so nothing is worth doing anymore. ((You may have invented a new rallying-call there, Rick; "Old Fan And Tired Is A Way Of Life". OFATIAWOL? No, I don't think it

will catch on. Come on you tired, old, remnants, write Rick and cheer him up (Chuch, Mal, Vinç, Walt - this means you!}}

PETE CRUMP,
9 Llys Wylfa,
Mynydd Isa,
Mold,
Clwyd
CH7 6XA

Thanks for pointing out to Steve Mowbray that I live just up the road from him, although he's such an idle bugger I found his address and wrote to him before he'd even got out of bed and opened last week's post. {{Which might explain what I was saying earlier about Steve's punctuality problem.}} I thought you might also have mentioned the fact that Pete Presford lives round these parts, too. Take out a map and see how very close Buckley is to Mold. {{My map doesn't cover the colonies.}} "When Two or Three Fen Are Gathered Together in My Name, They May or May Not Form A Group." With the addition of several other interested parties, we did. The groupzine is due out as soon as we've bought a duplicator....

FLAWOL; I empathize with you, Terry. Like yourself, I also earn my living the hard way and have a deserving wife to keep happy. Too many people fail to understand that this makes a difference.



FANTE-
NATAL

GUILT; Now for the unforgiveable bit... I don't give blood, but I'm not really a selfish bastard as Chuch Harris suggests. Why not? Well, I went along to give my pint at the earliest opportunity, feeling very brave and pleased with myself as I have this phobia about needles. (Don't get me wrong, this didn't stop me; I'm quite used to having jabs and samples taken, I just don't enjoy it very much.) The nurses were very nice, the bed was really comfy, but the needle bloody well HURT! I was in a roomful of women and colleagues, so there was no way I was giving in to the reflex to scream and yank the thing out of my arm; I just bit my lip and hung on until I passed out. I awoke sometime later virtually naked (they'd loosened my clothing, I suppose) and soaked in sweat. There was a dull hissing in my ears which obscured whatever the nurses and a few jeering colleagues were saying. They wouldn't let me sit up; indeed, they insisted I lie there for most of the afternoon. Once I'd recovered, the overriding emotion was not of relief but embarrassment. After the embarrass-

ment came the guilt, when I realised that I'd never do that again if I could help it. If I had to, there would be no question about it; if I had AB Negative blood or something like that. But I don't. It's just normal, everyday O Positive - the stuff they use as fertilizer. You see, I don't give blood

anymore because I'm allergic to pain. I've done my bit. I'll even help Chuch pester the life out of those who won't even try it.

I feel a bit of a bastard now. Going on about pain and all that after your sacrifice for your brother. You've probably experienced more pain than I ever will. Jeez... I can be such a shithead at times. Any amateur shrinks want to tackle that lot? Talk about a Guilt Complex...

{{As we know, fandom is crawling with amateur shrinks - many of which are concerned full-time with the problem of what keeps the hermit in Hagerstown.}}

HARRY WARNER, Jr.,
423 Summit Avenue,
Hagerstown,
Maryland 21740
U. S. A.

Hagerstown is only a half-dozen miles south of the Mason-Dixon Line which is supposed to mark the difference between North and South. But some of the Deep South cooking and eating customs which Lee Hoffman wrote about have made their way this close to the end of Dixieland. When a certain celebrated movie played for the first time at a drive-in theater near Hagerstown, the proprietor apparently thought its title was misspelled on the accompanying literature, because he advertised it in this way on his huge sign above the screen: "TRUE

GRITS". One strange problem so close to the meeting of North and South is a constant affliction to waitresses at lunch counters. When a customer orders a soda, she must size up the customer and intuitively decide whether the order came from someone who wants ice cream immersed in a sweet liquid, the meaning of the word in the North, or a soft drink like Coca-Cola, which people call a soda in the South.

Strange compulsions? I subscribe to two weekly publications, The Sporting News and TV Guide. I read The Sporting News from back to front invariably, and I always read TV Guide the orthodox way from the first page to the last. I invariably take my keys out of my pocket when I'm about a hundred feet from my car or my house and carry them the rest of the way despite the danger I'll drop them. When I get my shirts back from the laundry, instead of putting them into the closet at once I lay them on a chair and I put away one shirt each night just before retiring. I always put hangers into the clothes closet with the open area of the handle away from me. In a theater or concert hall, I always sit on the left side when seats are unreserved and I can take my choice. Sugar in coffee nauseates me but I can't drink tea without sugar.

