

WALDO 4

" THE DILEMMA WAS....
SHOULD I TAKE THE
TRAM TO MANCHESTER,
AND BUY THREE S-F
MAGAZINES, OR GO
MORE SPEEDILY BY
'BUS, BUT ONLY BE
ABLE TO BUY TWO...."
see page 4.





.....
A FANZINE OF SORTS FROM ERIC BENTCLIFFE

WALDO

4

17, RIVERSIDE CRES,
HOLMES CHAPEL, CHES.
CW4. 7NR. ENGLAND.
.....

The fact that I've been fafia these past few months or so has been due to a number of mundane factors - in fact, it's been due to the fact that I've been calling on a number of mundane factors. Hmm, that should be Mundane Factors. I changed jobs almost a year ago and reverted to hype...that is, I went back on-the-road.

Not, I hasten to add, as one of your colourful cartoon-type Gentlemen Of The Road bearing stick with spotted-kerchief over one shoulder holding essential belongings. Oh no, apart from the fact that I couldn't get all my essential belongings into a spotted-kerchief (the Astounding Pile, and the MOTA File, for instance), I've never been fond of walking; or living rough - although I suppose its quite possible that yer average British Tramp these days receives a subsistence allowance, allowing a reasonable standard of Tramping, from the Social Services. Together, probably, with a Meth's allowance and other prerequisites. ((Irrelevant to which I recently came across an interesting typo stating that Coal Miners now received a "subsidence" allowance.))

My standard of travelling is a little more civilised than that; I do the travelling part in a Chrysler Alpine (typically, with a high-gear aversion to hills) on behalf of a well known British hand-tool manufacturer (I don't mention the name because I haven't yet found out whether I can claim on my expenses for fnz publishing). However, tho' this is easier on the feet it is no less unproductive of fanac. It is not that the ideas don't come, at the usual odd moments, just that it is more difficult to make a quick note of them when you are travelling at Warp Factor 9 on a motor-way than when you are sat at a desk. (Yes, I've tried writing on the inside of a steamed up windscreen, but I forget and put the heater on...) Talking of which, I don't recall that Bob Shaw has yet written a speech commenting on the similarities of travelling the motorway network to those of piloting the Enterprise in hyper-space, so I think I might just draw his attention to it. I use the USS Enterprise as an example not out of any love for Star Trek, but because its crew regularly suffer the same element of surprise that I do when I hit the same hole in the road for the third ~~episode~~ day running.

Motorway travelling is similar to those descriptions of space-drive, hyper-drive, et al one frequently encounters in s-f - in fact, I wouldn't be in the least surprised if it isn't where most of our authors get their descriptive passages from in the first place; everything travels at a faster time rate and if you happen to be a poor navigator you can easily lose yourself in a place that is not quite normal-space. If you happen to be a very bad navigator you may even arrive home after your journey to find everyone has grown younger in your absence! The doppler-effect described by most s-f authors is very similar to having a police-car sat on your rear-bumper....and passing by a large, brightly lit city at night very suspiciously like an in-warp transit of a sun's holosphere.

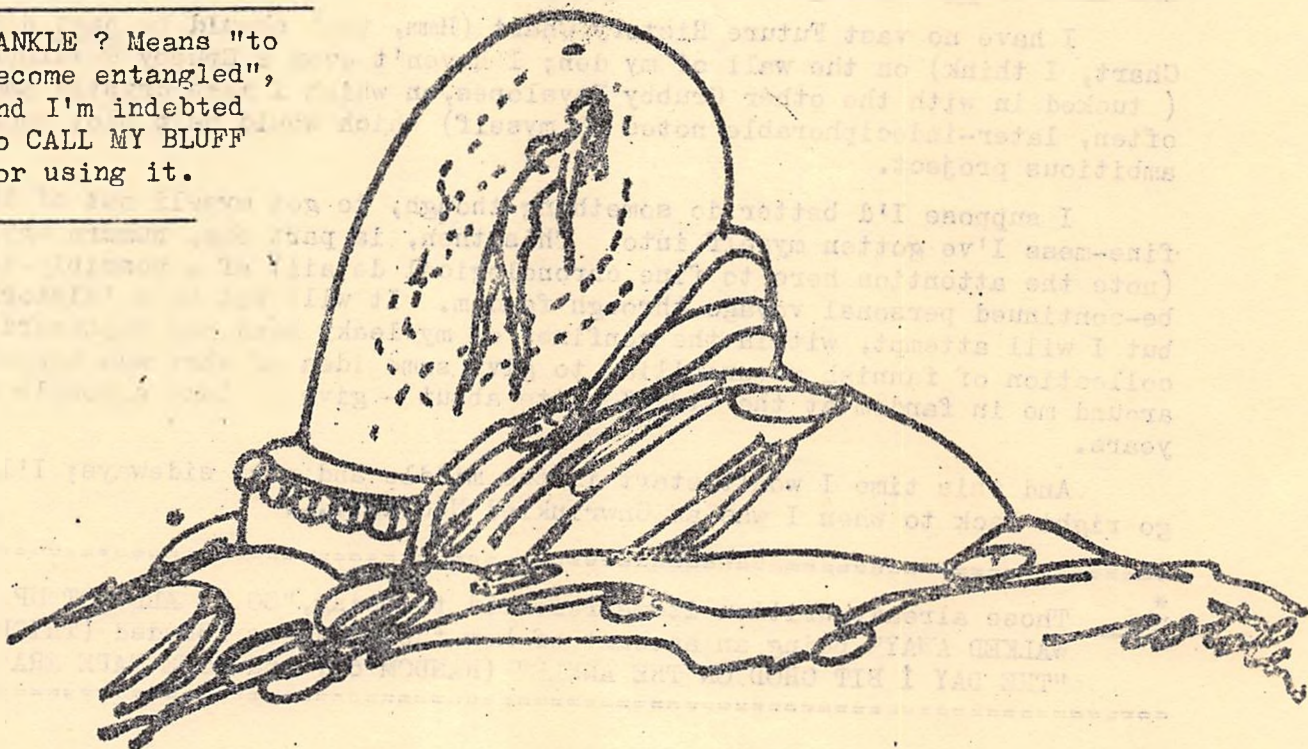
Motorway travelling can even produce the same sense of disorientation your typical spaceman feels when he hits dirt, like when you arrive in orbit on a city ring-road to find they've changed the one-way system yet again! And, of course, there are those alien stop-overs the 'service-areas' where the food lacks those trace elements so necessary to sustain terran lifeforms...

