

Alpaka



B.A.

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C O N T E N T S

CALLING ALPHANS	Dave Vendelmans	P.1
THE VISITORS	Maurice Delplace	F.3
GLORIA IN EXCELCIS DEO	The Rev. Ken Potter	P.4
THE " UNBROKEN " WINDOWS	Ah-Chee Mercer	F.6
FANZINE REVIEW	Jan Jansen	F.9
LIBRARIAN'S CORNER	Jan Jansen	P.11
THE ICST WEEK-END	Shamey Marriott	F.12
AMBROSIA	You'se guys	F.14
LAST PAGE	The Publisher	F.21

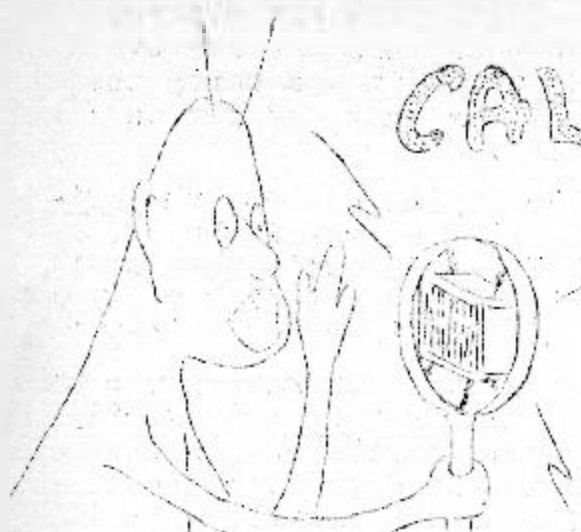
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ALL CONTRIBUTIONS, BRIGHT IDEAS, PRAISE,
FLATTERY, BOUQUETS, SUGGESTIONS FOR MA-
KING MONEY ETC., ARE FAGERLY WELCOMED AND
SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITWERP, DAVE VEN-
DELMANS, 130, STRYDHOFLAAN, BERCEM, ANTWERP.

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CALLING AL PHANS...



WHY DON'T WE GATHER SOME NUTS AND DOLTS,
NUTS AND DOLTS,
NUTS AND DOLTS,
WHY DON'T WE GATHER SOME NUTS AND DOLTS
AND SEND 'EM ALL TO ALPHA... ?

Spakeshear.

Well, fellow-sufferers, according to my rough calculations (they would be of course), it appears that the majority of our readers (those that can write, and did), approved my Jazzitorial of the Octish.

I must say I can but applaud your wonderful insight. It is a pity however that most of you seem to lean (in fact you almost topple over) towards that antiquated stuff better known as "Traditional Jazz"..... However, every man to his taste. I only detected one false note in the general harmonious acclamation, and that emanated from a certain individual named "Delplace" or "Palafore" or "Sourouss"... who - believe it or not - actually hates Jazz ! Can you imagine that ? Obviously a Paranoic (is that right ?) Still, it takes all kinds to make a world doesn't it ? - unfortunately.

Apparently I only scratched the surface of that pulsating mass of living matter that makes up "Jazz Fandom". It is therefore with great pride that I am able to add the following Jazz-solists (to whom I present my most humble apologies) to the honours-list : Irene Gore, Shirley Marriott, Walt Willis (a thousand pardons Walt, I really had no idea...) Ken Fetter, Dave Wood, Harry Harlow, Ron and Daphne Buckmaster, Norman Shorrocks, Dave Gardner, Don Bennett, Brian Lewis, Harry Turner, Derck Pickles, and maybe Mr. Temple (thanks Mal). A recent addition, and a very honorable one, is Marie-Louise Share of U.S.A. (see page 14). I realise of course that this list is far from complete, but I am counting on you boys and girls to let me know whether there are any others and, if you too are a jazzfan, drop me a line and we can exchange views. If you are a "cool" fan, we can probably have a heated discussion on some of the latest "combs"; if you are a traditional fan... well, perhaps I can still save you.

Now I have another favour to ask you. No, it's not money this time, although... What I should like you to do when you write to me again - that is if you write to me again - is to enclose a small snap of yourself. Come now, don't say you haven't got one. I know jolly well you have. Just have a look in those drawers... NO, not those you chump... You see, I happened to mention to Jan some time ago that it would be a good idea to have a "Rogues gallery" or "Who's who in fandom?" or something. (You know, like they have in Scotland Yard.) to keep a check on the ~~diff~~ various personalities that come and go in Fandom. We have received a few already, but I'm sure if all (you boys and) girls rally round we will soon have something really interesting. How about it ? Of course, if you girls have nothing but snaps that were taken at the seaside on a particularly hot summer... well, that will do too. We're not that particular...

Now here come a few criticisms from the readers :
The first one (which was bound to crop up sooner or later) drew our attention to the fact that we should not overdo the "Twerpeen Act".

I quite agree and I was perfectly aware of the possible repercussions of printing another Twerpish article, but as this one was by Ving ... I just had to take the risk and I do think it was worth the trouble don't you? However, you may rest assured that, as far as I am concerned, the "Twerpoon" is dead and buried.

Criticism n°2 was about the female form "creeping up from the left-hand side of the Octish cover... They tell me it was creeping up from the right. Well, I told you in my editorial I wasn't quite sure what it was all about and the way I was holding it, it was creeping up from the left. Some people always have to create difficulties don't they?

And now for a few corrections: My con-federate may have given you the impression that A was going six-weekly. Well, that is not exactly so. It is true that in the winter months production will be somewhat speeded-up (you will notice that the present ish is dated December, whereas it appears in November) but during the summer months, when time is precious, what with holidays etc.etc., the 2,1/2 months advance we hope to have gained will be neutralised and we shall again publish the August ish on August 1st. (silly ain't it?) Anyway, that should give me time to catch up on all my back mail. Here is a suggested schedule:

August ish	:	Publication date	:	August 1st.
October	:	"	:	September 15th.
December	:	"	:	November 1st.
February	:	"	:	December 15th.
April	:	"	:	February 1st.
June	:	"	:	March 15th.
August	:	"	:	August 1st. etc...

These dates are, of course, subject to modification. So you see, you won't get any extra numbers for your money after all. Sorry...

You probably won't be getting any more French articles either (no wise-cracks please). We only enclosed the previous ones in order to please certain members, but as these are in the minority, we shall, in future, issue these articles as a supplement and only mail them to the concerned members. It's cheaper too...

In the present ish you'll find a story by the afore-mentioned "Jazz-hater". I shall not comment on it in case some people accuse me of being biased. I hope you like it anyway.

We have another Mercer "thing" here too. Something about "refusing-to-crack-windows". Well, according to Archie, but not according to my wife, maybe I was one of the lucky ones, because a few days ago one of our bedroom windows suddenly shattered into a thousand fragments... Queer ain't it? We were just getting ready to go out and I was closing the window - it doesn't close very well you know - when: BANG... it suddenly changed from a "virgin" pane into a beautiful mosaic.... Perhaps I shouldn't have slammed it so hard...

Before I go I should like to mention that our artist Jean Steer is about to commit suicide. Yes, you've guessed it: he's getting married; to a girl called Milly Vereecken. In December. I bet he gets cold feet by then... This of course explains the mediocre reproduction of what might have been beautiful illos... Anyway, we all wish you the best of luck Jean, and may you have lots of little fans...

That's all blokes and blake-esses. Remember if - repeat IF, you should have some brilliant ideas for a column or article or story that you think is simply terrific, just send it to me and we shall repay you a thousandfold... by sending you in return a beautiful, brand new copy of Alpha...

'bye now,

The Visitors

BY J. M. DUFFLACE.

The spaceship entered the upper atmosphere of the planet, its glow gradually assuming a reddish hue with the increasing friction.

The beings who handled the interstellar vessel were well-informed about the world they were going to visit, because they had studied it thoroughly from its nearby satellite.

The planet looked very much like their own native one. The electronic "stats" showed huge cities with large imposing edifices, all signs of a great civilization; so, the XxYzw were satisfied.

The ship was loaded with weapons of all descriptions. She had to be because there were many dangerous creatures on the planets of the galaxy. The members of the expedition were numerous, but that is only to be expected on such an interstellar journey.

But why had they come? and from where? Were they friendly or hostile? Scientists or warriors? We shall never know...

The space-vessel approached the surface of the planet. The motors thundered madly to slow its downward plunge. Suddenly they were cut off and the gravity beams took over. The XxYzw prepared for the landing whilst the Captain looked for a likely place to put the vessel down without causing too much damage. At last he found it: a wide stretch of ground at the foot of a huge grey hill.....



