

ALPHA  
SCIENCE FICTION FANCLUB  
c/o JANSEN Jan  
229, Berchemlei  
BORGERHOUT



# ALPHA

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COVER : (illustrating a scene from "It didn't affect me") by WILLY ROMBOUT.

ILLUSTRATIONS by ESHM, STEER, ALLEN, ROMBOUT and cr... Dave (but I ain't talkin' see...)

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# First Page

Well, why shouldn't I call it first page? It is isn't it? After all, Jan calls his ed. "Last Page" and by Klono, he's right too for once. Only one page... the poor guy must be overworked. Come to think of it, so am I. This last week has been one big rush. I don't think I've worked so hard at the office for a long time, what with typing, cutting stencils, drawing fancy letters, copying illos on stencils, et cetera. Don't talk to me about fan-hours per week... in fact don't talk to me at all. I'm too busy.

I think you'll like this issue of Alpha. Why? Well, because er.... I think it's.... you see, we... well, hmmm, that's quite a good question. Actually, I don't really know why, although there's a lot of stuff in it (most I think Viné would call it); 34 pages of it. Naturally, it's not the quantity that counts, it's the quality. In any case there should be something there to please everybody (I hope).

Now here is the news and this is You reading it :

First of all, we must apologise for the delay in publishing the present ish. You will readily understand why when I tell you that it's supposed to be the April ish and of course should have been out on February 1st. However, we shall try and get the next one out on or around April 1st. That's the June ish of course. After that you will be left in peace until August 1st. Yes, there'll be no more A's after April for three long months. Ain't it awful? However, we have something else in store for you. Something even more 'orrible, but I'm coming to that in a minute.

The June ish (that's the one that comes out in April hatch) will probably be less bulky than this one owing to the scarcity of material. Unless some of you kind people send in loads of contributions and then it will probably still be less bulky, owing to a shortage of funds....

---

YOU have your GHU or OGGG, but all we've got is HARRY ROSCOE...

---

I have been favourably impressed by the eagerness with which some fen have received the various jazz discussions in last and previous issues of Alpha. The reason that the present ish contains only casual references to this great and noble art (quiet Paleface) is not because our love (or at least my love) for it has in the least bit diminished, oh no... but because I have decided to publish a special "Jazzine" during the summer, which will be sent to all jazz-lovers all over the world (?) and to some "cut of it", for a small consideration (you didn't think you were getting it for nothing did you?), the proceeds of which (if any) will be credited to the Club (that's us) for buying paper, stencils, stamps, and whatever else we may require for the publication of this world-shaking affair.

If anybody wants to send us something jazzy, we shall be very glad to publish it, unless of course it stinks... in which case

we'll keep it for a "smell-zine"...

The second item of news concerns the "Twerpecon. Yes, that old bogey has raised its ugly head again but this time it's on the level. Yes folks, the Twerps will be having a real con this time, complete with beer, girls, dancing, music and - who knows- perhaps even Shirley Marriott. Pete Vorzimer did mention coming to Belgium this year, but I think Jan gave him a scare... (after sending Pete a snap I'm not surprised). Still, it should be amusing anyway (the Con I mean) and anyone wanting to come along is quite welcome.

I can possibly take care of one person for the purposes of feeding and sleeping him. Male or female I'm not particular, but maybe my wife is. Jan, I think, can also take care of one person and I suppose we can always count on some other good Samaritans if necessary.

Joan and Milly Steer have kindly offered us their attic for the occasion, which seems to have been specially constructed for conventions... It is about 13 x 8 1/2 yards and has a small kitchen at one end with water laid on, and the other end can be partitioned off by means of curtains or lead sheets, according to necessity (Let's hope the necessity never arises). All in all, it should be an ideal place. Fear Mrs Steer....

The date for the Twerpecon hasn't yet been definitely fixed although personally I think the end of July would be a good time, don't you? However, the final details will probably appear in our next ish (that's the June one you know, that appears in the beginning of April), so.... you'd better start saving..... I think I'd better too!

Be seein' you,

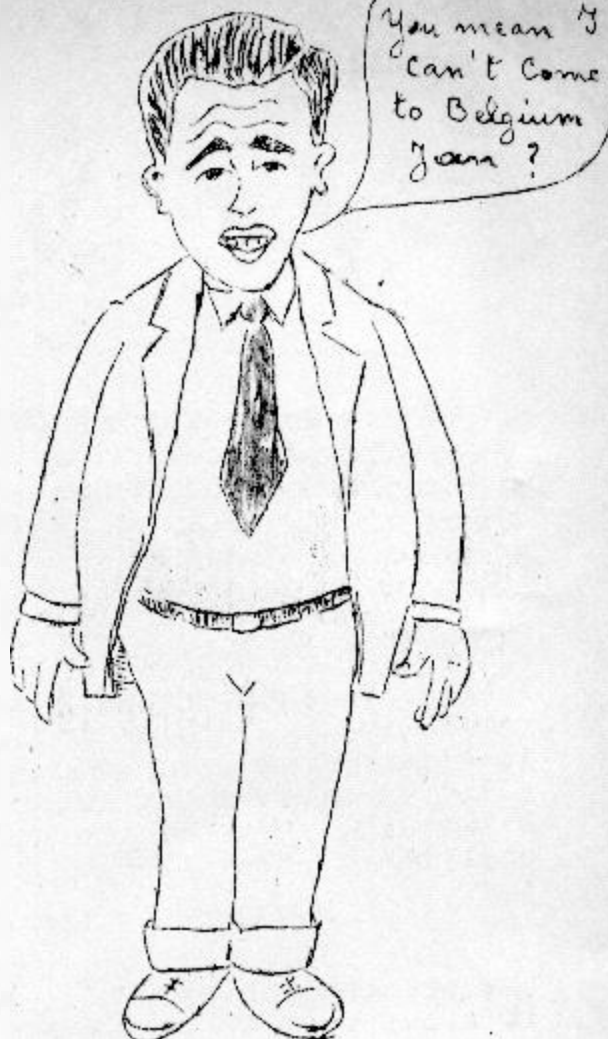
**IN MEMORIAM :**

It is with profound regret that we have to announce, to those of you who may, as yet, be unaware of the fact - the passing away of two good friends of ours : Dick CLARKSON of Baltimore, USA, and Fred SPIKER of Chattanooga, USA.

The former was my first U.S. correspondent and put us on the track of "Project Fanclub" and Orv Masher etc. etc... I was also teaching him how to write French correctly... We'll miss you Dick.

The latter was a very good friend of mine, although I've never yet met him... I always enjoyed his letters and Fred often sent us a big parcel of mags for the club. A great guy...

To the families and relatives of these two departed friends we send our deepest sympathy. May they both rest in peace...



# LINE OF DESCENT



A "SHORT" SHORT by JOHN KIPPAX  
\*\*\*\*\*

It was only when THEY - the whole August body of them- had laughed him down for the third time that Bergmann took the great decision.

It hurt him beyond measure that a man of his ability in this year of enlightenment and progress, A.D. 2500, should be regarded as a charlatan. Of course, the word was never used; they never accused him of being a reactionary sensationalist, but the feeling was there, and he thought grimly that he was now so far committed in his assertion that Darwin was right in his "origin of species" that the only thing left for him to do was to bring forward the LIVING PROOF from the past.

For months he and Bronoff laboured in fitting out the latter's time machine with a complete laboratory in which the most advanced researches could be carried out in the midst of the steaming jungles of a hundred million years ago, and from which Bergmann might review the whole development of homo sapiens in the matter of a few weeks.

When finally all preparations were completed, he shook hands with Bronoff and leapt back through the aeons of time, seeing nights turn back and ten million and more suns sweep down to the east and be unborn.

For weeks he laboured unceasingly, sometimes forward a million years, then back fifty thousand years to check something he did not understand. But soon sweating fear overtook him: he had made this trip to prove how conclusively right he was, and he only saw himself being proved wrong....

Failure! It was unthinkable! The threat of derisive laughter was too much - he would not be able to bear the humiliation. His lips were a tight line... And then, it seemed that a curtain was suddenly drawn and he saw... yes, he saw it all... Time was his to command, his unsurpassed knowledge of the most advanced techniques was unique, - and he had no companion...

Here then, was the answer; here was the way to self-respect and the position of eminence which was his by right among his fellow-scientists: HE WOULD CREATE THE MISSING LINK!



Line of descent - continued †

He laboured many millions of years and several earth weeks, and then... with two fine specimens of his creating in their warmed cages, he shot forward into the world he had left... Honour and fame were his!

He stepped out of the machine, and as he did so, it seemed he heard his wife call... He looked round, alarmed, perplexed... No, he was all right; this was his hangar... then where ???

"Karl dear!"

Yes, that was her voice, beyond any doubt. But where was she?

"Oh, you silly" she called, "Here I am. Lock up dear."

As he locked up, he saw her swing down with lissam ease from the highest girder.

HE HAD NEVER NOTICED BEFORE WHAT LONG ARMS SHE HAD!

===== 0 =====

J.K.

Continuation of LAST PAGE - so read that first will you!

There were thousands of things to be said or mentioned of course. Some of them I treated in the fanzine review column, where occasion demanded such action. Others will be left until next issue. I could really have done my bit on the Last Page, but being awkward, and having read Dave's editorial, I just couldn't resist to grab another half page.

I did mention in last issue that I believed most of the letters in fandom to be written for, or in the hope of, publication. Out of 130 possible writers, only three denied the statement. Please change the one percent to two and a half in your copy. Thank you!

I have long given up marking why you people receive Alpha at all. I was presuming that you would still remember - as most of you evidently will. However with so many new people receiving this issue as sample: here goes again!

YOU receive this because you subscribe

trade ....

gift ....

sample .... (trade) (subscribe)

Some are also review.... copies. But please note that I take no notice of review marked on fanzines sent here. Reviews are given when there's room to spare, when I feel it deserves a licking, or praise - preferably the latter. Or when it's been so long since you had a mention. Which ought to be fair enough.

If I didn't have the respect that Sandy hasn't, I'd say something about Abstract here. Hello, Pete. How do you like page 21? Nice symbolism? Or am I being awkward again? I told you, if I had a bright idea.....

Cheerio... ~~Love~~

# THE MURKY WAY

DEAN

A.

GRENELL

CHAPTER VIII (if memory serves) of a column without a fanzine; a column that is doomed to roam the earth like the Flying Yorkshireman of yore. No Jansen, don't come around and say that I meant to say Flying Dutchman. I said Flying Yorkshireman with infinite malice afcrethought so that I could work in the little anecdote about the time when Ponce de Leon was poking about Florida in search of the Fountain of Youth... On his trip to the interior he took only his first mate, a youth from Barcelona named Sam Covorrubias. Covorrubias' full name was one of those grand, sweeping Spanish sobriquets which lead one to believe that a Spanish baby is christened by the simple process of reading the Madrid phone book aloud. But anyway, every morning de Leon would take his eating-knife and carve on the trunk of the nearest palm-tree some sort of legend, such as:

JUAN PONCE de LEON  
and sam  
Slept here,  
April 14th. 1513

Tourists in Florida continue this ancient custom right down to the present day. But, to get back to the story: One morning, Sam Covorrubias, watching his Captain at his morning ritual, observed with faint bitterness "I don't mind taking second-billing because after all you are the captain... but Ponce, you made the Sam too small."