However, it isn't just my zooming around the length and breadth of Lancashire and Cheshire, and the depth of North Wales (Wales, that land of mists and mildew, where science-fiction authors can be seen copying down signpost legends for their next story title), that means you get WALDO instead of TRIODE. It's the amount of paperwork involved in the job, and its physical presence, that is the main reason - the furniture in my den which previously had only a fannish overlay now has another several-inch-deep covering of business correspondence (an interesting thought that some future geologist may be able to trace my life and times from the compressed layers of bumf decorating my desk and bookshelves!). And, its the removal of the latter so that I can get at the former, coupled with the problem of where-to-put-it-while-I-do, that is at the root of my problem.

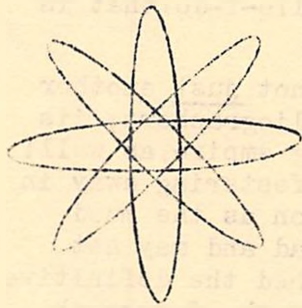
So, the revival of WALDO, my former OMPazine, is not just another attempt to confuse Peter Roberts and other fannish bibliographers; its an attempt to revive the flagging Bentcliffe publishing empire, as well! Somehow I don't feel complete unless I have a stencil festering away in the typer, and WALDO will (?) be something I can work on as the mood coincides with free time. TRIODE, of course, isn't dead and may get revived when someone thinks he has just finally published the definitive fanzine-listing, but it isn't likely to appear again in the foreseeable future - I was disappointed in the last couple of issues and the material therein, I just hadn't the time to write arm-twisting letters and cut stencils as well.

WALDO, will be mainly editorially written, but will (I hope) also attract a few fannish contributions of diverse and varying kind. It wont feature anything terribly topical. It wont be available by subscription. It will go to those I think may appreciate it and with whom I want to trade/ keep in contact / villify in one way or another / would like art or material from....WHIM, in fact.

FANKLE ? Means "to become entangled", and I'm indebted to CALL MY BLUFF for using it.



THE GOLDEN "FIRST CONTACT" AGUE



IN THE FAIRLY RECENT PAST I've written several (hopefully) humourous pieces based loosely (quite loosely) on past happenings in British Fandom in which I was personally involved. And, I've had several, apparently serious, queries asking why I don't write a History of British Fandom....now, apart from the fact that I'm not really that old, (I look the way I do as a result of a depraved fannish youth) the answer to that question is quite a simple one; I am not a Harry Warner. I've neither the source material nor the necessary Impeccable, Impartial, Viewpoint needed to do the subject justice. Also, I'm lazy!

However, I'll admit to making a mistake when writing these fiction-alised pieces of fan-history; I gave them all part-numbers under the same generic heading I've used again here. It's probably typical of my approach to anything historical that I should commence (as I did) by writing Part 12.* Following this with Part 23, and, Part 17! Apart from the fact that this has resulted in embarrassing questions as to where the other parts are; which I've been unable to answer with anything more cogent than "...mumble, mumble, mumble....all will eventually be made clear to you...", this makes the idea of me writing a coherent history patently impossible.

I have no vast Future History Chart (Hmm, that should be past History Chart, I think) on the wall of my den; I haven't even a Grubby Envelope (tucked in with the other Grubby Envelopes, on which I make cryptic and often, later-indecipherable notes to myself) which would help plot such an ambitious project.

I suppose I'd better do something though, to get myself out of the fine-mess I've gotten myself into. This then, is part one, numero uno, (note the attention here to fine chronological detail) of a possibly-to-be-continued personal voyage through fandom. It will not be a 'History', but I will attempt, within the confines of my leaky head and haphazard collection of fannish memorabilia, to give some idea of what was happening around me in fandom at the time I write about - give or take a couple of years.

And this time I won't start in the middle and work sideways; I'll go right back to when I was an Unwrinkled Neofan.....

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*nb: . Those already written items referred to being, "SO WE ALL GOT UP AND WALKED AWAY" being an account of how the BSFA was founded (TRIODE 20); "THE DAY I BIT GHOD ON THE ANKLE" (RANDOM 6), and "THE TAPE ERA"(MOTA 14).
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THE YEAR IS 1949....the after-effects of World War Two are still affecting what passes for civilisation and your young, sercon hero is about to be released upon an unsuspecting fandom by the Royal Air Force, in which he served with considerable inconspicuousness; rising over a period of five years from the rank of Aircraftsman second-class to Aircraftsman first-class. His supreme accomplishment being the losing of two Lancaster night-bombers, and a Fairy Swordfish - but only on paper! He was, however, considered to be of sufficient worth to his country to be issued on demob with a 5/- Warrant in case of re-mobilisation.

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PART OF THOSE FIVE YEARS in the services had been spent reading, and looking for, science-fiction. Just how much time, I'm not going to say, in case HMG decide they'd like their five bob back....however, more time had been spent looking than reading, for there wasn't much s-f published at that time. Occasionally, I'd gleefully come across a dusty Well's or Burrough's hard-back on some market-stall, but that was a rare moment. In fact, it wasn't until after I was demobbed that I discovered magazine science-fiction. This was in a rundown area of central Manchester where one could purchase such exotic items as 'war-surplus' radio's, black-market silk-stockings and off-the-ration-under-the-counter-chocolate; all very clandestinely, of course. I discovered, in a musty corner of what then passed for a (very) soft-porn shop, several copies of magazines called AMAZING, STARTLING, and THRILLING WONDER STORIES - they had probably been exchanged for the girlie-mags by U.S. Airmen from the nearby Burtonwood base. However, I wasn't worried about their antecedents...only how I could buy them on my weekly wage of £5.00 (before tax!) and still manage to eat and take the girl-friend to the pictures!

My dilemma was resolved when the shop-assistant casually remarked; " I lend those out for 2/6 a time....and when you bring one back you can borrow another". The shop was some seven miles from where I lived and could only be reached by a circuitous 'bus or tram journey, the latter being the cheaper but taking considerably longer; however, the trufan embryo didn't hesitate, its mental tendrils forced my hand to delve into my pocket and come out with the then equivalent of 25pence, and coerced my vocal chords into uttering, " Er, would it be allright if I took two, I live a long way away ?"

It is difficult to convey to those used to walking into any bookshop, and seeing a display of science-fiction of all types, how this discovery affected me....there was some juvenile s-f appearing in the (all-writing) comics such as HOTSPUR (a serial called, I think, "Last Rocket to Venus", ran for several of my formative years herein), and ADVENTURE, but British magazine s-f was still in its infancy. It took three years for four issues of NEW WORLDS to be published. Paperbacks hadn't really been born, and the hard-back novel was rare, and expensive. Entering this shop, and discovering American s-f pulps, was almost like wondering into an undreamed of alternate time-stream.

