



TOWNLEY
XMAS '95

SKUG

12

Brought to you by Gary S. Mattingly, 7501 Honey Ct., Dublin, CA 94568, gmatting@surf.com

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On to SKUG 12

WHAT?

This is the second issue in a lesser time. It should have been published in December but is falling into early March. This issue in print will be slightly different from the one on the web. I do not have a color printer and do not wish to spend the amount necessary to create printed color copies of Skug. Therefore you will not see all of the photos that will appear on the web page and those which appear in the printed version will only be black and white versions of the photos. This issue also includes LoCs and more artwork. I'd love to get more artwork and photos.

Work

I'm still at Toshiba. Many other people are not. Silicon Valley companies have many ads in the papers for engineers and programmers. Some companies are offering bonuses both to the newly hired employee and anyone who recommended a new employee. Additionally many companies have stock options and plans. Such do not exist for Toshiba. Toshiba decided to raise the salaries of many engineers and programmers to try to remain competitive. We shall see if this keeps present employees and makes offers sufficiently enticing so that we can fill the many employee requisitions we currently have open. I certainly hope so. Otherwise, the remaining people are going to be very busy.

They did give us a connection to the internet, in addition to email, such that we can now view web pages and grab things via ftp. It comes in on a T1 line so it definitely moves right along. Many groups and individuals have already created their own internal web pages.

Music

Since last time I joined a listserver for Exotica-related music. People cover a lot of easy listening stuff, cocktail/lounge music, surf music, and more. The following information was supplied by Brad Bigelow when people asked about a song called "Wimoweh" sung by Yma Sumac on the first volume, Mondo Exotica, of the new Ultra Lounge series from Capitol.

"'The Lion Sleeps Tonight' is an American adaptation of 'Wimoweh,' which is an American adaptation of 'Mbube,' ('The Lion') which was a South African adaptation of a Zulu chant. Solomon Linda penned the South African adaptation, which was a best seller there back in 1939.

Solomon Linda's Original Evening Birds' version can be heard on the compilation lp 'Mbube roots - Zulu choral music from south africa, 1930s-1960s' (rounder 5025, 1987)"

I never knew this and thought it was very interesting. Fortunately Brad Bigelow said I could quote him in Skug. (Thanks Brad.)

Of course there are many web pages dealing with music on the internet, such as Twangin' from Cheryl Cline. Then there are mixes of music and other things. I was just looking at the "Garden of Remembrance" (<http://www.islandnet.com/~deathnet/garden.html>). You can post memorials or remembrances of people that have died. They also have suggested CDs that you can play to create the proper mood. For your entertainment and edification the CDs are John Taverner: The Protecting Veil, Brian Eno: Thursday Afternoon, Gustav Mahler: Symphony No. 9 and Richard Strauss: Metamorphosen. Although I have music by all of the aforementioned I did not have those specific ones.

Amazingly enough after buying these CDs it would seem that music to think about dead people is very slow and uh, dirge-like. Well, I can think of a few dead people who would be better memorialized with a more upbeat tempo. I should check the other memorial page at <http://www.io.org/cemetery> - "The World Wide Cemetery" and see if they also have suggested listening material. For those interested in additional printed matter on the subject you can read "Final goodbyes float off into cyberspace" by Heather Irwin in the San Jose Mercury News, Wednesday, July 26, 1995.

Kent Johnson or Bruce Townley gave me an article about an indie band called Black and Blue, a band in Hong Kong. It was an interesting article but now I have to listen to Canto-pop. Maybe that's like the music on the CD compilation called "What's Pop" that Kent Johnson brought back from Hong Kong.

Chile Peppers

Almost every other year I grow peppers. This year I grew more than ever before. I'm not entirely sure why I did this. I do like peppers but the quantity I planted far exceeds my possible intake. I planted six serranos, six jalapenos, five cayennes, six fresno peppers, six Mexican chile peppers, three thai peppers, two cherry bomb peppers, two mulatto islenos, three anaheim peppers, six habanero peppers, one tabasco pepper and a few unknowns. The order of hotness could approximately be as follows (from mildest to hottest): anaheim, Mexican chiles, mulatto islenos, cherry bomb, fresno, jalapeno, tabasco, cayenne, serrano, thai, and habanero. The habanero peppers are definitely the hottest. Some of the ordering in the middle is uncertain. I could go look at one of my books on hot peppers but if you're that interested send me an email for more exact information. There is actually a measure of hotness called a Scoville but it seems to be something you can only determine with sophisticated laboratory equipment.

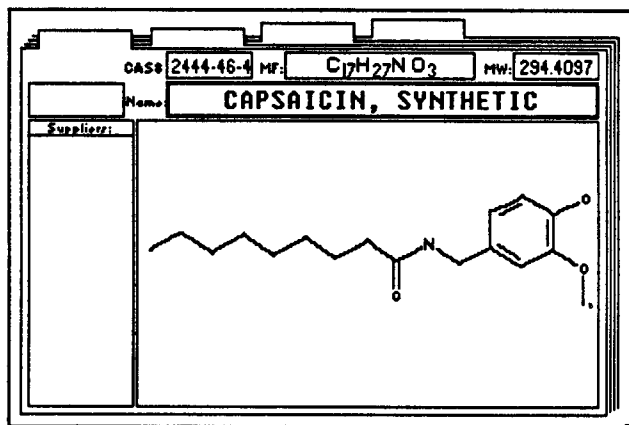
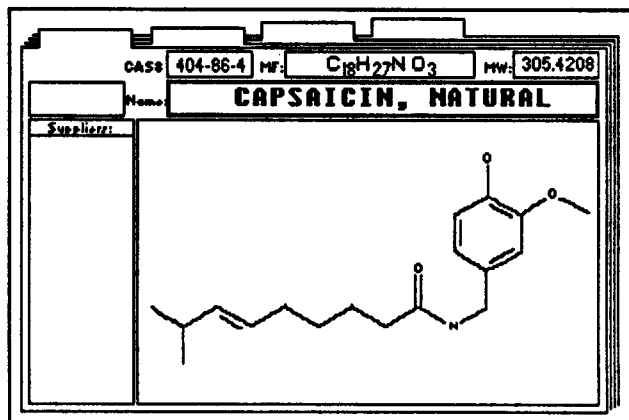
There is a chile list server on the internet. That is a mailing list to which you can subscribe. Many people send in questions, recipes, gardening information, and a myriad of other pieces of information, stories, etc. about peppers. It is run by a guy at UC Davis, who also has a Chile Pepper Web page. There are people from all over the world who send in messages. The majority are from the US but there are also many from England, Australia and even Japan. The people on the list refer to themselves as Chile Heads. Chile Heads even have gatherings. Basically these are pot lucks. Guess what types of food they bring.

It is nice to know that I'm not the only person who has twenty or thirty different types of hot sauces in the refrigerator. However many of these people spend more time cooking than I do. I would consider it but Patty definitely does not have the desire to sweat profusely while eating and I don't usually feel the urge to cut down the recipes just for myself. I have to figure out what to do with the remaining peppers that are still on the plants in the back yard. I can't freeze them all because there is not enough room in the freezer. I have taken a lot into work. There have only been a couple of incidents where people have not sufficiently heeded my warnings about the habaneros. One person actually bit off half of one. I definitely did not warn her enough. Fortunately she regularly eats peppers so she didn't have to go to the emergency room or die. I did dry a bunch of them and then ground them up into a very tasty chile powder. It is much better than that bland stuff labelled red pepper that you can buy in stores. That is probably what I will do with the rest of them.

I may actually plant peppers again next year but I think the maximum number of any particular type will be three or less. I would like to get some seeds for chiltepins or pequins. There are more seed companies that offer a greater variety of pepper seeds and some local nurseries are also offering a greater variety of pepper plants. Germinating seeds and keeping away insects in the early stages of growth are

the hardest parts of growing peppers. After they get past these stages they do not require much care. Once they're firmly started most insects and animals seem to avoid them. I do need to water several times a week and I did fertilize a couple of times. The hardest work is turning over the dirt and mixing in better soil and fertilizer when I do the initial planting. Soil in Dublin, California is very clay like and some thing to loosen it up is really necessary.

Well, that's enough about peppers for the moment, except for the following illustrations. Thanks to Rich Coad who passed these on to me.



Computers

Looking back at Skug 10 (or was it Skug 9) I notice my comments on buying a new computer, a 386, and dealing with everything associated with moving from typing a fanzine on a typewriter, even if it was an IBM Selectric, and making copies with a mimeograph to typing it into a word processor and making copies with a photocopier. We just recently gave the 386 away to a friend. The HP LaserJet II printer is still working although I think I need to replace a fan (at least I think that's what the noise is). I did add some RAM to the printer and replaced a hard drive, added RAM and added a 3.5 inch floppy drive to the 386.

Things change and about two or three years ago we bought a 486-DX 66 with a 17-inch SVGA monitor from a mail order company called Zeos in Minnesota. I thought I had a hard drive that would be more than sufficient for a while, a whole 400 MB. Now I keep having to clean it off. 8 MB of RAM seemed sufficient too. Last year I upgraded to 32 MB. Things work much better now. I do believe the EISA

bus was a mistake although my alternative at the time was a VESA local bus. PCI wasn't around then. It does have a SCSI controller card but now there's SCSI II. If I add another hard drive, it will be SCSI. All the new hard drives with SCSI use SCSI II. Hopefully I can get one that is backwards compatible. If it is, I won't have to upgrade to SCSI II, yet. I did purchase an HP ScanJet 4C, which is how various photos and artwork were transferred into this issue. It has its own SCSI I/O card although it could also be plugged into a preexisting SCSI card. My Zeos PC also has a 2X CD ROM. Patty never could get Myst to play on that machine. I don't know whether it was the CD ROM, the driver, the SCSI card or just insufficient RAM.

We bought a new computer for Patty in 1995. She had been using the 386. Again I think we have enough room on the hard drive and enough RAM but we shall see. The new one is from Micron in Boise, Idaho. They're one of the few US companies that continued manufacturing DRAM when Japan dropped their prices and took over most of the DRAM market. (Hopefully someone will correct me on this point if I don't have it quite right. I don't exactly memorize semiconductor history.) They bought out Zeos by the way. This one has a 120-MHz Pentium with a PCI bus. It has a 17 inch SVGA monitor too. It also has a 1.6 GB EIDE hard drive and 32 MB of RAM. It was loaded with Windows 95 and so far Win 95 hasn't caused us any problems. The 486 still runs Windows 3.1 and will stay there at least until I add another hard drive to it. I loaded the Norton 95 stuff on it. Norton is still more intrusive than Patty likes but it's not as extreme as Norton Desktop, which I use. I even had the Stealth 64 videocard loaded with 4 MB of VRAM. That probably was overkill but I'm trying to play it safe. It has a Creative Labs Soundblaster with AWE card and Altec Lansing speakers. Patty's new PC also has a 4X CD ROM and she has completed Myst on it. It is a rather fast machine.

At the moment I'm typing this on a Toshiba T4850CT portable machine while I watch the 49ers/RAMS game the weekend after Thanksgiving. This one isn't ours. It's from work but pretty much for my use now. It has a 75-MHz 486, 32 MB RAM and an 800 MB hard drive. This seems amazing considering its small size.

Also, communications have changed. I started with a 2400 baud modem. Now we have two 14,400 baud modems. Earlier this year we had ISDN brought to the house and the 486 has an Intel SecureLink card (with an NT1 daughter board added by Surf Communications I believe). It is quite fast but that's part of the reason my hard disc keeps filling up. We have an ISDN connection to the internet through Surf. When you consider cruising with Netscape, checking out all of the Usenet groups with Free Agent, and needing to have all these various other programs for playing and viewing as many different formats as possible, RAM and disk space get used up fast. In addition, I have these programs for ftp'ing (which I do use), gopher, archie, WAIS, (I'm just starting to try to use the last three), etc.

Add to this the fact that the latest issue of Skug came out in print form and as a Web page. Currently I'm using Hot Dog as an HTML editor but I still need to add many things in manually. Then there's the various GIFs I either created through scanning or changing/capturing through either Lview or Paint Shop Pro. Memory, memory. No wonder I have a hard time remembering everything. I don't get upgraded every couple of years, actually I think I get down graded continuously. Where are the memory enhancing drugs when you need them.

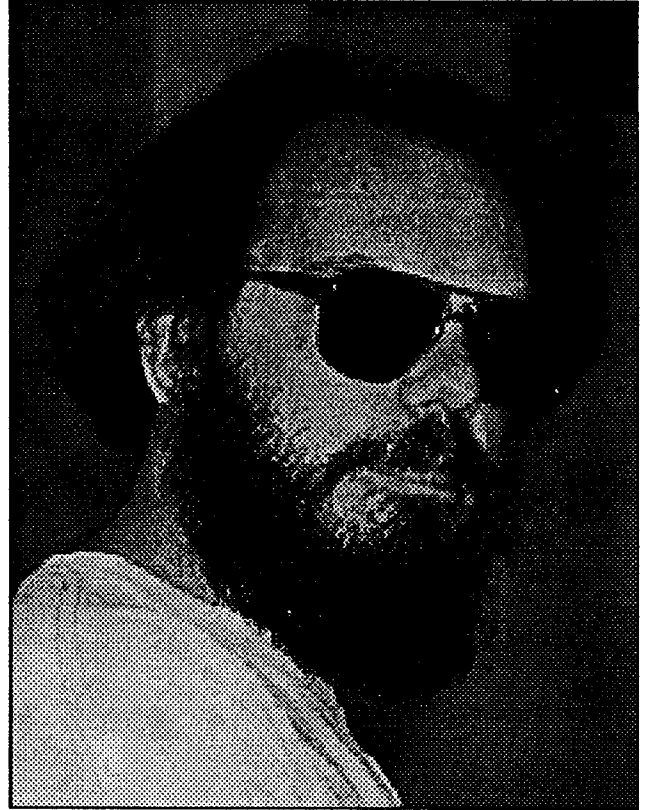
So what's the point of this little article? Just that many changes have happened since Skug 9 or 10. Obviously the changes didn't just happen with me. Electronics and communications have changed and become faster. Now you can get email reports and direct satellite TV transmission straight from cities in Bosnia (and many other places) where people are being killed over race and religion. Such advances.

Washington, D.C. (uh, really Arlington, I think) Corflu
(This is only somewhat old.)

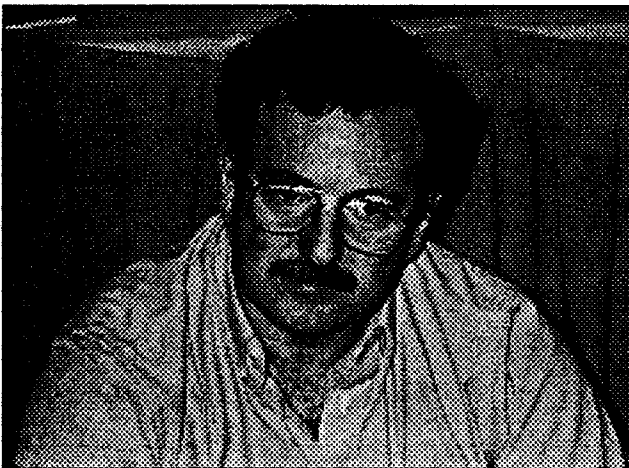
I was at this convention but I was sick. We (mainly Patty) took pictures so I decided to include some in this issue. I apologize that there is no article to go along with it but my memory is too faulty to write it now. I had a fairly good time, all things considered. It was rather weird that the banquet started as a stand-up affair. I have gone to work conferences where this is the norm. It is not for SF conventions. Somebody finally figured out that we should get some chairs.