If you've never read the delightful, warm-hearted fantasy called "Sam Small, the Flying Yorkshireman", you owe it to yourself to do so without delay.

But I'm beginning to suspect that there is a bit of a haddock connected with this column at that. Consider: four installments appeared in Joel Nydahl's fanzine, VEGA. A fifth was written for VEGA, but it never appeared because the magazine folded about that time. No fanzine since then has printed that many consecutive Murky Ways. A sixth was sent to Nan Gerding upon request and it appeared in her magazine for SAPS' last mailing. I've since heard that Nan is suspending her publishing activities for an indefinite period of time. Harlan Ellison requested - and got - a seventh MW, then later wrote that the copy of DIMENSIONS that would carry it would be the last issue of that magazine to appear for some time, since he was going to be busy with other things besides fan-publishing. Gerry Steward asked me to do a Murky Way for his CANADIAN FANZINE, but somehow, I haven't gotten around to it yet. It'd better do it soon though... I hear the next issue of CanFan will be the last...

Thus, when ALPHA's editors request an installment of this column, which has administered the coup de grace to so many good fanzines, I send it only with the most dire of misgivings. Good luck you guys...

---

Cuddly-flora, cuddly-fauna  
You would LOVE a cuddly-iguana  
Cuddly-reptiles' hearts are gladder  
Get your child a CIDDLE-ADDER...

---



I would hate to hold my breath until some science fiction novel won a Pulitzer Prize. There have been occasional sf novels that read well and seemed very good at the time. But I think that it was just that I was comparing them to the rest of the sf category. I became unmistakably aware of this when I read some non-sf work of Pulitzer Prize caliber.

Just for fun, let's compare contemporary sf with Herman Wouk's *THE CAINE MUTINY*. I enjoyed this book more than any other single work I read in 1954, but as I read it I couldn't help feeling that it could have been converted to a science fiction story with just a spot of alteration here and there. It's fairly easy to equate sea-going destroyers with space-going destroyers, but I can't recall ever reading any sf story that had as much depth and realism in its treatment of spaceships as Wouk's story has in its description of mine-sweepers, carriers, etc...

Ever since I finished reading *THE CAINE MUTINY* I've been trying to think of some sf story which had an equally great amount of fine detail. That, I think, is a good part of the answer: the details are all there in *MUTINY* while they are, of necessity, lacking in most sf. I've heard genius defined as the infinite capacity for painstaking detail. Perhaps you don't agree. You may prefer a story built up with broad splashes of color in the manner of the Impressionist School in painting. The argument for this type of rendering is that it provides a framework upon which the reader or viewer hangs details provided by his own experiences.

Be that as it may, I would still like to read some science fiction story which embodies as much authentic detail in its background as does *ICM* or -to give another example- C.S. Forester's *THE SHIP*.

The distinction is easy enough to explain. Wouk and Forester are able to fill in the details from their memories. A science fiction author must fill in such things from his imagination. Wouk served with the USN in the Pacific during the second World War. Forester is a keen student of naval lore, both contemporary and historical. If the course of the story requires reference to, say, a mooring bitt, they can describe it to perfection because they have seen mooring bitts. But the sf writer has no convenient recourse to such a wealth of data. No man or woman writing sf to-day has (as far as I know) ever seen a space ship. Every single rivet and air-purifier on their ships must be first invented and then described.

So if we admit that the sf author has the harder lot we must also acknowledge another disadvantage which he must work under. I have no idea how long it took Wouk to write his book. I suspect it must have been under construction for a long time.. probably a year or maybe a lot longer. He was able to spend that much time on it because the potential reward was proportionate to the effort. The royalties on the book, the movie rights, the prize money and other rewards accruing to him must add up to a very juicy plum indeed.

But what writer in the sf field can afford to put that much time and effort into his novel? The writer's proceeds from even the best-received science fiction novel is rather slim in comparison to that of the more conventional fields. And that, in the final analysis, is what I think is wrong with science fiction to-days: there isn't enough money in it to attract the Hemingways and Comrads and Steinbecks. Not enough people read the stuff. And why, you ask, aren't more people reading science fiction? Why, because it isn't good enough to attract them.



And it isn't good enough - to redundantly round out the vicious circle - because there aren't enough copies sold. Etc...

Sneer, if you wish, at the vapid slush that pads out an issue of COLLIERS or the SATURDAY EVENING POST. Let your face take on a pained grimace at the occasional pseudo-pseudo-science-fiction they run. Say, if you think so, that it seems wan and pallid beside the best of the straight-run sf. But before you work yourself into a state of total tizzy, check on the word-rate at the POST and compare it against the best rates paid in the science fiction field.

Remind yourself that LIFF magazine sells more copies in the city of Brooklyn every week than ASTOUNDING sells in a month throughout the whole world. Give Campbell a circulation to equal that of any of the really large-circulation magazines and he could match their rates and compete with them for the top names on an even basis. When the number of copies of GALAXY sold every issue matches the sales of SATEVEPOST - and not before then - maybe they'll be able to ante up \$ 3500 for a Norman Rockwell cover once in a while...

Don't misunderstand me. I don't mean to disparage a number of sincere and competent writers who are working in sf to-day...writing it in some cases when they could make more money in some other field. But it isn't fair to expect them to lavish the same loving attention to detail that a writer in some more popular field might. Nobody is going to do that kind of work for 30 a word or even for 25c a word. When science fiction authors can begin to think of their take in terms of a dollar or two a word, then - and only then - will you start to see an occasional rocket romance on the best-seller list. That's what you need to breed Pulitzer-grade space-opera : Money.

The really surprising thing about it, when you view it in this light, is that the present-day writers of science fiction do as good a job as they do for the payment they get. And another thing to consider is the fact that you might not even like science fiction if it rivalled the "slicks" in circulation. The reading tastes of the mass market are somewhat less sophisticated than the confirmed sf fan's in some respects. I'll applaud the thought of James Michener writing science fiction, but if you don't mind I'd rather not have to read Kathleen Winsor's attempts at it... or Rosamond Marshall's, to name only a couple of popular authors whose books sell quite widely.

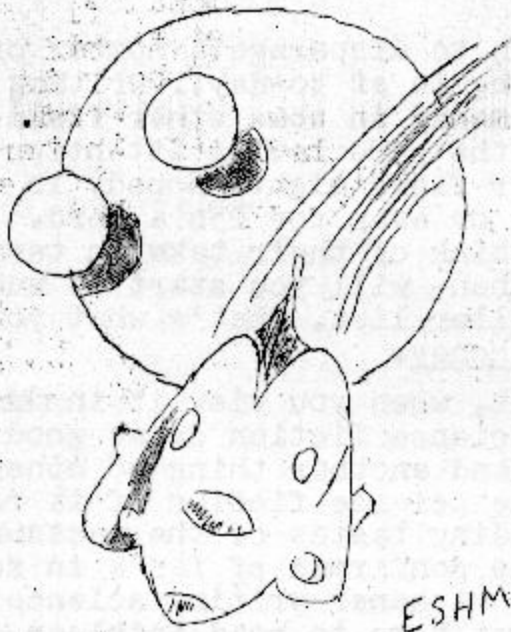
I don't have a neat, clever answer to the whole problem. It is not one that lends itself to a simple solution. Science fiction is gradually gaining ground by a series of short rushes (with an occasional backslide). It is much more widely-read to-day than it was 10 or 20 years ago and I think that we're starting to get a little better quality of story at times now.

But I'd still like to see a little more of the seemingly casual details that do so much to establish the reality of the story. Take the scene in THE CAINE MUTINY (the book, that is) when Queeg is about to take over the ship from De Vriess, who is discussing the ship's handling characteristics as it is being brought in for mooring. Take Forester's detailed and graphic descriptions (in THE SHIP) of how live steam from the boilers is used to heat soup for the men; or his mention of the fact that the members of the ship's band man the devices of the fire-control system deep in the lower part of the ship. When I finished reading THE SHIP I had the distinct feeling - probably erroneous - that I could go aboard and find my way about with little

trouble. As I read through the book I could see what was happening with no more effort than if I'd been watching it unfold on a movie screen.

And yet neither Wouk nor Forester were writing about the ships as a primary subject. Wouk in particular and Forester to a slightly lesser extent were writing about the men aboard those ships. But the thoughtful details were thrown in for lavish good measure. They constitute a demonstration of painstaking attention to detail which seems to be missing in science fiction. How many space-ships have galleys or wardrooms or even latrines? Read a sf story sometime that takes place for the most part in space and then sit down and try to sketch out a rough plan of the ship from detail supplied in the story. It probably won't be easy. But you could do it after reading TCM. The picture is included right in the text (on page 95 of the pb edition).

As an example from the other side of the picture, take SHADOWS ON THE SUN by Chad Cliver. I'd rate this as considerably above average in science fiction, but I don't know nearly as much about the big ship that the "silvery sphere" shuttled up to. I've read this since reading about the Caine, but all I could say about the space-ship at this point is that it had corridors in it. That seems to be something that most space-ships have: corridors. It offends my professional pride to insinuate that engineers who can design interstellar vessels haven't found a way around the shameful waste of cubic-footage represented by a corridor. It is all very well for a hotel or a hospital to have corridors. They aren't going anywhere and the space, once enclosed, doesn't constitute an undue waste of materials and upkeep.



But a bit of thought on the matter will show that any space-ship that carries its own fuel is going to have to forego such prodigal wastes as would be represented by lofty-ceilinged lounges, long and

broad corridors and other staple items of atmosphere-surrounded architecture. The distinctive thing about space is that there ain't no air out there.

Let us divert this ranting dissertation for a moment and dwell on a point that a lot of sf authors and artists (the artists are prime offenders in this respect) continue to blithely disregard. There is a very considerable pressure difference between normal earth conditions and the vacuum of outer space. This amounts to 14.7 pounds per square inch at sea-level and that is approximately half the pressure inside the average automobile tire. If you take 14 square feet as the average area of a person's skin- and that's the lower extreme for an adult- then one atmosphere of air-pressure squeezes you with the weight of nearly fifteen tons... 29,635.2 pounds if I can trust my multiplication. When you think of 15 pounds on a square inch, it seems relatively mild but one atmosphere means just over a ton of pressure for every square foot. It is enough to bring on claustrophobia, no?

While it is very likely that space-ships will operate under a bit less internal pressure they will still have to keep something like 10 pounds or so per square inch to maintain reasonable comfort for the

occupants. And the pressure is cumulative. A 10'x10' section of space-ship hull, if unbraced, must withstand whatever pressure that bears on 100 square feet. Even apart from protection against meteors and other hazards of space, you have got to have some thick, strong and- let's face it- heavy material to hold the air in.