The AMAZING STORIES I borrowed on that first foray into wonderland had as lead novel Rog Phillips "STARSHIP TO SIRIUS" - the sort of reading I'd been looking for, for years. It was no literary masterpiece but, by ghod, it evoked my sense of wonder, and it had illustrations of spaceships 'soaring' through the void and what I later realised were buy-eyed-morsters. Great stuff. But it was the letter-columns of these magazines that were the real eye-opener; somewhere, Out There, were other science-fiction readers. I was not alone! And they weren't, apparently, just reading s-f they were publishing amateur magazines about it, forming clubs and associations to discuss it.

What happened to me after I found those magazines must parallel the entry into, the discovery of, science-fiction fandom by many fans of that period. It was several weeks after my initial discovery of the pulps before I took the fateful step that has me at this typer. I'd now visited the shop several times at eager intervals, and borrowed twenty or so well-worn but eminently readable s-f mags - I was even trying to get a job in Manchester so I would be nearer the source. Then, on my next excursion I came away with the issue of STARTLING STORIES containing a novel by a new author, Arthur C. Clarke, called "AGAINST THE FALL OF NIGHT". That was a story. That was also the end of my visits to that shop, because there was no way I was going to be denied the pleasure of re-reading it whenever I felt like it. For months thereafter, I answered the door with reluctance in case it was the shop-owner wanting his magazine back.

But how to get more magazines? I tried two methods, and both of them worked. I wrote a letter to AMAZING asking if any Stateside s-f reader was interested in exchanging American s-f for British - it was now 1950, Wally Gillings first issue of SCIENCE FANTASY had appeared and NEW WORLDS had become a quarterly, so it looked as though I would have something to exchange. My letter was printed in the September '50 issue, and the result was Astounding - in more ways than one. Within weeks I started receiving s-f mags from all over the States. Some came from anonymous donors, or from people who just forgot to include their names and addresses; some came from censorious donors, who'd ripped off covers and torn out stories they didn't like - or didn't think were fit for my tender eyes (I'll never know which). Others were preceded by letters, such as the one from Neil R. Demeree in Washington, who wrote "I haven't any new s-f magazines I can send you, but I have an attic half-full of old ASTOUNDINGS if you'd be willing to trade for these?" I haven't heard from Neil for years now and suspect he's moved, or even, passed away, but I will be forever grateful to him for letting me trade my 'new mags' for his 'old'. His first consignment, incidentally, resulted in my receiving a request from H.M. Customs & Excise at Liverpool to quote my relevant import license. Neil, had sent some forty issues in a huge cardboard box! Fortunately, my letter explaining that these were outdated publications of a sentimental value only sufficed to release them from bond. I must have hit them on a good day.

Many of the people who sent me magazines I never heard from again, even after I'd written them - possibly they were just clearing out unwanted reading matter. Others, like Dale R. Smith of Minneapolis were to be friends and correspondents for many years, and Dale I even got to meet when I had the good fortune to win TAFF in 1960. Most of them weren't fans, nor even collectors, but they had in common a very grateful Eric Bentcliffe. And many, were very interesting people...particularly so to me, for at that time I'd seen a little of Germany and too much of Egypt, (courtesy of the R. A.F.) but knew little of the U.S.A., apart from the misinformation I'd gained from watching Hollywood movies.

However, it was my other attempt to get hold of science-fiction magazines that was to lead me into fandom. I'd come across, in one of the pulp letter-columns, information about a certain Captain K.F. Slater who was in charge of something called OPERATION FANTAST in the British Army of the Rhine, and who had s-f magazines for sale. In retrospect, I'd be a damned sight cagier contacting something called Operation Fantast today, than I was then. It was a wonder I didn't find myself involved in some secret army project to relieve Mafeking, again! Such, fortunately, was not the case. Operation Fantast, was something Capt. Ken Slater did in his spare time, and it had many facets; he did sell magazines, but he also put out a regular amateur magazine featuring material about s-f and, also, operated a purely gratuitous contact-bureau putting s-f fans/readers in touch with one another.

If any one person (other than myself) is to blame for this article, that person has to be Ken. He put me in touch with A. Vincent (Ving) Clarke and Ken Bulmer in London, who were publishing a news-zine called (appropriately) "S-F NEWS"; and this led me to contact other fanzine publishers, and to subscribe to quite a number both here and in the States. Then, in late 1950, Ken Slater sent me the address of someone called Dave Cohen who lived closer to me than any other known fan - just the other side of Manchester. I would have gone to see Dave right away, but it would have entailed my passing the door of the shop I'd borrowed AGAINST THE FALL OF NIGHT from....so I wrote him instead.

Dave had already contacted, by letter, two other s-f readers in the Manchester area; Frank Richards and Taffy Williams, and when he replied to my letter he suggested that we all rendezvous at the Oxford Hotel in central Manchester one Sunday evening. This meeting took place (according to my hasty research) in late January of '51, and was quite remarkably pleasant. Most of you have had the experience, at one time or another, of suddenly realising that you are with kindred spirits and can actually discuss your shared interest. Since science-fiction in Britain was then a much denigrated literary media, this was perhaps the first time any of us had actually talked about it without encountering the legendary 'pursed lip and curled eye' which mention of s-f usually inspired. We talked, mainly, about our favourite authors and stories but, inevitably, as the evening came to a close euphoria took over and we talked of how pleasant the evening had been, and how pleasant it would be to have a s-f club in Manchester so we could do it more often. We were all, you understand, veritable neo's and did not realise that Cosmic Minds and Compatibility are two very different things!

Dave suggested a venue; the Waterloo Hotel in Cheetham Hill which was close to his home and where he knew there was a suitable meeting-room. A suitably private meeting-room, for we'd realised a few minutes earlier that the Oxford was not such a place....after some four hours of talking and drinking there realisation dawned that the Oxford was the local gathering place for the city's prostitutes. At first their casual smiles had been taken (in our euphoric state) as tacit approval of our discussions, and it was only after Dave had got into a long argument upon mention of the Fitzgerald Contraction with a lady (?) who said she knew all about them....that we came to realise we weren't quite on the same wavelength.

From this beginning came the Nor'west Science-Fantasy Club, and the gay (old meaning), abandoned life of an active fan of the fifties...

