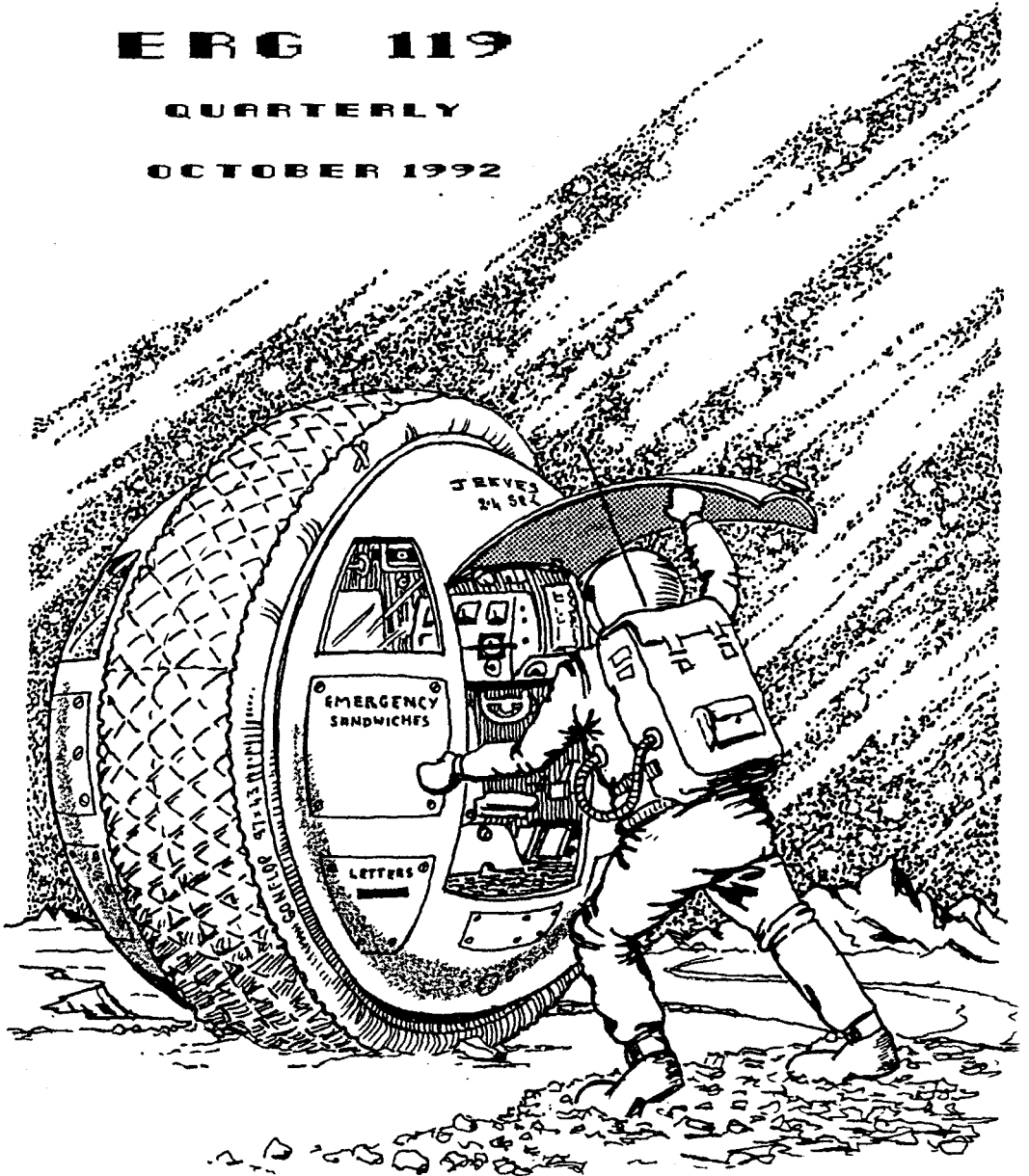


Now in its 34th. Year

ERG 119

QUARTERLY

OCTOBER 1992



ERG

QUARTERLY

No.119 October 1992

 B. T. JEEVES
 56 RED SCAR DRIVE
 SCARBOROUGH
 N. YORKSHIRE YO12 5RQ
 Phone (0723) 376817



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ERG -- NOW IN ITS 34th. YEAR

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Greetings Ergbods,

IF you enjoyed reading ERG, please pay for it by sending me either THREE, second-class stamps, or a dollar bill. That pays for this issue. When I produce the next issue, then you'll be sent a copy on the same terms. If I don't hear from you, I'll assume you don't want any future issues. I'm afraid that ERG was getting costly with many copies being mailed into Limbo, so each issue, I drop a few more non-responders and add a few new names. A cross in the top left hand corner indicates this must be your last copy - unless you DO SOMETHING.

NATTERINGS

October 1st. see not only ERG's 119th. issue, but brings me to my 70th. birthday. I haven't tried to make this a specially enlarged issue - extra pages up the printing costs and shove the postage into a higher band. On the contrary, I've tried to include a really good mixture of articles. You will write in with your comments won't you?

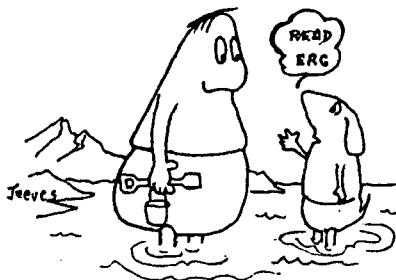
We recently had a tour of the Welsh mountains and lakes - which included a visit to Hay On Wye, the bookselling centre of the UK. I took my 'Want List' with me although I had very strong doubts of finding Astounding No.1 going for 3d. To be honest, I didn't even think I'd find any issues of SF magazines, let alone Astounding. To my everlasting surprise, I found one of the (18) (specialist) bookshops CRAMMED with SF, hardcovers, magazines and about fifty or so ASTOUNDING, AMAZING, WONDER AND THRILLING WONDER etc. from the 1929-1936 era - but at £20 or £35 a throw. They also had loads of more recent titles including American hardcover, Book Club editions for £1 each. Luckily for my bankbook, they only had one issue of ASF that I wanted, so bang went £20. I also got some other early SF mags and with a bit more time, I'd have sorted out a lot more.

Remember the Dean Drive? I came across a book 'by' Sandy Kidd, the Scottish re-inventor of a variation of the thing. His uses two gyroscopes and that's about all the book tells you. No photos, no diagrams, only several pages of extremely technically jargoned test results, totally incomprehensible to me. The book waffles all round the houses about his struggle for recognition, the peculiarities of gyroscopes, the problems he faced, and the final adoption by an Australian combine -- at this point he shifts over to natter about other similar devices and their inventors, including mentions of Dean, Pournelle and Analog -- but no further mention of what is happening, or any other useful info. The Book is titled BEYOND 2001: The Laws of Physics revolutionised (they aren't). Sandy Kidd, Sidgwick & Jackson, 1990 £14.93. I'd love to believe in it, but his 'explanations' seem awfully woolly.

MEXICON.V is to be held at the St. Nicholas Hotel, Scarborough over the weekend of May.28-31. Membership, £18.00 to Bernie Evans, 121 Cape Hill, Saethwick, Warley, W.Midlands B66 4SG. Val and I hope to see you there.