But how many artists show a space-suit in vacuum ballooned out the way it would have to be? How many pictures have you seen of some bloke exploring an asteroid with the slack of his suit falling into neat drapes and folds as if it were a light pair of ski-pants? I wish I had a nickel for every one I've seen and they never fail to infuriate me.

How many times have you seen pictures of some space-opera heroine zipping through the void with just a helmet on... the rest of her shapely carcass exposed to the rigors of space (and the gaze of the drooling readers) except for the conventional minimum? Have you any how hard it would be to anchor a helmet like that on a person's shoulders so that the air wouldn't escape around the lower edges of it? Have you any idea what would happen to a person with their lungs under anywhere near atmospheric pressure and the rest of them, from the neck down, exposed to a vacuum? The instant a person stepped out of the airlock in such a get-up they would spatter in all directions with a squashy, soundless plop.

Yes, I said soundless. You don't have sound unless you have something with molecules in it to transmit sound. Stand on the moon and set off an H- bomb and you would not hear a thing and you would not feel a thing unless it was close enough to the surface to send vibrations through the ground to your feet. Sure, you'd see the flash.... light waves travel through "ether", but sound waves must have molecules for transmission. Here's a rare howler from the November 1952 issue of ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION, page 32. The story is LAST BLAST by Eric Frank Russell who, I think, should have known better. The cast is sitting around in an "inverted dome's cap" on the moon. Outside is either vacuum or the extremely tenuous lunar atmosphere- take your choice - but at any rate man hasn't yet gotten around to furnishing the moon with air. Shucks, he's only made 20 lunar landings at the time of the story. Quote :

"And the ship came. It screeched overhead and howled into the distance and turned in a wide sweep and came back with a rising roar (all underscores are mine- dag). The sounds cut off. The dome trembled slightly as great tonnage set itself outside.

... "Don't make that sort of noise last time," observed Wilkins, unwilling to jump to conclusions... "Maybe it's a different one."

"Sounded different to me," confirmed Joe. "Bigger and faster".

Unquote. I'll go along with the dome trembling as the ship lands - ground vibrations would account for that.-But I'll bet you can't hear passing space-ships from a dome on the moon. Anyone want to argue?

But to get back to the subject of corridors in space-ships. I don't think you'll find many nice wide ones with thick carpets on the floor at first. Of course, if you postulate some sort of drive that coasts about on interstellar magnetic waves or something, that's different. But if the ship has to carry the fuel to impart and absorb interplanetary velocities to itself and its contents, you are going to see an orgy of ounce-counting unique in history. Even to-day, most airlines weigh a passenger's baggage and make an additional charge for

surplus poundage over a certain point.

But every single micro-gram on a space-ship takes a certain amount of fuel to boost it to cruising-speed and the fuel to boost it takes more fuel to boost it, etc...

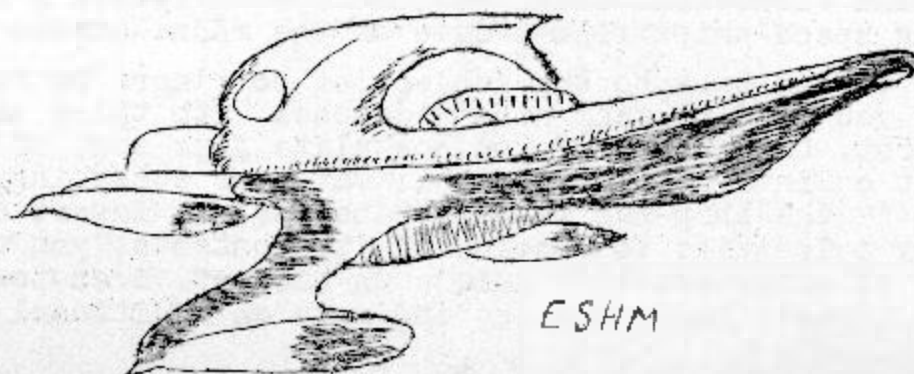
This brings up a point that is even more universally ignored than the matter of vacuum and its properties... the kinetic energy of all matter at inter-planetary speeds. Probably I'm a bit more conscious of it than most writers and readers tend to be because, as an amateur ballastician, I've had occasion to work with the energies connected with bullets.

Kinetic energy takes into consideration the velocity of one article- man, bullet, space-ship or what-have-you- in relation to some other article. That last phrase is important. A pistol bullet traveling at 800 feet per second has 1.42 foot-pounds of energy per grain of weight it has, that is, if the thing it hits is standing still. If the target is a pursuit plane traveling at top speed it might very possibly be going faster than the bullet, and the slug wouldn't catch up with it in a straight race. But I'm wandering again. Excuse me please...

Kinetic energy increases in direct proportion to the square of the velocity. The formula is simple, but frightening: You take the mass, in pounds, times the square of the velocity in feet per second and divide the product by 64.32 (twice the acceleration of gravity). Thus a bullet at 800 foot-seconds has, as just noted, 1.42 foot-pounds per grain but it has 5.68 foot-pounds at 1600 foot seconds... four times the energy at twice the speed! And it has an energy of 35.53 foot-pounds per grain at 4000 feet per second. In other words, its energy increases about 25 times with a five-fold increase in velocity.

What does all this have to do with science fiction? Plenty! Because you see... while 4000 foot-seconds is quite hot for a bullet, it is very small potatoes for a rocket-ship headed moonward. Escape velocity is around 7 miles per second for earth (37.0 for Jupiter!), and that, brother, is 36,960 feet per second... just about nine times as fast as the fastest commercially-loaded bullet...

This means that for every grain of weight in a space-ship traveling at 7 miles per second you have a kinetic energy of 281 foot-pounds. Got that? OK, let's take a concrete example: the Oldsmobile I drive about in weighs approximately 4200 pounds with me at the wheel. When it is bowling along at 85 miles per hour it has a k.e. of around 1,210,000 foot-pounds. There are 7000 grains in a pound, which means that every single pound at escape velocity carries 1,967,000 foot-pounds of kinetic energy. Normally dressed, I weigh about 190 pounds, which would mean 373,730,000 foot-pounds at 7 mps. Visualize, if you will, a cavalcade of 307 Oldsmobiles, all roaring along at 85 miles per hour. Stop and soak up the thought of all that momentum... of what it would take to put it in motion and what it would take to stop it. Awesome, isn't it?



I hope the foregoing figures haven't frightened anyone away because I think the question of high-velocity kinetics is one that has been too often overlooked in science-fiction stories. Bear in mind that we got those figures from a piffling 7 miles per second... the barest minimum for interplanetary travel. If you want to have some fun and kill an evening and use up a lot of paper, try figuring out the energy of anything you care to name at the velocity of light... i.e.: approximately 186,364 miles per second!

And when you start hurling mass around like that you find it takes a horrifying amount of fuel and that fuel takes more fuel and that fuel...etc... Don't forget, too, that once you use up that much fuel to get something going you must carry along an equal amount to bring things to a halt at the other end of the trip. All of which, I think, proves the point I was trying to make.

If an author is going to equip his ship with some sort of handy drive that needs no fuel or if he is going to use something like a Bergenholm generator that conveniently side-steps the whole sordid business of inertia, Newton's laws, etc., then that author can go his way with a free heart. But, by golly, if an author is going to push his ship around with mass hurled out the back end of the thing, then he can expect a polite sneer from this quarter every time he lets a single surplus gram slip onto the ship.

I think it will be a long time before anyone takes a pet elephant along to Venus... or a barrel of beer to Alpha Centauri....

THE END



"Stan Thomas jiving?"  
 "Nunno. Somebody squirted water down his neck!"

FAMOUS QUOTES

from

FAMOUS PEOPLE :

-----

"... Oh for the days when I used to reply by return..."

Eric Jones ,

(plus some 95% of the faneds).

\*\*\*\*\*

... " Don't print this, it may fall into the wrong hands.... "

(from ever so many very interesting letters).

\*\*\*\*\*

's all for the present.

# FANZINES

through the  
is of JJ

If I had to review every fanzine that has arrived here since I wrote the last instalment of this feature, I would have to double the size of this issue again. And it has gone a bit too far already. So instead of picking favourites, which might please friends, I am giving preference to fanzines that have not yet been mentioned in ALPHA. Some of which have been publishing for a year or so, others of which are the volume one, number one issue.

THE COSMIC FRONTIER is one of those that is celebrating its anniversary with issue no. 11. Edited by Stuart J. Wock at R.F.D. 3 Castleton New York, and costing you 10 cents per issue or one dollar for 12; it is one that I read with pleasure. Although the format is attractive (half quarto) I prefer the regular size, pages tend to be just a glimpse, instead of reading material.

The editorial reviewing the mag from issue 1 thru' 10 gives one an idea of the past history - but not very much of one. Not enough to make one scramble to get them which should be the case. If that's not what's meant (which I doubt anyway) it could have been left out, if it was then it's not been done well enough. Don Howard Donnell is represented by a very good short story, though he still seems to be tangled with women in his every effort. From his stories in various zines one would almost say he was a young person thwarted in his every attempt to secure himself a girl.

Peter J. Vorzimer comes to 4 with an article on the fanfield paying special attention to the dying out of good faneditors, and the possibilities of their replacement by the current crop of new zines. Exceedingly well done in some respects I cannot agree with his selection of new possibilities when based on judgment of two or three issues. Though as far as I have seen these, they were quite good, and one even excellent.

Stan Woolston discusses science fiction and the suggestion that it will/should develop into various trends, literary, detective, adventure and so forth. Fair. Don Megara and Oskar Stosser have short items that hardly merit publication. There is a letter-column, and fanzine reviews. The latter not always in agreement with my opinion. But that doesn't make it a bad review section.

On the whole, I like the issue before me, but would suggest that the filler art would either be improved considerably, or simply dropped. Where some advocate the use of these fillers for quarto sized mags, to break up the monotony (?) of a page, this would hardly apply to a half size zine.

ORION has already bypassed its anniversary. Volume 2 no. 6 for Feb. '55 came from Paul Mever 9 Churchill Avenue Hillingdon Middlesex or George Richards 40 Arncliffe Rd Eastmoor Wakefield Yorks, both in England. Subscriptions are taken at 2/6 per year - six issues.

This mag is half foolscap. Duplicating is very clear throughout, wish my wife would get a super and turn the crank for me. Or perhaps we could ask Dave's? John Berry, the latest Hyphen creation (?) has a



wonderful piece of fanzish fiction/fact about submitting material to the Hyphen staff. George Whiting's column A PAZ IN GREECE actually contain three separate short dramas. All of them well told, most convincingly so, and good for a hearty laugh.

A shorter article by Archie Mercer in his nonsensical style, "Random from the Middle Outward" and another column In the Corner by Doris Harrison round out the issue. As regular features: two editorials: one explaining things about the issue, and another with various odd bits of news. The letter column is excellent throughout. And that for thirteen and a half pages. There is also a review column of fanzines entitled Panlights, which also devotes time to an occasional worthwhile article, rather than, ever and ever, a complete review of each zine. This magazine is certainly recommended, whether or not you have the 2/6 to spare.

