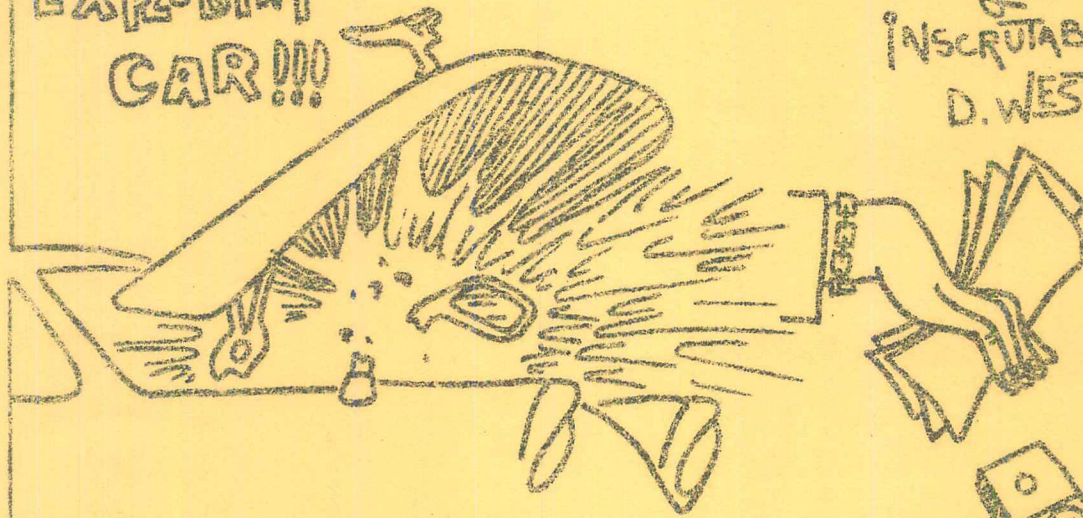


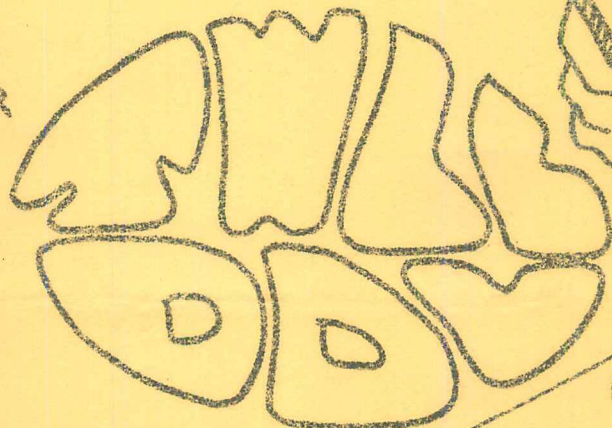
SEE THE AMAZING
EXPLODING
CAR!!!

SEE JOHN PICKOT
LOSE £12 TO
INSCRUTABLE
D. WEST...



SEE THE FANNISH SOCCER
MATCH....

...AT DOMINOES!



...WITH G. PICKERSGILL

IN HIS FAVOURITE
POSITION — MAIMER!



SEE THE JACK MARSH
FILM SHOW WITH NAKED
LADIES DOING THINGS!!

BOONK!



SEE FAMOUS
FANED ROB
HANSEN FELTED
WITH A BEER
CAN BY FELLOW
WELSHFAN DAI PRICE!!



HANSEN '78....

MUCH WILL BE EXPLAINED

Throw away that truss! Here at long last is TWLL-DDU 12, returned once more to announce that rumours of its regularity are absurdly exaggerated. And still at the helm is greying, alcohol-sodden Dave Langford, poking randomly at his battered Adler Electric 21c typinge engine loaded with Millway gossamer-soft and dirt-cheap stencils blotched with liquid measles at 40p a bottle... This fanzine comes to you courtesy of Barclaycard and may be obtained in trade for most fanzines: otherwise by LoC, whim, SAE-for-one-sample-only or a donation to GUFF of at least 25 pence. Send all these things and any surplus James Branch Cabell first editions which may be cluttering your home, to the usual place: 22 Northumberland Avenue, Reading, Berks, RG2 7PW, United Kingdom. Cover this issue by well-known prodigy Rob Hansen; it was to have been by noted avatar D. West (who was so horrified to discover that he was not once mentioned in TD-11---a Langford first!---that he rushed to the drawing-board), but Rob jumped the queue using the cheap gimmick of topicality. Send in your covers now, artists---this could be your chance to ensure that D. is passed over!