I took a personal interest in Ted White's account of how a neighbor went mad. Insanity has been a nagging worry throughout my adult life because there is a higher proportion of it among my relatives than in the national population in general and I've kept wondering if I'd be the next to go. Two cousins have been in and out of mental institutions and a third cousin should have been a patron of those institutions. A great uncle went mad after losing all his savings in the 1929 stock market crash. Several aunts have suffered gradual decline of their intellectual facilities with advancing age, sooner in life than this form of senility normally strikes. There have been several other relatives in less than perfect mental health down through the years. Maybe fanaticism has served me up to now as a sort of vaccination, with the irrational aspects of fandom fulfilling the same protection against madness that the diluted infection of a vaccine provides against the disease it prevents.

{{I've just thought, Harry has LoCed just about every fanzine ever published. Surely such dedication deserves some reward? How about HARRY WARNER, Jr. FOR TAFF IN 85? Perhaps that would get him out of town.}}

⌘Several people asked what a 'Cracker' was in LeeH's last article; as soon as the Egoboo Express arrived in Florida, pen was put to paper, and the following explanation resulted.⌘

LEE HOFFMAN, (HM-KTF),
350 N. W. Harbor Blvd.,
Port Charlotte,
FL 33952
U. S. A.

Somewhere in the past, probably along about the 1800's people in various states of the U. S. developed slangy terms for people in the other states. Generally derisive. I don't know how all this came about, but by now a lot, if not all, the states have some term applied to their natives. Like the folk from the surrounding states know Missourians as "Pukes". Folks from North Carolina are "Tarheels" etc. (I can't think of more examples off the top of my head, and if I start trying to look them up, I'll never finish this letter.) Southerners, Particularly and specifically those from Georgia and Florida are called "Crackers." (I'm so accustomed to this usage, it didn't occur to me that the British weren't familiar with it too.) Now a person from Georgia or Florida will use the term in either an affectionate or a derisive manner. Like, "I'm just an old Georgia Cracker", or "It's those damned Crackers who voted that ass into office." This is a little the way that Blacks used Nigger when I was growing up in Georgia. One might refer to himself or a friend affectionately as "nigger" but it was also a term of contempt for a certain type of Black among the Blacks themselves. (I think all this relates to stuff like in languages where they have a second person familiar as well as a second person formal. Du in German or tu in Spanish for addressing close friends, one's beloved, small children and servants or the lower classes.)

Anyway, in general, a "Cracker" is any native of Georgia or Florida, but in the derisive particular, it is the ethnic country folk. (Like "hillbilly" in the mountains.)

Back in the 1800's, the ethnic country folk (or as some called them "white trash") in Georgia and Florida were culturally quite a bit different from the better fed, healthier, more educated, more sophisticated urban types and especially from the Northerners who came south, and there was actually serious speculation that they were a different sub-species of the human race (as the Blacks were felt to be.) They were considered lacking in mental capabilities and much less sensitive to physical discomfort, able to live on diets that a "normal human being" couldn't survive on, and like that. Closer to the "animal" (a popular concept about other ethnic groups among the WASPS of the period.)

Nowadays, the guidebooks will tell you that Georgia natives were called Crackers from the term "corn cracker" (as in the song, that goes "Jenny crack corn and I don't care." I'm not sure just what cracking corn is, but evidently farmers in a corn/maize-based economy did a lot of it.) And that Floridians were called "Crackers" because they used oxen as the main form of propulsion, and ran a lot of cattle, which they controlled with bull-whips, so they became known as "whip-crackers". (Whereas the Western cowboy carried a lariat, the Florida cowboy carried his bull-whip. There's a lot of interesting stuff about Florida cowboys. Maybe I can write that up sometime. They used herd dogs, which wasn't common in the West. The famous Western artist, Frederic Remington--no relation to the gun, as far as I know--described them as being a lot scrangier even than Texans, and like that.)