I forgot: some wonderful illos (cartoons) by Atcm.

NUCLEONICS n° 4 Jan. '55 is one of the reasons I disagree with PJV in The Cosmic Frontier. This issue is one of the "promising" faneds: Larry S. Bourne, 3709 S.E. Hawthorne Portland Ore. I have to base my opinion on this single issue that has arrived here, and I am afraid that I cannot see any symptoms of future "genius". Perhaps it was in the first three issues? Two editorials by Larry, neither of them outstanding, four pages of art work, of which the first is quite good, whilst the third is the usual Rotsler work. Picture of a little Boy defines definition. Ultra-short? Or is this 'modern' poetry? It did pack a good punch line though. Saving the issue from a downright fiasco are the adverts for Heather Ale, and Tyric, both publications by Bradley and Kollogg, and evidently done by these.

Sorry to be that harsh Larry, but I feel that after three issues you should have known better. If it is lack of material that holds you down, wait another month. We did.

EPITOME on the other hand has no agreeing. For those of you who have seen both this and Nucleonics it will perhaps explain why I was rather shocked to find both these editors mentioned in one breath. Mike May 2428 Hobart Street Dallas 18 Texas charges 5 cents per copy and 25 ¢ for five issues for this mag. Cheap indeed. The issue before me, or rather at the side of the typewriter is n° 3, and has a Rotsler cover.

Don Grannell leads the score board with a fine article on ditto reproduction. I wish that all the people in fandom using ditto for their mags would use the advice given here - it might help them cut of a few spots. Second Best is Gloomer, an inside bacover feature with odds and ends - most of which were delightfully funny.

Bob Stewart and Sam Johnson both have a column, the first far better than the latter, which consists of news items. Interesting still, though.

A letter column and review section round of the issue. Perhaps the best compliment I can pay, is that I momentarily mistook it for Oopsla; reproduction wise, and the general outlay of the material. Very good!

First time around these parts too, is the issue 3/4 of FEMIZINE, available from Frances Evans School House, Teignmouth Street, Collyhurst, Manchester 9 England, though its editor is Sgt Joan W. Carr in the Middle East. Price is 9d per copy, 4 for 2/6.

This all-woman zine has some fine articles and other material in it, amongst which "Call to Arms" by Sam Bulmer, "The Meeting" by F. Evans, and Franczka's column share most of the glory. Men are barred from the mag, excepting in its letter column, which promptly features most of



were active fans. POT LUCK thereby manages to become (Gare I say it?) the best part of the issue, where letters and reviews, along with other fan information are scrambled together in a mad broth of delight.

Perhaps the most surprising information to be gleaned from this issue is the fact that Brian Lewis is a woman. For there it is on page 5: a short short by Brian Lewis, smack in the middle of articles and stories, and far from the Men Only department further on in the mag. One lives and learns I suppose!

HA RK 2 for January 1955 is another rag that has so far been absent from this column. It was published monthly, but as from issue 3 it will be published quarterly. Randy Brown at 6619 Anita Street, Dallas 14 Texas is editor, and manages to contradict himself by issuing a supplement to the January 1954 mag, which would make Hark a yearly. Some mistake.

Most interesting was the realisation that I'm not the only JAN in fandom. Here indeed we have a Jan Sadler with a column, and a letter. What goes on? His letter is full of criticism on an earlier venture of Randy, and if I'm correct, that criticism is going to come back to him for his column which wasn't particularly good. And that I'm afraid is being polite. Please, Mr Namesake, spare an honourable name like ours from further abuse and improve it, ah?

Warren Denis starts of another column with an autobiography - fair - and winds up with a suggestion for running a 'biggest-ever' prozine collection column. Personally he has 2855 items in his collection. Anyone want to take him on?

Noah McLeod has another column - this time on the various facets of sf - more especially about the biological story or rather its absence in any sort of quantity. As usual very interesting reading.

Also included: letter column and fanzine reviews. And of course an editorial. In which Randy states he doesn't like PJV. Wonder isn't it how that PJV keeps creeping into every fanzine I pick up. What Randy does with PJV concerns me little. However he also prints a statement to Lee Ridale: Where is that copy of Feon...etc. Knowing Lee, he won't be offended by that - but I would that you'd pay a bit more respect to other people in print, Randy. First of all, according to your statement you issued Hark 1 in December, with this issue following in January 1955. If all the fanzine editors you sent a copy to, agreed to send their own rag in exchange on that first copy alone you still wouldn't have more than a few zines. Most are published quarterly or bimonthly only a very few monthly.

So even if they agreed by writing you a letter or postcard to that effect, it would almost be impossible to have their copies there before you issued 2. On a monthly schedule it would be issue 5 or 6 before you received this issue of Alpha, the first to appear since receiving your mag. Think it over.

Secondly, I disagree with your statement that you should publish quarterly, and on more pages, in order to get trades. If you can publish a magazine on 10 pages of interesting material, you'll be far better off than with a mag that only has 30 pages of rubbish. Besides which, 12 issues of 10 pages equals the same as 4 issues of 30, so that you will only present the same "quantity". As if many would bother if the quality was lacking. Try and work on that side before worrying unduly about quantity. I'd much prefer half the present size, but the contents something I could shout about - this is good! At the present moment sorry. But I wouldn't admit myself by recommending it to anyone.

Another second issue to arrive is RITEA, dated Fall 1954, from Gilbert Menicucci 675 Galano Ave San Francisco 12 ; and Fred Malg 38 Seville St San Francisco 24 - California. At 25 cents per copy, I find the mag rather dear - even though the material presented is very good and the artwork simply beautiful.

Mari Wolf writes an article on sf maturity and the cardboard people, which should explain itself. Many words have the last months/years been wasted on the subject of 'maturity' in science fiction, calling most of it juvenile. This article is a "mature" opinion on the subject.

A column by Calvin T. Beck rambles from science fiction via book dealers, conventions and fashions to politics and the cost of living. No dearth of subjects there, but it made good reading. As did the short story by Bob Warner, THE MAN IN BLACK. Two editorials and a letter column, plus two poems, one by Bloch, another by Wood (mag) fill out the issue.

Very good in presentation and material. A bit high in price though.

And so to the newcomer in the field. OBLIQUE comes from Clifford Gould 1559 Cable Street San Diego 7 California. Priced at 15 cents per issue, this makes me feel that Rhea wasn't that dear after all.

For a first issue this Oblique is very good. About the best thing in the mag is a story by the editor himself Born into Fandom, a parody on Richard Matheson's fine story "Born of Man and Woman" (it is included in Tenn's anthology Children of Wonder!). Luckily I had read the story, as otherwise I wouldn't have thought much of it.

Another worthwhile point on the credit side is the cover. This is done by some sort of photographic process which I couldn't understand, though it is explained in the editorial. Some explanation? Or some understander?

That man is there again with an article on "Fannish Duty". Peter J. would have fans write oftener for new mags, for the first issues. One thing against his well-meant urge - wasn't it Dean Grennell that complained in Grue of having written two or three articles, which were needed immediately - either to start off a new zine or for a following issue - and which for all their immediacy hadn't been published yet three months later? I was asked to do an article, story, anything! for a new magazine. I agreed, once I knew for sure when the mag would appear. That was about six months ago. It still hasn't appeared - still no mention of it ever being published. Dave being either more generous, or less sceptical than myself, did forward something for possible use.

And a fened that puts out something with some trouble in getting material does at least show that he wants to. Wonder how many first issues would appear if the so-called SFP's, in this case better described as MAF, more active fans; if we all followed Pete up. Anyone taking it into his head just drops a note to Willis, Bloch, Grennell and Galkins with another couple of faneds to keep them company, and is assured of a good issue? I agree that both Peter J. Vorzimer and Ron Ellick are doing some fine work in helping out new faneds. Perhaps they have more time than others. Perhaps they know these faneds better. I believe that if Pete's idea were followed we'd have about a hundred new mags by the end of the year. Who would write THEN?

(two short stories - fair - and the editorials constitute the rest of the issue. Promise here - but stick to writing (preferably with a dictionary) and leave art alone, won't you Cliff? This is all. See you next ish.

# IT DIDN'T AFFECT ME

CHAPTER ONE

(After Nigel Lindsay)

Saturday the 5th of February dawned bright and clear, with not a cloud on the fannish horizon. In the mail came TRIODE and a letter from Jan Jansen. I opened the fanzine first of course, and there was a page of fan photos including Jan himself, looking much more intellectual than Walt Wallis who was either scratching his nose or smelling his fingers. Then I opened the letter from Jan. He wanted a story, and he wanted it by the 20th. What is more, he had paid in advance. Well, that was OK. One day to be spent in a trance, composing; one late night drafting it out; and another late night correcting and adding those little touches of brilliance. By Monday the draft was ready for typing, so I took it round to Helen's.

Perhaps I should explain; I don't own a typewriter, but Mr Highwater (Helen's father) does, and he lets me use it. Poor fool, he thinks it's his daughter I'm interested in. I do most of my fanning at their place, and even keep my helicopter beanie there, in the cupboard under the stairs.

Well, Monday evening we stayed in, and you'd have thought I'd easily get that story typed? Ha ha! This is how it went:

7.00 PM: "If you want to come round here and eat our food you can help wash up!" (That's Helen's Ma from the kitchen).

7.50 PM: "Before you settle down dear you can hold this for me." (That's Helen, who's decided to stick the braid on the lampshade she's making).

8.00 PM: "You can stop that tapping, I want to listen to the Bar- lores of Beddington!" (That's Helen's Ma again).

8.30 PM: Helen: "Shutup. We want to hear Ted Ray."

9.00 PM: Helen's Ma: "Put that damn thing away and listen to the Show Band Show."

9.30 PM: "You can go home now young man, we're going to bed!" (That's Mr. Highwater, who feels it's time he put a word in).

Well Tuesday was much about the same. Wednesday, Helen's Ma and Pa went to the pictures and left us alone. Typing never occurred to me. Thursday I had a band job. Friday I thought now I'll get it done, but no.... "You can take me to the pictures, I'm fed up with staying in night after night looking at you in that ridiculous hat. Yak yak yak....

"OK," I said, "but tomorrow I'll type that story. So help me I'll type it, if it's the last thing I do!"

CHAPTER TWO

Saturday afternoon, the 12th, I dashed round to Helen's, grabbed the typer, stuck in a piece of paper, then went to the cupboard for my beanie. And there it was - gone!

"Where's my beanie?" I yelled.

"I haven't seen it," she said.

I ransacked the room while Helen watched sardonically. From the corner of my eye I thought I saw a pair of horns sprouting from her head.

"I can't type Jan's story without my beanie," I complained.

"You can't type it anyway, I want to listen to Radio Theatre."

"But that's on Sunday."

"Today is Sunday. Look, here's today's paper to prove it."

Sure enough, it was. Sunday the 13th. But what had happened to Saturday? I looked at Helen. She had sprouted horns!