A few seconds later, the space-ship touched the ground, the gravity beams ceasing their faint buzzing. The vessel rolled a little and finally stopped. The beings from outer space clamoured excitedly: a new world had been reached, and two civilizations were about to meet....

An inhabitant of the planet approached the spot where the ship had landed.

The air-lock was slowly opening.... The XxYzw were ready....

The native came nearer and nearer.....

The air-lock opened wide, the beings were about to take their first step onto this strange new world..... then

Something crunched under the native's foot..... He didn't notice. He walked on.....

On the ground, tiny pieces of some metallic substance shimmered brightly in the rays of the setting sun.....

The "meeting" was over...

===== t h e e n d =====

" GLORIA IN EXCELCIS DEO "

The Rev. Kenneth Potter.

BASIL THROGMORTON is a pious man, a respectable individual. Nevertheless, he is a friend of my family. Often, I am inclined to wish he was no such thing, for to one who has as little use for piety and morals as myself, he is not pleasant.

How well I remember, when I was a small child, how Throgmorton would advance like some stealthy Indian behind me, and before I could squirm under the carpet, he would pat my head with syrupy affection. Rather than dangle me on his knee, he would squeeze my body and prod me with his bony joint and say "Remember little boy, Jesus is your saviour!" "Yes" I would reply.

This Throgmorton was the life and soul of any Sunday School picnic. One he saw a drunk in the gutter and fainted. Another time, he put half a crown in the collection by mistake and such was his piety that he didn't even bother to reclaim it. His life is full of beautiful incidents of that nature. Here then, we have a veritable Saint. From his tendril-like toes to the tip of his icicled nose, he is the epitome of all that is upheld by moral philosophy.

I remember one incident that happened years ago. I was seated in a large armchair, my feet barely touching the ground. I was absorbed in my copy of "How to desiccate a human stomach" or something equally well known, when Throgmorton entered. He moved - if such is possible - statuesquely; a clear light shining from his eyes. His bearing was decorously airy. He squatted on his haunches in front of me and leered piously. On seeing the title of my book he winced almost imperceptibly and firmly took it away from me. He looked piercingly into my eyes. His voice was insinuating, triumphant and yet he seemed to be confiding in me. "My child" he said, "I have found it". He went limp... "What?" I inquired. "My innermost soul" he hissed dramatically. "My purpose, my truth, my Saviour, my light, my way, my life..." He had ever been a Christian top drawer type, so I was somewhat surprised by this demonstration. I imagined he had for some time been in full possession of all the things he had mentioned.

He explained thus "Till now I have known only an indefinite purpose, half-defined... But it is all here in this book." He threw a glim volume at me "You may have it, child" he said, "for it has done its work for me".

Having observed that the title was "Come friend, save thy soul", I waited until he had departed, burnt it and once more became immersed in stomachs.

Now, deservedly or not, that incident has stuck in my mind. It only adds to my interest in what happened last week... Throgmorton had been for some time rarning his cock-eyed Theology down the unwilling throats of so-called "primitive peoples". He was of course under the impression that he was a hero. But lately he became almost humble, and last week... he stumbled, yes actually stumbled into our front room, looking positively broken. I had not seen him for a number of years but I still recognised him. This time he didn't call me "My lad" or "My Child", he did not patronise me.

" Ch..." he sighed, " I've been such a fool." This statement, coming from Throgmorton, was amazing.

" Why " I inquired.
He buried his head in his hands " Let me start at the beginning" he said. " With pleasure" I replied.

" I was in Manchester some weeks ago" he began "and there, in that City of dreams, it happened..."

" What happened ? " I asked, all agog.

" I'm coming to that " he said testily. " I was seated on a park bench, reading " How to save your soul by collecting Yaghort labels" when I happened to look up.. " he paused dramatically. " I had a vision", he said. " Standing there, above me, was a tall being... no, I must not call him a man, he was so divine." His eyes bored into me; " And then " he uttered, trembling visibly with emotion, " and then, he gave me the key to all the mysteries of the Universe". His eyes glazed over and he lifted his head and stared unseeingly at the sky.
" Go on " I urged breathlessly.

" It is all here, in my pocket " he continued, " the beautiful hidden meaning of it eludes me at the moment, yet I know there is a meaning, for I cannot forget the being. He was surely the Lord himself in the guise of man". He fumbled frantically in his pocket and at last he found it.

" Look" he said, " but do not touch it with your gross hands" . He came a little closer to me and held in front of my eyes a little yellow card, on which were inscribed the words :

(cont. on p.11)

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DEPARTMENT OF LOST (or forgotten) OBJECTS.
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Post today has been rather heavy, what with various fan and propublications being shoved through the mailbox. Most likely because I had just finished the fanzine reviews, and made out the rough draught of Iit's Corner. So it is useful to have odd space like this slinging around. Please note that Capt. Ken P. Slater, as from now, wants his mail sent to 22 Broadstreet, SYSDON, Leics. England. In the batch of CF material enclosed, I found a scrry item of news on the convention survey: CONSURI. What is the matter with you fans: don't you care whether it's a holiday camp or a hotel party you'll attend? From my mail it seems there'll be two conventions next year. Please won't you get together! If you'll all fill in these CONSURI circulars, perhaps there will be a majority either way, at the present it's just some saying this, others something else. Let there at least be a show of organisation, even if only to break down. KAYMAR TRADER 88 for October 1954 also arrived. With interest I noted that this mag also has started to carry articles/and/or reviews, which will make it all the more welcome. But how it makes my mouth water! All those bargains, and me without ready cash! One of the too often forgotten, or simply taken for granted, fanzines is FANTASY TIMES. Another change of address: Pandon House PO Box 2361 Paterson 23, New Jersey. Fancy squeezing a house in a box, and still finding room to publish a regular newsheet, a veritable goldmine of information on the profield in the USA, with regular notes on the British fields, and occasional ventures into the sf situation in other countries. Like ours. Send 10 cents for a sample, or better still, one dollar for 12 issues. And I'll probably have still more, but this is IT.

THE EVEN STRANGER CASE
OF THE UNBROKEN
WINDOWS

by

*John Chee
Moore*

Teun Van Ingen's piece in Alpha 6 started it all... "Why", I demanded of nobody in particular, "should Mr. F. Smith, Mr. F. Woods, and Mr. Van Breedam all be able to have their windows mysteriously broken when mine weren't even scratched?" It wasn't fair. At one haphazard stroke of an unidentified object each of them could have his name blazed across the headlines of the world, whereas I was doomed to remain unknown, uncared for and unheard of. Besides, if it could only happen to me, I'd be able to write a follow-up to Teun's article, and so keep those Antwerp characters quiet for a bit. Altogether, it was high time something was done about it.

So... I called for Sticky.

Now Sticky, be it known, is a little phenomenon who's been on my personal strength for a great many years, and whose function it is to break things. Anything at all, from a girder to a gramophone needle. So long as it has anything to do with me, Sticky's sole aim and object in life is to break it. "Sticky", I asked him, "do you think you could contrive to smash a window or two for me?" Mysteriously you know, so that the missile can't be found; like all these car windows in Surrey."

"Aw, gimme a break", Sticky protested; "First I tear the skylight from its hinges, then I bust your gramophone spring, then I crack up your free-wheel and make you walk to work for a week, and now... you want me to put in overtime yet. Aren't you ever satisfied?"

"That's all very well" I returned, "Every time it's most inconvenient for me, you go and break something. Now I've got something really useful and constructive for you to do, you begin coming the old ab-dabs. Make it just one window if you like. You needn't actually break it, just crack it slightly, so long as it happens mysteriously enough for me to make something of it."

"Go and do it yourself" snapped Sticky peevishly. "I'm busy". The outhouse hasn't collapsed once since we moved here". And he took himself off in a huff. There followed a crash - but it was only a fallen branch from the cak-tree hitting the roof, so I shrugged and summoned his pal Wrinky.

Wrinky (short for Wrinklebotham) has also been with me a long time - the same time as Sticky in fact - (there is a third one, Meldy, who paints things with mildew, but he's not really attached to me personally; he was in the caravan when I bought it). Wrinky's speciality is making noises. He's an acoustic little phenomenon. He it is who rattles things on the shelf when I turn over in bed; who makes my bike squeak whenever it rains; who produces discordant overtones from the soundbox during my favourite records. I found him in a very good mood. "Archib, I've got a simply wonderful idea", he enthused. "You know that high trumpet in the Second Brandenburg? Well I've been thinking, next time we play it, I can get a lovely vibration going in that bit of iron you've got over where the skylight used to be. Just made for the job... Wait 'till you..."