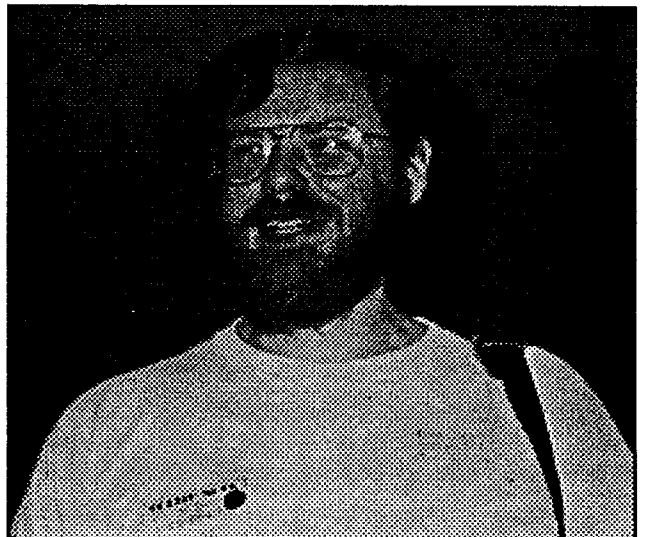
Joe Wesson



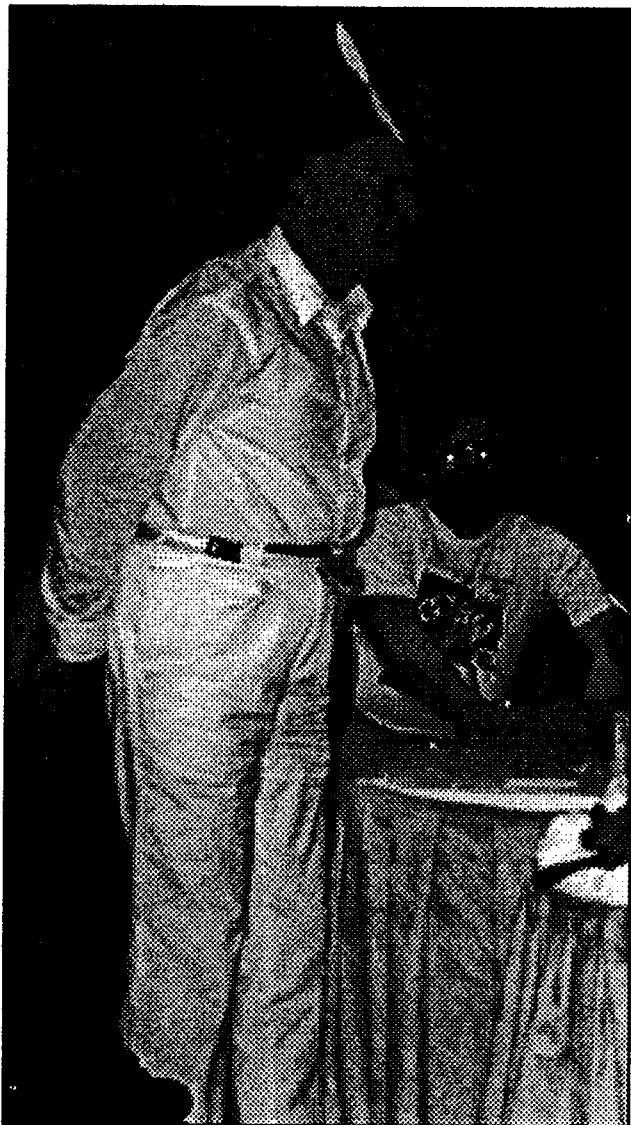
John Bartelt



Dick Smith



Bob Webber



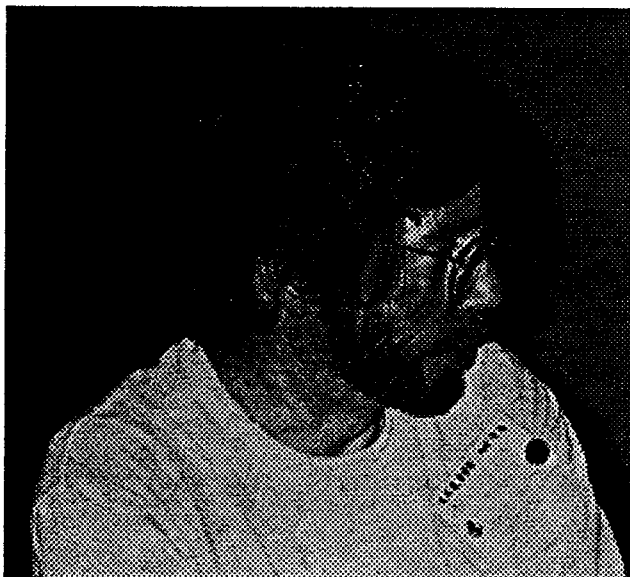
Jack Speer and Gary Farber



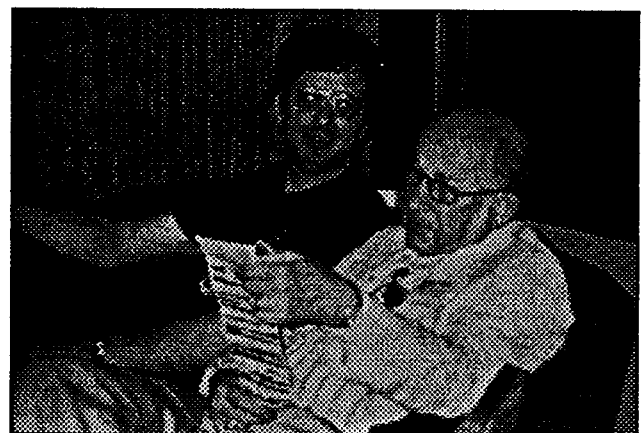
Lucy Huntzinger and Don Fitch



John Bartelt, Joe Wesson & Lucy Huntzinger



Richard Brandt



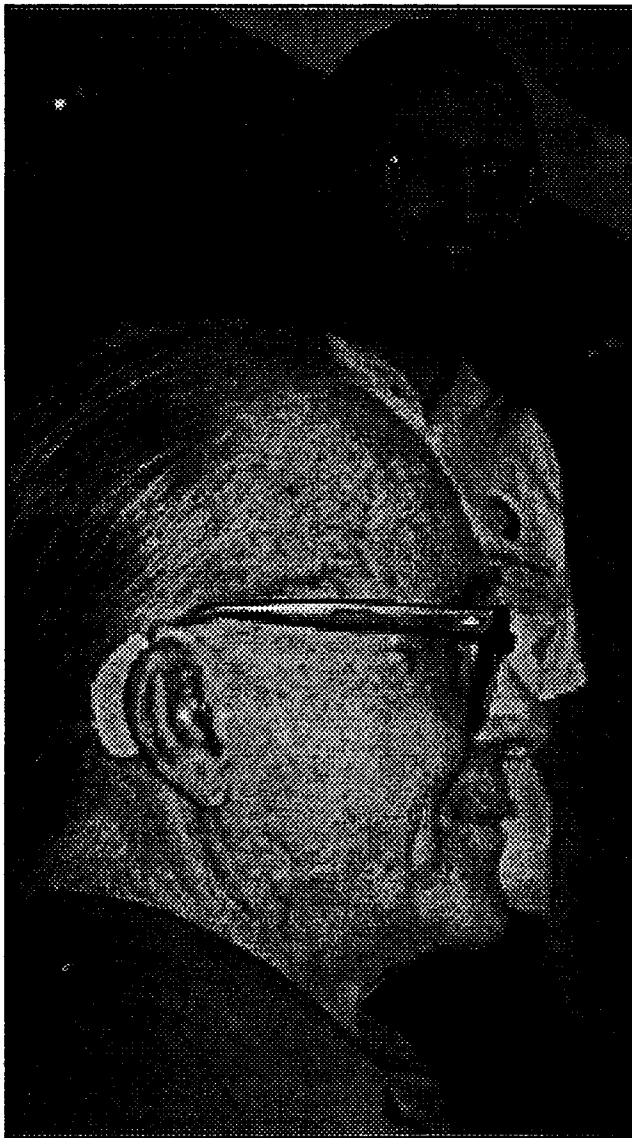
Alexis Gilliland



Bruce Pelz and Lise Eisenberg



Spike Parsons, Moshe Feder and Janice Gelb



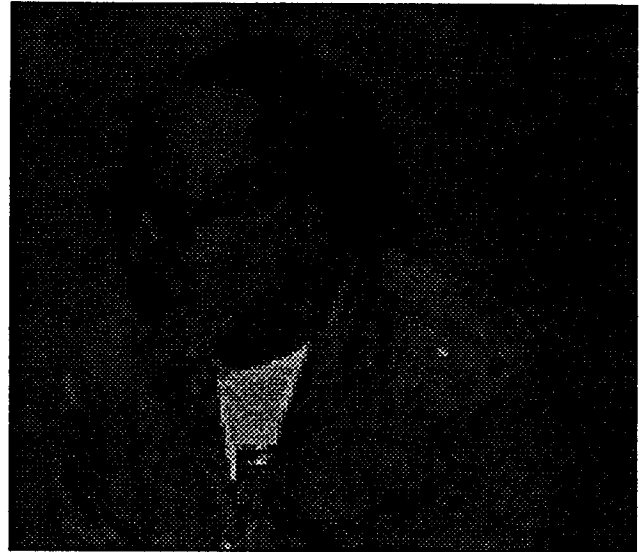
Don Fitch and Rich McAllister



Tracy Benton



Rob Hansen



Ted White



Nevenah Smith, Steve Stiles, Leah Smith,
Richard Brandt and Dick Lynch

Well, it looks like we will not make it to this year's Corflu in Nashville. Many apologies to Lucy and John. I'm having a hard enough time finding time just to get this out before Corflu. Maybe I can convince someone to write an article and take some pictures of the Nashville Corflu. Obviously I am willing to add in pictures from various sources but I'll definitely take a stronger editorial stance on which photos I will or will not use. Also beware that I may crop the pictures so if you do send me photos either do so knowing that or tell me that I cannot crop your pictures. By the way, I will be cropping the scanned images, not the actual photographs. Obviously information about the photos would be very helpful, like who the people are and possibly information about the setting. I have a really hard time remembering people's names even when I was there. I have been in situations where I have hung out with people throughout a convention and totally forgotten their name the next time I see them. Remembering names of people is not something at which I am particularly good. Thanks to Spike Parsons helping me remember some of the people's names above. I apologize to the few still unnamed.

Oh yeah, I also will not publish pictures from the Pink Pussycat.

Las Vegas Corflu & Yosemite

I should write something about the last convention I attended. This was combined with a visit with Patty's parents and a trip to Yosemite. It was an interesting trip.

Patty's parents spent the winter in Lake Havasu and were to fly back to Michigan from Las Vegas. Patty likes gambling a lot more than I do. For the most part I don't like the lights and noise of Las Vegas. My luck at gambling is bad. I gain no joy in the playing. Fortunately Patty usually either breaks even or wins. Patty's parents enjoy the slots. Patty spent much time with them over this weekend. This was a good thing. This was the last vacation she would spend with her mother. Her mother died five weeks later.

Although I spent some time with them I spent more time at the convention and exploring Las Vegas. Patty had been there before. The hotel was in the older downtown section of Las Vegas. One time I walked from there to the newer hotels. Another time I went with Jay and Dixie.

Notes written then would have been very helpful now. I can remember riding at least one or two rides and the changing ceiling at the same place that had the moving statues. I attended the parties at Corflu during the evening, a few of the panels and the banquet. It was an enjoyable convention but for some reason or another I felt moderately detached. They even had a good hot sauce, Buffalo Chipotle.

After our visit in Las Vegas we drove Patty's parents' car to Yosemite. That was an interesting ride. They have a large American station wagon. It was meant for the open highway, not curving mountain rides. We made it. Yosemite is great. This was also another first. Despite having lived in California for over ten years, this was my first visit to Yosemite. We stayed in the Ahwahnee hotel, which is inside the park. It is a very comfortable hotel. I like eating breakfast there more than dinner. You are supposed to wear dress clothes and a tie (if you are a male) at dinner. Whereas if you show up early for breakfast you have two or three people waiting on you and you get good food too. Let us not forget the really good point. You don't have to wear a tie at breakfast. The dinner was okay but not worth the price we paid. Maybe they just were having a bad night. The service at dinner also was not very good. Maybe it was because it was early in the season.

Being there early in the season does have its benefits. There aren't as many people. After Las Vegas I did not need many people. There are many magnificent sights in the park. There are a few of these sights that require considerable walking. I walked part of the way. We also took a bus tour to get a quick view of the major attractions. At one stop the tour guide pointed out the people climbing up the side of a cliff.

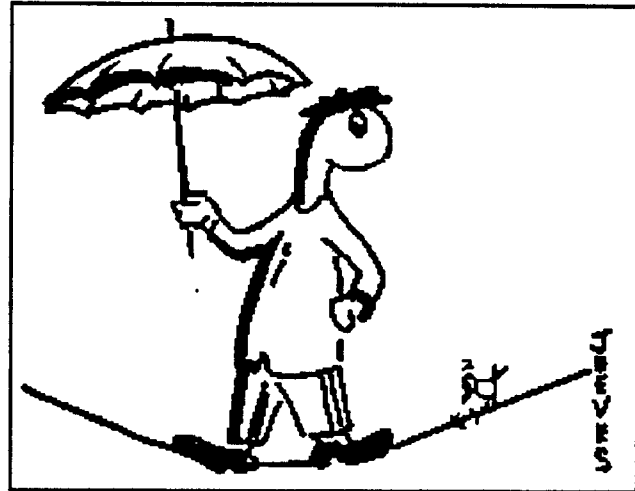
It did rain one day we were there. It also snowed. Like I said, it was early in the season. When we arrived it was warm and we walked around without coats. When we left, it was cold. Yes, we enjoyed several seasons over several days and it wasn't even due to modern technology. As we left the park, we could see the helicopters and rescue crews trying to save the aforementioned cliff climbers. We did not get to see any small children swept down the raging streams fed by the melting snow.

Bits and Pieces

From "The Grab Bag" San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle, Sunday, January 28, 1996:

"Tag Samuel Goldwyn with this one, too: 'If I could drop dead right now, I'd be the happiest man alive.'"

"Indonesia is home to a five-pound bird that barks. It's a hornbill known as the Tangkokored knob. Locals call it 'the flying dog.'"



"News of the Weird" by Chuck Shepherd. This appears in the San Jose Mercury, and probably many other newspapers.

"Fortune magazine reported in October on the foresightedness of Procter and Gamble in registering names for potential exclusive Internet addresses. It won the right to use, among other names: toiletpaper.com, pimples.com, germs.com, bacteria.com, dandruff.com, underarm.com, bad-breath.com, and diarrhea.com."

"A January Reuters news service story on the Japanese physical comedy team, Tokyo Shock Boys, listed several grotesque injuries suffered by team members' aiming for laughs: scarring of groins and buttocks from dropping firecrackers down their pants; tender skin, in patches, resulting from gluing various objects to their faces; and missing teeth by one member caused by bites of scorpions he puts in his mouth. One member, Danna Koyanagi, takes milk into his mouth and squirts it out his eyes. The Group's advertising slogan is, 'Please laugh. We're risking our lives.'"