Good news - or bad news? After vetting the first two chapters and illos, an agent has agreed to handle 'SAM SOGGY', an illustrated collection of children's stories. Less encouraging results have greeted my SF-nal autobiography, DOWN MEMORY BANK LANE. That runs to 66,000 words and over a hundred illustrations. Two sample chapters of that have been out with an agent since January, and so far, two letters of enquiry remain unanswered. I wonder why agents take so long to decide on whether or not to handle something - makes you wonder how they ever get around to actually selling the stuff.

I finally lashed out and ordered a new monitor for this computer. It arrived safely, I hooked it up, switched on ... and zilch! Only the TV raster, no sign of computer life. Dull thump of heart dropping heavily. More fiddling, still nowt. Applied servicing rule No.1 Read instruction book and discover little note, "Press switch X IN for RGB input." Bingo, all is now well and I have a nice shiny, bright and clear monitor to replace my old colour TV. Mark you, it won't stop me making lots of typos..



WORD EATING DEPARTMENT. In a letter in Matrix, I said I found Interzone, 'unreadable'. That comment was based on reading the first issue, some ten years ago. David Pringle kindly sent me a copy of the current issue - and what a change. Well-written and interesting stories, good art and a superb Hardy cover. I'd rate it better than Analog, but I have a few reservations - I don't like novel extracts, especially when this is only notified at the END of the piece. Two stories had the modern style of missing endings and I'd prefer to see most of the articles and interviews replaced by more stories - having said that, it's still a good zine.

I'm nearing the end of the 'Art In SF' series and probably the same for 'Weird & Wonderful'. Carry On Jeeves has only a few more episodes left to run, so the question arises, 'What next?'. If you have any suggestions, please send them in. If I can possibly write about them, then I will. New stuff? Reprints of old items? Just let me know. Right now, when COJ finishes, I'm wondering whether to re-run, DOWN MEMORY BANK LANE, which appeared in ERC from July 1982 to Jan 1987. It covers my memories of 'Bloods', comics, US & UK Magazines, Conventions, Clubs, etc. Any comments on that idea?

WANT LIST

COSMOS SF & FANTASY MAGAZINE 1953/54 Nos. 2,3 & 4 GALAXY NOVELS (magazine) No.29

DOC SAVAGE pb 95, 101, 102, 105 to 108 and 115 onwards.

BREAT SF FROM AMAZING etc. Nos.10 & 11 SF BREATHS 16, 20 & 21

MOST THRILLING SF EVER TOLD 11, 12 & 13 SF YEARBOOK NO.4

ORIGINAL SF (UK) NO.12 SPACEWAY (USA) 1969/70 Jun.1970

SATELLITE SF 1958/59 VOL 1 NO.4, VOL.3 NOS 2,4,5 & 6

Paperback or hardcover.. THE NIGHTIEST MACHINE, John W Campbell BOOKS

THE PULP JUNGLE Frank Gruber 1967

CHEAP THRILLS: An Informal History of the Pulp Magazines Ron Boulart

SALES

If you want to buy paperbacks, books, magazines or suchlike, please send an SAE and say which lists you'd like. Statesiders can omit the SAE.

FINALLY -- You will remember to LOC, won't you?

All the best, Terry

THE STORY BEHIND

THE COVER

This issue's cover illustration began with the idle doodling of a monowheel vehicle rolling across a Lunar terrain with a traditional rocketship rising above a crater. A reduced copy of this sketch is shown in Fig.1

This was just a preliminary rough to see how I liked the composition and the balance of the layout. I decided the scene was too static, the monowheel seemed stationary and the spaceship was a SF cliché. Moreover, since the ERG logo was to go in the top left-hand corner, this meant the whole composition was weighted heavily to the left. I shelved the idea for a while and thought of other designs.

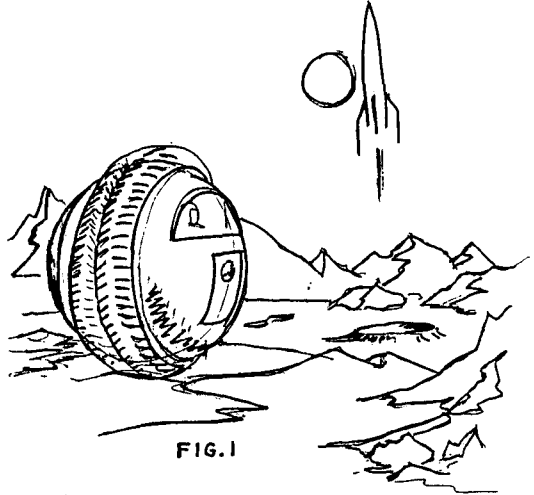


FIG.1

Over a few days, I began to think of a cover illo with some strong object in the bottom right-hand corner as a balance to the ERG heading. With this in mind, I sketched the

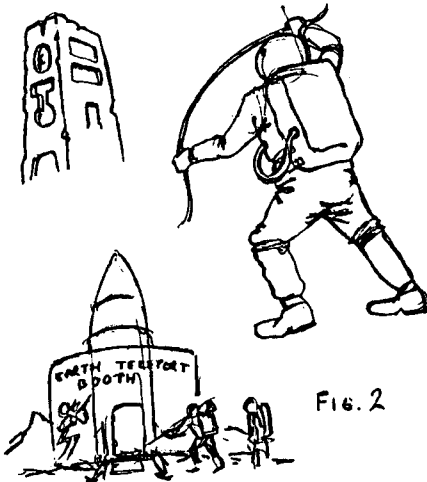


FIG.2

spacesuited figure struggling with a length of cable. Fig.2 The next question was, "What should he be doing?" At first, I considered making it a metal bar and having him trying to pry open a door in the base of a monolith. I started drawing one, then realised if the stone was large enough to be impressive, it would rear into the ERG logo space.

Another thought was to have him locked out of a teleport booth and trying to get back in by prying open the entrance. That led to the rough sketch showing a cylindrical booth. That was no good, it obscured too much of the background. How about him trying to re-enter his spaceship? I roughed the rocket onto the teleport booth, but rejected it because if the door was to be accessible to a standing figure, the rocket motor would have to be buried in the ground. Scrub that brilliant idea.

At this point I remembered the original sketch. Instead of handling a cable or crowbar, my spaceman could be opening the wide hatch of the monowheel. This seemed a more interesting "What's happening?" idea so I roughed out a simple outline to check the balance. Fig.3. I decided the idea was OK, so set to work on the cover proper.

The first step was to transfer the spaceman to a clean sheet of A4 paper and ink him in. Next, I pencilled in the hatch cover to fit the arm positions and added the monowheel.

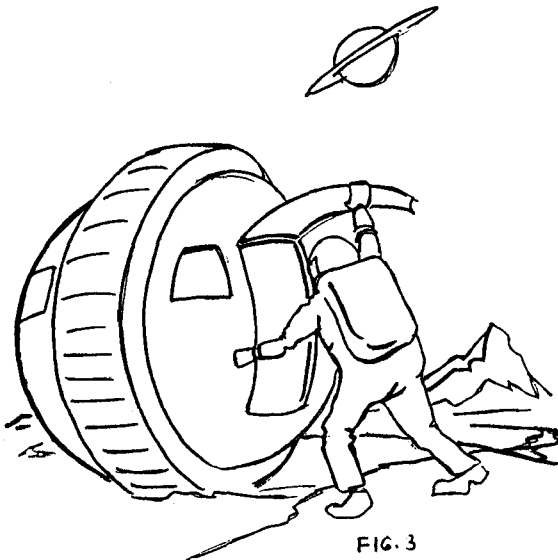


FIG. 3

Once that was done, the Lunar background was drawn in. There isn't a lot of it, but just enough to show the monowheel was standing on the top of a ridge somewhere on the Moon, and was about to descend to the plain. I tried changing the rocket taking off into a view of Saturn and its rings, (The scene could be on one of its moons), but decided it added nothing and would introduce needless clutter, so dropped that from the drawing. When I was satisfied with the final composition, I inked everything in. At this point, I decided the sky looked too bright if left untouched, so I put in the 49,357 dots, (count 'em if you don't believe me) which go to make the starry sky.