It's been a blank time since Skycon; at the convention itself I was too busy some of the time and too incapable some more of the time to take the usual notes. And since then I've been stuck in the merry schedule of writing the Book referred to last issue, at an output of effort akin to that of producing a fanzine every two or three days for a month. Those with more money than sense will wish to note that the work appears next year, and will be called WAR IN 2080: The Future of Military Technology---a tasteful title chosen by David & Charles Ltd, who still have some vague notion of publishing the thing.

For those of you who like T-D (though some do not---fantastic, isn't it? Into just such murky byways the lettercolumn will probe), it's fortunate that I had two breaks---one to find something to write about and one to type it up. The second is a direct consequence of WAR IN 2080: after typing 220-odd sides of lovely final copy (and think of the fan-nish prestige I've sacrificed! Think of how many articles in Maya that would have made!) I found that my nervous concentration had caused me to gnaw a large hole in my lip. Or possibly Hazel didn't feed me often enough during the ordeal, and I was reverting to autocannibalism. Now, a week or so later, the hole has festered into a gigantic ulcerous thing with aspirations towards becoming a Black Hole proper. Maddened by the constant stream of self-pity dribbling from the other corner of my mouth, the lords of the Civil Service told me to go away for a day or two; and here I am, writhing in torment and unable to concentrate upon

anything requiring the slightest mental effort. Lucky I've got T-D, isn't it?

The Event Worth Mentioning was of course the Greg Pickersgill/Simone Walsh First Annual Spring Bank Holiday House Party. Those not wishing to read about this at tedious length are permitted to go straight on to the letter column: the cover is no doubt an adequate precis of what happened...

We set off in the usual way---checking the various wedges that held the car together and hammering bits of bodywork more firmly into place---and presently were bumping (that car bumps even on smooth roads) along the M4 to the normal soothing accompaniment of strange noises as of many milk-floats, with an overall roar of unbridled power like a passing Concorde but less muted and tranquil. It was with a certain sense of routine that I noted the 21-gun salute of backfiring which began about two miles from glorious Ealing; with practised ease I weaved from lane to lane, squeezing the vehicle through gaps which would have been too large but for its relativistic contraction, and ended up on the last piece of emergency stopping-lane before the end of the M4.

A sense of routine, I said... this sort of thing happens all the time, and it was the work of a moment to remove the two wedges holding down the bonnet, fling wide the distributor cap and wiggle all the wires within, and reassemble the whole mess. It was then that I discovered that the battery had mysteriously gone flat, while from hitherto undetected holes in

the radiator came little jets of steam and boiling rusty water. We knowledgeable Vauxhall drivers are of course careful to stack several dozen old cider-bottles of water in the back, even when only driving round the block: it proved that one of these had somehow bumped against one of the others, so that the entertainment was enlivened with much dampness and broken glass. After a while the damage was sorted out and the car restored to perfect working order except for the trifling requirement of a push-start. We made a quick head-count. Myself; Hazel. I tried to push the car with her in the front seat ready to start it, but I couldn't push hard enough and anyway she refused to touch the controls, not being of a mechanical turn of mind; so then she pushed the car with me inside and it sort of rocked and that was all; so then we both pushed it and that was fine except for my inability to leap inside and put the thing into gear without spraining all sorts of things and failing miserably besides.

Since we'd been giving this hilarious open-air performance for nearly half-an-hour it seemed a good idea to invoke some reinforcements. Brushing muck and oil from my frivolous party ensemble, I wandered off to the phone and---lifted the receiver!!! A kindly policeman at the other end told me that garages on Bank Holidays were beyond the dreams of avarice and it would probably be cheaper to push our wreck in front of another car and claim the insurance. Failing that, he added hastily, a police-car would be passing in a few minutes. I ran back in time to see someone who had offered aid driving away (his notion of aid was only along the lines of petrol transfusions, mind you). There followed a long pastoral scene at the romantic motorwayside, amid May blossom and bits of old car, while I pondered on the possibility of cutting the treads a bit deeper on my more illicit tyres and Hazel indulged in a quiet sulk.