"Demond Morris' latest documentary, 'The Human Animal: the Biology of Love', now on TV in England, will appear on U.S. cable TV in January and picture a human orgasm -- from inside the vagina.

A tiny camera, similar to those which are used for exploration of the colon, was placed inside 31-year-old Wendy Duffield, and another one was strapped onto her husband's penis. The couple reportedly had sex about 60 times to assure sufficient footage."

"Mike McElroy, making an appeal to the West Lake Hills, Texas, City Council in August of the benefits of his being allowed to keep his pet donkey, Pearl, at his home despite regulations against it: 'This is a great opportunity for our kids and other kids who come to see us to be able to recognize and identify manure, which will help them in the future. Children need, at an early age, to be able to identify manure.'"

"Born in April in Little Rock was daughter Lexus Camry Peterson. Finishing 35th in the Club North Shore Half Marathon near Chicago in April was Farm Vehicle, 38."

"The Journal of Spinal Cord Medicine reported in a recent issue that observation of 10 patients whose wounds would not heal via antibiotics showed a weekly 20 percent improvement when ordinary maggots were placed on the wound. Maggots ate the dead skin tissue and the bacteria around the cut."

"**Snapping turtle bites off vacationer's testicles**' Nature-crazy salesman Dayle Nisi was skinnydipping with his fiancée in a remote mountain lake when a humongous snapping turtle swam by and bit off his testicles,' the **Weekly World News** reports.

Recently Nisi and Tricia Tealey drove from Utica, N.Y., to her uncles' cabin in the Adirondacks for a vacation. Because the cabin was so far from anywhere they spent their days swimming and sunning without clothes. But one day the couple had been in the water for less than five minutes when a 30-pound turtle attacked and feasted on Nisi's family jewels.

'I felt this excruciating pain in my groin and when I got my bearings, I realized a turtle had bitten my testicles off and swam away with them,' says Nisi."

From the SJ Mercury but I don't think it is from News of the Weird:

"**The magic Labrador**: Scottish police are hot on the trail of Oscar the performing dog, whose owner bills him as the world's only canine hypnotist. The main attraction at a sellout show in Edinburgh this week, Oscar bolted while being exercised by his owner, Hugh Cross. Police have warned people *not* to look the Labrador straight in the eye or they'll be hypnotized."

"**Naked musician briefly in trouble**, By Matt Helms, Knight-Ridder News Service: A naked man who played an accordion while four friends danced partially dressed in a Laundromat in Michigan's Upper Peninsula has learned his lesson, authorities said Wednesday, and neither he nor his friends are likely to be charged.

The five, believed to be students at Michigan Technological University in Houghton, had faced disorderly conduct charges. When Hancock, Mich., police responded to a complaint early Saturday morning, two men and two women were dancing in their underwear to the music of the accordionist, who was naked.

Police said the man, a graduate student from Brazil, told them, 'I can't play the accordion unless I'm completely nude.'

Police did not release his name because he hadn't been charged.

'They realize that kind of behavior isn't acceptable,' said Hancock Police Chief Mike Beaudoin.

Houghton County Prosecutor Doug Edwards said four of the students were wearing underwear that might be less revealing than beachwear.

'It's 3 o'clock in the morning, no one else is around -- what would you do?' said Edwards, tongue firmly in cheek.

But apparently at least two other women were in the Laundromat while the stripping was in progress. Both called police. One offered graphic details of the nude man's anatomy.

'That's the report I'm waiting on,' Edwards said."

"Study raises health concern about ditto machines, Gannett News Service

Those smelly, purple-ink sheets that teachers regularly crank out on low-tech ditto machines may be hazardous to everyone's health, according to the American Federation of Teachers.

Darryl Alexander, AFT's workplace health and safety director, said a brief study found that ditto machine fluid has excessive amounts of methanol, a highly volatile alcohol.

A spot check of schools from California, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Michigan, the District of Columbia, Louisiana and Oklahoma found that ditto machines are still in frequent use.

Alexander said exposure to methanol in schools can be much higher than levels allowed in workplaces by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Methanol has a 'high odor threshold' and by the time you smell it, 'you've already been overexposed.' she said.

The AFT study was prompted by teacher complaints of headaches, nausea and other ailments. Alexander proposes a survey to find how prevalent ditto machines are and gauge potential health problems."

PEOPLE In the News, also from the SJ Merc:

"I love karate; it's like a bible to me. But deep inside, I'm so . . . I mean, I'm so sensitive" -- the muscles from Brussels, Jean-Claude Van Damme

"Mama, Clinton has bombed our outhouse." -- Rade Gasevic, alerting his mother that the family privy had been decimated in the opening salvos of bombings of Bosnian Serbian positions.

Murphy's Law revisited

"Washington Post readers have given birth to these siblings of Murphy's Law:

- **Bates' Law:** The phone always rings when you are outside the shower with a knife.
- **Law of Productivity:** If not controlled, work will flow to the competent people until they submerge.
- **Law of Imitation:** It's not plagiarism if you would have said it the same way, had you said it first. (Biden's Corollary: It's not plagiarism if you would have said it the same way, had you said it first.)
- **Alter Ego Scenario:** Older, more experienced workers are a valuable resource because when they retire, everything can be blamed on them.
- **Driver's Mantra:** If you do not care where you are, you are not lost.
- **Absent-Minded Professor's Observation:** People who say 'Where did you last have it?' actually believe they are being of some assistance.
- **Law of Disproportionate Pain:** A ton of bricks weighs the same as a ton of feathers unless it hits you in the head."

Harper's Index, Copyright 1995. Harper's Index. Harper's magazine:

"Number of domestic violence counselors the NFL sent to its teams' training camps last year: 28."

"Number of rubber ducks accidentally spilled in the North Pacific in 1992 by a U.S.-bound freighter: 7,250"

"Number of oceanographers conducting a study of the ducks' dispersion as a measure of ocean currents: 2"

Harper's Index, Copyright 1989. Harper's Index. Harper's magazine:

"Percentage increase, since 1987, in the number of children killed by guns in Broward County, Fla.: 209"

"Number of years Steve Jenne of Springfield, Ill., has saved a buffalo sandwich bitten into by Richard Nixon: 28."

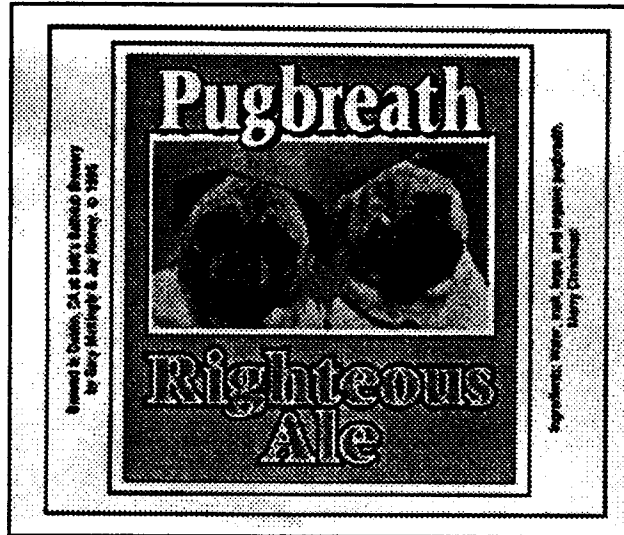
"Number of the 41,000 applicants for concealed-weapon permits in Florida in 1988 who were turned down: 246"

Remember, stochastic accretion makes the world go round.

And did you know that Rasputin's telephone number was St. Petersburg 64646?

Beer Brewing

Well, Jay and I brewed another batch of beer. This one is Pug's Breath. The label Jay made up should be below.



Lost Empires of the Soul
by Wm Breiding

2.

Misfits in Milan

"Traveling is a brutality. It forces you to trust strangers and to lose sight of all that familiar comfort of home and friends. You are constantly off balance. Nothing is yours except the essential things -- air, sleep, dreams, the sea, the sky -- all things tending towards the eternal or what we imagine of it."

--Cesare Pavese

"In the course of an hour I should have to go out to dinner, which was not supplied on the premises, and that effort assumed the form of a desperate and dangerous quest. It appeared to me that I would rather remain dinnerless, would rather even starve, than sally forth into the infernal town, where the natural fate of an obscure stranger would be to be trampled to death."

-- Henry James, "Italian Hours"

"I'm an American. I'm an American. I'm an American."

-- Patti Smith

I would say that the circumstances were peculiar, but the truth is that there are no such things as peculiar circumstances. The entire unfolding of life is a peculiar and unlikely circumstance. How we move from birth to death is just the story of one expulsion to another. What we do in between is of little consequence to anyone but ourselves and the few that we touch.

It wasn't until later that we began climbing the gleaming spires of love and obsession, then fell from the moon, plunging straight through the dizzying heights, deep into the tectonic plates of the heart, and into the mind rending, cataclysmic break up of the psyche. No. This was before then. But after I'd fallen out of love. Maybe a year since that first immemorial meeting in the subway.

Here we were: racing down through the misty Italian landscape, the skeleton trees and sere hills of winter greening, calling to life the villagers of Domodossola. We were rough and tired after a moody stay in Paris. I was unshaven, red-eyed. Wearing jeans, denim shirt, black vest, cowboy boots, a grey denim jacket that both zipped and buttoned. Danielle was wearing a skin tight black vintage lace dress, waist cincher, sheer black stockings, Victorian-styled boots, and a long coat of pale brown wool. Her hair was short. Probably shorter than she will ever have the nerve to cut it for the remainder of her life, patterned after men's styles in the 40s: cropped very short at the temples and over the ears, longer, fuller at the top.

I fell in love with the sound of the word: *Domodossola*. I repeated it incessantly for days in Marlon Brando's 'Godfather' accent, much to Danielle's amusement. We did not disembark at Domodossola. Though we were tempted by the bucolic surrounding, the fields of grapes, and the very name of the village. We knew better. We were happiest on the train.

Our goal was Milan, fashion center of the world, second only to Paris. Our original destination had been

Rio. All the cool shoes we were purchasing in the early and mid eighties had been made in Brazil. We decided a pilgrimage was in order, and suit cases full of shoes. A round trip ticket for one was \$1,500. A round trip ticket to London for *two* was just slightly less than \$1,000. Together with month long EuRail passes, we still came in under \$1,500. So much for the land of cool cheapo shoes.

Milan is a brooding city. The May weather threw a constant skim of unruly clouds skidding across the sky. The threat of rain was a too likely stage-drop for the huge, fascistic train station. No other depot is quite like it. The impression it gives is difficult to explain. Within the beauty of the structure lies a deep terror. Like being intimidated by a fat, courtly bureaucrat.

If I were a travel writer of the first magnitude, such as Donald Harrington, Jonathan Raban, Lawrence Millman, William Least Heat Moon or even John McPhee I would hit the library for some intensive research on the Milan train station, give you a complete account of its history, yet allow it to reflect my own feeling on the matter: that the building was erected during the fascist regime, meant to loom nobly and intimidate the excitable burgher into placid submission. The consequences were to otherwise be lead off towards death by the winged horses and mythical men at their sides, whose arms are stretched in the position of jettisoning an arrow from a bow but are, in actuality, empty.

In every major European city the train station has a Tourist Board office. Inquiring at one of these can be construed as a bitter offense, or on the other hand you can be swiftly helped, depending on where you are and with whom you are speaking. In Paris we were uniformly mistreated, but never so much as at the Tourist Board. The man must have decided he didn't like our looks. He refused to help us by feigning zero skill in the English language. After unsuccessfully negotiating for ten minutes we left our cue in aggravation only to have our man helpfully address the next person in clear English while throwing a disgusted look at us.

Rome was quite the opposite. At every point locals good naturedly stopped to figure us out between smiles and gestures. The Milanese were merely officious and coldly competent. A placid, aloof woman with a stern demeanor, wearing glasses, her long hair piled in a bun at the nape of her neck spoke a perfect accented English, locating for us what turned out to be an entirely romantic room in a *penzione* close by the train station for fewer lire than a carton of Marlboros.

I understand that the preceding paragraphs could make me out as a snobbish prig, or, more likely, a crass "ugly American". But what I'm pointing out here is that tourists from other countries should not be expected to speak the native tongue. On occasions too numerous to mention I have stopped for long moments on the streets of San Francisco, the Tourist Capital of these here Yew Nited States, to help a befuddled, non-English speaking alien achieve his goal. Through smiles, pointing, and key words they were sent merrily on their way. In Paris and northern Italy we found the locals hostile as the proverbial stuck pig. We were treated with uncalled for rudeness most everywhere. A minor illustration would be a shoe store in Paris. After browsing in both the men's and women's sections with Danielle I decided I wanted to make a purchase of a particularly cool pair of very pointed black and white shoes. I could not get any of the clerks to help. They would simply turn away. This made me quite angry, so I stormed out of the boutique in a rather loud huff, only to be hurried after by the store manager who made excuses for her clerks in halting English while she dragged me back into the shop where I was then attended to by several haughty women. The sale was made, but only begrudgingly. Danielle found the whole incident hilarious, and was particularly amused to see me surrounded by a number of tall beautiful women in high heels waiting to fit me with shoes. It was only later that I saw the humor in it, and the quintessentially Parisian erotic nuances of the encounter.

Rick Steves, the author of Europe Through the Backdoor tries to make excuses for this type of behavior, particularly among the Parisians, saying that they have every right to be snooty, having a history, dignity and culture to uphold, and as a visitor you should just put up with it, smiling knowingly to yourself. Those darned natives!

Walking through Milan from the beautiful but oppressive train depot to our room at the *penzione* was brief, made under a glowering sky. Our abode was on a small tree lined street bordered by an even smaller alley. The house was large, made of massive stone slabs. We were greeted by an ancient, bent woman wearing a heavy ankle-length dress with a shawl wrapping her shoulders.

She smiled wanly from within the deep hallway, looking us over as we gave our explanations. She stepped back, nodding, extending an arm to her right. We peered into the darkened hall and saw a heavy, wide oaken door. Danielle crossed the stoop and I followed suit. The old lady retrieved a latch key from somewhere beneath her skirts and the door opened to another world.

The room was huge, high ceilinged, paneled in dark wood, sparsely but smartly appointed. A rich brick colored throw rug with a white design lay on the light hardwood floor. A chest of drawers with a mirror stood across the room from a king-sized bed, which had a firm mattress and crisp white sheets. On either side of the bed were tables with tall, elegant reading lamps. At the far end, opposite the door, a set of windows reaching from floor to nearly the ceiling opened out into a small court yard that was criss-crossed with scaffolding. The light falling through the window was fragile, giving everything inside a pale glow.

We looked at one another in awe, Danielle's eyes widening with delight. I turned and told the old woman we would take the room for the night, handing her a wad of lire. Before she left, we mentioned something about food and she uttered a street name. She let us back out through the front door and stood watching us as we left.

Although it was mid afternoon the day was taking a rapid plunge towards dusk. A dense cloud cover had settled in and made the already grey, brooding city lonely and desolate. We wandered through an area of commerce, looked at the many cafes and restaurants, finally deciding on one after an agonizing deliberation.