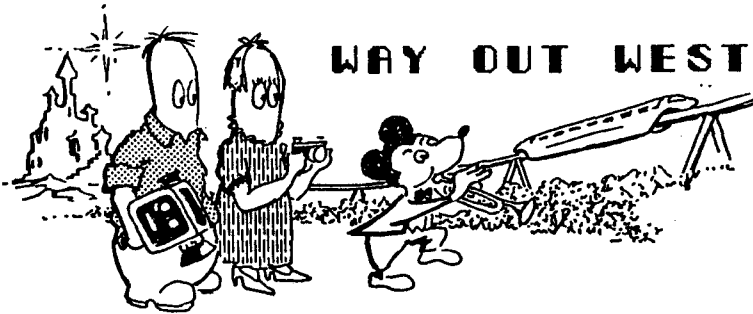
The next thing to do was to have photocopies made of all the sketches and the final cover illo - this latter in case of any snafu in printing out the ERG logo via Beeb and printer. I powered up the Beeb, loaded in my personal ERG font and designed the Logo heading. This was then printed at the top of the final photocopy.

The final stage was to load in the text of this article and work through it juggling margins and line lengths to leave the right amount of space for Figs, 1, 2 & 3. That done, I called a printout, pasted in the small illos and the job was finally done.

It may sound easy to say, "Draw a cover illo", but as you can see, even seemingly simple jobs can be complicated.

How do you like the result?

T.J.



After a seafood lunch (with tacos) we left Farmer's Market and were ferried off to Disneyland in nearby Anaheim. If you thought Blackpool was the cat's whiskers, you can forget it. Disneyland is as far beyond that junkheap as Blackpool is beyond the touring 'fair'. First and foremost, Disneyland is CLEAN! It is kept spotlessly so by a hoard of roving cleaners armed with brooms and pans.



They can whisk away a falling fag-end almost before it hits the deck. This is one place where the cliché, 'you could eat off the floor' is virtually true. Not that you need to do so, as there are numerous eateries of all shapes, sizes and types. Another great advantage is that no alcoholic drinks are sold - or allowed on the premises. Rowdy yobbos are skilfully escorted off the site. The aim of Disneyland is to provide a safe, pleasant place for family entertainment.

Queuing is never fun, and with the crowds waiting for many of the rides, it is inevitable. Even so, waiting is made as painless as possible. Wandering Disney characters entertain you. Lines are carefully 'laned' to prevent queue-jumping, signboards along the lines tell you how long you can expect to wait from that point and many rides embody 'people movers' to carry you along. Moreover, since the various cars, boats and trolleys don't stop to load, you never stop moving.

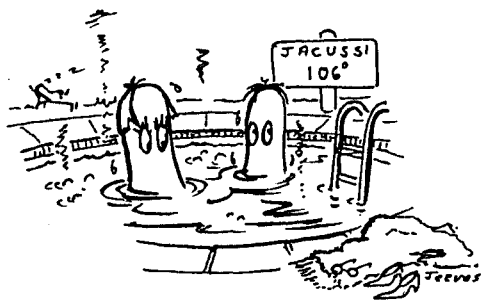
Disneyland isn't cheap, but once inside, you wander wherever the fancy takes you. The place is divided into theme areas - Tomorrowland, Frontierland and so on. Buses, aerial skyways and the like are available to carry you around and you can take as many rides as, where, and when you like. We started with the highly recommended 'Pirates Of The Caribbean'. An entertaining boat trip through caverns of animated tableaux where we sailed between ships of opposing sides engaged in a sea-battle. Smoke and flame everywhere, with cannonballs plopping into the sea around us.

On the shore, bearded pirates chased women out of realistically burning houses. We rode up water cascades and shot down chutes in what must be one of the most spectacular rides in the whole complex.

From here, we strolled to the New Orleans Square, where we sat and listened to the Jazz combo, toured the shops, had a soft drink in the period bar-parlour and lunched beside the lakeside as the paddlewheel steamer chugged by loaded with passengers. You could ride on that or for the more adventurous, two submarines were ready to take you beneath the waters of the lake. Later, we risked the terrifying 'Space Mountain' and numerous other rides, shows and exhibitions. If you ever get the chance, get to Disneyland at opening time and stay all day. It's an experience not to be missed.

Then it was back to the coach and away to our overnight stop at the Ramada Inn in Palm Springs. An excellent hotel with the fastest elevators of the whole tour. Sadly, we had arrived a week too soon to catch Frank Sinatra who was booked in for a show the following weekend. Our room boasted the usual two huge double-beds, coffee making facilities, bath/shower, sanitised toilet seats and colour TV. I've already mentioned how crummy the American TV programs are, well reception quality is even worse. Apart from their lower TV line standard, out of some 20 or so Stateside TVs we have seen, all seemed garish and crude. I must assume that hotels never buy good ones, nor bother to keep 'em in trim.

After unpacking our gear, we donned swimming costumes and went down to the pool. Up to now, the daytime temperature had been above the 100°F mark, so we were really looking forward to a cooling dip. Imagine our delight to find a Jacussi adjacent to the pool proper - we could alternately boil and cool down again. The Jacussi in the Boston Sheraton had been kept at around 80°F - we were amazed to find that the Ramada Inn kept its Jacussi at no less than 106°F.



We loafed in and around both pools for the rest of the afternoon. Luckily for us, we had acquired the beginnings of a tan before leaving the UK. Otherwise, the scorching Californian sun would have done us a heap of no good.

After breakfasting on peaches, coffee and orange juice, we boarded our coach and left the Ramada Inn - for the first time. After ten minutes driving, one of our party remembered he had left his wallet in the hotel safe overnight, so we had to go back and collect it. We set off again and passed Bob Hope's house perched at the end of a private road high on the hills behind Palm Springs. No doubt he would have been delighted for us to call for a quick round of golf, but we couldn't spare the time.

Heading out across the desert, we left California, crossed the Colorado river and entered Arizona. We paused to step out in the searing 110°F heat to take a few photos, examine the cactus and the

bullet holes in a sign beside Route 10 - it seems that when some of the locals got steamed up on firewater, they would drive out into the desert and shoot at such targets.

We made a lunch stop in Blyth. Then, plucked up our courage to cross the road for a milk shake in MacDonalds. It wasn't traffic which demanded courage, but the terrific heat which made the short journey seem like running the gauntlet between rows of electric fires. In the early afternoon, we pulled into Phoenix. As we checked into the hotel, the clerk informed us that we had guests waiting for us in the coffee lounge. By now, our fellow travellers were beginning to think that we were Russian agents making contacts at every stop. Shortly before leaving the UK, a letter of mine, mentioning our trip, appeared in an American fanzine. It brought a response from Jane Raymer of Prescott in which she very kindly offered to host Val and I during our travels. I wrote back explaining that our coach itinerary was fixed, but if she happened to be in Flagstaff on August the 8th., we'd love to meet her.