"You leave my skylight alone, Wrinky", I admonished severely. I've had quite enough trouble with the swine already, without you playing "Tin roof blues" on it. Look here, can you set up a vibration that would shatter a couple of windows? so's it'll all seem mysterious and inexplicable?"

"Sorry", said Wrinky. "Union rules. That's Sticky's job. I make the noises and he does the damage. And that's flat", he added, as some crockery rattled in the cupboard.

"I don't know why I ever keep you lot" I complained.

"You try getting rid of us, Beother", threatened Wrinky, "Just you try"....

I saw what he meant, sighed, and went to our traditional stand-by: the police. They were very sympathetic and recommended a local house-breaker of high repute, with whom they had frequently had dealings in the past.

"Did you say windows or widows?", the housebreaker said when I had said my piece.

"Why? what have widows got to do with housebreaking?"

"Nothing, really. But I also do some homebreacking on the side. Now only the other day".. he went on, "a bloke asked me to break a glass window for him, and I thought he'd said "a grass widow"... Point is, if she's a genuine bona-fide widow, there oughtn't to be anything left worth breaking. But he said he wanted to give her a new pane, so I said "O.K." and went along to do it. Bloke was real cut up about it and made me do the other job for free. Turned out she was a proper smasher though, so I just about broke even. However, I gather you're only interested in a window with an "W" in it".

"A hen in it?" I echoed. "Not in my windows there aren't. A couple of spiders maybe and a dead fly or so, but nothing bigger than that."

"I didn't say a hen, I said an "N". N for nothing."

"Well, thank you very much", I returned, because I'm not much good at driving a bargain. "Can you do it mysteriously, through the medium of some incomprehensible manifestation of supernatural phenomena that's entirely and absolutely inexplicable?"

"Huh?"

I endeavoured to explain as best I could.

"What you want" he told me then, "isn't a housebreaker. It's a ruddy magician". So I took him at his word and sought out the ruddiest magician I could think of - Rodolfo the Red-Nosed, past president of the local magic circle. (He reigned last year). I found him deep in the throes of scrubbing some dirty miracles with Miracle Cleanser.

"Can I be of the slightest assistance?" he enquired genially. "I can't do anything for you to-day I'm afraid, but I'll probably have some time to-morrow, or, as the French say "leisure demain"... Any nice women want cutting in half? If so, let's see them."

"I really want..." I began, but he cut me short. "E'you know, I once cut a woman in half, using nothing but a sheet of sandpaper. She was quite sore at me for a couple of days too, said I'd been too coarse-grained and rubbed her up the wrong way. Or... there's my famous Hat..."

"No thank you, I don't want any rabbits" I put in, "I just want..."

"Rabbits? Whoever said anything about rabbits? Kiddies' stuff. I produce elephants from MY hat. Only small ones of course" he amended hastily, before I could call him Bighead. "Or I eat live coals- I'm

red-hot at that." He stopped to take a breath and I managed to get my piece in during the interval.

"What ??? Certainly not. What the hell d'you take me for, a wizard or something? he demanded abruptly. "Go away then, can't you see I've got work to do?" And I left him busily scrubbing his miracles, which reminded me that I still had a last resort left, so I went straightaway to an odd-job man I knew of who advertised his establishment under the corny slogan "THE IMPOSSIBLE WE DO AT ONCE" - MIRACLES TAKE A LITTLE LONGER". I found him in and once again delivered my unusual request.

"What d'you mean exactly ?" he asked me. At that precise moment there was a sharp crash and the window shattered.

"There"! I exclaimed triumphantly. "Like that." Can you do it?"

He gave me a long look. "I don't know whether this is supposed to be funny, or what", he said slowly, "But if you're not out of here within ten seconds flat....."

I was out in five.

I returned to the caravan and its virginal windows, thoroughly disgusted with life. Nothing, I reflected bitterly, ever happens to me. Flopping down on the bed, I opened the lid of the gramophone, prepared to drown my sorrows in 6:8 time. I put a needle in the sound-box, pulled down an album, selected a congenial fig... when....

"Sticky!" I yelled. "STICKY!!!" "Who the blazes made all these little round holes right through the middle of all my records ???"....



BA.

FANZINES

through the
ii of jj

I have decided to publish fanzine reports separately for no other reason than I felt like doing so. Some will undoubtedly suggest: just to add another feature to the contents page. Have it your way - though I am thinking of dropping that page, and using it for other material. Which will only follow the recent trend in fanzines to do away with contents and page numbers. I do not agree on the latter though.

But let's start on the reviews, such as I find room for.

ANDROMEDA from F. Campbell, 60 Calgarth Rd Windermere, West., England is around again, changing drastically from a 50-page fiction 'zine to a 4 to 8 page newsheet, issues supposedly weekly, but liable to be delayed. After two issues, I wouldn't yet give an opinion on whether it is worthwhile, though a capably handled newsheet for pro- and fan matters could be of real service.

BEM 3 Tom White 3 Vine Street Cutler Heights Bradford 4 & Mal Ashworth. Another excellent production, only slightly below the level set in their two first issues. Though the reprint makes more than up for this. Still one of the best humorous zines in fandom. Archie Mercer delights readers with the antics of mice at a convention - with Viné fighting wars at sea. Easily worth the 1/6 per 2 issues asked.

FRANSCHUSS from Ken Potter 5 Furness St Marsh Lancaster. Better ask him how to get hold of a copy. It's rather complicated. A third of this is reserved for a conreport by Ken ably done, and informative. Bob Bloch and Mal Ashworth have excellent articles included, and Irene Gore's detailed statistical life-story (and measurements) was good reading. Good start off, keep it up.

CHIGGER etc. once a year, perhaps twice from Bob Farnham, 204 Mountain View Drive, Dalton, Georgia, US. Sorry twice yearly, perhaps 3 times. Nan Gerding seems to stick to publishing alone nowadays. How come?

A fanzine graded to have something for every taste. From fan articles,

to articles on the pro-field, good fiction, and various 'help this scheme' adverts. Listing of current fanzines by Russell Watkins deserves special mention. Good at 15d. HYPHEN 1C: Walt Willis 170 Upper Newtownards Rd Belfast Great Britain (just to be different) at 1/6 the two, still the best of the crop. Slant's serial on the FTS is continued here, as Slant has def been shelved. With the FTS story I rank Bob Shaw's story as best, though the various columns manage their usual excellent standard.

"i" Stu Mackenzie 5 Hans Place, London SW 1 - despite its nearly eighty pages was a sorry disillusion. Over thirty pages devoted to the convention, in fiction and in fact, was slightly overdoing it. Slightly? It might have been alright if it had preceded the others it might have been OK, but coming so late -- though the reports and fanstories were well done. Fubb's The evil that fan do fairly steals all honours, though the short Lind-say piece was admirable. I'd personally prefer less pages, more often. Too much spoils.

Even so, you'd better send that 2/- for their Xmas issue.

PHANTASMAGORIA 2, back to its old half foolscap size, has Nigel even better than above. Mercer's piece fell through mainly because of the lack of knowledge of the music in question. Still free for a letter of comment.