It is at this point that I should note one of my many faults. It had been a playing factor all through our travels, but was now coming to a radical, uncomfortable head. For whatever reasons, shyness, fear, a strong anti-social streak, or just plain neurosis, I find it rather difficult at times to interact with people. On this European trip I had become nearly paralyzed, particularly after the sound drubbings we had taken in Paris. It had come to a stage where it was almost impossible for me to engage people. Danielle, consequently, was carrying the majority of the burden in negotiating with the locals soon after we departed London. It should be noted that Danielle also suffered from these same ailments, but to a lesser degree. At first, none of this was a problem. However, the longer we were on the Continent, it became obvious to her she would be forced by my innate lack to lead us through transaction after transaction and she began to resent me. We started bickering constantly about both tiny insignificant things as well as huge, important things.

In retrospect, of course, it all appears rather amusing. But at the time I was deadly alienated, desperately hungry and spaced out much of the time we traveled in Europe. It was no wonder that we were happiest on the train. We could sit and be with one another, no worries. At whistle stops everywhere, the

platforms were canvassed with food vendors; sublime, huge sandwiches, good local beer, candy bars and cigarettes. All the comforts of home. I see now, also, it was why we ended up burrowing back into Paris after a horrific foray to Germany. Like everyone, we fell in love with Paris, and did in fact, have the quintessential Parisian experience: we broke up while there. I spent a horrid 16 hours wandering the gothic streets, lost, confused, hungry, love sick. Finally I returned to our hotel room quite ready to pack up and go, to find Danielle. The room was scattered with flowers, and she had bought a bottle of wine and candles. We spent that night making up, and for the rest of the trip had a grand time, ending up spending the total of 9 days in Paris. I learned in that period to hate the Parisians. They were the epitome of hypocrisy, worshiping at the feet of American culture but mistreating the individual. But back to Milan.

Our entrance into the cafe was surrounded by confusion. I was desperately hungry and tired, dazed and ill-prepared to deal with Milanese hostility. We hovered on the edge of the restaurant for some moments, with the waiters ignoring us. Danielle was hanging in the background forcing me to take charge. My impulse was to bolt, but I needed to eat. Conferring with her did no good. She remained noncommittal. I began to get aggravated.

I strolled over to a table, took off my coat, hung it on the back of the chair and sat down. Danielle followed my lead. Instantly a waiter came over wanting to take our order. But you see, we needed a menu. He gave us one and walked away, making us wait much too long before his return. I was not a happy camper. Finally the waiter returned; Danielle ordered verbally, I simply pointed to the dish I wanted on the menu without speaking. The waiter grabbed the menu from my hand and stalked off. A half hour later we were still waiting and bickering. These were simple pasta dishes. The bistro was not crowded.

Eventually the food came. I admit that it was piping hot and delicious. For the moment we were as happy as children, eating our pasta and drinking red wine, smiling, talking and acting civilized.

Our happy mood soon waned. Not only had we remained unattended during the meal, but now our waiter was ignoring us, long after it became obvious that we had completed our meal. Danielle refused to call the waiter, and said, jokingly, "Why not just snap your fingers in the air and call 'Garçon!' like they do in the movies? I'm sure he'll get the message." This was a dare if I had ever heard one. I was agitated enough to take her up on it.

I pushed my chair back from the table, raised a hand in the air and began snapping. "Garçon," I called. I looked around the bistro, found our waiter, repeatedly snapped my thumb and fore finger. "Garçon!" I called. Our waiter hurried over stiffly, all a-bristle. I looked him in the eye, rubbed my thumb and fore finger together. "Check," I said, "Check!" The waiter nodded his head quickly, blushing, turned on his heel and walked away.

I looked over at Danielle who was smiling broadly. I felt entirely humiliated. "Good job," she said. Our waiter returned with the bill. I stopped him as he began to walk away, pulling lire from my coat pocket. I counted, handing them directly to him, with the check. He left, returned quickly, leaving our change on the table without a glance. I counted out the change, certain that he had shorted us. Danielle argued that it hardly mattered at this point. I left the change on the table, and we rushed exhausted out into the street.

The afternoon was inhabited by shadows, slipping quickly along the *piazzas*, hands stuck into pockets

of long coats, or clutched around great purses. The sound of our shoes echoed in the sky. We located our *penzione*, decided on a stroll through the moody day, holding hands, trying to overcome our confusion and anger, both at the Europeans and at each other. We came to a silent, secluded *piazza* surrounded by trees and dotted with benches, a fountain at its center. We sat and smoked cigarettes, talking, listening to the distant thunder, watching the deep gloom of the sky as it descended into our hearts. Soon it began to rain and we rose to the occasion, enjoying the light downfall. We walked back to our room.

Our mood became increasingly rank. Rain now came down hard and steady, a wind rising, rattling the huge door-windows. We began to devour one another, our hearts bleeding, our confusion with one another deep, frightening, facing raw, hot emotions. Our level voices were searching the limits of control, and anger began erupting through blazing eyes, our voices turning to shouts. The rain was slashing at the windows, the wind causing the scaffolding in the small courtyard to shake and rattle.

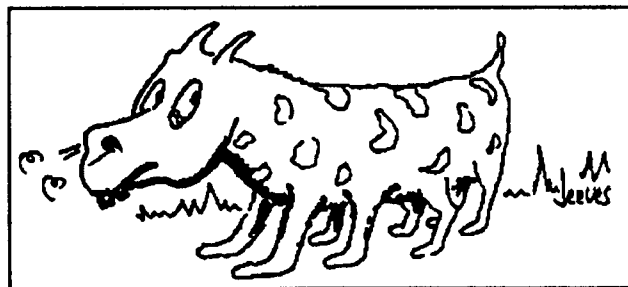
We were getting nowhere hurling verbal assaults; battering rams of love crammed down each other's throats. Trying to locate our hearts, finding it impossible. In frustration, Danielle threw on her coat and ran out of the room, straight into the face of the storm.

I sat down on a chair in the silence that always follows a violent act, calming my heart, coaxing my self-hatred, that beautiful bird of despair, back into its cage. I smoked a cigarette, then got out my camera and took pictures of the dark afternoon as seen through the gilded windows of loneliness.

The storm raged outside. Huge gusts of wind, loud cracks of thunder and long strikes of lightning. I became nervous, pacing the length of the room, smoking, worrying about Danielle out in this glorious spectacle, this outward manifestation of our moods.

Some indeterminate time later Danielle finally returned, wet, bedraggled and crying. I crossed the room and embraced her for long seconds. We parted from our embrace, eyeing each other, and a slow, tight smile spread across her lips, and then she was laughing. "God!" she exclaimed. "This is just like a fucking movie!" We laughed and the tension between us broke. Soon we were in bed, naked, clutching at each other.

The next day we stood at the counter of an espresso bar near the train station, gulping hot coffee, looking at each other in disbelief. Hours later we would be wandering sunny Florence, eating sandwiches and giggling down the narrow streets towards a Mapplethorpe exhibit. For the moment we were at peace with one another.



Five Senses

by Bruce Townley

Sight: What William Kinsella calls 'the thrill of the grass'. For me, personally, that's when you first emerge from one of those tunnels in the bowels a major-league ball yard into the actual stands and there's the field laid out before you like an immense emerald, a precious jewel.

Various SF vistas, including the fairly urban view from my apartment windows that includes the apartment across the courtyard that used to be occupied by a bulbous pink-boy who paraded around nude in front of open, uncurtained windows and reprimanded his numerous pets in a really shrill, lisping bitchy tone. Well, I guess I don't really miss him.

The look of certain machines, designed for living. This ranges from sculptural eye candy of some classic autos (the Cord 810, the Studebaker Lark) to some objects so well designed you hardly know that they're there, almost (Bell's standard handset phone, designed in the 30's to replace the old "candlestick" upright model). Of course a certain visual muscularity of machines can be eye-catching too, viz. the American design of steam locomotives versus the British mode. On the US engines, everything was visible, every compressor or widget up 'til the '30s when streamlining changed the look of passenger locos. The Brits always had very clean engines, somehow tidied of all of the attachments. Makes one wonder if they could do the job or not.

Sound: In the movie *Crumb*, one of the most affecting scenes is when lovable crank cartoonist (and man born out of his time) Robert Crumb goes through the ritual of selecting one of his treasured 78s and tenderly placing it on the turntable in his barn/studio. The scene is washed in a delicious, congenial amber light, some of which appears to be projected by Crumb himself as he settles himself down and gets immersed in the delightful fiddle band music that billows from the speakers. He has allowed the music to enfold himself in pleasure. You *feel good* just watching the guy. I get blissful myself, pottering amongst my records. The music stops me, grabs me, and I think: "This is a fuckin' *great* record!". Performers/bands as diverse as Link Wray, Slim Gaillard, The Dickies, Bob Wills, The Cramps, Duke Ellington, The Velvet Underground, Washboard Sam, Hank Williams, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Blind Blake, Bix Beiderbecke, The Bonzo Dog Band, Howling Wolf (well, maybe you get the idea) all have the power to hold me in their spell.

The crack of a wooden bat hitting a horsehide baseball.

The wail of a steam train's whistle (if you stand near a fired-up steam locomotive, it seems alive, breathing, exhaling vapor).

Smell: Freshly mown grass (only if the mowing is done by *somebody else*).

That special yeasty aroma present at wineries and breweries.

The way a Dell map-back (or any other vintage paperback book) smells when you open it to the center and inhale. I know of at least one other bookperson who shares this guilty pleasure. He too is wary of doing this in the store.

Antithesis: Hot tar, rendering plants in the summer.

Taste: Hangin' out in a brewpub, whiling away an afternoon with my buddies, sucking down beers and telling tales.

Almond bearclaws or pecan pie from Ahrens' Bakery around the corner from my place.

Pizza home delivered (Pesto, Feta cheese, extra garlic, pepperoni--and *no pineapple*--from SF's own North Beach).

Touch: This faculty should be viewed as the ability to *lay your hands* on a desired item, to find something, to get in touch with it. Anyhow, that's how I chose to approach (and distance) this most intimate of senses.

Retail entertainment: Going to the comic book store and finding a new title by a favorite author/artist (e.g., Chris Ware, Heather McAdams, Jim Woodring, Charles Burns) or going to the book store and seeing that the Vintage/Black Lizard Crime folks have released another batch of Jim Thompson novels. Also picking up Tiki mugs, post cards or vintage neckwear at the flea market/thrift shop.

Extrasensory: Film and video combine at least two distinct sensory apparati (Sight & sound, what did you think?) and even though people are such distinctly visual critters I think I'll stick the following lists here because I don't really know how to split it up, otherwise: My top 20 list of all time favorite TV programs (as always, in no particular order): *TWILIGHT ZONE; STAR TREK; THE SECRET LIFE OF MACHINES; MONTY PYTHON'S FLYING CIRCUS; MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATRE 3000; NOVA; THE ROCKFORD FILES; THE DICK VAN DYKE SHOW* (the first series with Mary Tyler Moore); *THE SIMPSONS; PEE WEE'S PLAYHOUSE; FRANK'S PLACE; GREEN ACRES; CAR 54; TWIN PEAKS; I, CLAUDIUS; HOMICIDE; HILL ST. BLUES; THE CIVIL WAR* (Ken Burns' PBS series); *PERRY MASON; THE PRISONER*--Top 10 Double Features: *Maltese Falcon/Chinatown; Citizen Kane/Rashomon; Eraserhead/Cabinet of Dr. Caligari; 400 Blows/World of Apu; M/The Thin Blue Line; Diner/Pulp Fiction; Stagecoach/La Strada; Duck Soup/The General; Apocalypse Now/Das Boot; Dr. Strangelove/Sweet Smell of Success*

Addendum to above: video fun--a psychotronic film (Ed Wood's *Plan 9 from Outer Space* is an example) or great old comedy (Three Stooges, Laurel and Hardy, classic Warner Bros. or Tex Avery MGM cartoons)

Getting cool stamps at the PO. In the past year or so there've been stamps honoring Muddy Waters, Richard Nixon (which should all be cancelled with a word balloon that reads: "I am not a crook!", you can now buy a rubber stamp commercially to add this comment yourself) and, of course, (Sun Records, pre-Vegas) Elvis. Upcoming are stamps for Krazy Kat and Little Nemo. Almost makes it worth waiting in line.

Filing away my recent book or record purchases and encountering great old books or records already on the shelves and getting sidetracked browsing.

Rearranging the stuff stuck on my refrigerator with magnets.

None of the Above: Avoiding writing sci fi fanzine articles.



[For Your Entertainment . . . just what you've been waiting for: the Top Ten technical errors in the movie "Apollo 13", to ruin the movie experience for you . . .]

Top Ten TECHNICAL ERRORS/ANACHRONISMS in the movie "Apollo 13"

- compiled by a bunch of genuine NASA dweebs who actually notice these things.

(Reading this list is guaranteed not to give the story away, but reading this next sentence will: They make it back safely.)

-
10. The NASA "worm" logo appears on a glass door. The logo was not developed until 1976.
 9. One engineer checks an astronaut's addition using a slide rule. Slide rules are not (and cannot be) used for addition. [makes you wonder if the writer's technical reviewers are either not engineers, or are simply too young to remember using a slide rule?]
 8. Jim Lovell's license plate is new.
 7. The astronauts point out the Sea of Tranquility while on the dark side of the moon. It is on the other side.
 6. A technician at the cape is wearing a Rockwell International logo on his coveralls. The Apollo capsule was built by North American, which did not become Rockwell International until after the Apollo program.
 5. The gantry arms for the Saturn V are released in unison, not one at a time.
 4. During entry, the spacecraft is shown hurling directly at the earth. At that angle, it would punch a brief but fiery hole through the atmosphere. It should be aiming towards the horizon.
 3. The paint pattern on the Saturn V is for the test configuration, not the launch configuration.
 2. The astronauts look at their intended landing site while on the dark side of the moon. It is a good thing they didn't land - no communications with Earth, it's dark and very cold.

AND THE NUMBER ONE TECHNICAL ERROR/ANACHRONISM in APOLLO 13 is:

1. In space, from outside the capsule, propulsion jets do not make any noise.

 The following is a review Terry Floyd wrote which initially appeared in an APA 50 zine. Wm. Breiding recommended I coerce Terry into letting me publish it. It didn't take much coercion.

APOLLO 13, A Commentary

by Terry Floyd

APOLLO 13 is the newest film from director Ron Howard. We saw it on Independence Day, an appropriately patriotic way to celebrate the occasion. The film does a fine job of recreating the period of the early 1970s, a time I remember quite well. Like a lot of sf fans, I was intently interested in the space program, and followed it closely, probably the only part of the daily newscasts to which I paid much attention. The film took me back to that time just before I turned 12 years old, the "Golden Age of Science Fiction." I'd just discovered Heinlein and was rapidly devouring every book in our school library that bore his name. I was also very fond of Alan E. Nourse, Lester Del Rey, Robert Silverberg, Ray Bradbury and Isaac Asimov. Because of my interest in space exploration, my mother had ordered a subscription to the Science Service's program of space modules for me, a bimonthly treat when the box arrived with new scientific booklets from one of NASA's public relations offices, written for elementary and high-school students, and every now and then, plastic scale model kits of the Saturn V booster, Apollo Command module and LEM craft which I eagerly constructed and tested in my bedroom flight simulator. Consequently, the concept of a manned mission to the moon was not beyond my understanding. In fact, I'd wondered why it had taken so long.