Despite having very great difficulty in walking, she and her husband John, an ex B-17 pilot had made the 100 mile trip to Phoenix on the off-chance of meeting us there. If you can think of a kinder gesture, I'd like to hear of it. Moreover, Jane had made up a goody bag of local minerals and other items by way of a meeting present. We sat and nattered over coffee until it was time for us to visit the old Western town of Rawhide. The Raymers insisted on ferrying us out there in their air-conditioned car and dropped us at the gates just seconds before the Greyhound coach brought in the rest of our party. We met them as they unloaded and asked, "How on earth did you get here before us?"

Entering Rawhide, a re-built, Western Movie setup, we sauntered along the dusty main street with its hitching rails and horse trough. We ogled the Indian village, patted the cattle and stumped along the boardwalk fronting the various stores. A candy store offered lollipops in more varieties than a dog has fleas.

The print shop offered various posters, deeds to non-existent mines, postcards and other souvenirs. For a measly \$2.00 they would print up a 'WANTED' poster bearing your name.

I declined that one, as hiding somewhere in my memorabilia is a similar one sent by Betty Kujawa - it reads, 'JEEVES ESCAPES HANGING -- the rope breaks'.



We shopped in the general store and paused to sit on the cracker barrel beside a pot-bellied stove - thankfully not in operation. After purchasing a few odds and ends we visited the Sheriff's office, peered down the entrance to a gold mine and watched brave souls who risked a trip on the stagecoach. We had tickets entitling us to a ride, but were too fagged out to climb up and go bumping across the prairie in a cloud of dust,

even if they did guarantee the Indians wouldn't shoot arrows at us.

Then the fun began on main street. Two bad guys rode into town and began loudly plotting a bank robbery. They charged inside, shots were heard and out they dashed carrying bags of money. At this point the drunken Sheriff arrived and after a shoot out, good triumphed over evil.

Dusk was falling by now, so we wandered into the saloon to watch the gambling (with fake money) Bar girls in plunge-neck dresses, abbreviated Western skirts and fish-net tights brought us drinks. We sat back to enjoy the view - it was also interesting to watch the other people as well. From here we moved to a dinner of steak and potatoes served by the same pulchritudinous girls, now aided by waiters in full cowboy rig. Admittedly the affair was as ersatz as a cardboard replica of the Great Pyramid and rather on a par with our own mediaeval banquets but even so, it was great fun.



The meal, the hectic day and the final run back into Phoenix, took their toll. We slept like logs until the crack of 6-30am. Then a breakfast of buttermilk pancakes, jelly, scrambled eggs and sausages - all served on one plate and accompanied by bread, jam and endless cups of coffee for which you pay a basic 40c or so, then they just keep bringing the stuff. Val limited herself to fruitjuice, a pastry and several tankfuls of coffee. There's another nice American eating out habit; it is very pleasant to come in out of the heat and be served immediately with ice-cold drinking water before they even think of taking your main order.

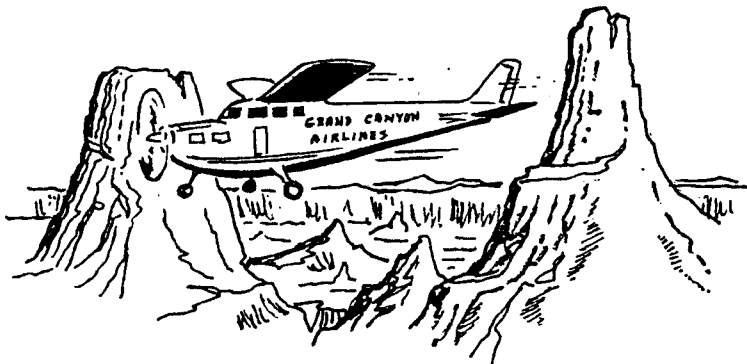
Baggage loaded, off we set, up Route 17 to lunch in Sedona, with one or two stops to take photographs of the wonderfully wind-carved and colourful rocks in an incredible shade of red usually seen only in Western movies. Our guide solemnly assured us that they used 20,000 gallons of paint every year. Sedona, like many other towns along the route, consisted of a dusty main street with a few shops studded along its length. These little towns don't have suburbs, the desert begins abruptly at the end of the single street. There's usually an eating place or two, numerous banks and several Realtors - (Land and Estate Agents) -- well, they DO have a lot of land. I suspect that the three main ways of making a living in the USA are in serving food, selling land or handling money.

As usual, we asked for directions to the Post Office - which turned out to be a mile or three down the road. With the mercury over the 115° mark, getting there would have been akin to mounting a moon mission without the benefit of an air-conditioned spacesuit. Instead, we tanked up on cans of lemonade and took photographs of a colourful Indian wigwam strategically placed on one side of the main street.

From Sedona, a short run took us to Flagstaff in Arizona. This is the home of the world famous observatory housing the 200" reflector. I kept my fingers crossed hoping for a detour, but sadly, we didn't get a chance to visit the place before trundling along to our next - and most breathtaking port of call - the flight base of GRAND CANYON AIRLINES. We bought our tickets, about \$40 each, and were ushered out to a single-engine Piper aircraft. Thanks to my height and weight, I was given the co-pilot's seat. From this vantage point, I was able to take some marvellous photographs, both still and cine. A brief engine run-up, a few words with ground control, then it was 'brakes off', the runway fell away and as we cruised along about fifty feet above the ground over a flat plateau, the plane headed for a strange, gleaming streak across the horizon. The streak grew to become a yellow and red band, widened out, then suddenly, with a marvellous sense of soaring like a bird, we passed over the edge of the plateau and found ourselves high about a gigantic slash in the ground - THE GRAND CANYON !

Over a mile deep, some five miles wide and totally indescribable. It was STUPENDOUS. Not only does it have to be seen, -- it has to be Experienced. I could go on about its ever changing colours, its immensity, the total stillness, the timelessness, the weird shapes carved in the rocks by the years of erosion, and never get near putting the feeling across. Flat-topped buttes unclimbable and forever untouched by human foot. Awe inspiring, magnificent, incredible - no use wasting words, the only thing to do is to go and see it for yourself - even photographs and movies fail to do it justice.

Far below, some tiny black dots were battling their way down the Colorado river. Tiny dots, but in reality, ten-foot long inflatable rafts carrying intrepid tourists through the rapids. We flew over and around towering peaks and ravines, we passed over flat-topped buttes on which no foot had ever been placed. Cameras whirled and clicked like crazy.



Then came the high spot of the flight, our pilot lined up the Piper on a couple of spires about a hundred feet apart - and flew between them! It was magnificent, but over too soon. We flew back to the landing strip and the pilot held us at an altitude of four feet right along the runway before touching down outside the terminal building. Some day, I'd love to do it again.

To be continued ...