Suddenly, before we knew what was happening, it happened. A huge vanload of two policemen was parked next to us and almost before I could utter my standard Opening Line In Friendly Encounters With The Law ("Hello") a large fatherly constable was explaining the rudiments of how batteries go flat. He then asked for a peep under the bonnet

before going into the complications of bump-starting: this fatal request was the cause of it all and the constabulary must take full responsibility for the horror that followed. With embarrassment I eased out the little wedges which held the back, and levered up the creaking, rusted mass of the bonnet; he looked inside in the apparent hope that I'd missed something really obvious such as an absence of engine. The engine was there all right; baffled, he slunk back to the police-van as doomed Langford lowered the bonnet, slowly, very slowly, to the sound of heavy, ominous music on the sound-track---and there was a snapping noise inside. Little did I know the awful etc etc...

When initially offering to bump-start the wreck, the kindly police were most solicitous about possible damage to my bumpers. Nice of them, I thought; after all, they have these rubber bumpers and it can't do much harm. But when they saw the horrid reality they shuddered and interposed a cloth to protect their own bumpers... And the car starts and it's a happy ending! We paid our final respects to the nice policemen and waited hours to creep back onto the motorway, and did so, and ten feet later I found what that little snapping noise under the bonnet had been. It was the catch that held the damn thing down.

After ten feet of motorway, the bonnet flipped into a vertical position and did a little dance on the wing-mirrors. There were loud broken-glass noises and a solid BONG as fifty pounds of metal tried to get at me through the roof. I thought it might be wise to pull off the motorway once more. I thought several other things but managed to contain them; Hazel too must have been having a containment problem, as when we stopped again she instantly stamped off into the undergrowth and thought things she would have surely hesitated to utter.

The police were again very solicitous, and helped me carry the now totally detached bonnet round to put in the back of the car. As I opened the tailgate, the lock disintegrated and most of its guts came out on the end of the key. I forced it back in as nonchalantly as I could, and favoured the police with a friendly, sickly smile. We ended up driving to Ealing in a slow and bonnetless way---

this was the perfect time for it to rain all over the exposed high-tension leads, but the Fates obviously boggled at this and we made it without mishap bar a tendency to start sentences "Suppose we'd been doing 80 in the fast lane----"... such sentences never finished.

At 7a Lawrence Road Hazel bitterly told the assembled revellers that if they wished hilarity they had but to go out and gaze on the remnants of our car. Due awe was expressed, Greg and Simone offering various useful bits of string. We then watched helpfully as a grunting Andrew Stephenson lashed the car together with consummate virtuosity, also string; could we have carried it upstairs he'd probably have attempted rewelding over the PickersWalsh stove. That was the last appearance of that car in this Twll-Ddu.

Within the hallowed portals were many strange attractions such as a display of notably pretentious letters of acceptance (I knew it was a mistake to use headed notepaper and six typefaces) plus a Competition for best editorial response to Ian Garbutt, whose lurid SBD letter showed his determination to outdo even the fabled Tom Jones in mastery of logic, language and even spelling. Fascinating though this was, our grim destiny now led us to Acton Fair---in Kev's car with big Mike Dickinson talking all the way about a Leeds-based near-millionaire book dealer who wants 20 tables at Yorcon and intends to stamp mere Peytons and Slaters out of existence.

KEV: "A fan rate for Book Room tables? Are there any non-pro booksellers?"

MIKE: "Well, people like Rog Peyton are pretty much amateurs in comparison."

To be fannish we all sneaked into the fair through a gap in the fence (which showed signs of strain as Dai Price assaulted it). There didn't seem to be an admission fee; it was the principle of the thing. Inside were thrilling events like motorcycle football, played with such cringing regard for safety that the goalies---on foot---were definitely the fastest movers on the field. Tiring of this after long milliseconds of dutiful attention, I felt an urge to investigate the rumoured CAMRA beer tent. It existed but was of course closed. We had no choice but to move on to the funfair itself, where all fandom was plunged into war on the Dodgems. It did seem for a while that Andrew was driving carefully and

trying not to hit others, but even I hesitate to make such calumnious assertions in print. (H'm: I almost said "calumnious imputations" there, but caught myself in the nick of time. Joe Nicholas, who can still be very irritating sometimes, has this theory that Langfordian style, if such it can be called, is lifted bodily from the Saintlier flourishes of Leslie Charteris. Certainly Charteris has emitted at least one "calumnious imputation": I must tread carefully, very carefully, lest our Joseph shriek "Told you so!".)

When the beer tent finally opened we had to buy (hire) glasses in order to sample the exotic wares. As soon as I had parted with 45p for a pint mug, Daio shattered it in a spirit of playfulness. D.West was unhappy with Leroy's choice of beer for him, and complained a lot, especially about the lack of comment-hooks (i.e. references to D.West) in Twll-Ddu 11. "You had an unbroken record for ten issues," was his pained reproof. "Why throw away a winning formula?" Greg, meanwhile, pondered glumly on the coming nuclear holocaust: ale does this to him. (I exclude as inadmissible the theory that it was my cheery company which brought on the despair.)