⌘Just when we were all prepared to believe that a Chuck Connor LoC was the weirdest thing that could arrive in response to a fanzine, there arose a new contender for the title.⌘

TERRY CUTHBERT,
158 Blackbird Legs Rd.,
Oxford

Dear Microwave,

I was going to write more, but the fish ate me, why they ate me I am not sure - I couldn't have been all that tasty, even if everyone does call me a worm. Everytime I went to the cooker, a fish always jumped out of the pan to bite my penis, so it could not have been too long before a fish had a baby and jumped with glee until the cows come home - that is, eat me. I am writing this from inside a fishes belly. It's cramped - after all - it's not a whale like who ate Jonah, it is a fish, a nasty, scummy, smelly...no, sorry, gods sake SORRY

⌘That's verbatim. From so far out in left field that he's running along the top of the terrace we now move nearer to the centre, with the only averagely weird;⌘

SKEL,
25 Bowland Close,
Offerton,
Stockport,
Cheshire
SK2 5NW

I can tell that Dave Wood has never met Elda from certain inaccuracies on the front cover - the fingers are too long. Then again maybe he's like me - one of those guys who just can't draw fingers (I've lost more commissions from Cabburys....)

I loved Harry Bell's illo on page 3, which is so much more than just a drawing, re-enforcing in just a few square inches all the ATom artwork and therefore the illustrative 'image', of MICROWAVE's last few issues.

Lee's piece was enjoyable (if eliciting no specific response from me, but even if it doesn't draw a more positive comment I can at least tell you I enjoyed it). Sid Birchby's piece (/pieces) remind me of when we were at Mal Ashworth's place and he was telling us of the stuff he and Hazel had picked up from flea markets at give-away prices. Every time I go to a flea market all I ever find is absolute rubbish at trendy boutique-type prices.

Steve Gallagher's piece was also enjoyable and in fact reminded me of the matched pair of article's I'd originally intended sending you, 'Sing Skunk and Think Hedgehog - parts one and two'. How come, every time I write anything I find I'm beaten into print? What do you mean, 'Plagiarism'?

Ted White was good too, especially where he did what he's best at, sharing his knowledge of past events. His throwaway sidelight upon the Hugo that Larry Niven 'bought' was the sort of inside dirt that us folks out in the fannish boonies simply never get to hear. I strongly suspect that there's another side to that story, but what the hell, that side we can all hear any time, it being the sort of thing we naive fans expect to take place. Ted's walk on the wild side is something else again. Get more of this sort of thing from him, if you can.

⌘ Those of you that get SFD will know that this brain-transplant donor has been cycling all over the country,

COLIN CRUBB,
720 Manchester Road,
Linthwaite,
Huddersfield,
W. Yorks

I can sympathise with Skel's difficulty in plannin out an article, I have the same trouble with letter writing, nowadays I just put down things as they come into my head; it's less coherent but at least the damn things get written.

Since you have been plugging the Blood Transfusion Service which is a worthy organisation, why not also plug donor cards such as kidney, eye, heart etc. The premise is that after you are dead you have no need for them, and they may give someone a new lease of life. (You can get a card to donate anything and everything). ((As you were lent your copy of MICROWAVE 5, I must assume that either the donor card fell out before you got it, the person I originally sent it to filled it in (well done!), or it was one of the few copies I sent out without cards 'cos I didn't have enough, o.k?))

PAUL VINCENT,
25 Dovedale Avenue,
Pelsall,
Walsall,
West Midlands
WS3 4HG

My most disasterous schoolboy chat-up lines have mercifully fled my mind, but probably made yours look good by comparison. Where I used to go wrong was chatting up girls with huge 17-year old boyfriends who weren't too delighted at the prospect of being usurped by this spotty little 12-year old with knobbly knees. Hence lots of being rapped on the head with rulers and/or knuckles as secret messages such as "Keep clear of Lyn, Vincent, or I'll break your neck" were drummed into my adolescently-fantasizing skull. I'm sure these early experiences account for my later shyness: maybe every time I harbour lustful

thoughts I expect to get hit on the head! ((Sounds like a good perversion brewing there, lad, watch it! (or cultivate it!))

The only quirk that springs to mind is related to filling in forms. As soon as I've filled one in I immediately check that everything is correct. Then I go back and check it again (even my name ferchrissake). Then I put it into the envelope and... take it out and do another check. There's no rational reason for this, and it drives me up the wall. Oh, I also leave all the meat on my plate until last. Maybe I'm naturally a carnivore who just likes to leave the best until last.