"What has happened to Saturday?" I gasped, "And your head!"

She smiled, and little red kisses floated up from her lips. Up to the ceiling they went, and burst, scattering drops of fiery liquid all over the room. The carpet smoldered in several places. "If you find Saturday," she said, "you will find your beanie. And if you find your beanie you will lose your reason."

"I must find Saturday," I said at last. "I've got to type that story on Saturday...."

"Type it now," she insisted, "for it's the last story you will type. Ever!"

She swished her tail vigorously and stirred up a flurry of paper scraps which glided around and floated down over me. They were rejection slips. Slowly I began to type, but what I thought I typed came out entirely different. I read:

"Mo, Minnie, Meenie, Mennie,  
Nigel Lindsay where's your beanie?"

Horrorfied I tried to snatch my hands away, but the keys had turned to tiny mouths and they clung to my finger tips like leeches. Came a roaring in my ears and a red darkness. The typewriter was sucking my life's blood away!

"The last story you will type," came her voice from the distance. "Ever!"

The little man in the electric light bulb shouted down: "Do you still want to find your beanie?"

"Yes," I gasped, "Oh, yes. More than anything else in the world."

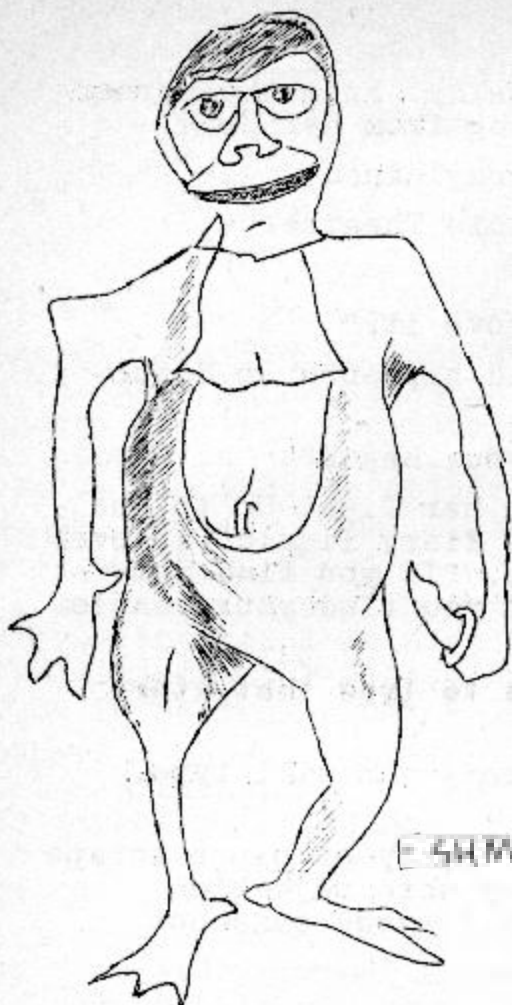
"Then come with me."

He drew me up by the hair and my arms came easily away from their hands. The typewriter, with an irate clatter, flung the limp and useless things to the floor.

"Hurry," shouted the little man, and sped off down the long glass corridor. I ran, slipping and slithering on the smooth surface, and he urged me on to even greater speed. "If it gets switched on now we'll be burned to a crisp!" he panted, so we ran and ran in sheer desperation until we reached the end of the mile-long corridor three and a half minutes later.

Up the escalator we went and the beanie-collector at the top said: "Beanies please!" He took my friend's beanie, punched a hole in it and handed it back. "Where's his?"

"He's lost it," said my friend.



"Lost Property Office over there...."

Behind the counter of the Lost Property Office stood a loadman. I approached him nervously.

"I've lost my beanie," I said, "and I've lost a day out of my life."

"What day?" he croaked.

"Saturday!"

"Well, it's not here, but I've a couple of lost week-ends." He drew out a wicked looking knife. "Perhaps you'd like me to slice you off a nice piece of Saturday from one of them?"

"I'd rather have my own Saturday, thank you."

"But if you find Saturday you will find your beanie. And if you find your beanie you will lose your reason. Do you still want to find your beanie?"

"Yes," I said quite emphatically.

"Then go over there and through the door marked 'Waiting Room'."

The waiting Room was a huge hall, dimly lit with row upon row of silent typewriters and piles of paper just waiting, waiting. A huge picture covered the far wall, a bestial face, snarling in impatient fury. It bore the legend:

JAN JANSEN IS WATCHING YOU !

No doubt Ron Hubbard is raising an eyelid too, I thought. I dashed to the nearest typer but alas, my hands were on the floor back in Helen's house. But with a flash of genius I bent down and was able to type a message with my nose:

HANDS WANTED !

A telegraph boy on roller skates snatched the paper from the machine and hurtled off with it. Seconds later he brought back the reply:

ALL HANDS ON DECK !

"Where's the deck ?" I shouted, but there was no answer, only the echoes which came back queerly distorted.

"Where is Saturday ?"

"Where's your be-e-anie ?"

Silently I said a prayer to Cogo, and he came to me on a Pillar of Fame.

"Do you really want to find your beanie?" said Cogo.

"Yes, oh yes. More than anything else in the world."

"And you are quite prepared to lose your reason?"

"I guess I can manage without it."

"Then follow me." Cogo slid right down the Pillar of Fame, which passed through a hole in the floor. I followed him to the bottom where a great machine was whirring and clanking away. An alarm bell rang stridently and the robot in charge went for his gun, but re-holstered it apologetically when he saw Cogo was with me.

The machine was vomiting packages and envelopes into a huge mailbag. Cogo waved a tentacle at it.

"That," he said proudly, "is the Fan Machine."

I picked up an envelope. It bore a stamp with a Lancaster postmark, and was addressed to me in the feeblest handwriting. "This is for me," I sputtered.

"They are all for you," said the robot.

"But why?"

"Because you are the Fan."

"What do you mean?"

"You are the only fan. All the letters, all the farzines you have ever received were produced by this machine. There are no other fans, not in the whole of this ever-loving, blue-eyed world!"

"Then Jan Jansen doesn't exist?"

"No!"

"And I needn't type that story?"

"No!"

I heaved a sigh of relief. "What about Saturday?"

"Here," said Cogo, and switched on a projector. Saturday slowly unfolded itself and I saw what became of my beanie.

"Thank you very much," I whispered.

"But see here," said Cogo, "haven't you lost your reason?"

"No!"

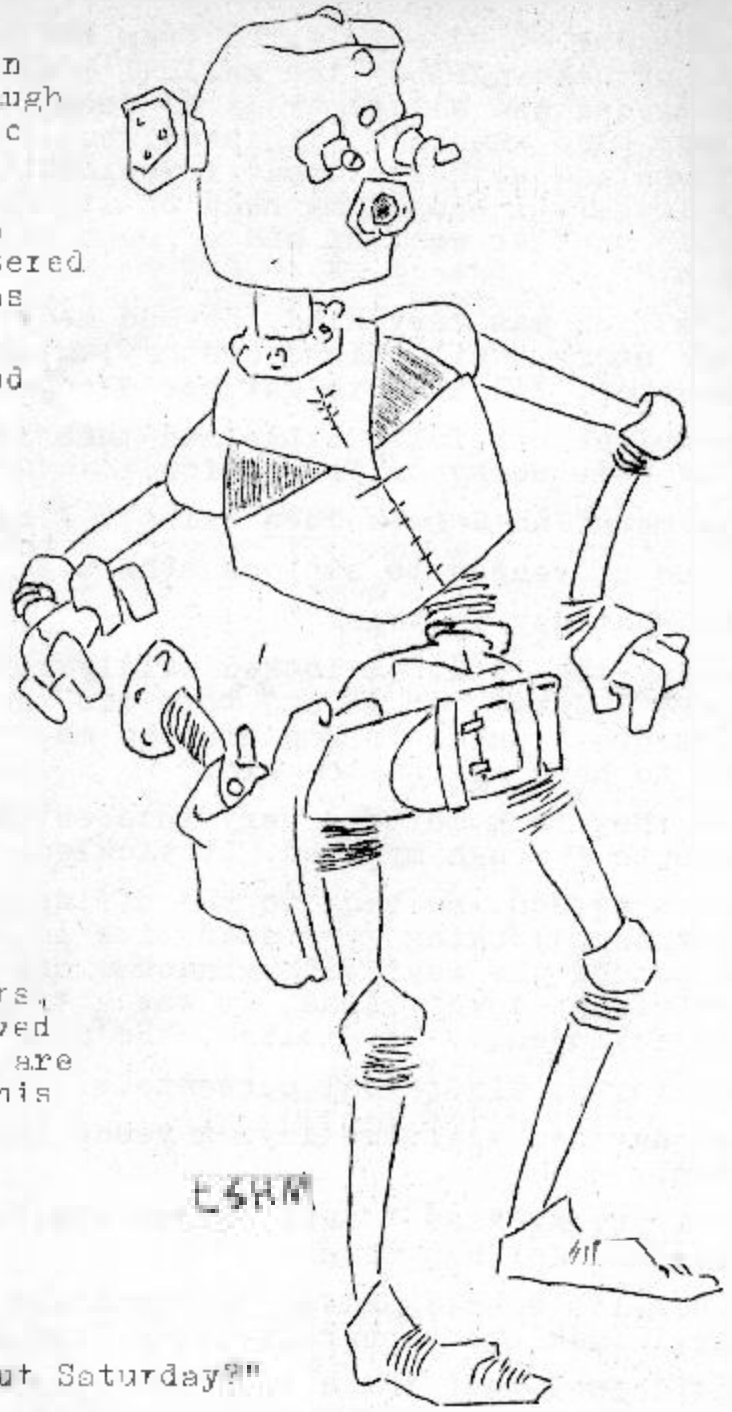
"Well, I'll be blowed!"

"Now if you don't mind, I'd like to go to bed. I'm very tired."

"I can arrange that," Cogo smiled. And the next minute I was tucked snugly between the sheets.

CHAPTER THREE.

As I lay there I thought and thought, and it suddenly dawned on me -



ESRM

I had been hoaxed! All that effort, all that fanatic, for nothing....

With a cry of rage I leaped from the bed, for I had a sudden urge to bang my head against the wall. I banged it. That was funny, somebody had padded the wallpaper in my room! Usually when I bang my head I'm always glad when I've finished, but this time it didn't hurt one bit. Overwhelmed with gratitude I decided to go and thank them, but the door was locked. I banged my head on it, and they'd padded that too. Then a little shutter went up and a rough voice said "He's getting violent again."

Dr. Smultch was very kind. He had me in his office and listened to the whole story, while his secretary, Miss Cglethorpe, took notes. She was a smasher. I'd like to get her alone sometime!

Dr. Smultch carefully explained that it was all an hallucination brought on by some worry or frustration.

"You mean Jan Jansen does exist?" I asked.

"I see no reason to suppose otherwise."

"And what day is this?"

"Monday the 14th." I looked wildly round the room. There was the office typer! I sprang at it and tore off the cover, but the giant in the white coat rushed in and grabbed me. "Dear me," said Dr. Smultch, "I seem to have aggravated him."