ALAN BURNS, 19 THE CRESCENT, KING'S RD. Stn., WALLSEND, N. TYNESIDE



LETTERS

The cover leads me to a thought. In Analog, there was a lot of mention of hover cars which were ideal for going over rough ground. I just wonder if they got those vehicles perfected. I recall two fine stories about the motorway police in the future where the average speed was 400mph. In rough country, will caterpillar tracks be replaced by hover transit? @>Highly unlikely, whilst hoverers can manage fairly rough ground, they can't cope with the large hummocks a caterpillar can surmount. Moreover, even a steep

slope has 'em beat, and they also have problems with side-slips and wind drift, even sharp turns can prove awkward. @ I was surprised you didn't mention the American invention which solved a persistent problem with electric cars, namely that with DC power their performance is not remarkable, unlike trams which use AC and whose acceleration has caused alarm and despondency in many motorists who thought they could accelerate past a tram and found its acceleration a wonder to see. @> That was the result of DC motors. English trams used DC motors, NOT AC The system was to use TWO DC motors which could be started in series for acceleration and parallel for max speed running @ Now the bright sparks (pun) in the USA have devised something that can take in DC and give out AC. Whack-o, acceleration of excellent grade. @> Assuming you have the enough DC to feed in - which STILL must come from your batteries, you then have power loss in conversion and performance inferior to the old tram system. @

KEN LAKE, 115 MARKHOUSE AVE, LONDON E17 8AY

Usual stylish Jeeves f/c illo, and the usual delightful interior characters (Did you ever have a name for these blobby folk?) @>Yes, I call 'em 'The Soggies', For 30 years, I did a regular cartoon in Movie Maker and its predecessor (a weekly!), over 400 cartoons. @ The ERG typeface does worry me a little. especially diagonals as in N where I could get quite sea-sick contemplating those ziggy-zaggy lines. Does state of the art not allow better definition? @> Much better definition (and colour) is available, but I'm limited to a 9pin dot-matrix printer and when designing letters, I must stay within a specific, small grid. @ Your Electocar™ piece was amusing enough, but about the same as Newton denying that anyone would reach the Moon. @> Why? I said they would come. My point was they would be held up until better batteries (or other system) allowed 'em to compete on a performance basis - or when petrol taxes pushed modern cars off the road. Your idea that petrol companies are holding 'em back is ludicrous. If Ford, Vauxhall, Chrysler etc could make a competitive battery car, they'd be after the profits and be blown to what powered 'em=@

PAMELA BOAL, 4 WESTFIELD WAY WAY, Charlton Heights, Wantage, OXON OX12 7EN

I enjoyed the episode of 'Go West Old Fan' and recall the problem of locating a Post Office and obtaining stamps of the correct denomination and that in a land of excellent service, the official purveyors of stamps were noticeable for their lack of courtesy. Agreed a tidal barrage would cause ecological problems. That lesson

has been learned in advance from beaches destroyed along the North-East coast by the building of protective groins off the coast of Norway. Further down the coast cliff erosion has been accelerated by the removal of shingle from beaches further up the coast. Such evidence has been noted and tidal barrages are not being built. Indeed, wind farms are an eyesore and take up far too much land. However a quite modestly sized windmill can provide all the power needs for an individual home in many rural areas. @> Satellite dishes are bad enough, picture windmills on every house! <@ The above does not of course begin to tackle the power needs of industry and cities. I maintain the fossil fuel users can clean up their act if there was the will to enforce the use of clean air technology. @> Probably so, but the problem is where do we get the energy when fossil fuels run out? Right now, only fission can do it, and fusion may if we work at it NOW. <@

ALAN SULLIVAN, 20 SHIRLEY RD., STRATFORD, LONDON E15 4HX

E.E. Smith Ph.D. Well whadda ya know... E.E. Smith was (along with such as Isaac Asimov) one of my first SF influences. That grand-scale writing style, the strong female characters, heroines even. His works may well be flawed, but he was by no means the worst of offenders. His limitations and values are no more than those of his time, and certainly not as over-emphasised as in say, the later works of Robert Heinlein. Anything, taken out of context can be criticised.



Some works just handle it better than others. The important thing is to recognise the nature of the stories - Action-adventure yarns set in universes where things were so much simpler than in our own - and appreciate them for what they are, rather than what they are not. One of the better examples of "classic space-opera" writing, I feel. @> I fully agree, I'd rather re-read a Lensmanepic than a new yarn by Cordwainer Smith, Zelazny, Bradbury etc. <@

GRAHAM STONE, GPO Box 440, Sydney 2001, AUSTRALIA, would like to buy, or failing that, get definite information on the following titles. CAN YOU HELP HIM?

John Baxter, THE HERMES FALL (S&S edn.) James Blackstone, TORCHED, Grafton. S.H. Courtier, INTO THE SILENCE
 Terry Carr, IDEAS OF TOMORROW, UNIVERSE. 12, AND 13. S.I. Childer, TENDRILS, WORM. Bernard Cronin, TOAD
 A.B. Chandler, THE SEA BEASTS, THE SHIP FROM OUTSIDE, UP TO THE SKY IN SHIPS Frank Dilnot, I WARNED BOTH HANDS
 Erasmus Dawson, THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH. Del Rey, STELLAR. 7 M. Dix, THE GOLDEN FLUID, THE KIDNAPPED SCIENTIST.
 J.F. Myer, COLD EYES. Chas Grant, Ed. DOOM CITY, FEARS, MIDNIGHT. J. Fagin, JULES VERNE'S ROCKET TO THE MOON.
 M.H. Greenberg, Ed. TANTALISING LOCKED-ROOM MYSTERIES, Greenberg & Olander, SF OF THE FIFTIES
 R. Hare, THE HAND OF THE CHIMPANZEE. Harrison & Aldiss, BEST SF OF THE YEAR 7/1974 R. James, THE SCENE IS CHANGED
 F. Huac, THE YEAR OF MIRACLE. H.A. Knight, CARNOSAUR, THE FUNGUS M.H. Hill, THE SECRET OF THE CRATER
 P. Ritchie, CONFESSIONS OF A PEOPLE LOVER. R. Torgeson, Ed. CHRYSALIS SERIES - all.
 Graham also wants to buy a copy of the John Hamilton Edn. of OUT OF THE SILENCE by Erle Cox - at least get a colour photocopy of the jacket.

S.O.S.

CHUCK CONNOR, SILDAN HOUSE, CHEDISTON RD., WISSETT, NR. HALESWORTH, SUFFOLK IP19 0NF

POWER TO THE PEOPLE, and the comment about fossil fuels assumes that they're going to expire before they become discarded by the power producers. I would think that as the supplies get smaller and smaller, natural greed will hike the price up beyond all economic stability. *☞ Whether fossil fuels die out or are priced out, we need to look at a replacement - NOW! ☞* It reminds me of a comment in THE SPACE MERCHANTS of a man who was left a valuable ring - made of solid oak. Nice touch that, especially when you consider it was penned in the early 50s. On a more serious note, Chernobyl is a powder keg waiting for re-ignition as although it was concrete clad, it appears to be falling apart and if something isn't done about it, then you have the danger of wind-carried dust. Like yourself, I cannot see a viable, readily usable alternative, but that doesn't mean I'm going to worship nuclear power. *☞ Right now, that's the only viable option. Demand already far exceeds any feasible economies we can make. ☞*