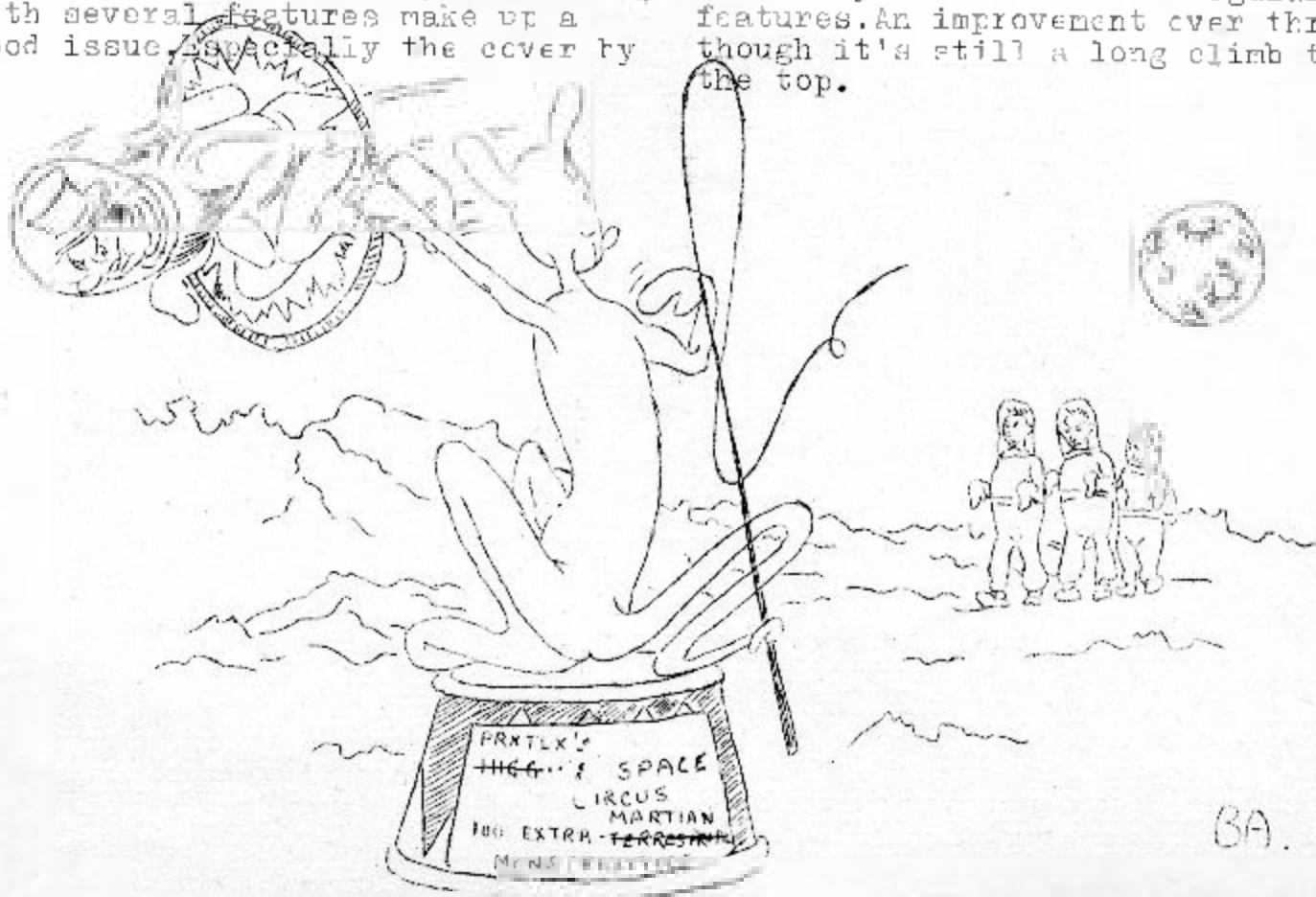
PIJOY 2 (the worst duplicated 'zine to arrive here) from Ron Bennett, Ronhill, Little Preston Hall Rd, Swillington, near Leeds. Luckily the contents are good, a shame really to have them manhandled like that. Viné Clarke makes some good points on New Fanzines, especially on the multitude of these newcomers (including us, though we will fall outside the scope of this article I trust?). Though, saying that you have a solution, I see no reason why you shouldn't come out now and say it. If you have to wait for another Floy, and yet another!

When the reproduction of this mag equals its contents, it will be good indeed. Ploy 3 may be reserved at 2/- a go. Rate of delivery not guaranteed, but someday.

PSYCHOTIC, Richard Geis 2631 N. Mississippi, Portland 12, Oregon. US. 20¢ This magazine has received some top rate polling, and seeing it, I have to agree that it is exceedingly readable, in repro and in material. I'd pick out this or that, but for the fact that I enjoyed the whole lot. Paging through it reveals Geis, McCain, Ellison, McLeod, Carr, and other US fans at their best. A magazine I recommend heartily.

SATELLITE 3 the North East mag, from Don Allen, 3 Arkle Street, Gateshead 8, Co Durham. 5/- for 4 issues or 1/- each. Late reviewing it, but then I only just received it. The articles here are rather to the serious side which is not a disadvantage, and are competently written. Joan Burns has some originality of idea in going off on clothes of the future, but doesn't penetrate far enough into the subject. Other articles are on writing stories, and spaceports. A short story, quite neatly presented, with several features make up a good issue, especially the cover by

Jim Cawthorn deserves mention. Decidedly good work. SFACESHIP 26, Eck Silverberg, 76C Montgomery Street, Brooklyn 13 NY 10¢ or 25¢ for three. Richard K. Verden has a critical comparison of Flayer Piano, Space Merchants, and Limbo. I haven't seen any of Verden's work before, but with this he shows a capable method and a fine style of work. The rest of the mag is taken up by comments on FAPA publications, and by odds and ends from the pen of the editor. Strange how I always fall for these odd unrelated items. UMBRA 4 John Hitchcock 15 Arbetus Ave. Baltimore 28 Md. US While the reproduction has certainly improved it isn't all it could be. That fans are interested in most any field is shown here by an article on Natural History in Water Pipes. Based on research through dusty newspaper files, in an effort to prove that beer is safer and healthier than water. Not humorous but darn straight reporting, I must chuckle at the thought of the things fan do. The rest of the mag is nearly all devoted to regular features. An improvement over three though it's still a long climb to the top.



BA.

THE PLACE WE
KEEP JUST TO
PROVE THAT AT
LEAST ONE FAN
STILL REMDS OF

Dedicated to
Ted Carnell

AUTHENTIC No 50 - The magazine devoted to features. Honestly, aren't you overdoing it a bit, Mr Campbell?? Admittedly, it gives the magazine a more 'honey' atmosphere than is usual with the pro-field, but we do (at least I do) get the mags for science fiction, not straight fact. No 50 features a not-too-good story "IT TAKES TWO" by Ken Bulmer. It ended rather disappointingly, where the hero sets out on a mission which should prove to contain far more interest than this story. How about trying Ken? As for the four stories left (Cubb, Duncan, Lane and Smith) - only just above middling. Making up for the rather low quality fiction (to me) are the departments devoted to fanon, and letter column. Worth it's 1/6, but at 35c??

NEW WORLDS no 29 - November 1954. The best magazine in England, one of the five best in the world, in this chap's estimation, the current issue did not fail to meet the standard of the last year. Starting off with Ian Wright's suspenseful novelette THE MESSENGERS, this ish also carries excellent shorts by Bester and Kornbluth, with almost as fine work by Tubb and DR James. Of course, reading the amount of sf I do, in spite of all the time spent in fandon, it is annoying to find so many reprints from American jobs or mags, tho' this should not deter readers from sampling the mag, and subsequently subscribing. All this and book reviews too, for 1/6.

3. A CEWAY Dec 1954 appearing after a silence of about four months, still featuring in preference the old prowar type sf (and authors), though it would perhaps be better to just call it space-opera? In THE FESTIVAL OF WARS, Charles Eric Maine tells of the visit of extra-terrestrials in their (obviously) FS, and their intention of taking part in the World Festival held in

the USA. Quite good. Best of the five short stories is M.B. Wolf's HUNGER, with the "7000 STEPS" by Hallam and Loring following close. The other three are but so-so. Also included, the 1st of three parts of John Taine's THE COSMIC GOIDS, now a fantasy classic. There are the 2 articles, one by Garret Ford: FS are from Mars; the other by Dorry Acker: man:scientific film Parade. But 35c???

FICTION no 12 - November 54. For its array of translated and original fantasy and science fiction, this magazine deserves compliments on the excellent quality set and maintained throughout its first twelve issues. Having recommended it to a British friend, I can but quote his letter: "I have been so impressed with FICTION that a week or so back I took the unprecedented step of writing to the editor." Besides original stories from Belgian author Thomas Owen, and one by Lucie Derain, the translated items read like the contents page of the best of anthologies: Evelyn Smith, Blish, Porges, Phillips, Kornbluth, Mack Reynolds, Sam Merwin & Coppel. Can one ask for more? One of the best review columns on books and films are regular features. And for 17,50 or 10c.

1F December 1954: to this one I will have to come back later. As it only arrived this morning I can not comment, but for its fine appearance, which I hope the stories can compare with. 35 cents, and the 1st copy of 1F to arrive here since 2 years ago.

HAPNA, October and November, whilst not of interest to Wim Struyck, might be so to other general collectors. It certainly is THE best produced of prozine I've yet seen. pity it's Swedish instead of Flem. 13 Sw.Cr. yearly 12 issues.

Cont. from page 5

IF YOU DIDN'T WANT
CROTTLED GREEPS
WHY
DID YOU ORDER THEM?

by Shirley Marriott (with rude interruptions by the Editwerp)

-?-?-?-?-?-?-?-?-?-?-?-?-?-?-?-

Although somebody once said they did think I was sane, even they wouldn't say so after the hectic week-end I have just spent in London.