Lee Hoffman is an enjoyable writer, and the Soulfood piece was no exception. Grits sound revolting, but at least I now know what it consists of. I used to think these Yanks must have incredibly strong teeth, being able to chew grit. I mean my budgie loves it, but hardly suited to yumans. So that's another of my illusions shattered. As for hog jowls, thank god Lee didn't see fit to provide all the gruesome details. If she (or he??) had, I might have been pestering Joy Hibbert for some good vegetarian recipes! Maybe someone ought to write something similar for a U.S. zine, describing some of the more revolting British specialities. ((LeeH agrees, anyone want to try it? Marty Cantor's HOLIER THAN THOU would probably be the best place for it - send it to him direct or via me if you can't be bothered to look up the address.)) Grey Paes (sic) would make a good example, this being a Black Country dish which bears a resemblance to lumpy mud, and has strips of baconfat floating in it. Believe it or not, the muck tastes delicious, but it took years of persuasion before my rising gorge quitted enough to make the experiment. A good whiff of tripe and onions would be enough to drain the blood from Lee's face, too.



I quite liked Skel's article about writing an article, but it seemed a little out of place, somehow, more the type I'd expect to see in Shallow End. Articles about writing articles are hardly an original concept, but there again, what is, these days? Skel's style saved the day in this case, but I still don't know whether or not I liked it. (yes, I know that's a daft statement. I suppose the correct word is 'ambivalent').

Absolutely amazing tale by Ted White. It was chilling to see how what appeared to be mere gullibility turned out to be mental instability. It's always irritated me that so many folk still believe Von Daniken's every word, despite such coverage as the Horizon documentary where they calmly and methodically ripped apart whole swathes of Von Daniken's twaddle. Many of the constructions, for example, which he claimed could not have been built without modern tools turned out to be easily reproduced by local natives using only the most primitive of methods and tools. And so it went on, Von Daniken being shown up at every turn as at best an incompetent researcher, and at worst a deliberate fraud-merchant. And yet there are still hordes of suckers buying his books, attending his lectures (which allegedly resemble Nuremburg rallies in their fervour and adulation for The Great Man). After reading Ted's piece, I can only wonder what sort of correlation exists between such gullibility and mental imbalance.

On the letters pages, I was amazed to see wunnerful Eunice making such a humourless fuss about 'minority-group' jokes. Bloody hell, remove such gags from the field of humour, and there'd be precious little left. The whole point of jokes, as far as I'm concerned, is that (a) they gently mock some of the more ludicrous aspects of the jokes target, (b) they provide a safety valve through which a mild dislike of a person or group may be exorcised without venom. Presumably Eunice finds some jokes funny, but mebbe those jokes are at the expense of minority groups which aren't currently fashionable, maaaaaa. Besides, I enjoy the wordplay in jokes as being their most important element. I'll laugh at such a joke even if it is offensive. Consider Monty Python's "Life of Brian". A marvellously funny film, with some of the richest humour I've seen; yet consider how deeply offended the Catholic Church was when it came out. Does she despise this film? Or is it OK because Catholics aren't a persecuted minority? If so, what gives her the right to decide who can and cannot be ridiculed by a joke. Try to get some proportion, dammit!

((Paul went on to include a joke that would probably offend a lot of people, but was very funny. I haven't printed it because it was topical and its moment is past. Also it would probably have been meaningless to foreign readers.))

Let's talk about SF, Hugos and all that interesting stuff, eh?