ROGER WADDINGTON, 4 COMMERCIAL ST., NORTON, MALTON, N. YORKS YO17 9ES

ANALOG is still my favourite of the sf mags, though I must admit I read it now more out of a sense of routine; no memorable issues or even memorable stories. The only way I remember that story from the April issue that you mention is that I've read it recently. Really, the memorable nostalgic issues must come from my discovery years, 1965 to 1968. I'd be quite happier with a smaller collection covering all the mags from those years, rather than stockpiling all the issues since. *☞ My own favourite years are 1937-1940 and 1946 to 1955 and I'd thumbs down virtually everything after 1975. ☞*

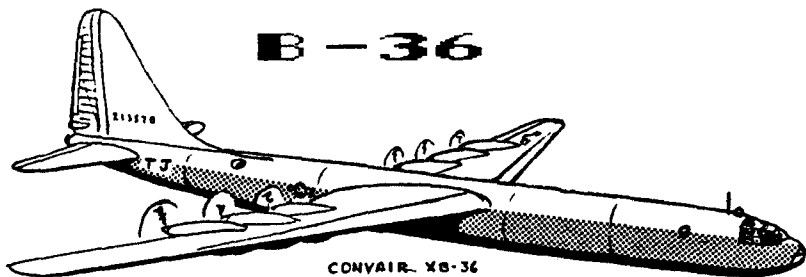
BRIAN EARL BROWN, 11675 BEACONSFIELD, DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48224, USA

POWER FOR THE PEOPLE. The problem for me isn't that I think we should not go nuclear but that I don't think nuclear power is quite the panacea people tend to think it is. There ARE safety conditions. You say that only 35 people died at Chernobyl but those numbers are dubious because it could hardly count the number of people who have contracted leukemia or cancer from radiation exposure but who haven't died yet. *☞ Nor did I count all the miners who have died in mines or contracted lung diseases whilst mining coal for power stations. ☞* You also overlook the hundreds of square miles contaminated for the near and middle-distant future. That makes it a bigger disaster than you're giving it credit for being. *☞ It IS a disaster, but it WILL clear eventually and Russia has plenty of land to spare. ☞*

While US reactors are safer than the Soviets, sheer numbers would mean that one of ours is bound to go up in spectacular fashion. *☞ Which, as I said, means VERY careful control. The real facts are that, our energy demands increase every year, alternate energy sources can only supply less than 20% of present demand and only nuclear (fission or fusion) shows any promise - at the moment. We're in a bind and it needs acting on NOW! ☞*

KEN CHESLIN, 10 COMEY GREEN, STOURBRIDGE, W. MIDLANDS DY8 1LA

There was something on TV recently about students avoiding the science subjects. I was wondering if this was merely another side of the refusal to live in the real world, viz the increased interest in Fantasy over SF - and the masses who follow TV soaps. There's a difference between fantasising and letting it take over real life. I have a feeling that arts subjects are easier to learn/do than the sciences. *☞ I think you're right, you can waffle in the arts (even sell a pile of bricks as a masterpiece), but science and maths must be accurate. ☞*



Ask anyone to name a famous multi-engined bomber and the chances are very high that the answer will be either the Avro Lancaster or the Boeing B-17, 'Flying Fortress'. One or two may recall the B-29 'Superfortress', but I doubt if anyone would offer the Consolidated B-24 'Liberator' despite the fact that more B-24s were produced than any other bomber. As for German or Japanese machines - no chance.

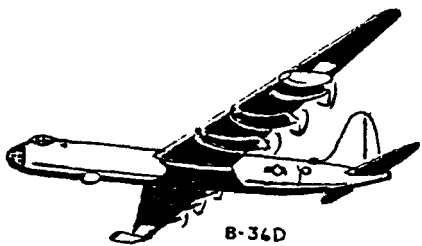
The Lanc could carry 18,000lbs of bombs internally, a normal load was 12,000lbs for 1700 miles, and it was famous for delivering the 22,000lb 'Grand Slam' - although carrying the latter limited its range to a mere 650 miles. By contrast, the B-17 carried a mere 4,000lb for 1300 miles - but it had a much higher 'ceiling' and a more powerful armament.

The B-29 could deliver 12,000lb over 3000 miles and the B-24 carried 8,000lb for 4000 miles, but was the most heavily armed of the lot with ten 0.5" guns. To give an idea of the sizes, the Lanc's wingspan was 98', the B-17 spanned 103', the B-24 reached 110' and the B-29 had 141' of wing.

All the above statistics pale into insignificance when one considers Convair's mighty B-36 which was conceived alongside the B-24 and B-29, but suffered so many political and production adversities that the prototype didn't fly until 1946. Take a look at the heading illustration. Six, pusher engines were buried in a wing of no less than 230' - roughly TWICE the distance of the Wright Brothers' first flight!

The first model of the B-36A had a top speed of 346mph at 35,000' and could carry a maximum of 43,000lb over a 4,300 mile range. Moreover, it was the most heavily armed bomber having no less than sixteen 20mm guns housed in eight remote controlled turrets. Developments moved apace. The B-36B had more powerful engines which pushed it along at 354mph. At this stage, they added a pair of J-47 jet engines in pylon-mounted pods and the B-36D managed 406mph and the B-36E achieved 418mph at 37,500'. The B-36 carried a crew of 15 and had four rest bunks for off-duty resting on long flights. Transit along its long fuselage was by means of a small wheeled trolley running through a narrow tube above the bomb-bay. I saw a section of the aircraft in Dayton museum, and as I recall, this tube was only about 2 feet in diameter.

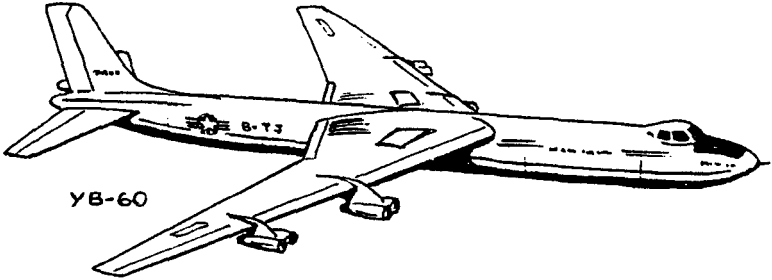
Some 382 models were built and for many years, the B-36 was the main 'big stick' deterrent aircraft of the United States Air Force. Among the aircraft's claims to fame must be included the carrying of the first airborne, operating nuclear reactor. No, it wasn't used to power the aircraft in any way.



The B-36 was also used as the mother ship to air-launch and recover an F-84 jet fighter in experiments for over-the-target protection. The idea being to conserve the fighter's fuel and allow it to offer bomber protection well beyond it's normal range.

The big bomber was also to have been the center ship in the Tom-Tom tests. This was a crazy scheme whereby two F-84 fighters were to be linked to its wingtips of the mother aircraft and be released when defence was required. However, when the scheme (under the title 'Tip-Tow') was tried using a B-29 bomber and two F-84s, it ended in disaster, so the idea was abandoned.

If the B-36 was such a magnificent aircraft, why didn't it become more famous? The answer is simple, with the advent of the all jet-power bomber there was no need to play around modifying an old design.



Two, swept wing, all-jet versions of the B-36 were built (as the B-60), but by that time other more advanced designs were leaving their vapour trails across the sky and no contract was awarded. The B-45 Tornado, the Boeing B-47 and the charismatic B-52 could all fly faster, higher and carry a larger payload.

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Terry Jeeves, Scarborough.