WATCH FOR THE NEXT EPISODE IN THIS THRILLING SAGA, which, may well tell of the formation (and disintegration) of the N.S.F.C.; of the nightmare ride to NECON; and of the first meeting with the strange beings from Scouseland.....

I'd be interested to know if there is anyone out there who has access to a (cheap) form of reproducing photograph's; for while I've little source material I do have boxes of old-photo's that could be used to make future episodes more illuminating. And, if anyone has printable fannish bric a brac of the period, this also would be of interest. FILM RIGHTS have not yet been sold!

"FINGERPRINT EXPERT GETS THE BIRD"

By

JOHN BERRY.

The car, with four occupants, drove into the forecourt of the garage...it was late at night and no other vehicles were in the vicinity. One man got out, he had an eye-patch over his left eye, a large black moustache, and his hands were thrust deeply into the pockets of his fawn windcheater. He produced a gun, and told the garage employee to give him all the cash in the till; he took a little over £220 and several cartons of cigarettes. He walked slowly back to the car, and drove away. The employee took the registration number of the car as it drove away, and dialled 999 to alert the police.

The police found the car the next morning, abandoned in a country lane. It had been stolen from a nearby city. I did a fingerprint examination of the vehicle, and found that it had been entirely cleaned of 'prints'. But, stuffed between the back seat cushions I found an eye-patch made of flesh coloured plastic, and a false moustache. A touch of black fingerprint powder on the inside of the eye-patch revealed a right thumb print....the ridge detail was superb.

Back at headquarters, I lifted the print off the eye-patch with transparent tape, and placed it on fixed white bromide paper, and on the same paper I also did a drawing showing the situation of the patch. I searched the mark amongst the fingerprint collections without success.

Months later, the mark was identified as belonging to a youth charged with taking and driving away cars, who had no prior convictions. He would not admit being implicated in the armed robbery, and I was detailed to give evidence on his appearance in court.

The defense counsel stood to cross-examine. He was polite, well-spoken did not raise his voice, and asked his questions shrewdly. He asked me to describe each of the sixteen ridge characteristics and when I had finished, he gave me an enigmatic smile and asked me the one question I had been dreading.

" Let me see the eye-patch...."

* * * * *

Our fingerprint office was long and narrow, and on the north side wide windows ran for its entire length. The headquarters had been built on the outskirts of the city, and was surrounded by a large acreage of lawn and shrubs. It was not uncommon to see animals and birds in the grounds...foxes, pheasants, many migrating birds of colourful plumage... one photographer said he'd even seen a badger, but we didn't take this too seriously as several of us had suffered the effects of his notorious home brew, Chateau Fred.

A magpie fluttered near the window and one of the fingerprint officers opened it, and proffered a handful of paper-clips. The bird landed on the sill, took them out of his hand and flew away.

Sometimes, afterwards, when we walked round the lawns at lunch-time, the bird would flap around us, landing on profered arms quite tamely.

I had just lifted the print off the eyepatch, when the magpie pecked at the window opposite my desk. He looked at me with his head on one side. I opened the window. I still had the eye-patch in my right hand, and with my left hand picked up a couple of paper clips, leaned out of the window and opened my left palm invitingly. The bird hurtled forward and whipped the eye-patch out of my right hand. I just could not believe it, and watched aghast as he dropped it, then swooped down and picked it up again, before disaparing into the trees.

It took some time for the laughter to die down amongst my colleagues. They accepted the seriousness of the loss of this vital piece of evidence and we drew up a plan whereby several of us would be strategically placed in roads and fields in the direction he had taken, so that, flushed with success and a further beakfull of paper clips his sanctuary could be traced. For some weeks we took it in turn to dangle paper clips out of the window, but the magpie, realising he had hit the jackpot, never came back again.

* * * * *

" Let me see the eye-patch," he repeated.

He had a superior glint in his eyes, and I suspected and still do, that he was well aware of the circumstance of its loss. "My Lord," I said, " the eye-patch is not in my possession."

"Where is it ?" he asked.

"I don't know, My Lord," I breathed.

"When did you last see it ?" he parried.

"Some time after I lifted the mark," I answered.

A pause.

" I don't think this loss is serious," announced his Lordship. " A scenes of crime officer has given evidence that he saw the fingerprint expert find the eye-patch, and we do have the lifted mark and a drawing of the eye-patch, which was accepted by the defense."

The advocate asked the judge if he could ask me a couple of further questions relating to its loss. The judge frowned, but nodded assent.

" How long was it after you lifted the mark that the eye-patch was lost ?" he smirked.

" I couldn't be absolutely specific," I countered.

" Days ?"

"No."

" Hours ?"

"No."

" Minutes ?"

"Er, yes, My Lord."

" How Many ?"

"About ten, My Lord."

The advocates face hardened. The smile evaporated and his lips curled downward in a sneer as he asked me the inevitable question.

" How did you lose it ?"

" Er, a magpie flew off with it, My Lord."

* * * * *

The youth was convicted....and the title of this tale is a newspaper headline reporting the case.....

JOHN BERRY.



This will, no doubt, develop into a bawling, brawling letter-column in future issues. I hope. This time, the letters are mainly of comment on the last issue of TRIODE/ FANALOG; plus snippets from general correspondence. The usual editorial ((parenthesis)) will be used.

MIKE MOORCOCK, London.

Steady on, Eric....

I mean TRIODE is taking on a definite sercon slant (if you'll forgive the expression). In fact I'm not at all sure I feel easy about it. Now PLANET STORIES happens to be the only sf magazine to which I feel any loyalty at all (NW not being an sf magazine anyway) and I'm pleased to see you giving it credit as deserved. It published a lot of the best 'romantic' sf - Brackett, Harness and others - as well as humour and unselfconscious adventure stories - and I wish I still had my run from No.1 to the last issue; so I can't complain about your choice of subject. But now I see you have fallen into the abyss at long last (was it bound to happen, I wonder?) and FANALOG threatens to emerge. However, I'm consoled. You say you're not interested in publishing Checklists, Biographies, Autobiographies, tedious listings of esoterica or author-interviews...hidden-meanings behind story-lines or examples of how much cleverer you are than he is, SFWA feud stories etc, etc. So it won't in fact have anything really alarming in it. But don't send me one, I beg you. TRIODE was for me a beacon in the void (don't ask me how it burned) and the thought of you giving one up for the other (are you?) is too much to stand. As it is there are a lot of disturbing hints of the direction you are taking in this issue. Also I can't stand, as you know, The Lord of the Rings and mention of Lord of the Rings sends me to sleep immediately.