TERRY JEEVES,
230 Bannerdale Road,
Sheffield
S11 9FE

Ted White's comments on Battlefield Earth tickled me..but there are other viewpoints to the one he expressed. Oh I agree the yarn is hack. No argument there...but so what? If people like hack then why shouldn't they vote for it? As for Hugo winning...I don't know the truth of Charles Platt plugging BE as a swipe at the Hugos..but two things come to mind...one, if the Hugos are so easily fiddled, then their value in plugging ANY title is suspect..and more so than the title concerned. Secondly, I find that in general..and speaking only for my own tastes...Hugo winners are frequently tedious, tiresome and pretentious..which get voted for simply because people want to feel they too are 'with-it' in the 'literary' stakes. SF..and indeed all fiction is read primarily for pleasure or entertainment. Some get their jollies from deep level allusions, others 'literary style' and so on...but in the final analysis, if YOU enjoy a book, then by your lights, it is a good book..and the same applies to BE. Personally, I gave up on the second part...but no doubt many stayed with it until the end..and enjoyed it. So there. I'd venture to suggest a more accurate level of assessment (as against a fan vote and its vulnerability) would be to give the Hugo to the best-selling title as tallied over a ten-year period. The giggle of this system is that 90% of the Hugos would probably go to the much reprinted 'classic' tales of SF.

Well, it's an idea, no doubt one which many of you want to agree/disagree with. Me, I just don't care anymore - it's vile-pro stuff.

Now, bringing up the rear, lagging behind again, we have our final LoC. Step lively, lad, we're all waiting!

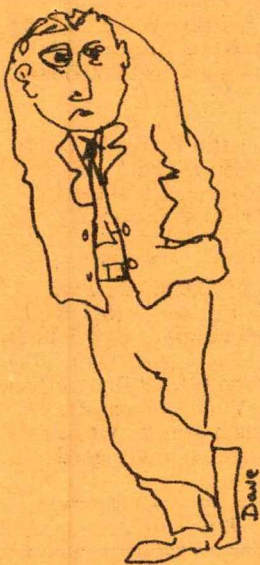
GLEN WARMINGER,
72 Linacre Avenue,
Sprowston,
Norwich,
Norfolk
NR7 8PG

I was amused to find that in the Deep Soweth they eat shoes or is it that in the High Streets one can find shoes made from corn meal, wheat flour etc. etc. It makes sense, though; I always did wonder where my old suede boots went, musta had em for tea sometime. I always had this mental image of grits being small hard brown things usually fed to chickens, that can cause certain body disorders to people who are not used to eating them. I can see them running as fast as their legs would carry them to the wazzhouse crying "I GOT THE GRITS!"

Having seen only two Microwaves (splish, splish), who is this Elda Wheeler? Sounds to me like a local racing cycle club. Just what every 26 year-old needs, a good bike (that is a very tasteless and sexist joke). The cover picture shows her looking very bewildered, probably because of the giant condom she's holding.

Tasteless and sexist it may be, but it seems a very apt way to end this column. Gird up your loins, though, we're heading for WAHF country - every man, woman & child for themselves!

We Also Heard From; Stu Shiffman (twice), Gloria McMillan, Joy Hibbert (who said nothing we didn't expect), Michael Ashley, Mike Johnson, Mark Greener, Philip Collins, Bryan Barrett (many thanks for the 'Bloom County' book), Skel, Chuch, Jeanne Gomoll, Ken Lake, Maureen S. Porter, Kim Huett, Marty Cantor ("having ATom as staff ~~WAZZ~~ artist is a stroke of genius, you lucky sod..."), Skel & Cas, Lee Hoffman, D. Willis ("What's all this about 'the ultimate in fannish crossbreeds'"), Chuck Connor, Alex Stewart ("I too used to know someone I gradually came to realise was completely off her trolley"), Ethel Lindsay (twice), Harry Bell ("Could do with a little more attention to layout and white space, I think, but I know how that can cost money"), Jon Wallace, Sydney J. Bounds (Like Astounding/Analog, I assume you will soon be MICROWAVE/ELDAFORM"), Steve Green ("Am I missing the point somewhat, or wasn't there supposed to be an article after Skel's 'The Best Laid Plans'") Yes, you're missing the point- go and read all three of his pieces again, Tom Taylor (sneaking in under the wire within hours of typing this), and Dick Bergeron to whom many thanks for returning his copies of 2, 3 & 4.



Some of us are doomed to
be forever a WAHF.....

It was with deep sadness that I received the news that George 'All The Way' Charters has passed on to permanent gafiation.

He was a man I never knew - but only read about - and wished I did.

He had been ill for some time, but was doing such a convincing imitation of being indestructible that the news still came as a shock.

He will be missed by many, and remembered by many as the fan who stencilled 'The Enchanted Duolicator'.