After losing my way, I finally managed to track down the home of the tallest storyteller in fandom (that's right, I mean Tedd Tubb; he's well over 6') and then only after wandering around for over an hour, in reply to directions given to me by some of the inhabitants of S.E. London.

I was just in time to say good-bye to the great Viná, who was about to try and find some conveyance to get him home. As he did not come back I presume that he actually managed it, by broomstick I think...
\$ Witch way did he go Shirley ? \$

Next morning, when I had woken myself up sufficiently, I made my way to the West-End and as I made a dash to cross the road, I very nearly ended up in hospital or the Morgue, but luckily a hand grabbed me and the owner of the car asked me - in the thickest, broadest, widest American drawl - whether I was trying to take hell out of the car, or trying to get hell to take me... Well, for once I didn't know what to answer \$ come now...\$ but ended up going out to lunch with two guys from Kentucky.

After eating a large plateful of spaghetti, with cheese and tomato sauce (why doesn't someone invent spaghetti that doesn't wriggle? I'd personally hand them a large medal), \$ try "crottled greeps" next time, they're not so messy \$ - we went to see "The Egyptian", which was all about a man who worshipped "Chu" before he was dreamed up.

At eight o'clock I got on the tube to find Hans Place. After ringing all five bells on the door, \$ Old Stu must be a little hard of hearing ...\$ nothing happened. Suddenly, someone else appeared on the doorstep and with one ring from him, the door opened... and we entered. Somebody introduced me to my friend from the outside, took my coat and showed me where to leave my things. \$ what things ? \$

Although it was originally to have been fancy dress, hardly anyone turned up in it, so I stayed the way I was... \$ just fancy!\$ When I had made my way to the Festival Hall, it seemed remarkably quiet for a fan-affair. This was soon rectified however when Ted Tubb and "The Ecard" got us sitting in a circle \$Traditional ?\$ trying to conjure up the spirits. To help us get into the feel of things, we were given the special brew to drink, consisting of neat alcohol and bats' blood, with a little grated, dissolved newt's leg to add a delicate flavour. \$ that's the spirits \$

When they had us swaying and humming to their liking, they kept us at it for nearly half an hour. Bad man Newman kept us liberally supplied, but even the floor belonging to such fans as the Mackenzies gets a bit hard on the hindquarters. \$ Oh, my Chili Bom Bum...\$

The police only came once to see what was happening, but only about two people realised they had been at all until we were told next morning...

Sherry, gin and "hooch" all mixed up soon made everyone happy with the exception of one person (not guilty) who became slightly ill. \$ name please. \$

Of course, there was the usual grouping of bodies in odd corners and on the beautiful soft divan. \$ I knew it \$ Somehow I was with a yellow alien all night. \$ Name please \$ An alien with antennae and a bent cigarette holder which somehow got mislaid in the early hours... \$ I bet it did \$

Another peculiarity of this alien was the fact that although it had only two visible arms, it somehow managed to find a couple of others besides - invisible ones \$ I wonder what for? \$

One of the persons enjoying the drinks and things (perhaps I should not term it "things", someone might feel insulted) was supposed to be "on business" somewhere else, at the time... The lies we tell. But somehow I think he thought it was worthwhile. \$ Perhaps he wasn't entirely untruthful; he obviously meant "monkey business" \$

As morning came, people started to drift away and the wreckage began appearing. Nothing very serious, but it was the over-all effect that was pretty horrible, especially to my half-doped senses.

Before I left, they had started to tidy up. Somehow I do not think there are many places in London where you can see someone sweeping up in a long party dress... They looked even weirder when arrayed in the trousers from the alien's costume. Anyhow, we managed to have a good laugh at everything even then.

As I went out of the door, I began to think that they had teleported me to Manchester; the rain was streaming down and every car that passed by made a point of splashing me \$ Must have dampened your ... spirits \$

When I finally arrived back at Waterloo station, in time to catch the 7.30 train, they kindly informed me that it didn't run anymore, so this is being written in a jogging carriage, at half-past ten on Sunday night \$ I thought there was something "wobbly" about it \$

My eyes are propped open with a couple of matchsticks and I am yawning in time to the rattle of the wheels \$ Hear that? you hep-cats! \$ when I reach home I am going to fall into my bed \$ nothing like a change and sleep, and sleep and sleep.... \$ you'll be late again \$

In any case, this lost \$ my fault \$ week-end was something I would not have missed for anything \$ except perhaps a trip to Antwerp \$

As we are now entering the station, I must collect my rubbish and prepare to run for a taxi, because busses stop running at 11 p.m. Besides, it's a quicker method of reaching my bed, to sleep... to rest... perchance to dream.....

And what a crazy nightmare it will be

S.M.

\$ Gee thanks Shirley. This "Halle Wien" affair seems to have been a roaring success by what I can make out. But I've got a sneaking suspicion there are many more things you have left out... I mean the juicy bits... Oh well... By the way, I'm sorry about the \$ I had to use. Ain't got nothing else. I thought that a money sign would attract attention... Did it? Oh....

DV.

AMBROSIA

Postage to Europe

4s

HCIE TIGHT... Here comes another batch of missiles from the corners of Fandom. There are a few from the near corners too, but I'll let you sort them out yourself.

Being a "gentleman" I naturally put the ladies first, so HATS OFF to

MARIE-LOUISE SHARE : Your letter of Sept. 19th. reached me several days ago and ALPHA to-day. I'm so GLAD (the capitals are Marie-Lou's) to know you both, because you are obviously two of the most fascinating (I almost said characters) gentlemen I've ever heard of. I have already been told things about you - nice things - from St Mackenzie, but I was truly delighted by so warm and friendly a letter. Dave, shall we be mail-order friends? or have you got a Roza too, and if so, what's her name?

The interlineations in Alpha are wonderful and the piece I most enjoyed was that "smashing report" by Teun Van Ingen. Right here in our locale we've had numerous samples of the windshield shatterings he writes so entertainingly about. What I consider the most fascinating of all his theories is the idea of "wee creatures trying to shoot a hole or doorway into our dimension". Gave me chills after I'd thought about it awhile. Do you know what Nance said when I read the article to her? She is of the opinion that Mr. Van Ingen ought to be locked up and the key thrown down the nearest john. Seriously, it seems to me he omits the one really plausible (sp?) answer to a good many cut of the way of currencies lately - the series of atomic blasts... A good many people sneer at me when I venture this opinion, but it doesn't stop me from offering it. I liked Vince Clark's report, but then I like to read anything he writes. Wish he'd do something for H.P. (She means "Hodge Podge", not the sauce-TV). And your editorial Dave was interesting. I like Jazz too, that is, the Dixieland variety. In fact, I earn my salary at it. You haven't lived until you've heard me play Fats Waller "Ain't misbehavin'", and anything else he wrote. I have a style similar to his but NOT acquired; it comes naturally....

Jan, you seem to be all over Alpha; such drive and energy fills me with envy. I love your style of writing, you ramble along just like I do. I just noticed how close that misused word Love is to Jan... Oh well, Roza might just well overlook it... (she might... eh Jan? DV)

+++ - We seem to have made a good impression on you, Marie-Lou. Still you impressed us too, with your Ompa "CAPRICE". Jolly good. I should like to thank dear Stu for saying such nice things about us. When (and if) I come to London again, I may even buy him another drink. No M.L., I haven't got a Roza... but I've got a "Yvonne". That's just as bad isn't it? (or good?) However, that shouldn't prevent us from becoming friends... after all, there's a lot of water and stuff between us. I don't think your sister is a very nice person, saying those disrespectful things about Teun Van Ingen; such a nice chap too (I think surprised I am that you didn't catch on to Van's "handle"... As you know, the symbol "¢" stands for cents doesn't it? and being as Vincent's name is really Vincent, the abbreviation she very obvious is, yes no? So you like and play jazz do you? Good. We are going to be friends... How about coming over to Belgium (or U.K.) and we'll organise a "Jam-Con".