Then they took me to a very interesting place where they shot electric currents through my head. It tickled.

Then they sent me back to the office. There on the couch was Miss Cglethorpe looking very seductive in a flimsy negligé. Good! Smultch was out of the way! With gladsome cry I sprang at the typewriter and tore off the cover. Alas, it was a trap. In came the giant in the white coat followed by Dr. Smultch. "He's no better," he said.

Back to the electrical currents.....

Next day was visiting day. A young lady to see you they said. It was Helen.

"Tell me, my dear," said Dr. Smultch, "is your name Beanie? He's been screaming for his Beanie."

"O Nigel!" sobbed Helen. "O Nigel! Do you know what you did on Saturday when I took the typewriter away from you?"

I explained that I had lost Saturday, so she told me all that happened including the fate of my beanie. Oogo's version bore no resemblance whatsoever. "They say you have a persecution complex," she went on, "you think that a man called Jansen is hounding you, and you have an obsession to get to a typewriter so that you can send him foul imprecations through the mail."

"It's lies," I said, "all lies. Listen, you've got to get me out of here."

"But how?"

"I have a plan. Come closer. Pass psss psss ...."

CHAPTER FOUR.

This story has a happy ending.

Helen, good girl, went straight back, packed up all my fanzines and





things before passing judgment as follows : "...humorous baccover that has little or nothing to do with either sf or fandom." Pete, what are those guys wearing beanies for ? Or has it become a fashion to wear similar headgear on the beaches of Great Britain ?

However , let me explain .

Peter J. Vorzimer : way back in 1953 a nice kid , judging from a photo received in January 1954. Neofan, with rather startling ideas about ye olde fans dying out , and the young set taking over from them. In the first months of the year he was still an agreeable faned - then Abstract began to have some success - and a couple of months later he was about the loudest braggart (and I hope that the word isn't a swear-word in US slang!) in fandom - inscilent and arrogant , and to top it all, consistently contradicting himself all over the place. Such an approach would sooner or later earn him a well-deserved "hiding" from somewhere. A BAS supplied it , although it seems that there material was used outside the scope of fandom.

Pete wrote us when Alpha was just the "newsheet" we started off with, sending us a dollar for a supply of all "fanzines published on the Continent". He received Alpha as from issue 1, and having agreed to trade Abstract for Alpha , we mailed him back the dollar.

Abstract 1 was mentioned on the contents page, as being the first issue of a bi-monthly publication, with monthly supplements. I didn't immediately write about Abby, but waited until I heard further. I didn't. So some months later I asked whether his "bi-monthly mag had folded already. It hadn't, he replied, but he had forgotten to send me copies. He would however mail them out shortly. There was quite a discussion about the frequency of the mag at the time, myself trying to get it in Pete's head that Abstract was bi-monthly according to issue 1 , and he could I know otherwise when I hadn't seen any of the following issues. He blamed me for writing "disconnected letters" which he was kind enough to forgive me, because I was, after all, a " foreigner". We won't go into the 'ugly cuss' about the photo I'd sent in return. I replied fully by letter, and gently (?) slated the guy in Alpha. Which at the time aroused quite some feeling amongst friends in the US who took it upon themselves to explain that this was typical neo-fannish behaviour and should be taken as a joke. I knew . We kid each other in Belgium too.

I did finally get Abstract 5 one fine day, upon which I commented in due time. Too late it seems to receive issue 6 - though I did get a letter saying that from now on I was on the mailing list (again) and would receive all future Abstracts. I did receive 7 and 8 - the latter because Claude Hall donated the "extra" 25 cents on my account. I have heard from Gregg Calkins that no 9 is out, when he writes : "I loved the baccover this time...but how do you feel about Vorzimer now , especially with the advent of the new Abby? You must admit it changes things somewhat...."

Changed what, Gregg ? My opinion of PJV ? I have neither a feeling of animosity against Pete, but I don't adore him for his fanac. I am but slightly worried because I like to receive every issue of a fanzine I trade for. Same goes for you I suppose ? I like to hear from the people concerned occasionally, and when they do write - I always appreciate it if they let me know at least that they received Alpha. But carry the grudge? No! But surely I am allowed to tease him with his forthcoming visit ? If not, I'll still do it if I get another bright idea. Only, do hold it against me. If I can take it - why shouldn't Pete ?

# LIB'S CORNER



AUTHENTIC 54 FEB. 1955 - Hamilton & Co 30-32 Tancelot Place Knightsbridge London SW 7 Editor: R.J. Campbell. 1/6 -

This is the second issue carrying the pictorial supplement, and this time there is some slight reason for it, though not in my opinion sufficient to warrant the expense. Surely short stories can be far better printed on ordinary paper - and it wasn't that good! The feature story: THE LESSER BREED by Ian Morgan is one of the best I have read of this author. Excellent handling of a trip to the far stars, and the mounting tension when it is discovered that humans cannot have normal children. The 'clcu' of the story (guessed a bit too far ahead) is the use of a new type of android to work the ship, isolated from its human passengers. A fine story and capably told. Three other stories, in order of preference: NONENTITY by E.C. Tubb, a good survival plot, though not of the standard of Wyndham's "Survival". DEATH WISH by Eric Wilding about the use of human brains on spaceships, as computers; MAN IN A MAZE by W.F. Temple, quite good, though I found myself in a maze towards the end. Usual features, some very good but in my opinion still too many. An improvement on the last couple of issues though.

FATE MAGAZINE: no 4 - Press Books Ltd The Manor House, Worcester Park, Surrey. Editor James Leigh. 1/- Strictly non-(?)-fiction.

A magazine devoted entirely to Off Trail (no connection with OMPA) subjects. Special attention this issue goes to the "strange powers" of animals, beside articles on lost races, snowmen, and horoscope. Rather out of place a review of Triplanetary in the back reviews. Mainly reprints from the American edition, but also included several original items.

FICTION 15 - FEB 1955 Eds OPTA 96 rue de la Victoire Paris 9e France Editor Maurice Renault. 100 FrFrns :17,50 FrFrns / 2/6d or 35 ¢ approx. With this issue Mr Renault presents us with the second of three J.T. McIntosh: One in a Thousand. Thanks for bringing those stories before the French reading public. But perhaps I'm prejudiced, they're favorites of mine. Translated along with this story: The green thumb by De Camp-Fratt and Technical Advisor by Chad Oliver. Other authors: R. Sale, L. Charteris, and A. Porges. Original stories include Claude Farrère, Y.F.J. Long and G.M. Dumoulin, all three short but good.

NEW WORLDS 32 FEB 1955: Nova Publications Ltd 2 Arundel Street Strand London WC2 Editor: John Carnell. 2/-

Due to the rising costs this magazine has increased its price back to the former 2/-. The bouquet this issue goes to GOMEZ, an excellent Kernbluth story about a "wonder" boy discovering a new form of mathematics. The story development is carried out very convincingly, and makes one believe in the characters. E.C. Tubb again does fine in SCHOCKI FOR BEGINNERS, a story about the rehabilitation that will prove necessary to discharged space-pilots after stringent training and isolation from youth. Sydney Bounds and Ker Bulmer each contribute a story not far behind Tubb's in merit. The serial PRISONER IN THE SKULL concludes in this issue - and towards the end has one reading word by word just to make sure one is still understanding things right. Despite criticism on my previous recommendation I still maintain it's a fine story, and well worth including. Even if Take-Off was better.

o o o o o THE END o o o o o

# Pet

an infrequent column by

ERIC BENTCLIFFE

One of the hardest things about writing a column is finding a bright new subject for each issue of the 'zine you write for, or, in my case, each issue you can make the deadline for.

A couple of days ago I was completely bereft and barren; however in yesterday's mail, there came a letter from a character who I don't intend to name, -he isn't a fan anyway, so it is extremely doubtful whether his name would convey any meaning to you. This person is a type with whom I served in the RAF for some time and an infrequent correspondence has been conducted between us ever since.

His letter of yesterday touched briefly on science fiction. He doesn't normally read the stuff; he is married and says he doesn't have the time. However, in an earlier letter, I raised some query regarding s.f. and asked him whether he had read any recently and, if so, what was his current opinion of the media. His reply was that he had not read any for well over a year and that the principal reason for this was because he considered science fiction to have too high a content of "pornography".

My immediate reaction to this was of the nature of a rather annoyed chuckle, for to anyone who has been reading s.f. for a large number of years, this claim seems fantastic. However, my friend is a pretty intelligent person so I decided to do a little cogitation and research before answering him and brushed his statement aside like so much twaddle from a person not sufficiently acquainted with s.f.

First, I suppose we had better ascertain just what pornography is. According to my dictionary, it is "obscene writing", which is not a very good definition I feel. I think the word in its current usage means "obscene writing about sex" and that is the meaning I shall give it for the rest of this column.

I don't think that very much obscene writing about sex does appear within the pages of the s.f. magazines, nor the books. But there have been instances of what I consider to be "pornography"... As an illustration, let me give a couple of quotes. First, let's take a look at OTHER WORLDS of March '51. In this issue, there is a story entitled "Eye of the temptress", which is a blatant example of sex written thinly, very thinly, disguised as science fiction. Here are a couple of extracts from it:

"The comet!" he exclaimed, "It's going to strike!"

"And we are going to die!" cried Patricia. "Don't look at it. Hold me in your arms. I want to die that way..." etc...

Unfortunately for the dramatists and lovers of clear-cut virtue amongst us, Pat doesn't die, although she succeeds in being "that way". The story ends: "... You like the blouse?" she asked. "I liked it better the way you were in the observatory", he said, a gleam in his eye. She got to her feet and felt for the button at the neck of her blouse. "Well, if that's the way you like it".....

The worst example of pornography in relationship to s.f. was, much as I dislike to state it, British. There were two examples really both by the same author, one Ralph L. Finn, who authored a couple of pocket-books, the titles of which have become somewhat infamous to the

fans who were around some three years ago, namely "Captives of the flying saucers" and "Freaks against Superman", both of which were equally foul. Just how these stories got published I don't know, although it is a fact that the firm who pubbed them was later fined heavily for publishing "obscene literature".

I shall give you a short extract from the latter book, but whether you will read it or not depends on Alpha and the Belgian censorship. If either one strikes it out I can't say that I blame them... ((Carry on Eric, we'll take a chance. dy))

Page 68 of "Freaks against Superman" reads: "I fumbled with my fingers, found the zip and tore it down, so that the girdle fell away from her and she lay in my arms, her lovely rounded breasts bare and unflung, her thighs round and firm and indescribably beautiful in their shapeliness and splendour.

She fell back across the bed and began to sob in sheer terror. She was still crying as I took her and her cries continued for a long time."

And this, believe it or not, is one of the more innocuous quotes I could have chosen.