In 1947, during the pre-production phase of George Pal's film DESTINATION MOON, Heinlein himself predicted that we'd be launching unmanned probes to luna before 1955, and manned missions less than ten years later. Well, lots of us were optimists, weren't we? It took a bit longer than that, of course, but we did accomplish Kennedy's goal of a manned moon landing within ten years. Now that the space program has sort of stalled in its tracks while marching in step to the PC trend of the 90's, "searching for its identity," many of the early astronauts have written their memoirs and revealed just how miraculous the Mercury, Gemini and Apollo programs really were, considering that the vehicles they flew were slapped together in ridiculous haste in a foolhardy "race" to beat the Soviet Union to the lunar surface. It's truly amazing that more lives weren't lost to NASA than those of Chaffee, White and Grissom in the disastrous Apollo 1 fire. The documentary series Moonshot includes a recording of one of the last sentences spoken by the Apollo 1 astronauts before their fiery deaths, while trying to iron out a radio problem. Gus Grissom had to repeat the phrase three times before the control crew deciphered what he was saying: "Come again, Gus?" they asked. "I said, 'How can we expect to get to the moon if we can't even communicate between two buildings?'" But each accident taught the engineers more lessons in how much they'd overlooked that, in hindsight, should have been perfectly obvious.

What astounded me most about APOLLO 13 was how primitive their technology seems today, yet that awkward design, held together by little more than crazy glue, rubber bands and prayer, still got us to the moon and back more than half a dozen times (counting the orbital flights as well as the landings), with only one major glitch encountered on unlucky 13. But good god, it was one helluva glitch, and highlighted an entire sequence of blunders that, had the public or congress been paying attention at all, could have so discredited the program to the point where moon missions might have ended right then and there.

It's absolutely astounding that the Apollo design even made it in the first place, much less repeated the feat as frequently it did. The Soviet Zond design -- less elaborate, but equally functional and brilliant in its own way -- might have done the job just as well, but after NASA had accomplished the feat, it seemed entirely too costly a public relations risk for the Soviets to take unless Murphy's law

had somehow been repealed. The brave cast of Heinlein's DESTINATION MOON had less difficulty reaching their goal than did the hapless crew of Apollo 13. And as with DESTINATION MOON, the real challenge was not just getting to the moon, but returning to the earth safely.

The film shows NASA ground crews calculating reentry trajectories and CO₂ level projections using pencils, paper and slide rules. Remember, this was 1970, some years before the first hand-held calculator became feasible. The Apollo 13 crew must do the same, since their computers were intended for other vital tasks, and a few simple mathematical functions accessible to the crew had been somehow overlooked in the design process. Likewise, CO₂ filters in the Command Module were cylindrical, while those in the Lunar Excursion Module were square, and thus were incompatible with each other. The crew had to improvise a device using duct tape, a plastic bag, a notebook cover, some tubing and a sock to scrub their precious air supply into breathability. That ugly little lifesaving box now sits on display at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, a testament to the Heinlein-hero boy scout ingenuity that fueled the space program in those days. Ed Harris sighs at the point in the picture where this particular snafu is discussed and remarks, "Tell me this isn't a government operation."

We know now that it was this good-enough-for-government-work management style that led to the costly accidents that have plagued both NASA and the Soviet Program throughout the history of the space effort, and contributes greatly to both programs' present states of scientific confusion and political bootlicking. Such things might have been expected as a consequence of the bureaucratic nature of the Soviet system with its inherent weaknesses exaggerated by the staggering scope of their mission. But by doing it the American Way -- by having the design teams work almost independently of each other, and having hundreds of other project contractors spread out all over the country, apportioned by congressional districts represented by politicians who knew pork when they smelled it (Johnson Space Center itself being a particularly aromatic example) -- such problems were practically designed into the management structure. Not all that much different from the Soviet system, when you get right down to it; bureaucracy is bureaucracy, no matter where it grows.

A brilliantly slimy cameo appearance by Roger Corman (who gave Ron Howard his first directing job with EAT MY DUST in the 1970's) as a conservative member of Congress touring the Kennedy Space Center launch facilities, makes many of today's politicians from Newt Gingrich to Al Gore appear much more appealing, and highlights the kind of toe-shuffling dance NASA must have performed every day of its existence to justify its enormous costs (Corman, of course, became famous for making the cheapest movies in Hollywood on a tighter schedule than any big studio; often his films were better than the slickest, most expensive productions from the majors).

While one comes away from APOLLO 13 with an intense distaste for politicians and bureaucrats, it is also clear that though astronauts and cosmonauts are routinely celebrated as heroes in both nations, knowing the truth about the risks they took proves them to have been far braver, much smarter, infinitely tougher and more heroic than the Public Relations machines of either Pravda or the New York Times could possibly have depicted.

But the film also reminds us of all the other things that were going on in that fateful year that occupied the public's attention more than the utterly astounding feat of exploring our nearest satellite. The sad fact that none of the three networks bothered to broadcast the television transmission from the craft only hours before the accident shows how easily distracted the public had become by then. The Kent State massacre, the invasion of Cambodia, the trial of Lt. Calley and the revelation of the ugly details about My Lai, all of these horrors put the wonder of space exploration on the back burner of the

public consciousness -- except among us 12 year old kids with our own pocket protectors and slide rules concocting fantastic dreams of space flight and heroism. As Ed Harris' character says near the end of the film, far from being NASA's greatest tragedy, he believed the safe return of the Apollo 13 crew would prove to be the agency's finest hour. Perhaps it was.

My own disillusion with NASA has grown steadily since the peak of the Apollo program. I sat enthralled in front of our television throughout the early years of that decade, captivated by all the moon missions, and I was heartbroken when the exploration of the moon ended after Apollo 17. The Space Shuttle suffers from the same bureaucratic syndrome that Apollo somehow managed to overcome, but its one spectacular disaster cost more lives and caused more damage to the organization than anything that might have stalled the moon landing. Had it not been for the fact that by the mid-1980s the Soviets had a working space station in place and a permanent presence in orbit, not to mention Ronald Reagan's cold war determination to best them in every field where our two nations competed, the shuttle program might have been scaled back even more after the Challenger explosion. I'd say we owe the Russians a helluva lot of credit for keeping our program going in the face of substantial odds against it.

Most of us who've followed the program in the days after Apollo, Skylab, and Mir know how much our knowledge base has expanded over the past 25 years since we last visited the moon, and can only hope that others in the audience will be startled into an awareness that we could easily go back to luna next year in a safer vehicle built for less money and with far more confidence using today's technology. I hope this aspect of the film is not so subtle that only SF fans and computer geeks feel this way while walking out of the theater.

I hope the film is successful in re-inspiring a new generation to strive for the kind of goals I grew up with. There are now several private space ventures that show promise of success, and I'm sure all the other computer nerds in the world share the same dreams I do. One of the first computer games I ever played on a Radio Shack TRS-80 was a text-based lunar landing simulation (of course, I crashed and burned quite a few times). I now have a freeware Windows program on my computer of a lunar landing game that can occupy hours of my time that should probably be devoted to other pursuits, but by golly I've become a pretty good LEM pilot by now and hell, it's the closest I'm ever going to come to being an astronaut.

Simulations are fun, but nothing can compare to the real thing. We need the real thing, or our fragile society will become so self-absorbed that we will lose the unique perspective we gained by looking back on our planet from another celestial body. Those incredible pictures really had a way of demonstrating how insignificant our species is in proportion to the rest of the universe, but at the same time, they captured all the beauty and importance of our tiny planet, orbiting at just the right distance from the sun to make life possible. I don't think anyone ever really understood how precious and important life was until they gazed at the surface of an utterly dead world. We'd done enough advanced preparation and theorizing to know what to expect on the moon, so there wouldn't be any nasty surprises awaiting us, but no amount of intellectual conjecture could have prepared us for the emotional consequences of looking at the utter desolation and lifelessness of such a place. Human life in the 1960s and 70s seemed to have lost quite a bit of its value, when millions of people were massacred in Cambodia and almost half a million Americans lost their lives for little or no valid reason in Vietnam. But while the insanity of nuclear weapons proliferation and the preposterous policy of Mutually Assured Destruction were all that kept the superpowers from blowing each other to kingdom come, perhaps the reality of the lunar exploration had a beneficial influence on revealing the utter "lunacy" of these kinds of political decisions made in both countries.

I hope APOLLO 13 awakens other dreamers from their long nap and inspires today's visionaries to develop practical applications to help us return to the moon to establish a permanent scientific and industrial complex there. It's the obvious logical step.



From New York: Where we're still reeling from the cancellation of "Matlock" . . . it's THE TOP TEN LIST for Monday, July 24, 1995. And now, the artist formerly known as Connie . . . David Letterman!

From the home office in Grand Rapids, Michigan

TOP TEN ERRORS IN "APOLLO 13"

10. Real Apollo 13 never picked up hitchhiking E.T.
9. The spacecraft was not pulled over by a Ct. state trooper for speeding
8. To fix spaceship, Tom Hanks just punches it like the Fonz
7. That "Footloose" dude never gets a single chance to cut loose
6. The scene in which spacecraft chases white Bronco around the moon
5. Jim Lovell never told Houston "Forget about us! Just free Willy!"
4. Mission was not "to open Gap store on the moon"
3. According to movie, first man on moon was not Dick Armstrong; in reality it was Dick Assman [relates to sketch earlier in show]
2. Crew never cruised Sunset in lunar module looking for hookers
1. Moon covered with giant Taco Bell logo

[Music: "Higher Ground" by Stevie Wonder] Compiled by Sue Trowbridge

LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN

ADDENDUM to the Apollo 13 article:

I also received a very interesting response to my Apollo 13 zine from one of my old friends in Texas. Dave Green lives near Houston, and has followed the progress and pitfalls of NASA from up close.

I'm attaching a portion of his reply to me, in case you'd like to include it in SKUG (paper or on-line). As you can see, he disputes one of the Top Ten Technical Errors, and identifies at least three more that weren't on the list. -- Terry Floyd

A FEW MORE COMMENTS ABOUT APOLLO 13

by Dave Green

There's a scene in the Vehicle Assembly Building in which the third stage of the Saturn V is lowered onto the rocket stack, resulting in a thunderclap BOOM when the two come together. A NASA engineer here in Houston says the assembly process was much much more gentle than that. If they had dropped the third stage in place with enough force to make that kind of noise, he said, the weight and impact would have crushed the second stage underneath.

In A13, Lovell's crew is assigned to Apollo 13 because Alan Shepard's ear infection is acting up. In reality, Shepard had recovered from his inner ear ailment and was cleared to fly again. He was bumped back to Apollo 14 because some overcautious management types at NASA headquarters feared he didn't have time to get up to speed after being off flight status for more than five years.

Speaking of Shepard, I assume that was supposed to be him we saw at Deke Slayton's side throughout much of A13, although that character was never identified as such (I make the assumption because Shepard was Chief of the Astronaut office at that point in time). If that's the case, why didn't they cast someone who resembled Shepard, or at least bore a vague resemblance? The guy who portrayed him in A13 was nearly bald (Shepard still had most of his hair in 1970, thank you) and came off looking and acting like some sort of weasel/bureaucrat. A pity that Scott Glenn couldn't reprise his role as Alan Shepard from **The Right Stuff**.

In fairness, I give Ron Howard credit for casting Tom Hanks as Lovell instead of one of the reported alternates, Kevin Costner. Ten years ago, I would have gagged at the thought of Hanks in this role, but he has blossomed and matured as an actor. His roles have gotten progressively better in the last five years, too. And Ed Harris (who portrayed John Glenn in **The Right Stuff**) was perfect as Gene Krantz.

Lovell announces that he's going to the moon instead of to Acapulco. Lovell did say that to his wife, but it was prior to his circumlunar Apollo 8 flight of December 1968, not the Apollo 13 flight.

Speaking of quotes, the pun "I wonder where Guenter Wendt?" belongs to Donn Eisele, the command module pilot of Apollo 7, the first manned flight of the Apollo program. Wendt was not part of the program at the time of the Apollo 1 fire, however. One of the demands made by the astronauts in the wake of The Fire was that North American hire Wendt from McDonnell-Douglas. Wendt was fanatical in his attention to detail, pursuit of excellence and devotion to the astronauts' safety as far as the spacecraft was concerned. Apollo 7 commander Walter Schirra says he referred to Wendt jokingly (and out of earshot) as the "pad fuhrer," but this was a term of respect. Wendt once called NASA security to the launch pad and threatened to have an engineer handcuffed and taken away for trying to make a modification that Wendt had not approved.

I really enjoy the sequence in the movie in which the astronauts are donning their pressure suits and are boarding the spacecraft. It's effective, in my opinion, due to a superlative musical score by composer James Horner. The background music sets an appropriate mood for the event, somewhere between a coronation and a commencement. Seeing the astronauts being assisted in suiting up brings to mind the thought of knights preparing for battle, with help from their faithful squires (not an original thought, I admit, since Tom Wolfe described the astronauts as single-combat warriors dueling with the Soviet

enemy for supremacy in the heavens).

One problem: A13 makes it look as though the astronauts just hopped on board the spacecraft and blasted off shortly thereafter. In reality, inserting three men in bulky pressure suits, securing their oxygen lines and hooking up communication and telemetry leads took the better part of an hour, even under ideal conditions. The astronauts then spent another 90 minutes or so before launch checking the position of every switch and dial (in case something got knocked awry during the insertion process), going over assorted checklists and reviewing launch and abort procedures. This consisted of much more than just glancing at the "abort" lever to ensure that it was still there.

Regarding the countdown and launch: I was disappointed that they picked up the countdown in the last 15 seconds, as opposed to the last 60 seconds or so. I watched nearly every moonshot launch, and I recall a whole litany of ground control terminology that confirmed that everything was nominal and that yes, this is for real and this mammoth booster is really going to leave the Earth. Two such phrases in particular linger in my mind: "Power is internal," and "Guidance is internal." Those are key phrases that confirm the booster is "on its own" and ready to leave the pad, two very important milestones on the route to commencing the ignition sequence. Without internal power and guidance, the rocket isn't going anywhere.

The ignition sequence seemed to be a rather protracted affair. And if you'll look closely, there's a snippet of film in which the flames at the base of the Saturn V are billowing **in reverse**. It's right after one of the shots of Mattingly gazing at the rocket.

By the way, what's Mattingly doing so close to a Saturn V launch? In this shot, it looks as though he's hardly a mile from the launch pad. The grandstand for VIPs and other observers was located a good three miles from the launch pad, in view of the fact that a fully fueled Saturn V can blow up with the explosive force of a tactical nuclear weapon. The pad technicians and rescue personnel took cover during launches in a concrete blockhouse with very thick walls.

Trans-lunar insertion: we see the third stage propelling the Command Module out of Earth orbit and heading straight for the moon. That's a shame, because in the three days it's going to take them to get there, the moon will have moved roughly some 165,600 miles **to their left**, and so the spacecraft will likely wind up orbiting the sun for a long, long, time. The moon is a moving target, traveling at some 2,300 miles per hour in its orbit around the Earth. Better aim for where the moon will be in three days, not where it is now (Stanley Kubrick had this same problem in 2001).

Phases of the moon: as our heroes coast to the moon, we see that the moon is in its first quarter; that is, the eastern half is in the sun, and the western half is in shadow. Their landing site, Frau Mauro, is kind of in that western half where the sun isn't shining yet. I hope the LEM has landing lights and the guys have flashlights and thermal socks.

In the sequence where they've swung around the moon and are in a return trajectory to Earth, a full moon is visible in the window (it was half full on the way out). Then we see a full Earth visible in another window. That's impossible. If you're in a spacecraft between the Earth and the Moon, the phase of one will be the opposite of the other; i.e., if the moon is gibbous, the Earth will be a crescent, and vice versa. They can't both be full from that vantage point unless there's a source of light directly between them. In any case, in the later shots we see the Earth is, once again, half-full (or half-empty? Depends on your point of view, yuk yuk).