SOME HOURS LATER.....

Well, I feel better for the rest. In fact mention of sf, by and large, gets the eyelids drooping pretty rapidly these days. I've had enough of it. I don't care if it's intense or non-intense. This is a cry from the heart. Try and shake it off. What about the exploits of Harrison? Will they never be seen again? Is TRIODE as we know it to cease? Are we to have long rambling monologues about how well SWORD OF SHANNARA compares to LORD OF THE RINGS?

TWO DAYS LATER.....

I mean, have you thought about what you are getting into? From being a lively, humorous, jolly, extroverted, satirical fanzine - quite probably the last of its type - TRIODE threatens to become well, frankly, dull. Dull. I go a long way to avoid chaps who like to sit and ramble on about sf. You never struck me as that sort of chap, Bentcliffe. You were always a decent, clean-living boy, interested in cards, drinking and complicated practical jokes - the real world, in fact. Oh, you paid lip-service to the false values of sf society, but it was easy to see you cared nothing for them at heart. Would Pancho Villa join the Federales? Would Makhno ride side by side with the Bolsheviks? Would Robin Hood get a job illuminating manuscripts for the Sheriff of Nottingham? Oh, the Golden Years are truly over. The age of iron returns. We are threatened with thoughts on Bakshi's version of LoTR...

Well, it must be too late now to make you change your mind. The deed will have been done. So I must bow to the inevitable. Where are the brag games of yesteryear? Replaced by a round-table discussion on the Great Days of Authentic?

Ah, the Gods had played their last, grim joke. And Eric, Lord of the Dead Sun, must ride the Sercon Beam - forsaking all he once honoured and loved to fulfill his ultimate and terrible destiny - Destroy Home Star Triode and leave not a memory of its being, not the merest murmur in desolate infinity!

FIST AGAINST THE MIST

(A Novel of Unguessable Paradox)

by E. Chappel Hulme.

Call me naive, but I never thought it would come to this.

Yours, sorrowing and alone,
Mike.

(('Anode' to Triode, no less, and by Ghu its a real tear-jerker, I can hardly see to correct the typos for the tears in me eyes. Sob. sob. And Mike's subliminal runes seem to have had effect, this isn't Fanalog; although I suspect that title will get used again since it does, after all, rhyme with Blog...and is a useful aid for American pro' authors. Well, one American pro' author.))

Robert Bloch, Los Angeles.

Thanks to your reminiscences, I now know more about PLANET STORIES than ever before, since it was a 'zine I never read. Strange, in a way, that it would take someone thousands of miles away to inform an American about a magazine published in the United States umpteen years ago! ((All I can say, Bob, is that it doesn't show; I would never have thought you hadn't read PLANET!))

But I think I can best that. This issue has nostalgic, whatever-became-of references to British fen Alan Dodd and Eric Needham. Allow me to inform you that Mr. Dodd is alive and well and driving a car. ((Which is more than can be said for his Instructor...)) And that Eric Needham and spouse are currently on holiday in Canada - I received a card noting their arrival in Vancouver late last week.

There is, as you have reason to suspect, a vast network of fen who have pretended to gafiate but actually went underground where even now they are plotting to take over the world just as soon as they can make Arthur Clarke let go of it. I suppose you think it's an accident that Chuck Harris has reappeared in lettercols. I assure you, it's part of the plot, this business of planting spies in the enemy camp. I don't mean to seem an alarmist, but it is quite possible that fandom has not yet seen the last of Claude Degler, ((True, I believe he is alive and well and running the B.S.F.A.)) and I expect that the article I sent to Max Keasler in 1954 will appear in a fanzine any day now. There is no need to give away secrets - let's just say that as long as Tucker lives, no man is safe. Or woman, either, come to think of it. ((WALDO, the fanzine of unashamed nostalgia...))

Jim Cawthorn, Part One.

Sophisticated lot, the rising generation of TV sf watchers. Going to Hilary's recently, I saw daughter Kate, 13, watching Six Million Dollar Man, and asked what he was involved in that week. "Oh," she said, "A time warp..." And then, after a bored pause: "But not a very good one."

Bob Pavlat, 5709 Goucher Drive, College Park, Md. 20740.

Triode is rather like a Midwestcon. It's like this. I've been to three cons so far this year - Disclave, Midwestcon, and Unicon. At Disclaves there are maybe 600 or so fans present, and I might know a moderate percentage of the attendees, say 150 or thereabouts. At Unicon - held in a hotel not over six miles from the Disclave and only about six weeks later - there are some 1200 fans present, and as best my wife and I can figure out we know no more than thirty of the fans there. But at Midwestcons, while we don't know everyone, we do know an easy majority of the four or five hundred who attend. And that's why Triode is rather like a Midwestcon. ((So now you can look round for a con that's like WALDO... "The fanzine where old-fans can feel at home". Actually, this known/unknown percentage at cons is one of the reasons why I most likely will not be at The SEACON. There are a lot of people coming over I would like to meet - meet again - but the thought of having to search for them amongst a veritable host of unknowns is not one that appeals. I'm hoping that people such as Peggy Rae and yourself will be touring round in this direction aftercon. Of course, the advantage of huge cons, as Jim Cawthorn recently pointed out, is that its also easier to avoid people at!))

Are you sick of letters on fanzines, what they are, what they should be, and how they should be reviewed? Fanzines don't serve a single purpose, nor is there any reason that they should. They should serve their purpose well, but that does not mean that they should be the best work of which the individual is capable. Immediacy may be more important than immaculacy, content may take precedence over format, cost and time must be considered. A good reviewer, who's reviewing for an audience that may not know the work being reviewed, must consider to some extent the intent of the editor. In my opinion both the intent and the achievement are proper subjects for review and criticism, but without some attempt to understand intent, criticism drifts from reality. ((That's a pretty good statement, Bob, one I agree with and can nicely use to tie the thing up...but, there's always a but isn't there, a lot of new fnz editors are not quite sure of their own intent; other than to put out a fanzine. This shall henceforth be known as the Bentcliffe Bugger Factor.))

Jim Cawthorn, Part Two.

KALEIDOSCOPE, if you still

listen to the radio, taped an interview with Mike about GLORIANA, to go out at 9.30p.m. on Tuesday. So what happened? Katchaturyan (and I take no responsibility for the spelling) chose that day to die. Not a word of the interview got used as they were too busy playing Sabre Dance, but they still did a review, and a slightly fantastic one at that. Introductory Trumpets, an actor reading excerpts from the text, the lot. God knows what he'll have to write in order to top that.