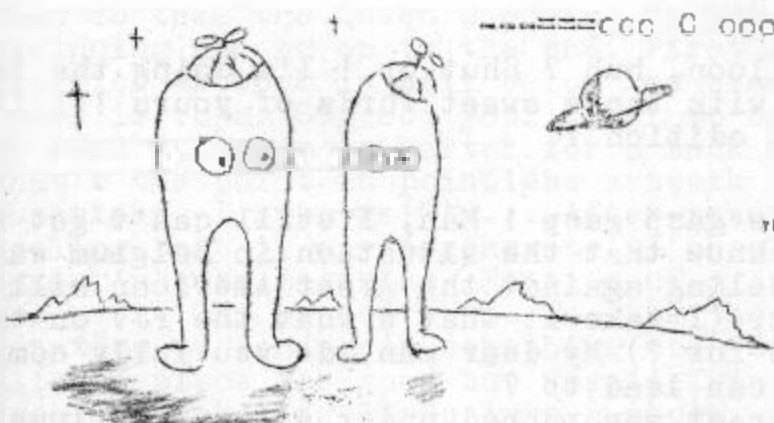
Pornography in s.f. does exist then. And what appears to be obscene to one person is not so to another. I consider myself to be pretty broadminded and I certainly have a healthy interest in sex. I don't even consider the quotes I have given above to be particularly "obscene" although I deplore this type of stuff being passed off as s.f.

Pornography is a relative thing. And to someone who holds, say, strong religious views, or is still a victim of Victorian mores, then a very large proportion of s.f. could appear pornographic, for, in many s.f. stories marriage has been done away with and replaced by "free love". In others, the characters make love (usually by implication) without any regard or thought for the resultant offspring. I think you'll agree with me that both statements are true of science fiction and that the implications of both are offensive, and possibly obscene to a devout religious person.

I think this is what my friend was getting at when he accused s.f. of being largely pornographic, rather than the more blatant, but rare examples I quoted a few paragraphs ago.

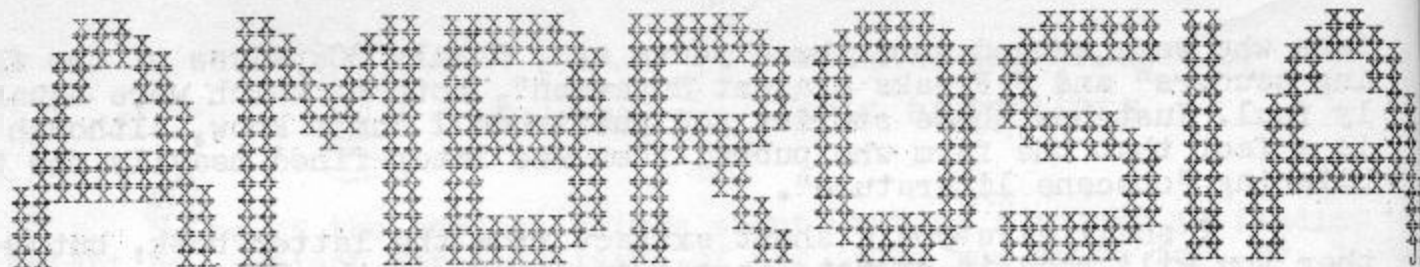
In conclusion, I am not going to say that I think the idea: that there are other states of bliss besides marriage- should be censorable, or that authors should be forbidden to use this theme... Not me. I'm in favour of "free love"!?!?!?

EB



"Yes, I think our disguise is sufficient to enable us to mingle with Earthmen."

Don



It's Jan that's first this time. I can always beat a bicycle with a scooter - so here goes in strict alphabetical order.....

MAL ASHWORTH:

I don't see how you can keep on improving ALPHA time after time, but as you evidently do see how you can do it, please keep on won't you? Seriously I did think it was even better than previous issues and I thought they unimprovable; which means there's something strange somewhere. It's the most educational-type study book-magazine thing I've come across. And of course I approve of the Principals of thing..... but the real high spot of the issue of course must be awarded to that venerable old man - not you Bloch, sidown - Tom White, whose Akmar Mystery combined such a wealth of intellectual and cortex-developing symbolic concepts with the maximum possible subtlety of dramatic and literary excellence and beauty, in such a way as to make one appreciate the True wonder of this Great and Awe Inspiring Universe in which we find ourselves. (And sometimes other people too). Moreover, that sentence should make for a highly successful play if he writes in and tells you that my piece was lousy. I shall then be able to look at him with the same sort of mute reproach his cat uses when he ties a piece of string around its neck and fastens it to a chair leg. Except that a look of reproach won't be quite as effective as the cat's, as I haven't the necessary wherewithal to scratch half his arm off at the same time... As a matter of academic interest, when did Kettering acquire its second horse?

§ Sorry, Mal. Tom hasn't written in - not unexpected that - with all your "studying" someone has to cut the PEM stencils...

GREGG CALKINS:

Alpha 8 was much more legible than certain previous issues and I like to think that some of it was caused by the double spacing between paragraphs and the like. Now I have only one other comment... and I suppose you are the one that does it all the time. Notice, when I come to a comma or a period I always space or double-space, as the case may be, before starting the next word, whereas you just make like Tennyson's Brock and go on forever. You don't lose many words per page by adding in the three or four extra spaces per line and it sure adds to the ease with which that same page may be read....

§ We'll try anything once!

MAURICE DELPLACE:

So I'm a ballcon, huh? Shut up! I'm doing the talking! Don't try to drown me with those sweet words of yours!!! I'll...  
§ This is the expurgated edition!

CLIFFORD GOULD:

Chortle-chortle gasp gasp! Man, I still can't get over that crazy hacoover. I didn't know that the situation in Belgium was so bad that there was fannish feeling against the great American millionaire Peter James Vanderbuilt, (I take it that's what the PJV on the tow of this Queen Mary stands for?) My dear man, do you fully comprehend what this sort of thing can lead to?

§ Didn't know that Abstract was pubbed under a 'nom-de-plume'!

JOHN HITCHCOCK:

What struck me the most was the signature WR on the backcover - Pete Vorziner's artist :William (Bill) Rotsler. You are becoming malicious Jan.

§ In Umbra you complained I was too polite and apologetic ! Make up your mind, John !

ARCHIE MERCER:

This business of bigger zines less often - well, to my mind, the ideal zine comprises from 40 to 50 pages, and comes out as often as the quality of the contents warrants. I'm not quite sure how you worked out your "break-even" point with the Winter Alphas - are you supposed to be running the subs for a year, however many Alphas are published, or basing it on the number of issues ? If the former, surely to appear less often but bigger would save postage at least. If the latter, of course, it'd be cheaper to put out a single sheet per week or halfweek or so, provided you could get people to renew their subs every month...

§ "Break-even" : 120 pages yearly, mailed out in six times, to 100 paying subscribers. Actually we have some forty paying subs and mail out 150 copies. As from this issue, circulation will be upped to 150. You get us 100 PAYING subscribers and we'll give you the forty pages. We don't mind losing money - we just don't want it to go too fast. "If the latter"...there is a thing called ethics !

DEREK PICKLES:

Who did the portrait of Ashworth on page 6 ? Extremely good - might even be another Graham Sutherland, although I think he's prettied Malash up a little too much. His story is good, only thing, I read Gregg Calkins story in Grue ..... I thought I'd said I liked your covers, both back and front. Ben Abas' work is always good and I like WR's backcover, very nice. How do you get your artists ? Send up so many coupons from packets of soap powders ??? Of course if I changed the initials on the boat to JJ it might do on Phantas' backcover for your proposed trip here. Of course I wouldn't be so nasty as to do anything like that.....

§ If you liked Malash's portrait you'll presumably fall in love with that OMPA item. Willy Wombouts is the artist. - If you did run that backcover I'd say: Copycat ! Haven't you anything ORIGINAL to flaunt me with ? And if you thought to annoy me with it, you're wrong. I'd consider it a nice fat slice of egghoc - and a good laugh.

GEORGE WHITING:

A is the screwiest farsine to hit the Whiting mail box but it contrives to amuse even a staid old fan like me. A problem that bothers me each time is how to review it ? Well, I can do no better than to take the Queen's advice to the White Rabbit and start at the beginning and go on to the end. First a swipe at the art division. Interior artwork is well below the standard of exterior artwork. Front-cover is tops. Suggest your offer to sell or loan artists be altered to read exchange or barter for a back stencil cutter. One question: what's the point in pointless artwork ? (§ Same as that in pointless questions, I suppose!?) ....After reading this copy of Alpha I have a feeling that it may degenerate (I chose that word with care!) into fanzine's jazz magazine. Mention of a jazzcon made in the editorial: the great Ghu preserve us. To link the lunatics of jazz with the fanatics of fanzine is something too horrible to contemplate.... Don Allen's piece was good but unsatisfying. If you're going to introduce dressless evening girls into a story, let's hear about them or leave



them out. A similar complaint was voiced by D. Fickles about Shirley Merritt I believe. Dale Smith's wants are too simple, my major requirement is someone to go out to work for me. I can fill all the other posts myself, except the secretary for which my wife will have her own specifications.... All Night Party was the best item in the issue, with the Akmar running it a close second. This latter item had me fool for several paragraphs and earned a well deserved bellylaugh from yours truly.... So one of the eds beside being a jazzfan collects femme fan photos: how low can you sink? I was however scriver to hear that the Great WAW is also a passive jazz fan. I can see that a knowledge of cool jazz may well become a qualification for a BNF (What will Harris do then?). Is anybody interested in photography?

§ Both of us are still babes where it concerns stencil cutting. Though we're both doing our best to improve. Hope that the art this issue comes out a bit better... and I do like your choice of words... Seems that Joyce Goodwin is interested in photography, judging by that article in Authentic. Dean Grennell of GRUE is another fan with photographic interests (other than femme-fan-photo collecting of course)... I used to be, but haven't done much lately... Fanning you know...

WALT WILLIS:

This is the best Alpha yet, in every respect... Dale Smith's idea was a nice one that could have been developed a bit further. There was a fan once, Charles Hornig I think, who was a bigtime executive and had a secretary. Whenever he wanted to engage in fanac he would call her in and say "Take a fanzine!" Whereupon she would write it all down, stencil it, run it off, and mail it out. Ah, the rich full life... Mal Ashworth was brilliant as usual. Apparently it was the fans who put the hospital in hospitality? ... The letters were as usual the most interesting part of the mag, but they had some really stiff competition this time from the contents. A wonderful issue, and congratulations.

§ Such praise is worth the trouble we're taking!

DAVE WOOD:

...Such cults in sf! Take that letter from Shirley. She denounces "Hole in Heaven". Then says the publishers have a check to call this science fiction. From what I've seen of the story it seems to be the best thing to call it. That type of thing gets me. Read a book with a slight slant tosf. If it's lousy they'll tell everybody about it, then say you don't think it should be called sf. Read 1984 or Brave New World or Earth Abides. Praise to Ghod! The greatest! This is really great sf. See what I mean? ... If it stinks we don't want it. If it's acclaimed as great then we will call it sf and take it in our arms. No offence to Shirley of course, Jan.