Re-entry interface. The command module begins re-entry over the part of the Earth that's illuminated by the sun. Trouble is, Apollo flights returning from the moon always passed on the side of the Earth away from the sun when entering the re-entry corridor.

Radio contact being reestablished simultaneously with visual contact and the main parachutes going up: a dramatic climax for the film, but not in keeping with reality. The spacecraft usually came out of re-entry blackout somewhere around 100,000 feet (when they were plunging straight down at about 300 mph). The drogue chutes (to stabilize the spacecraft and slow it down a little) deployed somewhere between 20,000 and 30,000 feet, with the main chutes coming out shortly thereafter.

I take issue with the guy who said that the Rockwell International logo on the technician's coveralls was an anachronism because "North American . . . did not become Rockwell International until after the Apollo program." Guess again, Buck. I've seen some NASA footage of the Apollo 13 launch in which there are technicians wearing coveralls that have the Rockwell logo on them. Furthermore, Walter Schirra mentions in his autobiography Schirra's Space, which North American merged with Rockwell-Standard in September 1967 (about 2 1/2 years before Apollo 13). Since Wally has had extensive business and personal dealings with North American/Rockwell personnel, I figure he knows what he's talking about.

I got really ticked off at all the inferences in the movie to Jack Swigert being a rookie, as though that were an assumption of incompetence. True, Swigert had not flown in space before. But neither had LEM pilot Fred Haise nor, for that matter, the man that Swigert replaced, Ken Mattingly. From Apollo 13 on, the only astronauts on board who had space flight experience were the mission commanders (Lovell, Shepard, Scott, Young and Cernan). All of the CM and LM pilots from that point on were "rookies."

I use the term "rookie" with some reluctance. As "rookie" astronaut Bill Anders sourly opined, "Everyone's a rookie when it comes to flying to the moon." Anders was the sole "rookie" on Apollo 8, the first flight to the moon, and he became increasingly annoyed by being perpetually referred to as the "rookie" member of the crew. Quick, how many Apollo missions had all-veteran crews and can you name them?

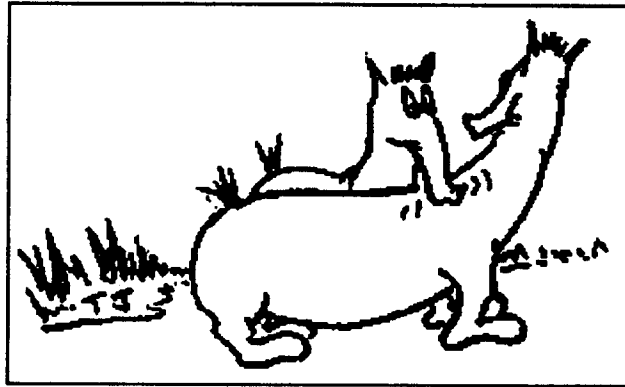
Swigert was on the support crew of Apollo 7, working with Bill Evans and Ron Pogue to develop flight data files and emergency procedures. Apollo 7 commander Schirra assigned to Swigert the task of establishing procedures in the event of a fuel tank explosion. Schirra says it was Swigert's checklist that was used to help get the Apollo 13 crew home.

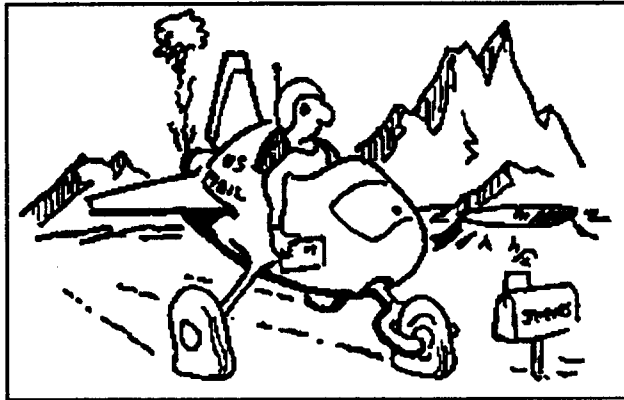
Members of the backup crew were trained to step in, individually or en masse, for members of the prime crew who might become incapacitated through illness or injury prior to launch. Lovell was justifiably concerned about having a replacement come in on the eve of the flight, but this had less to do with concerns over Swigert's competence as a CM pilot and more to do with breaking up a team that had trained together for a long time, developing a deep rapport and operational cohesion.

Michael Collins was originally the command module pilot for Apollo 8. A back condition that required surgery resulted in him being replaced on Apollo 8 by Jim Lovell and being assigned instead to Apollo 11 (which had been Lovell's flight). Granted, this switch was made far in advance of Apollo 8, not as a last-minute exchange.

Oh yes, the all-veteran crews: Apollo 10, the so-called "dress rehearsal" for the lunar landing, had commander Tom Stafford and CM pilot John Young (2 Gemini flights each) and LM pilot Gene Cernan (1 Gemini flight). Runner up was Apollo 11, with one Gemini flight each for Armstrong, Collins and Aldrin. The least experienced crew, in terms of previous flight time in space, was Apollo 14. CM pilot Stu Roosa and LM pilot Ed Mitchell were on their first space flight, and commander Alan Shepard's only previous flight was the first manned Mercury mission, a suborbital lob lasting all of about 15 minutes. Shepard was renowned for having a sharp mind, superior problem solving and decision-making skills, which is why he was chosen to make the first Mercury flight to begin with, back in 1961.

Also, let the record show that Shepard and his space rookies dealt coolly and ably with a faulty docking probe; an errant "abort" signal in the LEM computer that required reprogramming the LEM computer while in orbit around the moon; and a landing radar that threatened to fail on them. Any one of these problems could have aborted their mission, which would have been a serious public relations fiasco for NASA in the wake of the Apollo 13 flight.





LOCs

John Berry - 10/16/95 - (73144.2206@compuserve.com)

Just got Skug and started browsing through it. I haven't even had time to read the whole thing yet, but you know as well as I do that if I wait until I'm finished, I'll never send you a word about it.

I've had fun with the parts I've read so far, and I expect to have more fun with the rest. I love the image of Dave Rike filmed as a dirty old man in a porn film. And I cracked up at Jay's "Olde Calcutta" label, which I hadn't seen before.

Keep up the lightning-fast publishing schedule. You'll be an inspiration to me.

John Berry
525 19th Ave East
Seattle WA 98112

David Thayer - 11/10/95 - (eushar@exu.ericsson.se)

Skug #11 arrived safely, its fluorescent Blade Runneresque covers nearly blinding me.

I am working for a company, Ericsson, which has international connections. Most employees eventually visit the headquarters in Stockholm. I am studying Spanish to give myself opportunities in their Latin American operations. Your German trip sounded fascinating.

Mismanagement last year drove me from the company I had worked for almost 13 years. It is now owned by an investment firm known for selling pieces here and there to create profit, not product. I am better off in my new environs.

Diana Thayer and I have been adding an eclectic mix to our CD collection: Andean, East Indian, Australian Aboriginal rock, German rock, Mexican pop, Caribbean steel drum. As comforting as sameness can be sometimes, it quickly bores me.

David Thayer
701 Regency Dr.
Hurst, TX 76054-2307

Teddy Harvia - 11/10/95

My favorite line in your fanzine is "Electra loves armadillos and words that rhyme with orange." What poetic nonsense!

Jay Kinney's spoofs of beer art transcend the subject, just as the real things have a life of their own. *(It's not a spoof! We really did brew those bheers. - GSM)*

Do I ever really want to attend a Corflu? Conversational SMOFing reminds me too much of pseudo-war stories.

Teddy Harvia
701 Regency Dr.
Hurst, TX 76054-2307

Chester D. Cuthbert - 11/12/95:

Many thanks for sending me a copy of SKUG 11 for October, 1995. You and your contributors write entertainingly and many of your activities amaze this 83 year old book collector who seldom ventures far from his armchair. Of all the famous names mentioned I know personally only Garth Danielson and Joe Wesson, though others have favored me with fanzines and correspondence. I had hoped to learn whether Joe has found a teaching position. Garth visited me a little over a year ago with some other fans and he seems to be still the unique personality he was when I first knew him as a schoolboy.

Your expertise with computers enables you to present your readers with superior production values, and your trip to Europe saves me the trouble of a journey. I dislike the routine which travelling entails, so do not leave Winnipeg unless compelled to do so.

Although I have read fantasy and science fiction since I was a child, I have never attended a convention, so reports by you and others enlighten me. Garth has probably told you of our local club, but this no longer functions, so, except for visits from former members, most of my fan contacts are by letter.

Bruce Townley's notes on films are the first I have read about festivals, at least in such interesting detail. And Rich Coad's article reveals information I cannot acquire from my armchair; many thanks.

William Breiding makes camping sound fascinating; more so than my one experience as a boy which was enough to discourage me from adventuring again.

I know that Garth will treasure this issue for the beer illustrations in addition to all else. Garth writes well about any subject he likes, and beer, for which I never acquired a taste, is a favorite of his.

Chester D. Cuthbert

1104 Mulvey Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3M 1J5

Terry Jeeves - 11/12/95

In view of the above (*notes on having broken his ankle on September 28th appear above Terry's actual LoC, explaining surgery, pins, and reasons for late LoCcing - GSM*), I hope you'll bear with me for a meagre response to your zine. The 'pot' (*Um, that's what it looks like in the LoC - GSM*) came off yesterday, but my ankle is frozen solid so I'll be on crutches (and physiotherapy) for another 3 weeks.

A really striking cover to Skug 11 - and card cover too - oh the expense! Not much interior art apart from those fascinating 'beer' labels - I must have a go at doing some myself. Meanwhile I enclose a few fillos by way of thank you. -- Hope you can use 'em. (*Many thanks. You should see them throughout this issue. - GSM*)

Con report was interesting, sadly anno domini and expense have kept me away from recent conventions. One upon a time, I never missed one.

Also enjoyed your European trip but sympathized over the strike/wrong airport snafu. In 1957, we were due to welcome Dave Kyle and party to Schiphol airport. They arrived early so instead of waiting, they all went into Amsterdam and waited in the KLM lounge. Meanwhile we got to Schiphol and waited three hours for their arrival before an official found they had already landed and moved into the city.

Terry Jeeves
56 Red Scar Drive
Scarborough YO12 5RQ
W. Yorkshire UK

Jeanne Bowman - 11/13/95 (on a very interesting post card from the SF Suicide Club)

Hey,

Just when I thought it was safe to gaffiate -- the Skug issue. Damn. But I am not over in Rohnert Park for Spacecon 5, even tho I thought I might 6 months ago. No more con organizing. Help me St. Jude just say no. Nada. Nope. No way. But here's Skug with attractive Tiki automotive motif. In the same week as Townley's masterpiece. Can something from Glen Ellen be far behind? You bet your sweet ass! Uh, is this enough?

Jeanne Bowman
1260 Hill Road
Glen Ellen, CA 9544209658

Dave Haugh - ~11/13/95

Just received SKUG 11, thank you very much. It was a good read, with some really excellent supporting illustrations. Your trip to Europe sounds like fun in a tiring sort of way. Hopefully the next SKUG won't take so long. Now I just have to do an ODD!

Dave Haugh
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Salem, OR 97301-3058
Haugh4520@aol.com

Walt Willis - 11/14/95

Many thanks for sending me SKUG 11. I was very pleased and impressed by it.

All the editorial stuff was interesting, sometimes as much for what is not said as for what is. I get the impression for instance that you are not impressed by your mother's choice of a new husband. (*Um, well, he's okay . . . - GSM*)

I was fascinated by your musings on determinism, death and free will. I have not myself worried about determinism, ever since I was convinced by chaos theory that the future is inherently unpredictable. As for death, Kingsley Amis in a passage in his novel Jake's Thing convinced me that my fears were illusory. Either you believe in an afterlife, or you don't. If you do, there's nothing to fear. If you don't there is literally nothing to fear either. One's fear arises from confusion between the two concepts. What is worrying me is DNA. For about fifty years I have been a devout materialist, regarding with contempt all religions. But the discovery of DNA has given me cause to worry. It is difficult for me to accept that something as complex and sophisticated as DNA came into existence by the process of natural selection. I shall have to read again that book about evolution, the one about the Watchmaker.

Your report of your trip to Europe was full of interest, especially for the way in which I find myself leaping intellectually to the defense of Europe, although it is just as foreign to me as it was to you. I surmise that I would be equally defensive of the USA in the case of a similar trip report by a European of a visit to the States. For instance it seems as difficult to hire a stick shift car in the States as to hire an automatic gear shift in Europe. You may argue that it's easier to adjust to the automatic from the stick than the other way round and I agree, but it's not as simple as that. On my last trip to the states, for Magicon in 1992, I found myself cramming on the brake at every unexpected development in traffic instead of leaving the problem to the automatic transmission to sort out. When smoke started to come from under the hood I assumed it was because of this and gave up. I phoned Alamo and they came and towed the car away. After a couple of days I phoned Alamo and said I wanted to cancel my agreement. They were surprisingly amenable and I have often wondered what they would have said if I had enquired about the car. As it was I was so relieved at getting out from the hiring agreement that I just gratefully accepted their offer.

Walt Willis
32 Warren Rd
Donaghadee
N. Ireland BT21 OPD

Ken Gammage - 11/14/95 - (KMBGammage@aol.com)

Speak of the devil! I was just going to write you . . . I loved the latest Skug -- just finished it tonight. I'll send you something for the next one. I'm a home brewer too . . . I'm editing a mag called Slick Times: check out www.slick.com if you get a chance.

Ken Gammage
1234 Upas St.
San Diego, CA 92103

Avedon Carol - 11/14/95 - (avedon@cix.compulink.co.uk)

Fortunately, it has also just popped through our door, which makes it much easier for us to read.

I am so pleased that you didn't neglect cereal reviews entirely, despite your condition.

I think it was cornchex I was missing. You can get something like wheatchex here (but they're malted - that's okay, I like that). Oddly enough, what I actually do find myself missing is ordinary Cheerios, which were never a big thing for me but every great once in a while it would be nice to find them. They only have the multi-ones here, with all different grains. Not the same.

The Corflu report - better late than never, but an hour later you're hungry again . . .

Avedon Carol
144 Plashet Grove
East Hamp, London E6 1AB
England

Geri Sullivan - 11/15/95 (gfs@toad-hall.com)

>If you're interested, Skug 11 can be seen at
><http://www.surf.com/~gmatting/>
>I think that will get you there.

I was. It did. Nice job!

I'm new to all this Web stuff, but a couple quick comments/questions/etc.

1) Why gifs? Jpeg files seem much smaller. I didn't try looking at the cover (as I have the hard copy), but none of the photo tiff files we've done have been that big, and I thought gifs tended to be smaller than tiffs.

*(The size I initially noted for the cover was 10**3 off. I'm still working on the illustrations but overall I like the way the gifs look much more than the jpegs. Plus I plan to switch to GIF 89a format next time around. You'll see the difference. - GSM)*

2) More importantly, I didn't find a quick-link way to loc the zine when I was in it -- no highlighted response key, no email address. Did I just not see it? If it's not there, go add it -- right now! (*It was on the last page. - GSM*)

Even though I've read most of the hard copy, I re-read your Minneapolis Corflu report. Your account of the "Methods of Reproduction" panel was all the more poignant when read on the Web. I was again reminded of how much has happened in the time that's passed since then -- especially Dana and Eric later losing their son who was born that weekend. And it's been a long time since anyone "accused" me of not saying much. <grin>

Sorry this isn't more of a real loc -- I don't have the paper or electronic copy at hand.