Spider Robinson? I thought he was a middleweight.

One book not mentioned by Terry was GUNNER CADE, a film company was recently doing the rounds of the sf dealers, and even contacting individual collectors, in an effort to locate a copy of the original hardcover edition, or the aSF serial version. ((Sounds as though they didn't want the author to know of their interest!)) A new Tarzan film, LORD GREYSTOKE, will begin shooting soon at Pinewood, and in Africa. Information courtesy of Janet Freer, whose daughter auditioned for the role of an ape.....



Rick Sneary, 2962 Santa Ana St, South Gate, Calif. 90280.

So you're taking up the question of what is fan humour? You would think trying to define what science fiction is would be enough trouble, now you want to take on humour... Well, I'll tell you right off, I don't know. I don't think punning works too well in print, except for the masters. But a well turned phrase is worth keeping... I believe too that most of our best humourists have become so by being able to see the funny side of normal events. One of the masters of this style was Mal Ashworth, who could take events that happened to him, retell them without much apparent exaggeration, but because they would hit a common note in all our lives they would seem funny. This is what I think of as the Three Men In A Boat style, which you British seem best at, although a few Americans can handle it as well. But it all seems to stem from a state of mind, more than comic skill. I think you are right that we often laugh at the familiar - the running joke. To fans our age, almost any aside about Claude Degler is likely to cause a smile, even though the truth was rather sad. ((Yes, Norman G. Wansborough occupies a similar niche.)) And there is the case of Burbee's famous Watermelon Story. In the late 50's when Burbee was enjoying his second round of fame, he was telling this story that dealt with a Watermelon. It was never printed, that I know, for the reason that in print it wasn't very funny. In fact, when people heard Burbee tell it for the first time, they were usually disappointed in that it didn't seem all that funny. What was really funny was Burbee telling the story, so that each time you heard it it became funnier. - Fans wrote about it, and travelled miles to hear it. They expected to be amused, and were... A lot of fan humour is like that - the mere reference to the punch line of a story being sufficient for you to remember the humour of hearing the story.

Another thing about fan humour, is that humour begets humour. A fanzine featuring, a writer writing good humour, will not merely inspire less imaginative fans to try and copy the style, but will also cause fans who have not thought about writing humour, to try it. Thus a fanzine can create a whole school of writing, if it hits on a new and popular new style.

Taral Wayne MacDonald, 1812-415 Willowdale Av, Willowdale, Ontario.M2N 5B4.

Hughes for TAFF. Hughes for TAFF. Hughes for TAFF. Alright, already. I know you people want to see Terry win the fund to attend the SEACON, but the message has been conveyed quite well enough, thank you. I hope he wins too, I suppose, though with no consequent desire for other TAFF Candidates to lose. But the constant repetition of the British sentiment is becoming positively anti-social. It's become a strong statement that the British are not interested in seeing anyone else - that is, instead of a positive vote for one person, it's beginning to sound like negative votes for everyone else. I hope you see what I mean by that, as I don't want to be misunderstood as speaking against Terry. ((Know what you mean, Taral, and it's a good point...due, I suspect, to Terry being thought of as a Honorary British Fan, as distinct from an American Fan - over here. No matter who wins, Fred Haskell (who I admire for his work with RENE), Suzanne Tompkins, or Terry, they will be assured of a warm welcome by U.K. Fandom...and, in future, I'll put 'terry hughes for taff' instead of 'TERRY HUGHES FOR TAFF'.))

IAHF Sam & Mary Long, Victoria Vayne, Gary Deindorfer, Terry Hughes, Kevin Easthope, Ethel Lindsey, Micheal A. Banks, Eric Mayer, John Owen, Terry Hughes, and Bill Harry. All of whom will, I trust, excuse my not quoting copiously from their most quoteable letters. And I promise not to change magazines again next issue. Artwork received for Triode (thanks Bill, Taral,) will appear in subsequent issues of WALDO.

FANALOG

Just as there will be, inevitably, an 'essence of triode' in the preceding pages; this page or two here will reflect what I was going to do with this title as a magazine - when I got that sudden last flush of fanac..... Nothing earthshaking, or mind-bending, I assure you, but probably a word or two about recently enjoyed (or detested) s-f. The occasional not-in-depth article - next issue could well see a piece on STARTLING STORIES & TWS, as a sort of sequel to my PLANET STORIES piece. And a review, or two...

If I had to name the story I've most enjoyed reading these past few months I'd also, probably, reveal quite a bit of my character but, what-the-hell... The sf story that has entertained me most this year - well, it appeared last year, but I've only just got round to reading it - is Lord St. Davids ACCORD. A short story in the Nov' 78 AN LOG. The title is, you've guessed it, a pun; the story a beautifully crafted little piece on what can be done with a casually aquired alien artifact. Someone should make Lord St. Davids a convention GoH, he is obviously possessed of a great deal more wit than the average sf writer. There have been other s-f things around that I've enjoyed, of course, such as...

THE CUSTODIANS by Richard Cowper. (PAN S-F) Paperback.

Normally, I review more s-f novels than collections since I read and prefer novels to short-stories; I like something I can get my teeth into, I'm nasty that way. And then, collections (and anthologies) can be so damned infuriating...its often possible to decide after reading a few pages of a novel whether reading the rest is going to be a rewarding experience, or whether you wouldn't be better off switching on the stereo or, even, tv. But, collections of an authors work can be highly variable and you may have to reader several pages of each story before you can reach the decision of whether to quit whilst you are ahead, or not. Hopefully, of course, desperation doesn't set in at all and perseverance is rewarded, and such, I'm pleased to say was the case with this excellent collection of novelettes by Richard Cowper (who someone has made a GoH). Cowper, is one of the few British s-f writers (Keith Roberts is another) who seem able to produce only good stories - it may be, of course, that he is a writer who submits only his good stories for publication - there are a few paragons in the field. Cowper (again, allied with Keith Roberts) is a master of a peculiarly British style of s-f; one that takes equal cognisance of the past as well as the future - the reason American authors do not seem able to master this style, could be that they haven't got as much history! I enjoyed all the stories in the collection; the title story (by now well known) which evocatively deals with the strange nexus in a French monastery which allows the 'future' to be foreseen. The equally masterly "PIPER AT THE GATES OF DAWN" which, whilst it is set in the future, is set in a wholly convincing (post holocaust) time which is a logical developement from earlier feudal periods of English history. And there are two lighter but equally fascinating stories; "PARADISE BEACH" which deals with the (inevitable?) perversion of a new art-form, using the detective idiom. And, "THE HERTFORD MANUSCRIPT", a story that amusingly, does for H.G. Wells "THE TIME MACHINE", what Chris Priest did for that authors "WAR OF THE WORLDS". Excellent.