FANZINES

FANTASY COMMENTATOR.43 Langley Searles, 48 Highland Circle, Bronxville, N.Y. 10708. Large size, Paul illo on card cover. An article on the SF of Nat Schachner. Sam Moskowitz continues two series on SF's history (Bernarr McFadden and 'Voyagers Through Eternity'). There's a piece on Conan Doyle, and another on Lilith Loraine, plus verse and book reviews. Excellent, serious material, \$5.00 a copy or six for \$25.00



THE MENTOR.74 Ron Clarke, 6 Bellevue Rd., Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, Australia. Subtitled 'Australian Science Fiction', but Buck Coulson has a con report, there's assorted 'verse', a piece on the SF of Capt. W.E.Johns. There's a twee yarn about an Indian girl and another about a tree. (Why do modern stories lack plot, theme or ending?). Throw in letters and excellent reviews and you have a good variety - Get it for \$5.00, published contribution, or LOC.

DIPSOMANIA.15 is a 60pp, A5 zine devoted to postal gaming. Well produced, excellent print, good diagrams and oddies of games - diplomacy, scrabble etc. It also has a French language edition. 558f/issue, UK cheques accepted. Contact G.A.Bryant, 121 Rue Jean Pauly, B-4430, ANS,BELGIUM

GEGENSCHEIN 6414 beautifully produced A4 pages from Eric Lindsay, 7 Nicoll Ave, Ryde, NSW 2112, Australia. Syncon report and Part.2 of Eric's USA trip report, stacks of book reviews and lots of letters. Get it for the usual.

LAN'S LANTERN 36 & 37 Excellent 40pp, A4 these issues in which sundry fans and pro writers comment and reminisce about a particular author's writing and personality. 36 is on Theodore Sturgeon, 37 on A.E.VanVogt. Lovely items, get 'em for the usual, or \$2.00 from George Laskowski, 55 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hill, MI 48304, USA.

GROSS ENCOUNTERS.17 Alan Dorey returns to the fanzine fold with this 22pp,A4 zine. Alan tells of the hideous job movements which have kept him incommunicado. Three pages on football, three of lighthearted waffle, a good LOCCol and fanzine reviews - Oh, and Alan expresses delight at election results. Get it for the usual

From the BSFA come MATRIX, VECTOR and the last PAPERBACK INFERNO. MATRIX is an enjoyable mix of news, views, LOCs and competitions. VECTOR has LOCs, an article on Le Guin, an interview with Lawrence Sutin (who he?), another on Katherine Kerr (who she?), articles, good reviews and news, but is too intellectually s&c. Much space is wasted on overlarge headings, and both zines devote half pages to the same advert for 'REMINISCON.40'. PAPERBACK INFERNO merges with VECTOR with the next issue. If Matrix could do the same, it would make an excellent mag.

AMOS SEWELL

I was unable to find any details about Amos Sewell, other than the obvious fact that he illustrated tales in ASF during the 1933/34 era. However, a letter to Mike Ashley, that SF indexer supreme, brought me the following information.

"Amos Sewell lived from 1901 to 1983 and was a regular illustrator in the weird menace magazines published by Popular Publications during the thirties -- *Horror Stories*, *Terror Tales*, *Dime Mystery* -- where he provided much of the interior art, and that's what he's probably best remembered for. But he was also in *Strange Tales* which is why he popped up in the Clayton Astounding. He had been a sailor in his early days, working his passage from New York to San Francisco via the Panama Canal. By the end of the 30s, Sewell had graduated to the slicks, especially *Saturday Evening Post* for which he painted many covers".

I'm afraid Sewell's style doesn't lend itself well to my roundabout method of first photographing the illo, getting a photocopy and then making a 'paste-up' for the ERG reproduction. His heavy black & white style admirably captures the eerie gloom of an ancestral manor in the illo for THE MAN FROM CINCINNATI by Holloway Horn (surely a pen-name?) in the Nov.33 ASF. A very short tale in which the Lord of The Manor entertains an unusual guest.

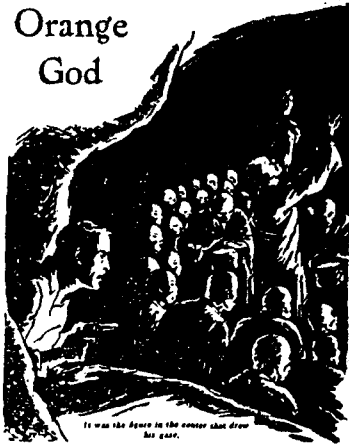


PING-TING

by Charlton L.
Edholm

PING TING, by Charlton L. Edholm appeared in the Oct.33 issue and tells the tragic story of a half-human ape. In the illustration, Sewell shows Ping Ting - in human garb to show his intelligence - rushing to the aid of the hero and heroine whose are endangered by the mad gorilla, Brutus. Here again, the emphasis is on the use of solid black. This was a common trait of many artists of the era, mainly because the poor paper and mass printing techniques of the pulp magazines didn't deal kindly with intricate cross-hatching, shading or fine pen lines.

The by Walter Glamis
**Orange
 God**



The soot-and-whitewash technique is carried to its ultimate in the above illustration for **THE ORANGE GOOD** in the same October 1933 issue. Despite this, it captures admirably the dark underground cavern, the mob of Tibetans and the weird creature dwelling in a crystal globe. Written by 'Walter Glamis', a pseudonym of Henry Kuttner, the high adventure yarn tells of a flyer who crashes in the

Himalayas and is captured by Tibetan monks controlled by an alien in a transparent globe. Before he can be sacrificed, the flyer shoots the alien and the monks calm down. Incidentally, the cover depicts a scene from another story in the issue - **ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN**, but sub-titles it with **THE**

In the
**Shadow
 of the Tii**

*The little god was almost forgotten
 —but not quite—*

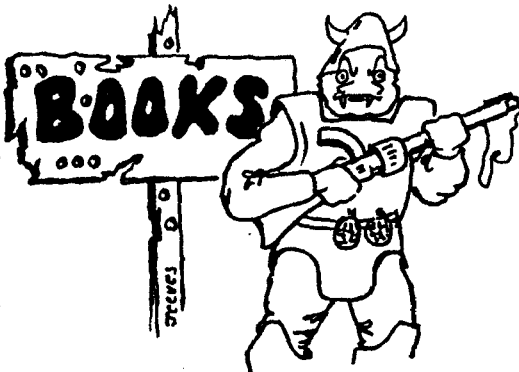
by Ainslee Jenkins

The final illustration marks a departure from the normal squarish or horizontal in that Sewell had to produce a long, narrow scene for the story in **THE SHADOW OF THE TII**, by Ainslee Jenkins in the Nov. 1933 issue. Not a particularly good drawing with the Tahitian idol of the god Tii, looking rather like a sand-filled sack with a face drawn upon it. The half-clad maiden is noteworthy however, such figures were a rarity in the SF mags of the era. The story hinges on the nasty trader, Sparth who bribes a native with whisky, to get him the girl, Tuaoa. She prays to the god and her prayers are answered - exit Sparth.

Nothing epic in most of the stories of that era, but at least they usually got interesting illustrations to accompany them. Sewell, unlike several of his contemporaries, could produce excellent figure work and could add that extra touch to an unread story which made you want to find out what was happening.

===== T.J.