MAL ASHWORTH : " I'm glad you brought up the subject of Jazz in your
----- last "Calling All phans " (another instance of how you
two always seem to do just the right things at the right times) becau-
se if you or someone else hadn't done it, I was going to do it myself
somewhere or other. As for the people who are jazz fans to start with,
well I'm told that Ghed himself over in Belfast has a collection of
over 200 records (traditional I believe - naturally, in accordance with
Ghed's impeccable taste) so I suppose he must be a "jazz fan"; then the
re's the Lancaster group en masse (Ken Potter, Dave Wood, Harry Hanlon
and Irene Gore) who are fans of both Traditional and "This horrible mo-
dern stuff", and Ron and Laphne Buckmaster (Traditionalists), Norman
Sherrock and Dave Gardner of Liverpool (Traditionalists I believe), Ron
Bennett of Leeds, editor of Play (Traditionalist) Erian Lewis (Swing
and modern driven I think) and I seem to remember being told that Harry
Turner "digs" Chicago style jazz. Moreover, Derek Pickles, though not
exactly a fan, enjoys Traditional jazz and is pretty knowledgeable a-
bout it, and I have a sneaking suspicion that Wm. P. Temple may have been
a Jazz fan at one time, though whether he still is - if he ever was - I
don't know. Anyway, that's quite a parcel of us that we know about (if
I've remembered everybody I know about, which I very much doubt) and
there must be plenty more that we don't know about.

It causes me great pain of course to know that you, Dave, are really
a "cool jazz" enthusiast; you see, I had formed the opinion, before
you mentioned it, that you were a really intelligent sort of character
and then "zowie" right out in public, in cold print, you admit you are
a "cool" jazz (why man, the very terms are a contradiction) fan... ugh!
(careful Mal- DV) I shudder at the thought. Still, seeing as we're all
s.f. fans together. I suppose we shall have to learn to live together
in ~~harmony~~ hot rhythm. What wouldn't I give to get on those skins that
you beat for just a quarter of an hour. I've never had a chance to show
Krupa how it really should be done yet.

As for meetings of jazz fans at conventions, oh but yes, by all means.
I suggest we use the Transfanfund to bring Louis Armstrong over to the
next Convention.... "

++ - Thanks for the info. Mal and if you could come to Antwerp you
could "have a bash" for a couple of hours if you liked. We could
fix up a special "Jam session". How about it?
If I'd known you'd sent Jan a letter mentioning Jazz and that he'd lost
it, I should have insisted on a duel between you. I should even have
helped you in the choice of weapons. Such carelessness is unpardonable.
I'd challenge him myself if I could be reasonably certain of the out-
come, but supposing something happened to me... what would happen to
poor "Alpha" ?

What's all this "traditionalist" nonsense ? You'd think you blokes
hadn't cut your teeth yet. I can imagine you all liking the stuff -af-
ter all, most Englishmen are Traditionalists at heart - and I like it
myself too; yes I do, but I prefer "cool" jazz; it's more exciting and
advanced. I should have thought you scientific beds would appreciate
this "cool" stuff better, but I see that I shall have to be patient a
few more years... Are there any more Jazz fans about ? Let's have you.

MAURICE IURIN : You've a fine 'zine there, better than many U.S. mags.
----- You guys are a bunch, but I like you just the same.
I'd like you to fill up "A" with a few illos tho...

++ - Thanks for the compliments Maury. We try to please everybody of
course and for that reason we've included some extra illos in this ish.
Just for your sake. I'll bet you like us even better now...

RON ELLIK : ... the TWERP CON report did not scare me old man... I did
===== read it. You see, I find little time to read all the fan
zines that come through here. I read the places that might have my name
in them (sic) and whatever else promises interest after the first two
paragraphs. Especially in foreign mags, which hold little promise for
me. Hope you're not put out by my attitude... quite a few other fans
do the same thing.

Star Rockets n°11 or 12 carried a convention report similar to your
Twerpcon. It was titled a little less subtly than: "A report of the in-
ginary Bulloon". It wasn't much-- it was submitted to my mag first &
I rejected it. Just that I'd mention it.

+++ - It would appear that "EGOECCO" is all you Californian guys worry
about (no, not you Gregg). Maybe it's the proximity of Hol-
wood that causes the slight inflation of the local craniums... We
enjoy and appreciate a little flattery now and again, but we also try
to peruse and appreciate other people's efforts too. One of our reasons
(I think I can include Jan in this too)- for joining Fandom was to have
fun and also to enlarge our circle of friends; not to set ourselves up
as wonders... - Just that I'd mention it.

And now, last, but by no means least, we have something from :

CHUCK HARRIS : ... I think the nicest thing about ALPHA were the old
===== friends who keep popping up in its pages. I hardly got
started on it when I found my old friend Teun Van Ingen, and LC... he
still writing about Fortean phenomena, and still making it interesting.
Further on, in the letter column, I find yet another old correspondent
Jan Hillen. Jan mentions that he was in Batavia and I'm hoping that one
of these days he'll get around to writing his memoirs for some fanmag.
He disillusioned me about Bali, and it would do Fandom a lot of good to
get straightened out about those luscious dancing girls of Bali. Jan
swears there aren't any. I find him hard to believe, but he's been there
and his eyes are supposed to be pretty good...

Jan also mentions Ben Abas. I remember Ben. In fact, I remember
him every time I go into my room. He did me a couple of water-colour
paintings on fantasy subjects a few years ago and I have them decorating
my walls.

I don't know if Ben sees Alpha, but if he does, I suggest that you
get right after him for illustrations. He's better than Cartier and he's
a wacky sense of the ridiculous that should produce some very fine art
work for fanmags.

I enjoyed all of Alpha and am looking forward to future copies.

++++ - Glad you found so many old friends in A.6. Yes, Teun's article
seems to have gone down well. It also seems to have inspired
Ah-Chee Mercer to carry the whole thing a step further... I wonder
where it will all end ? ? ?

Now look here Mr. Hillen, what's all this nonsense about Bali ?
How about giving us the low-down on these "luscious" Bali women ? Not
too low-down of course...

In contradiction to my letter of October 4th., it seems that Ben
Abas is not dead eh Chuck ? In fact he's practically all over the ish.
Do you like the cover ? I think it's real cute. By the way, if you
got A.4 and A.5 (did he Jan ?) then you would have found Ben there too.
In A.4 : the cover; in A.5 : interior illes of the Twerpcon and the
"Rambling Woman".

And that's all as far as I'm concerned. Take it away JAN

So now what's happened? Not satisfied with having the first two pages of the fanzine, Dave takes the first pages of Ambrosia from me. So I always have to be receding, ever farther from that front page, where once my name stood out in the limelight. How much more can I take? Where will it end? Who cares?

But to read softly now, far out of the silence, the Voice returns, and WALT WILLIS SAYS:

I was tremendously impressed with Alpha 6 and now that I'm returning to fanac it's good to have the opportunity of telling you instead of letting you ESP it. Reproduction and presentation were of course impeccable, an object lesson to me. I liked the cover very much too. I knew you were publishing fairly frequently, but I didn't realise you were going Dali. (§To tell you the truth Walt, I didn't and still don't realise!§) - I thought at first that Van Ingen's article was one of those dreadful Fortean phenomena things, all silly speculation about inaccurate data, and so was all the more pleased to see it turn out to be a burlesque. I love the idea of motorists driving about with cages in their front seats to be popped on top of the windscreen when it shatters. The Americans would probably design cars where they were power operated, like the windows and steering. American cars do everything automatically for their drivers these days, except neck. - Viné's piece wasn't up to standard, as if he was tired or something. I wonder is he turned out? - The letters were fine, Elock the best as he is in any letter section he appears in. I Sympathise with Struyck in his not liking 'Shooting Line'. I was surprised at Terry sending it to you and at you having the courage to print it. It was essentially an exercise in word play and I'd be surprised if all your English readers got all the puns, let alone the poor Continentals (§??§). Vorzimer seems to have mellowed with age; I'm getting quite friendly and sensible letters from him nowadays. Wonderful what a little experience in fandom does for you. When I think what an ass I was when I started in it.....

§Reason why the American cars don't have any device for necking is obviously because drivers anywhere do it automatically. Terry didn't send it, that was Bentcliffe's idea; nor did I have the courage to print it. I was against it for just the reasons you mention. I refuse to comment on that last line. Too, too, too polite. Not like

DEREK PICKLES :

You so and so....printing little bits again from my letters - if you don't print at least 2 paragraphs (complete) from this missive, I positively refuse to write any more letters attempting to comment. I shall write Brunner-type Confessions letters. Faring my soul (wait while I change my shirt) to you....

§Attempting is as far as you usually get. Let's have confessions instead. I love them. §specially from people like

DAVE :

... Yes folks, I too have a confession to make. I took the liberty of censoring the letter which originally would have appeared here. I thought it was a little, shall we say : too revealing.