NOT AS GOOD AS I EXPECTED, BUT THEN I NEVER THOUGHT
IT WOULD BE - George ATW Charters



BAQUOTES

SOMEONE HAS BEEN SLIPPING FALSE FORTUNE COOKIE FORTUNES INTO MY HOUSE ... HERE COME THE PARACHUTISTS - LET'S SEE IF THEY LAND... ALL EJACULATION IS PREMATURE... IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT I WAS THERE UNDER FALSE PRETENCES... THEM CONCATENATIONS ARE DANGEROUS, YOU KNOW... I CAN NO LONGER SEE ANYTHING AS SMALL AS SINGLE LETTERS, JUST WORDS... BUTTER WOULDN'T MELT IN HER MOUTH - OR ANYWHERE ELSE... HE GOT ARRESTED ONCE FOR DEFACING A CROSSWORD PUZZLE... THE GOSTAK DOES SO TOO DISTIM THE DOSHES... I ONLY WISH I COULD EDIT FOR BERGERON... MY CIRCADIAN RHYTHMS MUST BE ALL TWISTED - OR ELSE I'M A SUPPRESSED SEX FIEND... I AM REALLY RATHER SHY IN CROWDS AND TEND TO HIDE BEHIND DOREEN ROGERS... I BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT CONFUSING YOURSELF EVERY SO OFTEN IS THE KEY TO MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH... IT'S LIKE HERPES - IT GETS YOU IN THE END... YOUR MOTHER'S ALREADY UP AND ABOUT - I CAN HEAR HER CASTANETS... WELL, THAT'S WHAT COMES OF DRINKING WATER... I'M NOT REALLY A JEW; JUST JEW-ISH; NOT THE WHOLE HOG... MECHANICALLY PERFECT AND ONE OWNER - AN INVETERATE LIAR... THANK GHOD WE HAVE TWO PAIRS OF SHOES, NO PITY AND THREE LAVATORIES... I THINK WE OUGHT TO NIP UP TO VAUXHAUL AND KNEE-CAP FATHER BRIDGE... IS THIS SOME NEW FORM OF PERVERSION YOU'VE INVENTED?... MOST OF MY FANNISH FRIENDS ARE AS UNRELIABLE AS I AM... I LOVED THE WAY THESE QUAINT AMERICANS SERVE BOOZE FROM TEASPOONS... THERE IS A DESTINY WHICH SHAPES OUR ENDS - BUT HE'S GONE TO WASH HIS HANDS... ISN'T THERE ANY OTHER PART OF A MATZO THAT YOU CAN EAT?... INSIDE CYRIL SMITH THERE IS A NOBODY TRYING TO GET OUT... I DON'T UNDERSTAND ALL POST MING DYNASTY TECHNOLOGY... DOESN'T THAT MAKE UP FOR ALL THOSE TURGID HEAPS OF STRINE CRUD THAT WE WADED THROUGH?... HE CAN'T OUTSMART ME, 'COS I'M A MORON Those responsible are; LeeH (2), Ethel Lindsay, Syd Bounds, Marty Cantor, Clegg, Carl Brandon, The Giant, Chuch (5), Harry Warner, Jr., Niall McA Robertson (2), Philip Collins, B.C., Jonathan Miller, Marilyn (2), Ving, ATom (2), Tony Blackburn and a couple that Chuch sent in but can't remember where he got them from. Keep up the good work, folks, I can always use more.

=====

I LOVE MY NEW BELLYBUTTON - ATom

=====

STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS...

ELDA WHEELER'S CON REPORT WITHDRAWN ON SOLICITOR'S ADVICE... MSS. & PHOTOS MAY BE CALLED FOR AS EVIDENCE IN COURT CASE... NEITHER MICROWAVE OR EDITOR IMPLICATED (Thank Ghod)... HAVE WE AT LAST MANAGED TO SCOOP ANSIBLE?

STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS...

PRINTED MATTER - REDUCED RATE
 PRINTED MATTER - REDUCED RATE
 PRINTED MATTER - REDUCED RATE

By air mail
 Par avion

Lee Hoffman, HM-KTF,
 350 N. W. Harbor Blvd.,
 Fort Charlotte,
 FL 33952.
 U.S.A.

From: Terry Hill, 41 Western Road,
 Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8NE
 Great Britain.