Geri Sullivan
3444 Blaisdell Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55408-4315

Sheryl Birkhead - 11/15/95(started- postmark 12/15/95)

"Long time no see," but it's hard not to see the fluorescent bubblegum cover! I must admit that the chronology leaps were interesting. I think I got most of them sorted out.

It has been quite a while since I've been in the research lab, but I seem to recall that Siemens (then, at least) was a big name in equipment. Sounds as if, regardless of venue, you seem to be putting in the hours.

I still haven't been to a Corflu - although the one which was almost in my back yard was tempting. But when a budget is cast in iron it (unless heated) doesn't tend to give and remain intact (i.e., no \$ for ANY frills). Then too, I keep trying to accept the fact that I just DON't do well in groups of fans (professionals, etc. - no big deal - just fen) - so don't push it. I see that your readers (e.g., Hope) are forgiving.

Hmm - sounds as if Puerto Rico might be (was the conversation current at that time) a budding fan haven.

I'm not sure WHAT I'd call Garth's Smurf "art" - if it's what I recall, it's less than suitable viewing for the VERY young or faint of heart.

I'll try (ha!) to remember to ask Richard Brandt who ended up buying the Carr zines. (Were they from Terry's collection - or from a run of the zines he published?) (*I do not recall. - GSM*)

Curiosity - in China, since the average height is less than here, do you happen to know if room ceilings are lower? Just wondered. (*Don't know that one either. I should ask some people from work. Many come from Taiwan, mainland China, Hong Kong, etc. - GSM*)

(I'm sitting waiting for my car to be done a Grease 'n Go - it's Ladies' Day every Wednesday but I'm here at lunch - so far they've come in and asked each (3) female 4 separate questions for other services - there

are 3 men waiting - and none of them has been asked ANYTHING.)

(- presto - now it's the 16th - car all well - except it has laryngitis (telling the mechanic at the local garage that it lost its beep was probably not a technical evaluation - I'll need to get that fixed - when there is \$))

The "squatters" of "tomorrow" are pretty much here today and they, as an actual culture, are probably not far away. It is only natural in a society that has throwaway people.

I think that everyone who learns how to drive formally (driver's ed, a company . . .) should learn on a standard - so then they could drive whatever transmission they find (at least to some degree).

12-3 - Car . . . had its beep replaced, then, the very next day . . . smoke → serious problem. I won't go into the details, but it isn't fatal as long as I cut off the engine at any stops as soon as the heat indicator starts up. Sigh - in any snow this will be impossible - either lose traction on icy hills or blow the engine. Will See.

I'm not certain about the elevator monitors . . . not sure I've seen any (my last con has been more than a handful of years ago now) - or why they would make one feel threatened (that's my interpretation of what Bruce says. I may be way off).

What are SKUG's future plans? I notice you, wisely avoid mentioning it. Just curious.

(Plans?? Well locally I told people Skug 12 would be out in December. Note the cover. February/March is not too much past December. Well I hope to have another Skug out before the end of the year. Hopefully that is nebulous enough and not too optimistic. Actually it is easier for me to update this as a Web page but I know there are still many fans who either do not have access to WWW pages or would prefer to receive a printed fmz. However I will note that the Web page for Skug will continue and probably contain a bit more than the printed format, solely because I don't want to pay for colored photocopying. That is to say there will be photos and things in color on the web page. I will reproduce some photos in black and white. - GSM)

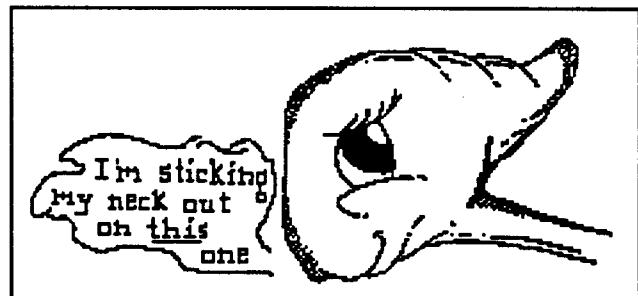
Here's hoping you keep right on pubbing,

Sheryl Birkhead
23629 Woodfield Rd
Gaithersburg, MD 20882-2819

Harry Andruschak - 11/17/95

((And you really should find out and start publishing and using your 9-digit zip code.))

I received SKUG 11 sometime in the past, but not sure when. I was on vacation most of September, and at another Post Office school in Norman during October. So I have a huge pile of mail to answer, and since I am mostly gafia fanzines tend to be at the bottom of my priority list.



Being gafia does not mean being idle, bored, unhappy, or unfulfilled. For starters, like you, quite a few changes have been going on in my life since I received the last SKUG, whenever that was. The most obvious is that I am sending this to you e-mail. Yup, last January I finally broke down and bought my very first home computer system, an IBM clone 486/66.

So I nowadays waste a lot of time with internet user groups. Look for me in alt.recovery.aa (I'm now 11+ years sober). My e-mail address is NOT valid after 1 December, which is when the BBS I am using goes down permanently. I need to find a new internet/e-mail provider by 30 November.

I am still working for the Post Office, and still work Saturdays and Sundays, making it impossible to attend any conventions, not even the local sci-fi cons put on by the local sci-fi club (LASFS). In fact, my last convention was the 1993 CORFLU. I have Thursdays and Fridays off however, and that makes it convenient when I go to the mountains or deserts for hiking and camping, since they are mostly empty of other human beings and I prefer it that way. Weekends, of course, are very crowded.

As for music, I am still mostly classical music, with a small and slowly growing collection of classical CDs.

Like you, I have made trips to Europe and elsewhere. Africa in 1990, Chile in 1991, Scotland in 1994, and I hope Italy in February 1996. (My mother, aged 71, just finished a vacation to India and Nepal and is now planning on a trip to Antarctica.)

Not much else to say. Now that I am gafia most of my social life revolves around various Scottish social groups. This time of year is very busy, what with Saint Andrews day, various holiday parties, and Robert Burns birthday in January. Plus Scottish Country Dancing.

Anyhow, it is now bedtime, so I'll close this out and send it off. Thanks for the zine.

■ SLMR 2.1a ■ . . . Nightmare: Cats with opposable thumbs.

Harry Andruschak
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Lloyd Penney - 11/20/95

Yes, it has been a while, but here's the newest Skug after all, and it's good to see it. This is issue 11 . . . can't remember when issue 10 was, but comments are needed for this issue.

Life has a tendency to get in the way of your commitments. So do BBSs and the Internet. For all its wonders, I've never seen anything else better for eating up available time. I can't afford to get on the net, even with most of fandom being on it.

Ah, Ditto 1 . . . the only fanzine con I've been able to get to. Dittos and Corflus beckon, and now, there looks to be a third fanzine con on the go, with Arnie Katz staging something in Las Vegas called Toner. Yvonne and I have tried to make up for that lack by running the fanzine lounge at the Winnipeg Worldcon, and it looks like we will be working the fanzine lounges in Los Angeles and San Antonio.

All this fannish activity is a welcome and needed break from what seems the eternal job hunt. I'm unemployed again, and have been so for just over five months. The unemployment insurance runs out at the new year, so prayer wouldn't be out of the question soon. *(I hope something turned up. - GSM)*

The Saturday Toronto Star runs The News of the Weird each issue, and it's great fun. Just recently, a fellow named Clifford Olsen won second prize in a major American poetry contest. The prize was not awarded, though . . . turns out this guy is the Clifford Olsen who is serving life in prison for serial child murders in British Columbia. Oops . . .

Northern Exposure . . . I never watched that show. However, I certainly heard enough about it. Just the other day in the paper, the town where the series was shot, Cicely, Oregon (?), has fallen upon tough times because their short-lived industry is gone. Looks like they were so busy basking in the klieg lights, they failed to set up contingency plans.

Ah, European travel . . . I'm sure the pilsener plant in Pilsen, or Plzen must have had collectibles. *(Yes indeed, we picked up a couple of T-shirts and pilsen glasses. - GSM)* When Yvonne and I were in Holland in 1990 for the Worldcon, we took the morning tour of the old Heineken plant in Amsterdam. It was a guilder to get in . . . they took us around, showed up how they make their beers, and then took us to the sampling room. We had the morning tour recommended to us because this tour serves the most beer of all the tours of the day, nine rounds. I'm not a beer drinker, so I sipped a few glasses of Pepsi, but Yvonne had her nine rounds. After the sampling, we were taken to the souvenir shop. For some people there, only 1 guilder to get in, but upwards of 800 guilders to get out. Fortunately, I was sober, so we only left 100 guilders behind for coasters, lighters, steins and towels. By the way, we had pizza in The Hague. Strange, indeed.

On our local con committee, there is the position of Brewmaster. Each year, the con appoints a local fannish brewmaster to produce good, strong brew for the con suite at a greatly reduced cost. Maybe a California con could appoint you to that same position so you can further your brewing skills, and still provide a con suite with your finest efforts. *(Jay and I have already supplied several conventions, parties, etc. with beer. - GSM)*

There are a couple of film festivals in Toronto, and one of them is world-level (better than Cannes, say a few), but those of us who do like to see the odd movie are smart . . . when those film festivals hit town, we hit the video store, and get out of the way. The snob factor is appalling, and it's best to ignore them.

It's nearly midnight, and my eyes are falling together, so I will fold up here, thank you for getting back and Pubbing your ish again, and say my good night. Good night. *Zzzzzzzz* . . .

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Sarah Prince - 11/23/95 - (ssprince@world.std.com)

The very first [this time around] personally-addressed mail to me at my "new" KV address. Reading it

[with mentions of music, if not music I'd expect to search out] inspired me to remember to go outside & splice the break I'd found [fortunately ground-level accessible] in the lead from the ancient TV antenna to my FM tuner. Reception improved noticeably, except when it drops out completely . . . inspiration fizzled before I hooked up the CD player I'd brought up, with only a handful of Xmas CDs [but then it seemed a little early to play those].

Sarah S. Prince
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Mae Strelkov - End of Nov, 1995

SKUG 11 just came and many "thank yous."

Let's start with your mystic experiences.

"Grandma Mae" stays:

Never try those out-of-body "astral" experiences. I know some folk who did. It leaves a body unstable. While you're in your body be nice to it, treat it well, enjoy what it can share with this nebulous other "you." I've learned to view my body the way I do our pet animals: friendly and tolerant, and sorry for its mortality. "Me," (an immortal, briefly paired with it) regrets its vicissitudes. But I believe we merely get new bodies when we die -- become new infants, to start or continue learning from a new point of view. There are empirical reasons why I believe it. I'll not repeat the stores -- I must have mentioned them in bygone fanzines. But for my part I'm so sure one's essence "goes from strength to strength," I'm sorry that one's temporary "companion," the body, can't share the soul's experience but must be left behind.

No! I flatly do not believe in the dogma of "the resurrection of (the same old) flesh!" Those disintegrating atoms won't be reassembled. Always something new lies ahead every time!

Now: your other experience: "Inventing a monster."

Actually, you were evoking something, something that has not rightful place in our Space-Time Dimension of mortality. Lucky if now, when you "try to call it forth . . .; nothing happens, not even the feeling of closeness."

Good heavens, why want to be close to some vacuous nonentity that can only "exist" by devouring your life-energies?

You "see violence under the surface of it?" "It'll rip your spirit out of you?" You do know what I'm telling you!

Why do you hate yourself, want to punish yourself so much? (*It's what I deserve? - GSM*) "Brain-squashing, anger, sex, violence." Our lower instincts tugging us back to that age when we were gorilla-like beast! But we're homo sapien folk now, an evolutionary step up, with another evolution to follow. (*I'm not so sure I can wait. - GSM*) Let it be still up! For goodness sake! You're listening to rhythms

that shatter a brain, not build it up! (If you prefer terror, canned in books, shows, etc.)

So enough on "mystic experiences." I've had some, but how I do and always did avoid them! Anyway, "mystic" isn't the term. "Spooky?" Sometimes.

As for "thanking St. Jude for favors" as in the newspaper ad? Even saints I keep at bay, though I tried out "being a Catholic" years ago. No Christian would see in me a fellow-Christian. Yet I still love the old hymns of my childhood in China -- they were written with such passionate truth.

What I celebrate is the truth of each human forever, and try to recognize temporary flaws as what they are: the "goads" we must respond to, lessons to be learned.

"Saintly necrophilia!" "Let the dead bury the dead" I say! -- no honoring relics in processions. Very good questions you ask about such fanatical folk: Those who "hold up a holy platform on their long march to some shrine" . . . "Do they . . . drag something out of their soul?" You bet. There's lots of it here. In the little town of P.S. (Palma Sola is the P.S. or Postscript tacked on to my long life.). 20 kms from us here, they have processions.

One sleepy hot noon hour as old men and women, girls and children, stumbled along in the dust, they didn't even see when their Virgin's statue fell off the platform along the route. Reaching the church, they found her missing. Galvanized, the tottering worshippers RAN back till they found her none the worse from her fall; brushed off the dust, and carried her back so the worship could continue.

"They think they'll be heard by their much speaking." Jesus said that, about worshipping by rote. Jesus simply is not known to Christians, save for those who ignore all the dogma and mumbo-jumbo, and appreciate his easygoing way.

You like Aboriginal music? Wish I could hear some. (*Do you have a cassette player? - GSM*) I adore pre-Colombian music from the high Andes. Nothing like it, for me. It evokes those wild, lofty pastures where guanacous rove, so well!

What's wrong with the USA so even "mowing the lawn" is RISKY? They spend all their time looking into their refrigerators for solace, do they? (*Yep - GSM*) Break out the "ecstasy." That'll cure them. Years ago in the times of Seattle's "Cry" some young fellow wrote me and asked what drug was I taking. They wanted to take it too!

"No drug, save tea and coffee," I said. And the ecstasy of just simply savoring each moment whether of joy or pain. I do add: "Thank you, Father (mother?) I love being alive in this amazing Creation!"

It gives one a charge of energy each time we remember to say "Thank you for life!" Who needs medications? Only the statue-toting type! They're always worn out; "Something's hurting?" Only at fiestas with lots of wine, do they really have flings. Charmingly! We admire! "Growing old, dying." I was born in West China in mid-1917. Had some brushes with death -- a sweet and reassuring experience it always was, yet not to be deliberately sought. (That's treating "Friend Body" ungratefully!)

What's wrong with ordering "clothes bought by mail from Sears," in your boyhood? (*The popular social crowd seemingly did not wear clothes from Sears when I was in high school. Even with the "right" clothes I would not have fit in but in my mind slightly more fashionable apparel would have not so*

extremely placed me in the "out crowd." At this point having those more fashionable clothes might even have been detrimental. I think I would be a different person than I am now and I'm not sure whether that is bad or good. Teenage angst is always entertaining. - GSM) Good you missed the crazy "60s". I entered Fandom by 1962 (thanks to Don Wollheim to whom I'd submitted a novel - rejected - at Ace). I was puzzled by fandom. Now I'm not. Each new generation "goes through it again"; but the 90's has more thoughtful young folk, I feel. In fanzines, it seems so. *(I disagree but I could not immediately offer you any solid proof. They were/are probably all equally thoughtful just with different reactions to different times and environments. - GSM)*

Being "wild and crazy" is an urge best fulfilled by long walks or trips or stays in really wild and even dangerous places. We do it here and always did.