BLAKES 7. BBC1 TV.

Allright, I admit it...I'm a sucker for space-opera, in almost all its forms when it's reasonably well done. The second 13 part series of this one has shown a quantum increase in conviction from the first trial series. The special effects are not wonderful but then, this series did not have a STAR WARS size budget; I understand that all

the alien Planets had to be found within twenty miles of London, for instance. The effects though, were certainly better than SPACE 1989 and tho' it would be easy to find fault (even with my limited knowledge of hard-science) with some of the story lines it is only fair to consider what was accomplished on a pretty small budget. And, the strength of the series was the quality of the acting (for a s-f series) and plot and sub-plot... for unlike STAR TREK the stories actually had quite devious (for general consumption) plots. Considering that each 50 minute story was made in ten days, and the budget....I consider the series a qualified success and the next series, due to start in the Autumn could be even better. Is this being shown on Stateside TV ??

THE LONG RESULT by John Brunner.(FONTANA S-F) Paperback.

This dates back a while...I think the original story was printed (as a series of novelettes) in NEW WORLDS...but it is a welcome UK paperback publication, and John has reworked it nicely into a coherent novel. Its the story of Roald Vincent of the Bureau of Cultural Relations (the department responsible for contact with off-earth aliens and on-earth, for the moment, aliens - and colonists) and his entanglement with The Stars Are For Man League...and its secret supporters the colonists of Starhome. Without giving away too many of the plot twists; it isn't an easy book to review, but if you like a fast-paced, credible story of a quite-possible future, you'll like this.

A POGO PANORAMA

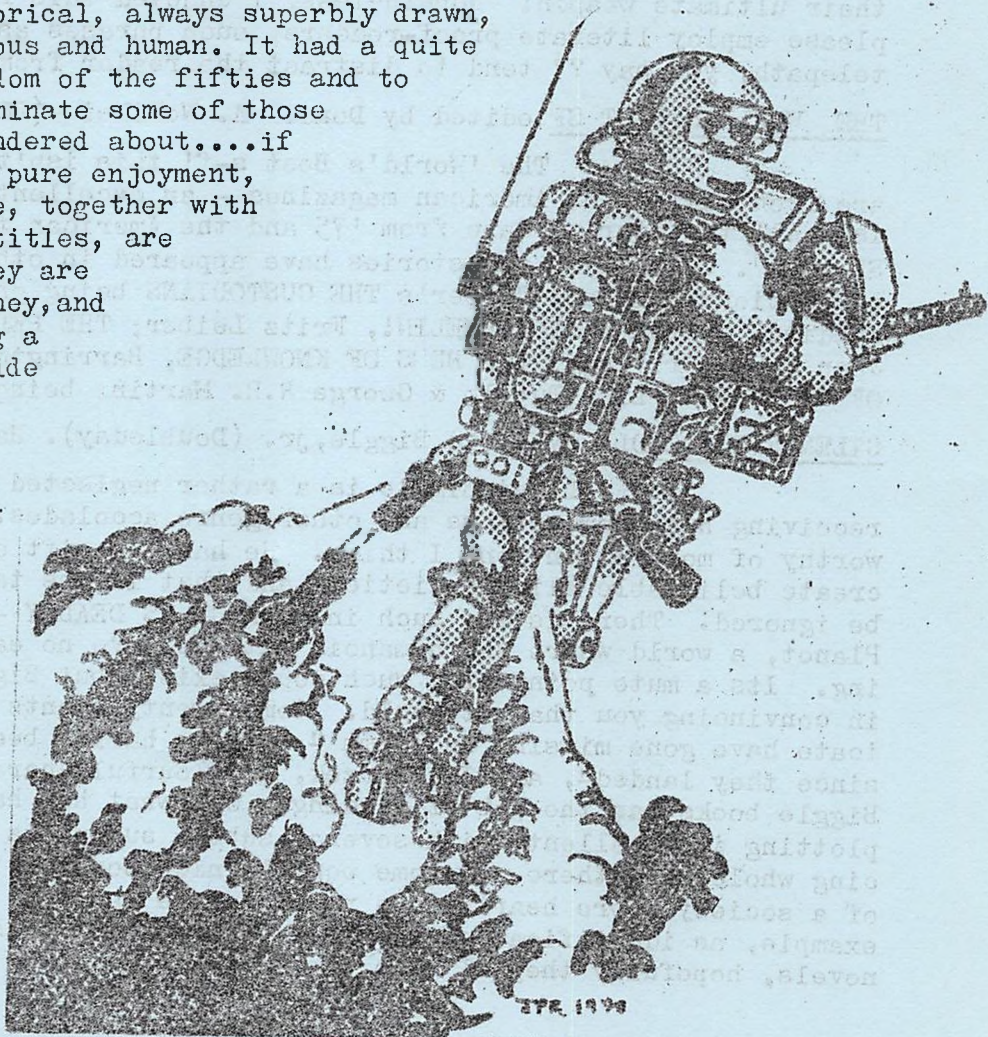
POGO REVISITED

POGO'S DOUBLE SUNDAE

by WALT KELLY. Simon & Schuster. New York.

I don't know what proportion of contemporary British fandom has discovered the delights of Pogo Possum and the other inhabitants of the Okeefenokee Swamp; or , even, if any have. Pogo is/was an American comic-strip of genius; often allegorical, always superbly drawn, and wonderfully humourous and human. It had a quite profound effect on fandom of the fifties and to read it will help illuminate some of those weird allusions you wondered about....if you need an excuse for pure enjoyment, that is. All the above, together with several other uniform titles, are available at \$4.95. They are very well worth the money, and the effort of arranging a trade with some Stateside fan who's arm you can twist. And my humble apologies to the shade of Walt Kelly for misspelling the Okefenokee as Okeefenokee, up there...and being out of correcting fluid! Pogo also has abberatory qualities, I can promise.

POGO FOR PM....



SHIP OF STRANGERS by Bob Shaw. (PAN S-F) Paperback.