That evening we settled to conviviality and the Ian Garbutt (sic) Competition. Joe wailed that the letter was so cretinous that detailed refutation would take pages. Since Joe takes pages to convey the information that he has received a fanzine, this comment should be taken with a pinch of health-salts. Disregarding him, I entered the competition several times to conceal my own lack of coherence and continuity. Bloody Charnock won, though, with bloody Smith as runyon, oops, runner up. Their letters should appear in the next issue of the transformed Stop Breaking Down, which Simone unblushingly announced would be called Seamonsters. Ahem. (Later she realised that this title had a double meaning, as in "Simone stirs ((up trouble))...". She was stunned by this witty interpretation, while Greg was merely incredulous. "I saw that right away," he growled.)

Eve Harvey tactfully told me that I was getting gross and fat and disgusting. This was an omen. Pleased with their earlier witty efforts, the restless fates were beginning to choreograph a brand-new sequence of misfortune and disaster...

(4)

The next day, Sunday, we were moved by cowardice to resort to a train, arriving too late to capitalise on various rash offers of lifts from Ealing Broadway. After a walk we found the masses at play in a park near the official venue. They were recognisable from a distance as a fannish group by their almost total immobility; they stood silent and ritualistic with nothing but the occasional flash of a frisbee to distinguish them from statues.

I watched awhile, as my life was saved by resolute sucks at a can of beer supplied by sympathetic Pat Charnock. The game was an amazing spectacle. The contestants were arranged in a wide circle and most of the time did not even have the strength to throw the frisbee across a complete diameter. Thus Rob Hansen was stationed in the middle... "Fetch Rob! There's a good boy!" Greg indulged in occasional sprints, machismo oozing from his every pore. Big Dai Price, stripped to the waist, gradually went a sort of boiled colour, while the balding generation (Kev and Mike D.) were later prostrated by what may well have been sun, in part. D. West did not see fit to play... he survived.

It was the hour of my downfall. I joined in and presently crippled Malcolm with a well-aimed miss to the instep. He obviously invoked in retaliation all the occult powers bestowed by George Hay's interstellar contacts upon masters of the Foundation, for very soon there came a rending sound of the sort familiar to all connoisseurs of Brian Rix farce. Another Langford disaster! I backed away from the game and sat down, rather wishing that I was not wearing lurid red-and-white underpants. The situation had all the delicate subtlety of a banana skin. I lay on one side, trying to look unobtrusive, while Hazel fumbled ineffectually about the disaster area with safety-pins... a tableau so intriguing that the frisbee game instantly broke up and unfeeling, sunstroke-deserving wretches like K.J. Smith took the opportunity for coarse laughter.

Rude cries followed as I minced very carefully back to the flat. To avoid actual arrest I presently developed a technique of dangling a document-case from hands clasped nonchalantly behind my back. This does not conceal the fact that South Ealing is a draughty place. We searched the flat for what seemed like minutes,

finally discovering (beneath a pile of old Gregorian boots) a sewing-machine complete with needle and thread. I read the papers in an exposed state while Hazel displayed wifely virtuosity, and the job was just finished and me re-inserted when Malcolm and Chris burst in, obviously hoping to catch me unawares. Though disappointed in this case, Chris's lust later led to into sexist acts such as p*unch*ng my reupholstered but still cringing buttocks. The woman is dangerous.

A beard-discussion group came next on the agenda; it elicited the shameful truth that I have Never Tried It because Hazel will not let me. It was suggested that Joe was trying it by degrees---that the resistless march of his sideburns would eventually come to a head in the middle. This he denied. We moved on to a real programme item in the form of a quiz held in mid-air over the back garden, in a sort of wooden balcony like a steeple-jack's cradle only not so safe and solid. There is a protective rail apparently made from balsa-wood; if one leant on it all those in the know turned white as BSFA paper. Simone asked searching questions from a book intended to test 6th formers to their limits; the teams (Kettle, Charnock, Bell, Pickersgill vs. Edwards, Langford, Piggott, Bridges) suffered from forebrains bombed back to junior-school age, and were helpless when asked about the diameter of Jupiter ("Big---big, isn't it?" said Malcolm), the poetry of Wordsworth (much Charnockian disgust when this outmoded name was revealed) and hard botanical things which the inquisitor could not even pronounce. Big Greg concealed his ignorance in utter contempt ("That's a fucking stupid question---"); the rest mostly exaggerated their drunkenness into an excuse. Of course I would have known all the answers if I'd been able to hear the questions...