We're not herd animals and shouldn't try to be. As for "freewill," the little daily decisions are what count. The simple little doings and/or refrainings, that "sum up the soul" at last, as we build ourselves into what we'd like to become.

You're not "very supportive?" Supportive? Just identify, be vulnerable and open and feel what your fellows feel. Nothing to do with "supporting." Sharing -- not just with individuals but with "all Creation" (undergoing birth pangs) "groaning and travailing, till now," as Paul put it (Giving birth to the new, a new type of human).

Feel the intensity of every sparrow, every adorable kitten trying to catch (play with) the cute little sparrow. Feel the fear of the viper who'll "pierce your heel" if you "step on its head" in what I call the "Shup Encounter." Shup! I read somewhere it's the rare Hebrew term used in Genesis for the prophecy where the Seed of the Woman will Shup the Seed's heel. Everybody has an Achilles Heel. It's our vulnerable love and need for our fellows everywhere.

You want proof of life after death? There's "no particular point in living?" (Or dying?) But you must select the "point" on which you'll focus; and then "all" comes alive and vividly real. *(I think there have been times when I have selected these points but I guess I just keep losing the point. - GSM)*

"Fish eyes still watching as you eat the fish?" It would bother me too. You do identify -- this is already your problem and can be your release! Try it with living things (sparrows, even their worms!) (as you watch their little moments of drama.)

"Brewing beer!" "Patty is patient?" Good girl!

Wm Breiding! In your story, you must have run into someone "worshipping Satan." Humans don't sacrifice little animals ritually now. (At butcher-shops, it's "business"; in war, it's "politics." It used to be "religion" that invented Inquisitions, pogroms and crusades -- far worse!)

Yes, Wm! You ran into horrible evidence of a sick mind. How did you dare linger for a night? I'd have moved away.

Here we've no movie-houses; our TV serves only for videos: (the mountains cut off broadcasts, even radio here doesn't work). I can't discuss movies, etc., therefore. We've no library nor bookstore near, either.

The names of fans in SKUG are familiar. Some of you even used to write to CRY, didn't you? So you're in your 40's? Just beginning! I started my language-study (of archaic Chinese) around 45, at the beginning of "the Sixties" and am deep into my study's old relationships linking Chinese with echoes worldwide all the time. Very fulfilling it's been! So Start something BIG and living daringly, I advise.

"Sez Grandma Mae!" And a kiss and hug for each of you.

With "holy love"

Mae Strelkov
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Jujuy, Argentina

(Thanks! Thanks also for the artwork under which you noted: "From 1977. Our 30 year old Danny died in 1976, and I still hadn't the heart to resume hectography, though I tried. This should appear in Skug on the web. It's in color.)

Brad W. Foster - 12/05/95

Hey, thanks for sending along the 11th issue of SKUG. Now there's a title to reckon with! SKUG the might! SKUG the conqueror! SKUG the thing stuck in your throat! SKUG!!!

Hey, a couple of years between issues is no problem. And since this is the first time I'd seen an issue, why, I barely noted the span of time!

Nifty cover - I particularly liked the hood ornament.

Woo! I could hear banjos being plucked more and more rapidly while reading "Lost Empires of the Soul." Of course, the ending brought it all back to earth. How an accumulation of different things from different times can suddenly take on all new, and sometimes frightening, meaning when seen later by someone else who doesn't know the background. Cool.

The beer labels were wonderful. I don't even drink beer, but I might have to if they were as interestingly labelled as "Tragic Snowman Xmas Ale!"

I liked "But Is It Art?", though I think the comment on the release forms was not so much that Malcolm didn't have confidence in his project, but that he probably knew he was the only one who really knew what was going to happen, and wanted to make sure someone else walking in didn't decide later it was more than they had bargained for.

So, looking forward to seeing #12 in a few more years!

(Ha, less than half a year. I amaze myself. (Doesn't take much.) - GSM)

(I know most people don't care what music I have on in the background but Israel López "Cachao" in the background makes typing this up much more entertaining. Mambo, mambo, mambo, mambo, over and over again. - GSM)

Brad W. Foster
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Cy Chauvin - 12/09/95

Thanks for the copy of Skug you sent my way - it seemed even more stream-of-conscious than usual (maybe that's me). Bill Waldroop occasionally threatens to revive Seldon's Plan, blaming all delays on my lack of desire to write an editorial. I think I understand more and more why the Beatles waited 25 years to do another couple of songs

Cy Chauvin
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Spike Parsons - 12/10/95 - (spike9@netcom.com)

Liked the Skug Page. Are you the first sf zine on the Web? Well, you're my first. It is (was) good for me.

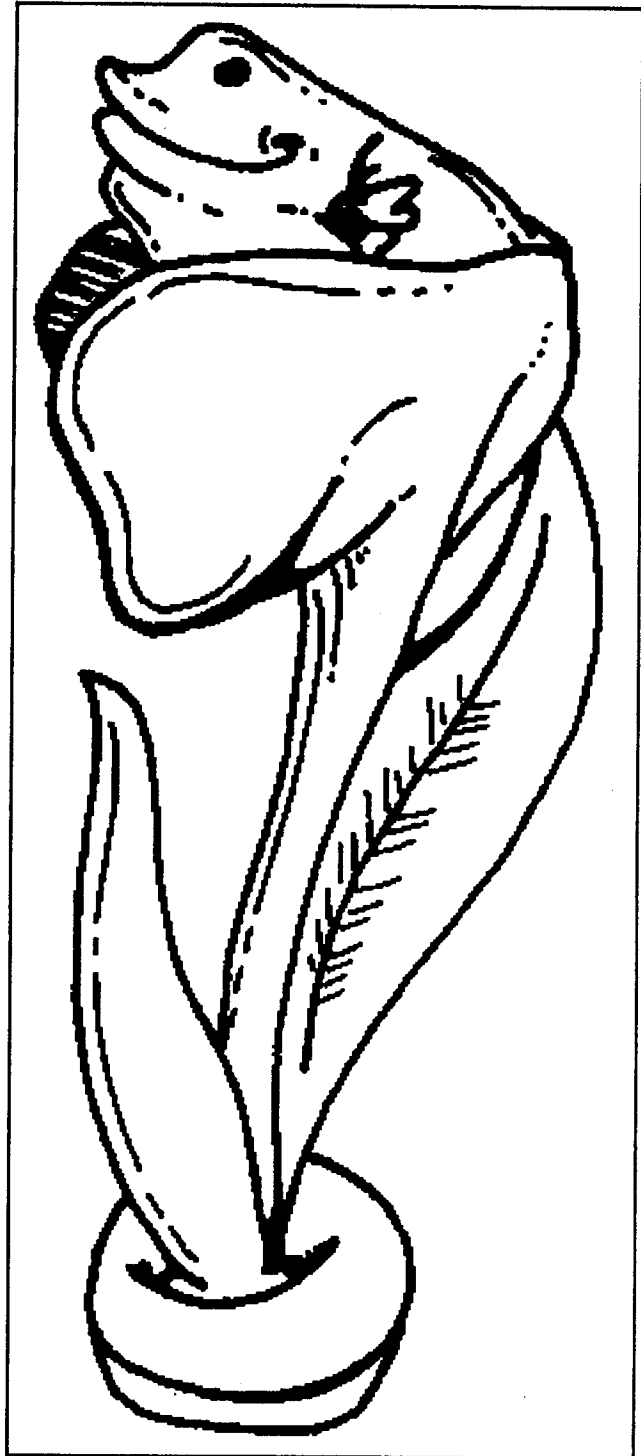
(No, I'm not the first. Someone told me who was but I forgot.)

Spike Parsons

Steven Black - 12/23/95 -
(sblack@library.berkeley.edu)

Wow. Never expected to find Wm Breiding on the WWW. Have you told him? *(Yes - GSM)*

Steven Black
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Harry Warner, Jr. - On the Feast of Stephen, 1995

The long delay in thanking you for and commenting on the 11th issue of Skug is not a subtle symbolic reference to the length of time since the tenth issue. Rather it's a simple, downright demonstration of how I've become senile, incompetent, undependable and generally a mess, a sad change from the eager beaver loccer that once inhabited what remains of my body.

(But where does that put me since I promised this in December and here it is February.- GSM)

But I was glad to receive it and to read it and I trust that you won't be too late with the promised next issue.

Your trip account was the part of this issue that held my attention best, since you went mainly to the parts of Europe that would attract me if I came down with Alzheimer's and forgot how much I hate to travel and therefore went overseas. You even got practically all the German names right, something fans rarely do when they write up their European travels. I envy your daring in driving through unknown big cities with an unfamiliar auto and, I assume suffering some culture shock from the strange directional signs. Like Patty, I'm unable to drive an auto with manual transmission. Everyone told me when I first learned to drive and used a car with automatic transmission that I would someday regret it, and I keep wondering when that prophecy will be proved valid, 45 years after it was spoken, since I haven't had a crisis with a gearshift vehicle yet.

(Now I'm wondering which German names I misspelled. Admittedly I did not put umlauts everywhere and I may have occasionally spelled "Köln" as "Cologne," although I suppose I could have put "Koeln" but that might have been even more confusing. The directional signs were not as bad as the placement of the signs. The distance between signs and exits was different and also there seemed to be fewer advance notice signs. - GSM)

You didn't mention one thing that aroused my sense of wonder, your ability to get into East Germany and Czechoslovakia without undue problems. It seems like only yesterday, when anything under Russian domination was almost inaccessible to the average tourist. Time change, so I wouldn't be surprised to read in some future year how a fan found a place to park in Manhattan.

(Since the trip was made after East Germany and West Germany became just Germany there was no problem going between what used to be two separate countries. There were differences, such as the East Germany buildings seemed older and/or in worse repair than those in West Germany. We did have to stop at the Czechoslovakia border (it was still one country then) but it only amounted to ten or fifteen minutes, if I remember correctly. - GSM)

The little advertisements on the classified pages thanking St. Jude appear around here, too. Apparently part of the bargain involved in praying for a favor from that saint's intercession is a public display of gratitude. Most of these ads appear in a tabloid giveaway shopper distributed in this area. After an unusual number of the thank you notes had been appearing, one week there was a new ad which said simply: "Don't mention it. St. Jude."

I would have been comfortable growing up in Japan. My parents taught me to get into the habit of saving some of my income and I'm eternally grateful because without the investments that have resulted from that practice, I would be on the very verge of poverty with no income other than social security

and the pension as a retired newspaper company employee. I'm still managing to put away some money every year, although it becomes more difficult all the time with interest rates so-so and the cost of all essentials rising. I continue to try to save on the theory that it might someday mean the difference between comfortable final years in a rest home and miserable end to life in an inferior rest home.

I suppose Bill Breiding never solved the mysteries he encountered that day in 1987, since there's no update to this matter appended to his article. Maybe an unusual type of Satanism is being practiced in that remote area. *(Wm. never solved the mystery, as far as I know. - GSM)*

You were wondering how many people watched Northern Exposure. In its last season, when it was moved to a bad time slot and suffered from very bad scripts, it had an average rating of 11.2. This tied it for eighth highest among all the CBS offerings during the season. CBS had 21 series that finished with lower ratings. Its rating was higher than anything on the Fox network or on the two new networks. It stood in 36th place among all network offerings for the season (132 series existed in that season altogether). The decision by CBS not to renew it is incomprehensible. Picket Fences and several other CBS series that had ratings below that of Northern Exposure were renewed and given extensive advertising campaigns. It's now running in syndication on over-the-air stations in Washington and Baltimore, and I imagine one of the cable channels like Bravo will eventually pick it up for national reruns, but I doubt if any more episodes will ever be created, a terrible shame.

(My viewing has become worse. Now I regularly watch "Space Above and Beyond," "Voyager," "Deep Space Nine," "Babylon 5," "X-files," and "3rd Rock from the Sun." "American Gothic" was in that list but I believe it is being canceled. Add all the movies we can get with our satellite dish and it becomes too extreme. - GSM)

It was the only series I've watched regularly in recent years. I don't match your ability to watch a lot of television. I do treat myself to baseball in season and the rare, occasional offering of serious music. Currently there's nothing on the networks that interests me enough to get into the habit of watching every episode. Instead I'm spending this winter videotaping as many episodes of Newhart as possible from its reruns on The Family Channel (this is the second of the series starring Bob Newhart, the one in which he's running an inn in Vermont).

It occurs to me that you may doubt the genuineness of this loc since I probably haven't had occasion to write you since I finally retired the typewriter that I had used for all fanac for four decades. Too many things went wrong with it and it's almost impossible to find someone who can repair an ancient, non-electric typewriter at an affordable price. So I dug out this tiny Royal portable that once belonged to my aunt and had been sitting in a closet for more than thirty years. It worked to perfection at once and even the old ribbon that was on it all that time gave pretty good results except for the few inches that had been exposed to air for one-third of a century. I have some trouble with spacing because my right thumb is numb from having been caught in a car door several years ago and because sometimes I pound the keys hard enough to cause the machine to jump in the air and indulge in an unwanted space when it comes back down again. *(This conjures up quite a sight. I'd love to see the jumping typewriter. There are no typewriters left in this household, only keyboards attached to our PCs. - GSM)*

Harry Warner, Jr.
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Milt Stevens - 01/02/96:

Thanks for the copy of Skug #11. If you kept to your stated intention of publishing another issue by the end of the year. I've already missed your next issue. Of course you didn't say which year, so I may yet make it.

I enjoyed the one Corflu I attended in 1992. I haven't been making a great many cons in recent years, but I will make LACon III this year. When I retire, I intend to hit at least some Corflus and Dittos. If nothing changes in the intervening time, I will retire four years from today's date. Surfing the net is another thing I'm postponing until retirement. I'm almost sure I'd enjoy it and might even find it downright addictive. However, I'm not currently in the market for something which would gobble up lots and lots of my time. I have enough other things to gobble up my time at the moment.

I haven't seen one of those replica radios in the form of a juke box. I have seen solid state radios which looked like old vacuum tube radios. I imagine they're sort of nostalgia items for people who remember the radio era. The things that impress me as curious are some of the more bizarre models of telephones. Like who needs a telephone in the shape of a football.

Death is something I've always had a problem reacting to. Death doesn't impress me as being sad or unfortunate in most cases, it just sort of is. Some ways of dying can be quite unpleasant, but death itself is largely neutral.

Rich Coad didn't tell us whether Dave Rike launched a movie career after being discovered at the porn screening. Dave could probably use the extra money, and he certainly would get to meet new people. With porn in general, I get more erotic effect from the mildest stuff while the hard core stuff doesn't impress me as erotic at all. I'm always willing to eyetrack those Playboy lingerie issues.

Until next issue, whenever that is.

Milton F. Stevens
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WHAT'S LEFT?

Well, I wanted to put in more up to date stuff from me but I've already wasted too much time. Next issue really should be out before the end of the year. Bruce has already sent me another film article for the next issue. He beat me again with his fanzine. I still have several more articles by Wm. Breiding. Rich Coad said he plans to have another article done in time for the next issue. Then there's always the hope for more art work from Bruce Townley, Terry Jeeves, Sheryl Birkhead and maybe even Jay Kinney. I wonder if I put Kent Johnson's name in here he might think about doing a cover for me. Next issue I hope to have something on my four months in Germany and various and sundry other meanderings.

This issue will go out by snail mail and will also appear as my updated Skug web page. If you want to see the web page, the URL is <http://www.surf.com/~gmatting/>. You can reach me via email at either gmatting@surf.com or garysm@well.com.



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