I sincerely hope nobody finds, and I think that some people might even be grateful....

after all, we have our own responsibilities to think of too haven't we?
O... Jan ?

MAURICE DELPLACE:

Charles has found a new member. A girl! Very young, sixteen or so, crazy about SF, but with a very severe father. He wants to know if A is decent. I think he'll agree, but if he sees that cover! Wow! But to go on about the girl: she must be clever, otherwise she wouldn't

like SF. She is certainly charming, nice looking, gay, joyous, all the necessary qualities.... Now Jan....

§I don't think I have to warn you. Sounds like its already too late. Poor guy. I pity you. Almost as much as MAL A-SHWORTH :

By all rights I owe you an awful lot of letter in reply to that extensive missive of yours and in thanks and comment about A6 but I'm afraid you'll have to forgive me if this is only short; the accursed fact of the matter is that I now have to start intensive (theoretically) studies for some business exams in March. In fact I'm already behind in my studies and it leaves me hardly any time at the moment for writing letters - even fan-type letters. This is a pity but I haven't yet got fed-up enough with it to commit suicide; that will probably come about November - watch out for the happy day! (§Make it the 20th will you?!). Like I think I told you about sixteen times already in this letter, A6 was just wonderful; Alpha may have some faults - I wouldn't be surprised if it has some tucked away secretly somewhere - but I'm always too fascinated with it to notice any. Leafing through the last issue now (I can always leaf through things better when there is no one else with me you know, a case of "Leaf well alone") the major impression is one of the neatness and tidiness. It is almost ideally produced I think and is neither too big nor too small; the Jean Steer cover is lovely and seems to me to be a sort of trademark of A now - they are a unique style of cover which appear only on A and sort of typify its very individual flavour. As someone pointed out it is slightly different from both British and American zines, and it is all the more enthralling for that. In the same line, the innovation of the Twerp is very welcome; he looks as though he might be a most amusing lil critter. I haven't the heart to dissect the interior as it hangs together so well that that would seem a crime, but your own columns (both), Ambrosia, and the Grunch episode were all outstanding. If I can't finish trying to comment now I shall just go on and on enthusing, and while you may not mind that, it's playing the very devil with the firm's notepaper...

§Whatever ideas you may have about Alpha, your name sure makes a good advert for it. And though I thank you for all the compliments you'd better check on cover artists. Seems there's Ben Abas on too. And if this goes on, it won't be only the interior hanging together. There will also be Dave and myself in the same position should the EMG find out. But let's turn to your partner

TOM WHITE:

Now that BEM 3 is at last posted and done with I dare to look into the direction of the corner in which I keep unanswered letters and uncommented fanzines. Ghod! - But things aren't really quite as bad as all that; I've read Alpha 6 --but the trouble is, I forget things; or rather I mix 'em up; so if I start to wander off about something in A5 blame it on the engrams. - Of course, I'm not really as bad as Mal tries to make out --he just tells everybody that I'm a dreamy sort of individual in a cunning attempt to make them blame all BEM typos on me; in actual fact I'm a perfectionist, and never allow more than ten types per page. - In actual fact I have a good memory really. It isn't often I forget to do anything I've set out to do. The whole sordid tissue of lies had been built up by that Ashworth character because I once put a stencil on the flat-bed back to front. - But that wasn't what made him mad, oh no! The trouble started when he told Walt about it and Ghod suggested we just keep on turning the handle (I know it was a flat-bed, who's telling the story!) until things came right again. He said that that was what he did and things always worked out in the long run even on a short run. - Of course I looked at the thing in a logical manner; I saw the flaw in Walt's argument straight away --that we were using a flat-bed and there wasn't a handle, so we couldn't turn it. Also (I pointed out) we pay for our paper, we don't have reams of it shipped to us by adoring neofans. And anyway (I said) by the time you'd written to Walt and got his answer, we'd cut another stencil and run the thing off.

Well, I don't know whether it was genuine hero-worship on Mal's part or whether he was just mad because I'd worked out all this in three days while he was still looking for the inky stencil (I'd burned it) but anyhow he was definitely peeved. - Ever since then he's been going around telling people that I'm eccentric, and trying to make them believe that he only bothers with me because I'm his poor old uncle.. Now what was I going to say ??? Darned if I can remember.

§Could it be Alpha? Certainly not Mal who seems to have become an obsession. But your worries will soon be over. He's had the foolish idea of throwing the gauntlet!

And here's a fellow wishing to pick up another:

DICK BILLINGTON:

You have an American representative don't you? If you don't just holler and I'll help. - Ving's report on the Twerpcon was hilarious. Sorry Dave (§Sorry Dick, should be Sorry Jan§) - better than yours. (§But your taste isn't impeccable!§) Those quotes sounded awful real. - Watzis? An A wish! I like the idea but what about Boggs dire forecasts about Annish pubbers going GAFIA after the big thing occurs. Puh-leeze, don't let this happen to Alpha.

§You really gave me the creeps with that last sentence. Had to reread the whole issue to find out if Dave or I had been making silly promises. You mixed Dave's comments and Ellick's letter, tho'. What a relief. Like hearing from

CHARLES BEN RIDDLE:

We had another hurricane scare here last Friday, as you may have read in your papers over there. It was called Hurricane Hazel (research into the whys of naming hurricanes after girls should prove interesting some of these days!) and it was thought that it might pass through here for a while... I was afraid that, after being so lucky with the last two storms, that the Riddle family would not be spared this time. Luckily nothing happened....

§One item I do regularly follow in the newspapers, Lee, though I hope never to come across Norwich in them. Research won't be necessary, you'll find out while Alice grows up.

Or perhaps the one-track mind

NIC OOSTERBAAN can help:

So Dave likes cool jazz whatever that may be (§Quite hot stuff, really!§) and I'm sure glad to hear that some fans do have other interests beside science fiction. Why don't you guys put out a fanzine sometime about the spare time hobbies of sf fans? Drinks and girls and stamps and drinks and girls and fishing and drink and girls and jazz and drinks and girls and girls and girls... Put that way it seems you'll be in the girlie mag business (§For the money we can make out of it?§) soon. (§In jail even sooner!§)... Now that you have introduced a French section to Alpha we may expect a Netherlands section too, sometime? (§If you'll supply the necessary dough, yes.§) So Eob Bloch expects something exotic when a Belgian stamp appears on an envelope. He seems to know a bit about you Southerners. (§Do you intend to start another War of Independence?§) You'll have to mail Alpha under white label some of these days....

§Eheer is best! YOU ought to know, since all Holland is plastered with posters bearing that legend. And I really wouldn't mind including an article or story in Flemish, Nic, there's thousands that would do lovely. only it's hard enough trying to scrape together enough cash to issue Alpha the way it is.

NIGEL LINDSAY knows so, and says:

Thanks for the bigger letter section, I know it takes a lot of stencils, but to hell with the expense I say, that is when it's not mine. (§One coin: ALL of you seem to agree about!§) Last Page was good... but I should think twice about going on a six-weekly schedule, much as I'd like to see more Aa. You may find that fan-publishing is taking up too much of your time, and then it suddenly

ceases to be fun.

§We're still a bit moot on that part. Though the factor Time is not to be passed by lightly, it's the Treasury that really worries me in this respect. I could perhaps number this issue 11, and call upon all of you to renew subs immediately ?
Or perhaps we could ask

RON BENNETT:

How do you get a section of long, interesting letters, like Ambrosia, worked up? So far all the letters I've had on FICY 2 read like : "Got the mag. Could be better. Why not try Hyphen? Willis." or "Got FICY. What is it? Have you seen Orbit? -Gibson.", or then "What the hell is the idea of sending me this damn thing? Not half as good as Tricde - Jeeves". Only faneds, who need the plugs, have answered. (§?§) Everyone else seems to think that because I've gone Gafia I've closed my bank account....

§One way is to besiege them with an endless flow of prose, usually they start blushing and finally reply... though it may take a year or more! Another method is publishing an Interesting 'zine. Like the one

DEAN GRENNELL publishes:

Thanks for the nice comments on Grue. Hope you'll like the next issue as well.... For all I know ALPHA may be the only fanzine since the world began to run a picture of Walt Willis with his pants down!....

§I couldn't be sure on that matter, but I have never seen one.

And that picture did stir up consternation,

ARCHIE MERCER crying out:

DOES Walt, as per the illo, REALLY wear sock-suspenders? Personally I tend to doubt it. Doesn't strike me as the type at all.... All this praise - good job I don't wear a hat. (Didn't you know - they call me Atlas.) But the bloke who thought I was better than Willis - I think he's prejudiced. Willis can describe ANYTHING, exactly as it happened, and make it sound amusing. Whereas I have to resort to all sorts of extraneous matter, and even then don't succeed in pleasing Everybody. (Alias Vinz.)