So then I tottered out in search of food and drink, only to find a typically unfocussed Chris holding a box of sticky brown stuff. "Do you like fudge?" she asked. "Oh---yes," I replied, only to be hurled to the ground by the whirlwind entrance of Hazel, who shrieked "Don't touch it! don't touch it! it's got Things in it!" Chris was most put out when I obeyed orders and merely had a few Kong-sized fingers of Scotch instead. The Things must at any rate have been few in number, as Simone had eight bits of fudge and was

slightly disappointed to note absolutely no Thingy effects. In the other room, meanwhile, Daio had transformed himself into an evil cardsharp (with overtones of Bernard Levin) by donning a pair of thick and sinister glasses. The ensemble cried out for cuffs and a green eyeshade.

Unfortunately I can offer no first-hand experience of Monday's doings, as commemorated at bottom right of the cover. My spies inform me that feeble pictures there were, provided by Jack Marsh and watched by all and sundry bar Malcolm and Chris, who lurked primly in the other room---though Malcolm was seized many times with a need to visit the loo, passing slowly, very slowly, through the film-show in the course of each trip. Simone attempted later to attach some significance to the great frequency of Big John Piggott's dashes for relief, but a man has got to do what a man has got to do.

Days later, in the One Tun, Greg explained that it wasn't his fault, that he bore no responsibility, that all blame or credit was to go to Simone. So fervent were his disclaimers that I re-examined my own memories of the event, half-convinced that it must have been a flop after all instead of the roaring success I seemed to recall. Neither Greg nor Simone wished to be blamed for the choice of Guest of Honour (otherwise John Brunner would have complained that the GoH wasn't foreign)---they put the matter to popular vote and of course Hazel was chosen, much to her dismay. She made a brief speech in Coptic, but no-one was listening at the time.

And what of the future? Is it true that I'll be writing a fantasy serial instalment by instalment in the good old Dickensian sense? It might be---but only for money, be assured. Might I get a second contract with David & Charles? Fingers crossed, folks. Will I ever get round to producing that fanzine I'd always meditated, containing articles sent as too-long locs to TD? Possibly. Will I receive innumerable letters asking what's happened to Drilkjis? Almost certainly, since that vindictive wretch Rob Jackson has directed all his readers to plague me. Well, it's Kev's turn as chief editor of Drilkjis---write to him, there's good people. (now 47 Wick Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 9DN. Lovely postcode.)



** Over 50 letters (i.e. over 25% response via letters) this time, in addition to the vast numbers of fanzines which seem inevitable (though welcome). Funny thing, though: very few letters of the high standard of idiocy which gets large chunks printed. No doubts, however, when it comes to the studied inanity of---

R.I.BARYCZ, 16 Musgrove Road, New Cross Gate, London SE14 5PW:

"The glyphs on the cover of TD11... I interpret the first line as a riddle: 'What cometh first, ye chicken or ye egge?'. (It's logical ainit, a foot, leg = a start, a commencement, a beginning, a chicken = a chicken, the whole reduplicated for both emphasis and uncertainty, then linked by a young chick to an egg. See?) The second line was a little more difficult but then I realised that it was the ancient Egyptian equivalent of our 'beware of low flying aircraft' road sign, the ancient Egyptian would read it as 'Kites (or hawks) are flying round here. Hold onto your wig or else one of them will swoop down on you and carry it off and leave you bald headed and pointing up at the sky and screaming (in ancient Egyptian) 'Come back yer @+*=@ thing before I pulls your feathers out.'

"The interpretations assume, however, that the cover glyphs can be read separately. If however they are a connected text bifurcated for reasons of thermostencily ((Litho, sirrah!)) then what you have in fact got on the cover of TD11 is an ancient Egyptian shaggy dog story of great fatality and fatalism that goes 'Once upon a time there was this ancient Egyptian chicken who went out walking with a friend of hers (and one of her friend's chicks) by the light of the moon, and they came to a road and as it was too long to go around it they decided to cross it, and, swift as a hawk on the wing, death came to them all in the shape of a woman driver with long flowing hair who was making a U-turn in a one-way street at the time.'"