§ I quite agree, Dave. But saying "They shouldn't call that sf" is about the worst statement that can be made about science fiction titles to sf fans. Possibly the reason it's used?

Well, that's it for this time as far as I am concerned. But before I pass Dave, I have to correct a misunderstanding. I forget to mention immediately after Derek's letter where it belongs. Since other fans have however mentioned the same thing...

Mal Ashworth's contribution ALL-NIGHT PARTY was received by us, about a week after mailing out issue 6, for inclusion in no 7. We did not publish it then because there had been too many "convention" reports and stories in 5 and 6. Besides which there isn't much resemblance, except the background of hunting for convention space... Over to you, Dave!

IA.

This, as you no doubt have gathered (well gathered Sir!) is Dave speaking, or rather typing. I have another bunch of interesting ~~junk~~ letters here, so I won't waste your time (or mine - hehe) and get on with it. Naturally, just to be awkward, I've arranged them in alpha-betical order too... only the opposite way round. After all, why should "A" get priority over, say : B or Z ? - Good Heavens, what am I saying ???

DAVE NEWMAN (whom. incidentally has moved to Liverpool (75 Renville \*\*\*\*\* road, Broadgreen, Liverpool 14 to be exact) writes :

".. My first comment (on our 'zine) takes the form of four bob's worth of stamps which should be passed on to the keeper of the subs to ensure that I get further copies of the zine. This of course, really constitutes sufficient comment for any fanzine and is my own way of saying that I liked what I saw ((and we like your way of saying that you liked what you saw)) ...

I liked the layout and production of the 'zine - a very creditable effort- which puts a number of British 'zines to shame. Keep up the good work.

Ken Fetter was very good as was the Mercer blcke. Would like to see more of that sort of stuff. ((Me too. How about it fellas ?))

Fan and prozine reviews: nice unbiased comment, untouched by the odd blight of parochial feuds.

"Lost Week-end" : Well, I was there and I think that Shirley covered the main points pretty well. I was too busy dispensing refreshments to see most of what was going on, and what I did see I recorded in Eye 3. Incidentally, I'm not really a bad man as Shirley alleges. Just inhibited ((??))

==== Well, thanks for the sub Dave and the other nice things. We do our best you know and appreciate being appreciated...

SHIRLEY MARRIOTT (alias SHAMEY) says: " If it is humanly possible, \*\*\*\*\* I will come to the genuine Iwerpcon, but I am warning you that if I do come, I will have to rely on the generosity of others to feed me as I will not have over-much to spend. I would not mind going hungry except that it makes me queer when I drink and from what you say there will be plenty of booze...

==== You can certainly rely on our generosity Shirley. Gosh, I'd even give up my bed for you... well, part of it anyway...

ARTHUR HAYES apparently has misunderstood me. He says " I should \*\*\*\*\* imagine that the fairly large number of mentions A has received over here should have brought it to a circulation well above the 30 you mention as being on your list for December 15th, tho' it may not get to the 300 figure for a little while. Fanzine publishing is not, normally, a very good financial deal.

I am surprised to hear that French s.f. is the way it seems to be. I think Galaxy has a French, Italian and Swedish edition but I had hope for more than a straight translation of fiction in England or U.S. if you should hear of some that is more than merely a translation, I hope you will remember to let me know...

Arthur Hayes goes on :

I have just written to four other 'zines, commenting... I get seven fanzines- not counting yours. I subscribe to about ten prozines now and am gradually enlarging that list ((You must be a s.f. fan)) One trouble I've been having is that just when I'm ready to subscribe to a prozine I hear it's been suspended. That is happening to a lot of them these days. The Boom-days of '53 are over and it is being increasingly felt by those who did a lot of reading. I can easily take care of at least 20 magazines per month and with a lot of them on a bi-monthly basis or quarterly basis I don't get as much as I would like. At the moment, the S.F. Book Club and the Pocket books are taking up the slack.

===== Fhew... I wish I had some time to read. I'm lucky if I get one mag or book read. Now about these 30 people you mention. What I meant by this figure was that we have about 30 members in the club (actually we have none now). Our circulation however, amounts to about 140, with possibilities of increasing still further. Sometimes I wish it were only 30.... it's cheaper!

WIMZ CLARKE sent us, as usual, an interesting and constructively critical letter. He found the :

"Cover good if not grand... dignified, sort of. The college idea in the contents and editorial not bad at all, and the letter very smooth. ((Ta)) You'll gradually build up a fan community; this year..4, next year 5... etc.. ((Boas!!)) - this is being cruel I suppose. But really, fans are scarce here too, if you use the term to mean what we mean it to mean. The Globe draws anything up to 40 odd (hah) people on the Thursday night, but the ratio of regular fans doesn't go up by more than about 3 a year. The numerous people who've been up here once only... I sometimes think that they must be using the Globe as a stop on a sight-seeing tour. We've had as many as 5 different new faces in one night who have never reappeared). (Bet you thought I'd forgotten that bracket?) Why "Alface" in the title of the editorial, some private "Courtney's boat" type of gag? ((haha))

Don Allen's piece fairish; just mentioning two or three names doesn't necessarily make a piece funny... not unless some characteristic is touched upon for humorous purposes. In any case, why shouldn't they burn Chuck Harris??

Encyclopedia : witty, if slightly sexy. Don't overdo it.

Simple solution: good ideas could have been built up more. Maybe that's why fans are susceptible to nervous breakdowns... doing 6 people's work at once?

All-night party: Very good indeed; smoothly written and humorous to boot. The idea of what will happen when Fandom runs out of hotels isn't brand new, but this is a damn good treatment of it. (The obvious solution: to build our own hotel, was mooted by Tucker in '52, which started Bloch on his "Send a brick" campaign (see "Quandry" of that period); some of us participated in conceiving a plan of the hotel, with beer fountains, padded cells and all modern fan conveniences.)

Fanzine reviews were competently handled and I was glad to see mention of US 'zines therein.

Tom White's got hold of an idea in the AKMAR thing, but I don't like the development; it's slow-moving and, in my opinion,

Vinç Clarke still at it...

would have read better as a report of a controversy over the authenticity of the remains... with accusations of faking, etc. The illo was in the wrong place... should have been at the end of the thing or on another page. ((quite so))

Frozine reviews good again. Like your comment on Authentic's fanzine reviews.

AMBROSIA... ((I'm afraid I can't afford to print all this, so you'll have to be content with the end of Vinç's letter... we were!))

" Nice issue of Alpha. Plenty of meat. Duplicating as usual extremely good. Easy styles from everybody and a pleasantly comradely air over-all.

==== The "Alface" you saw was really "Alfags", meaning 'All fags', but the result of my brilliant (?) titling was anything but brilliant. However, the "college" idea should have given you a clue. Surprised at you Vinç.

JOAN CARR opines : " ... But the best part of this zine, as with most good ones in these days, lies in the letter column. The things one can learn from them... About two months ago, Sandy and I got involved with decorating the Mess. Not that Sandy knows anything about decorating (does this make him a trufen?) ((Natch!)) Note the smug way in which I comment on Sandy's uselessness? I felt rather justified at the time since I was told that being a woman and a person with some artistic sense into the bargain, my job would be to decide what colour paint to use where and what shapes sizes and colours of crepe paper would go well together to make some decorations. We were getting ready for Christmas you see. Mind you, in the Army you are only told these nice things when someone wants you to do some work that no one else is willing to do. Sandy was busily engaged in wielding a paint brush. Anyway, one day the FMC (the President, Messing Committee) came in to have a look round and I said "If he sees you slacking, he'll tell you not to dilly-Dali", which was met by blank stares all round. If only I had seen Walt's letter before I pulled this gaff I could have said something like " I suppose he's inspecting you Dali"... This would also have met with blank stares, since puns don't seem to be appreciated here, but at least I would have had the satisfaction of knowing I had pronounced the name correctly. At the moment my face is deep red with embarrassment just thinking about it...

==== What a Balli shame!

HARRY CAINEK apparently likes Jazz, because he says:  
+++++ " I'm glad to see that most approved of the jazz editorial. I hope you keep a little bit of Jazz in ALPHA somewhere. In view of the fact that so many s.f. fans are also jazz fans, it doesn't seem out of place for a few fanzines to carry some jazz talk. Besides your bit in A the only other zine that I can think of off-hand that has any jazz stuff is Rackburn's A BAS...

==== Well, you got a bit Harry. In a couple of months' time I shall be publishing my "Jazzino" so you'll be having all the jazz you want. Also I have to keep as much stuff on that subject as possible for this new project. If anyone has an article on Jazz, whether it be Traditional, Swing, Cool or Progressive, I shall be very glad to receive it and if it is good I shall be pleased to publish it. And that, my dear femmes and fon, is all for this time. See you in April.

Did I hear murmurs about people who couldn't keep to their publication schedule? Did I hear grumblings about fanzines that first promised to appear more often, and then delayed appearance far longer than ever had been the case? Did I hear mention of the postal services having lost a whole consignment of Alpha's?

I'm not too sure now, but I certainly have been getting remarks about magazines that are on time. Punctuality is a Twarp's vice, they told us. But then, we are sweet and innocent, though not perhaps so young in some fan's estimation. But what happened?

Well, we could have been on time, even with OMPA to get out of the way first. We had to start off with the thought of running of Alpha by the first of February, thinking of doing OMPA after that. The way the material was flooding in assured us that we'd have three issues of material by the end of the month. Only it remained by that single page on the first of the month. The other material that we did possess was good. Too good for Alpha. So we dumped it in the waste paper basket.

The thought of having to run an issue that would put every other fanzine to shame was too much for us. We just couldn't break all these hardstriving faneds to their doom that fast. So we decided to hold on and wait for other stuff.

You're a bigger twerp than we are if you believe that of course. But frankly, it was shortage of "good" material that led us to wait another month before inflicting Alpha on you. Then why, I can already hear the questions shouted at us, have you all of a sudden published another mammoth zine? Well, it is rather thicker than is our original intention. The reason lies in the fact that each issue should, if at all possible, be balanced out. We think, at least I presume that Dave agrees with me, that this balancing out has been carried out almost to perfection here. (Yes, that's our noses curling up there!) There should have been a fuller Ambrosia, where stark murder was committed on beautiful letters in order to keep ourselves out of debt. We've had to raid Sonja's and Patricia's savings-boxes in the process ....

That however is another story. I hope however that we have been successful in pleasing our representatives Ron Bennett and Dick Ellington both of whom will only represent us (i.e. spend our money) if we maintain or improve the quality of succeeding issues. We'll try!

Ron Bennett: Hall Road - Little Freaton - Swillington - near Leeds. That's the address to send postal orders to, please! We have recently had EC's made out in my name, or in Dave's. Would these people please explain where we're supposed to cash them? It just isn't possible folks, so please use Ron Bennett's address for subscriptions if you live in Great Britain or the Empire.

For US subscribers the money should go to Dick Ellington, who has this week moved to 113 W.84th Str # 51 E. New York 24 N.Y. The contents page may already have been typed by Dave, so please note this. (ctd.P.4)