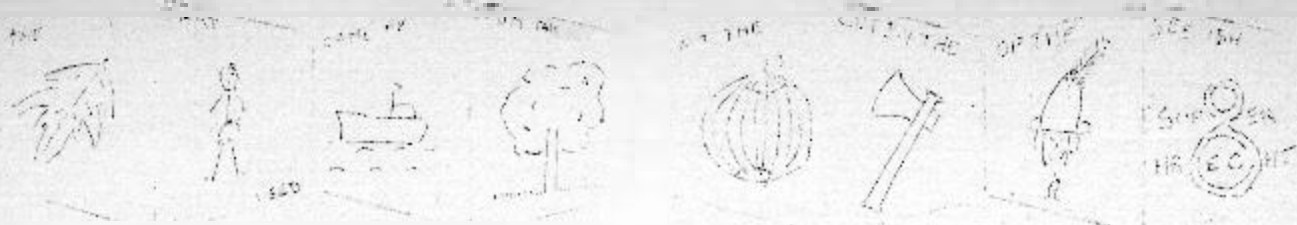
§As long as you and the others manage to please most Everybody, we'll be completely satisfied. Though it wasn't nice of Vinz to say he saw you at the Twerpoon, implying that your tale was, to say the least, untruthful.

And whereas I have to resort to all sorts of extravagant clippers to keep this section down to its allowed seven pages, I find I have succeeded so well in pleasing Everybody (Alias Dave) that I even have some twenty lines left. So

ERIC BENNICLIFFE found the latest Alpha quite enjoyable. Like the little Twerp, seems to be kin of a cross between Chad and a Gremlin, do you keep finding him in the duplicator smothered in ink ??

RON HALL (London)-You will not recognise the handwriting since I am in the process of altering my style - it should be noted that I am writing to you not because I think you are a nice chap, or because I owe you a letter, but merely to practise my new style. The last Alpha was great, you really got some collaboration! So good was it indeed that the next manuscript of mine, which is rejected by Ted Carnell will probably be forwarded to you for rejection! -You should keep this letter, by the way. In years to come it may be a collector's item as 'The First Letter Written by the Great R.A.H. in his New Handwriting!' (§ And I still can't read it, looks more like the scribblings of Sonja than those of an admittedly deluded handwriting writer. §)

§And that brings me to the end of Ambrosia. You've claimed it to be excellent, you've glorified it, and you want more of it - BUT it really depends on YOU. If you don't write in, we can't (we could, but won't) comment, or publish letters - so grab your pen, paper, pencil or typewriter - and don't forget: Ad to Europe!



INTO EACH ZINE - TIME BLOOD MUST FALL *D. E. Hingston*

ART WORK THIS PAGE MUCKED UP BY ME
The above is not really an accusation against myself, but serves BEA utifully as an indicator for justified margins. Amongst the letter mail today, there was one from Dick Geis saying: "I expect you found that justifying the edges of those two-column pages was a terrible chore. I am trying it in the next issue of PSY and finding it an incredible amount of work; work that doesn't seem justified. I doubt if I'll continue it."

Sure it ain't easy, but the looks of the thing. Perhaps you may have guessed, but I am at the present moment composing straight onto stencil, just to see how it works out, and though it doesn't seem ideal at the moment, perhaps it won't be too bad when duplicated.

Of course, quite a bit of US mail seems to be missing, the comments from over there having met their all time low. That is one nuisance of publishing too frequently. Dave told me he has set forth the publication date in his editorial, but I'm already worried over the dull summer I shall undoubtedly undergo if the plan is carried through. Of course, I have already made various plans to alleviate the period thus threatening me, but as usual, will there be sufficient money to carry these crackbrained schemes out? I suppose not, but I can hope!

So all of you are enormously captivated at the thought of receiving Alpha every six weeks! Until now learning we'd spend summer playing tennis, or some such thing!

Though judging from the contributions, it looks as if we will be writing most every issue ourselves or publishing only four pages. Some of you have willingly, and speedily answered our appeal. Others promise material in the near future. I hope it's near, too. Whereas some people stated in subsequent letters that they were honored at the request,

for material, I feel that it should be us who ought to be grateful to anyone accepting. Consider, you spend your valuable spare time slaving & sweating away over a piece of fiction, or an article. When you eventually feel satisfied with it, after possibly rewriting it two or three times, out it goes to the faned in question. After mailing it out, time passes slowly, dragging on until you have given up hope ever hearing about that particular article again. Then one day, in pops an envelope, postdated in the right town, and yes it is from that chap, and... Regret to state that we have had better material in the meantime, and feel we cannot at the moment use the effort which after all, isn't quite what we expected. No explanation as to what was wrong in the opinion of the editor nor any suggestion for improvement, possibly rewriting, the stuff. No, the above has not happened to me, simply because I have hardly sent anything but letters to anyone. But it often does turn out like that, and I feel even faneditors should show more appreciation of the various efforts received for possible publication. The French article in last issue is considered a success by most of our readers, delighted no doubt to find that they could at least follow the general trend. Except in Holland, as if we couldn't have guessed they'd start meaning for Dutch articles as soon as they received last ish. Well why not, just send me the cash, and for all I care, I'll fling a complete Dutch issue together. I don't mind, but not out of my pocket. (And if ever we two agreed...)

I have often wondered just how much time is spent by various fans every where on fanning. Perhaps those who do write would give me an idea of the time thus wasted(?) in the next letter they send? Obviously, figures will be very approximative, but just an idea of 'x' hours per week would suffice. Thanks.

Another day has passed, and today's Sunday the seventh. Alpha should've been mailed out today, but one thing and another have prevented us from getting it ready. Our stencillers are conspicuous by their absence which meant I had to do the headings to my own columns myself. Two may turn out fairly respectable but I managed to cut the stencil of Lib's corner nearly to bits. As to the idea on the previous page, we are allowed some idiosyncrasies I hope?

I'd been hearing about the review in Imagination for some weeks, some new subscribers turning up mentioning the magazine. Today, Madge herself arrived, and of course I was very pleasantly surprised at the rating received. Thanks!

A day after the story on the London party arrived, I received a more detailed account from Shirley giving the names of the characters. Strictly confidential I'm sorry to say. Though she does admit that doubtful events took place, by her signature Shamey. She ought to be. I have occasionally perplexed some fans by sending several letters to someone in England, and asking him to forward them to their final destination. To quote one: "Please explain in a convincing manner how your letter reaches me eventually postmarked Cheltenham, England. When my wife brought me the letter to the breakfast table I was afraid to open it in front of her in case it was part of my past catching up on me!" To explain it: letters from here to England are about six pence ha'penny, for which amount I can enclose easily three even four sheets. So that sending these, say three letters separately would cost me 1/8, now it's only 1/- . It does make a lot of difference, doesn't it. Also, I'm actually not paying for postage in England, as I had that money owing to me, thereby only paying just over sixpence for some five or six letters. Satisfied?

I shall be using the same method in other cases as well, but only as long as there's nothing of too confidential nature (or personal) in any of the letters. Still should

anyone be opposed to it, please let me know, I'll mail these direct. I have also received various requests for magazines published here, and not available in UK or US but am sorry to say, that at the moment I cannot fulfil any such requests, as there isn't a possible method of my obtaining same by trade arrangements, and I don't want to spend cash on it. It would take up far too much of the latter but I am willing to obtain same IF you forward the money. Certainly no objections in helping out any of you that way.

For information: US airmail arrives here in THREE days. Surface mail, letter post, 2 (East) to 3 (West) weeks, with printed matter only taking one day longer. UK two days for letters, printed matter three. But PLEASE: Postage on letters from UK is 4d. if it's just a letter, tho it may run to more if articles etc are enclosed. US is 6 cents surface and 15¢ airmail. Airletters at 10¢. I've had some 5/- postage due this month, so please guys, make a note! (Am I being too polite, again, Sean? Cheerio,

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Sample: how about ~~writing~~!
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Actually, this information is not only required by postal authorities, but is a statement subject to law and back such number para 13 something else.

Verantwoordelijke uitgever

Jansen Jan
229 Berchemlei
Bergerhout.

Uitgave van de Alpha Science Fiction Fan Club, waarvan bovenvermelde secretaris is, met KV als voorzitter. Graag bereid U alle inlichting en te bezorgen. Wou U betalen?