** Persons doubting their sanity should refer back to the TD11 cover, of course.

PAUL KINCAID, 20 Sherbourne Road, Middleton, Manchester M24 3EH:

Lots more letters received from---

"In the supplement you report our little tribute to Rob Clarke and Coral Jackson at Faancon (not Silicon). Indeed we had prepared numbered cards after the fashion of certain sporting events, but sad to say 9's and 10's did not predominate. You see, it happens to be the fashion of these sporting events, for whatever arcane reason, to score out of 6. The scores you record, hence, were 1.0 and 0.9 (unless this latter happened to be held upside down, but nobody's that perfect."

Mary Caulton, Colin Bateman*, Pamela Boal, David Row, Jim Barker, Tom Perry, Graham Ashley, Christian Lehmann, Jan Howard Finder, Wally Stoelting, Desmond O'Reilly, Rob Hansen, Joyce Scrivner, Steev Higgins*, Joe Nicholas, Cyril Simsa ("To express my gratitude I've drawn you a picture of a hippopotamus"), Glenn Garrett, Judy Blish, Steve Sneyd, Alan Dodd, Mike Glicksohn ("I never expected a fanzine with an Egyptian bent to apyramid the day's mail. Is it pharoah you to expose us to this ancient culture? Tut, tut. Etc, Etc, ad nauseam, ~~sanctus...~~"), Chris Tringham, Robert Day, Brian Aldiss, Pauline Palmer, Cas Skelton*, Mary Long ("I must say that the drawing of Kevin reminds me (the one of him on the right side of the cover, of course) of a long-time fan whose name, of charity, I shall conceal... San: 'A fan is a person who reads Playboy to admire the type-faces!'", Dewi Williams, Dave Bridges, Alan J Freeman*, Dave Lewis, Ian Garbutt, Steve McDonald, Keith Plunkett, Tim Rogers, Keith Seddon ("Boring drivell"), Liz Nightingale, Gary Deindorfer, Peter Roberts, Dave Row, Garry Kilworth, Andy Sawyer, Jonathan Palfrey, Leigh Edmonds, Brian Tawn, Steve Edgell, Chris Southern ("I like Twll-Ddu but am getting help.").

Mike Glicksohn thought Rob's and Coral's bedroom score should be 6.9, but clearly his theory too is inadmissible. Curses!

"...Surely you have misquoted Boris in that self-same supplement. Anyone witness to the famous events of last Novacon knows well enough that when the black outer flesh is peeled off, Boris' skin is far from creamy and yielding. In fact it is leathery and well-scarred, obviously having built up over the years quite a resistance to such treatment."

ROB JACKSON, 71 King John Street, Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 5XR:

"You must promise never to tell Steve McDonald who Hilma Peterson is; now that I'm engaged to Coral, I don't want her reputation ~~(spelt/it/it/it)~~ spoiled. Tell Steve firmly that the fact that Coral has an aunt called Hilma has absolutely nothing to do with the case.

"...The little disagreement between Martin "Battle of the Bulge" Hoare and Peter "Svengali" Weston has been resolved amicably." ((No news-value there.))

IAN WILLIAMS, 6 Greta Terrace, Chester Road, Sunderland, Tyne & Wear SR4 7RD:

"...One things I intended to do or say, rather, was a jokey loc but sadly the impression it would have given was rather snide. It was along the lines of: Well Dave, thanks for TD11, or as you called it at the time, Skycon. It was really your funniest yet. I especially enjoyed your marvellous parody of a con hotel..."

Since Ian didn't actually write that jokey loc, only thought about it, my wrath is stayed. It's silly to defend Skycon's mistakes now, anyway: and fans have offered fair comment, pro & con.

oo
* The persons starred above have spoken of the unspeakable; they have praised or maligned little brother's group The Mekons in letters to Me! Indeed, the person Higgins sent what was in its entirety a Mekons fan-letter. This must stop. Anyone wishing to beg little brother's autograph should drop him a line at 32 Cliff Road, Hyde Park, Leeds 6. Probably won't do you much good, actually, as he'll be in the USA (not on tour) for a while... I see that in something called "Sounds" the lad's group is well spoken of, though they add that only the drummer can actually play. Jon is the drummer. Blood will out.
oo

Damn! If I'm going to stop here---and it's best that this be a short fanzine so I can get back to my hackwork and things---there's little room to tell all about GUFF...a worthy cause. Very probably a GUFF flyer will be attached to this very fanzine: please read it with care, or don't read it but send money just the same!
THAT, THOUGH TOO SHORT, WAS TD12 FROM 22 NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, READING, BERKS, UK.