As mentioned earlier in this department, I have a general aversion to story-collections; and to further develop the point..... herein are a number of good stories spoiled by being brought together as a pseudo novel. They deal with the adventures of the survey-ship Sarafand, and the linking character Dave Surgenor. I enjoyed them all when they first impacted on me in Universe, IF, and ANALOG; they were presented with a variety of other stories and individually enjoyed. The setting was right. Reading them as novel-segments, here, I didn't enjoy them as much. The characters aren't quite strong enough and the action continuous enough to read as a novel. Read it, as I did originally, in segments interspersed with other stories, for maximum enjoyment.

THE TAR-AIYM KRANG by Alan Dean Foster. (NEL) Paperback.

Science-Fantasy seems to be a term that has gone out of usage of late; which is a pity because it was a good general description for that which was somewhat less plausible in its science than science-fiction. This is good science-fantasy, good space-adventure - I enjoy the writing of Alan Dean Foster, his stories are highly imaginative, well-paced and entertaining. His ICERIGGER (also published by NEL) is a favourite of mine, and he has, incidentally, just had published a sequel to this, MISSION TO MOULOKIN, which I look forward to reading. The Tar-Aiym Krang, apparently is also the first of a series and because of this, perhaps, suffers a little from an indeterminate ending. Its a good yarn tho', a quest-story in which an interestingly odd group of humans set off to seek a fabled, fabulous weapon developed by a long gone alien race. To digress, I can never quite understand the eagerness with which s-f characters seek out rumoured alien weapons belonging to long-dead races - it would seem to me, in my innocence, that one of the reason they are dead is because of their ultimate weapon! Nonetheless, I enjoyed this romp. NB, to NEL, please employ literate proof-readers; such phrases as " An emphatic telepath, you say ?" tend to distract the reader from the story.

THE WORLD'S BEST SF edited by Donald A. Wollheim. (DOBSON SF) Hardcover.

The 'World's Best s-f' this isn't - all of the stories are from English or American magazines - an excellent selection of s-f it is. All the stories date from '75 and the American title was "WORLDS BEST SF 1976". Several of the stories have appeared in other anthologies and collections (Richard Cowper's THE CUSTODIANS being one), but all are good reading. CATCH THAT ZEPPELIN!, Fritz Leiber; THE PEDDLERS APPRENTICE, Joan & Vernor Vinge; THE BE'S OF KNOWLEDGE, Barrington Bayley; THE STORMS OF WINDHAVEN, Lisa Tuttle & George R.R. Martin; being my favourites.

SILENCE IS DEADLY by Lloyd Biggle, jr. (Doubleday). Hardcover.

Lloyd Biggle is a rather neglected author in terms of receiving Hugo Nominations and other genre accolades...he's an author worthy of more attention, I think. He has the gift of being able to create believable alien societies, and that is one talent that should not be ignored. There is one such in SILENCE IS DEADLY - Kramm, the Silent Planet, a world where the humanoid natives have no ears, no sense of hearing. Its a mute point...if such could exist, but Biggle does a fine job in convincing you that it could. Some twenty agents of the Galactic Syndicate have gone missing on Kramm " Nothing having been heard from them since they landed", and Jan Darzek, a colourful character used in several Biggle books, has the job of finding out what has happened to them. The plotting is excellent, with several subtle sub-plots woven into a convincing whole, and there are some equally nice touches in the development of a society where hearing has no part; the personal use of scents, for example, as identification. DOBSON BOOKS have published several Biggle novels, hopefully they'll also publish this one over here.



I suppose one of the little wonders of publishing a fnz of this type is that the perpetrator can be just as unsure of what it's going to turn out to be as the recipient.... For the first time in a long time I've just started with stencil numero uno and let things develop as I've gone along - it probably shows! - but I've quite enjoyed it. It's the little stencil-cutting-digressions that add to the fun; part of the mag has been composed on stencil, part from a roughdraft and it's this that has caused the diversions - you come to the end of a stencil-line and the next word should be 'afterwards' (perhaps), but if you change it to 'since' you get yourself a nice neat right-hand margin...and a lot of trouble. For after substituting an alternative word for the sake of neatness of layout you read the sentence again and find you've changed the whole meaning, and have to fight your way back to the point you were at. I suppose this is how my vocabulary (of epithets?) has increased over the years.

I've just been taking a look at the last issue of WALDO, August '61, and noted that it was published just after I'd returned from San Remo on the Italian Riviera, which is reasonably coincidental since we are once more visiting Italy later this year - end of July for two weeks - the venue being Lake Garda, one of my favourite places. I like Italy for a vacation; I've visited quite a number of other countries over the years but Italy appeals more than most. I've enjoyed all the vacations taken both before, and since, I married, but there's a select list of only two or three places I yearn to visit again. Venice, and Lake Garda come high on the list; Venice for its wonderful atmosphere and architecture, Lake Garda for the pleasure of just drifting along on a lake steamer amidst beautiful alpine scenery, bar on board, and being able to hop on and off and explore any little town or village that takes your fancy. I'm tempted, because of its location, to attend my first European convention next year, at Stresa on Lake Maggiore. That too is an area of great natural beauty and the combination of the two appeals...but then, we are supposed to be saving for a trip to the States soon. Somewhere else I've wanted to revisit since my TAFF Trip; and where neither Beryl or Lindsey have yet been, but would like to go. Soon, in our calendar, means any-year-now, but hopefully this would combine one of the smaller Stateside cons (Midwestcon, perhaps) with a fair amount of sight-seeing. I appear to have developed an aversion for large cons these past couple of years, even the Novacon is getting too big, for me, and I doubt that I'll attend the Worldcon in Brighton - it's at an inconvenient financial time, coming soon after the Lake Garda holiday, and whilst I faunch to meet a lot of the Stateside fans coming over, I don't care for the idea of searching for them amongst four or five thousand other bodies..... God, I must be getting old!

It seems to be the trend amongst contemporary fanzine publishers to list the music they are typing to, hyping to, this seems to result in free plugs for THE WHO, Jefferson Starship, and numerous other tone-deaf musicians...so, to redress the balance, and faze anyone under forty... This magazine has received inspiration from Bill Basie, The Duke, Ray Anthony, Ella, Glenn Gray & the Casa Loma Orchestra, Benny Goodman, Sauter-Finnegan, The Airmen of Note, Elvis Presley (when Lindsey's radio has blasted forth and caused a few typo's), and a lot of Brubeck, and Shearing, and Memphis Slim. So there...

I'm also indebted to the following for aiding and abetting this issue: Terry Jeeves for Duplicating, John Berry for visiting NEW WHORLS upon us, Grant Canfield, Bill Rotsler, "JRF", and Jeeves for illos. And all those friends who have been patiently sending fnz the past few months without any apparent reaction - this is it!

7-11-68

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