GRUNTS Mary Gentle Bantam
£14.99

The final battle between Good and Evil looms with 18-stone orcs as Evil's front line. Their Captain, Ashnak, meets the murderous thieves, Will and Ned and steals a dragon's hoard of alien weapons which carry a spell making his men into hardened marines. Evil loses out, but

Ashnak fights on, then the Dark Lord re-appears and sets out to force an election. Some lovely characters, including the cut-throat thieves, gutter language and a marvellous tongue-in-cheek S&S yarn which avoids laboured puns. Black humour and not for the squeamish, but a rattling good tale, I just couldn't put it down until the end

THE ARCHITECT OF DESIRE Mary Gentle Corgi £3.99

In an alternate, old-time England, magic is normal. Lord Architect Casaubon is called to London by Lord Protector Olivia, to complete a new temple which is beset by demons. Olivia ask his wife Valentine to bribe Queen Carola to flee into exile. There's also a sub plot of rape. The plot is very light but Gentle's characters and setting are as gripping as ever.

FIRE SEA Weis and Hickman Corgi £4.99

Wizards have split their world into four - sky, stone, fire and sea, each accessible only through the Death Gate. In earlier tales, Haplo has visited two, this time, along with a being called Alfred, he rides an enchanted boat down a lava sea to the fire world where he finds a deserted city and a lost tribe practising forbidden magic. Third tale in a four-part Sword & Sorcery saga.

THE ELF QUEEN OF SHANNARA Terry Brooks Legend £14.99

The Volcano, Killishan threatens to erupt and destroy the city of Arborlon on the isle of Morrowindl. In addition the magic wall holding back monsters is weakening. Wren Ohmsford and Guardian Garth come seeking the elves, partly to discover Wren's past and partly for aid against the Shadowen creatures. Sky elf Tiger Ty flies them to Morrowindl where, beset by perils, Wren finds the power of her elfstones and wins through to elf-Queen, Ellenroh Ellesedil. Book three of the 'Heritage of Shannara, rather slow moving and introspective being more concerned with moods than motion, but if you enjoyed the earlier tales, you'll like this one.

A FIRE UPON THE DEEP Vernor Vinge Millennium £14.99 hdc £8.99 Tpb

Picture a Galaxy-wide collection of species and AI 'Powers' sharing interstellar trade and linked by a colossal index-information system, 'The Net'. Humans in Straumli Realm create a new AI, a 'Perversion' which destroys them - but for one ship which escapes. Landing on a world of intelligent group-minded dog packs, all are killed save two children captured by different groups. Rescue is on the way, but a dog leader plans conquest and elsewhere, the Perversion AI is spreading its power. A magnificent, multi-level space opera with a new idea on aliens and more plot-threads than a van Vogt opus. It's a dead-cert for an Award.

GERALD'S GAMES Stephen King Hodder & Stoughton £14.99

Gerald's game is bondage sex and begins when he handcuffs his near nude wife Jessie, to the bed in an isolated cabin. But when she changes her mind and kicks him with all her force, he dies of a heart attack leaving her imprisoned and facing a horrible, slow death. As Jessie's struggles, a ravenous stray dog arrives and a weird voice inside her head drives her to face a suppressed secret. It all makes for a terrifying tale of sex and horror.

UNION FOREVER William R. Fortschen ROC £4.99

Book 2 of 'The Lost Regiment'. Through the ages, a time warp has allowed humans through to a world of warring aliens. Col. Andrew Keane has raised an army and defeated the Tugar hordes. Now the powerful Merkli tribe is recruiting other time-castaway pirates to make weapons and train their soldiers to defeat him and rule the planet. Modern warriors against barbarian hordes in this SF-nal updating of Sabatini and Hornblower epics.

THE WHITE ROSE Glen Cook ROC £4.99

3rd Chronicle of The Black Company. I quote, "The White Rose was humanity's final hope in its struggle against sorceress of darkness whom men had named the Lady. The Black Company from their secret base on the Plains of Fear, now fought their former mistress .. But another force slumbered in the grave .. the Diminator stirred once more., previous battles were eclipsed in the ravaged valley."

SEERESS OF KELL David Eddings Corgi £4.99

Book 5 of the Malloreon. "Now in the final stages of the quest for his son, Garion and his companions travel to Kell .. to the Place Which Is No More .. Zandramas the Sorceress will not be outdone. Though she may not enter Kell, she still has young Geran and should she meet the final meeting place with him, then Garion must slay his son or their world will be no more."

BLOOD ROSE William Heffernan Bantam £4.99

Opening with a child slaying its mother, the scene moves to a small town with the usual quota of lecherous, sadistic layabout, including the deputies of the nice widower Sheriff, Paul Devlin. There's also a killer who disembowels his victims. Fleeing cruel husband Jack, Leslie Adams moves there with her 12-year-old brother and so you have all the trappings for a formula tale of a 'menaced woman and child'.

THE UNLOVED John Saul Bantam £4.99

Kevin Deveraux, wife Anne, daughter Julie and son Jeff come to visit his tyrannical mother, Helena and his sister Marguerite at their isolated island home. Helena is determined to make Kevin stay there, and on her death, a cruel Will ensures this. Then the evils begin, a ghostly figure, car sabotage, a drowning, a vicious killing and Marguerite's personality changes. One of those slow, escalating horror tales which builds to a climax.



VOYAGE TO THE RED PLANET Terry Bisson Pan £4.50

Poducer Markson plans a Movie on Mars, so acquires a moth-balled spaceship and recruits spacers Bass and Natasha Kirov. He hires a midget cameraman, plus stars Fonda-Fox and Beverley Grant as well as Dr.Jeffries. After launch a stowaway is found. An enigma is found on Mars, they have fuel trouble, but all is resolved in a light-hearted look at a future Hollywood and a first landing on the Red Planet - Highly readable, never fraught, I enjoyed it.

A COMPANY OF STARS Christopher Stasheff Pan £4.99

Ageing actors Burbage and Tallendar set out to form a Repertory Company to take live theatre to other worlds and recruit young Ramou as their techie/karate expert. This is a good job, as politician Rudders, head of the LORDS party seeks to censor all plays and stirs up violence against them. It's a race against time to get cast, crew, pilot and ship together ahead of injunctions. A highly readable Book.1 of 'Starship Troupers'. (Nice pun)

ICE TRAP I.A.Graf Titan £3.99 Kirk and company come to the ice-planet Nordstral where workers are going crazy and scientists are missing from a crashed shuttle. Chekov and Uhura take a search part whilst Kirk and McCoy board a giant submarine. Then iceuakes, magnetic storms, murderous aliens and sea monsters bring an escalating series of cliff-hanging threats before the rabbit is pulled from the hat. This and the next yarn seem similar in plot development.

IMBALANCE: Star Trek, The Next Generation V.E.Mitchell Titan £3.99

This time, Captain Picard brings the Enterprise to open up diplomatic relations with the insectlike aliens on Jarada. A contact team beams down, all seems to be going well but then the Jarada isolate its members and cut off starship communications. Then they begin to act madly and mount an attack on the Enterprise. Much time is meant chasing through subterranean tunnels before a solution to the problem is discovered.

THE BRENTFORD TRIANGLE Robert Rankin Corgi £3.99

Omally and Pooley are playing Allotment Golf and see a mysterious stranger. Barman Neville is plagued by a games machine. Newsagent Norman experiments with relativity and produces a levitating camel. Laser beams guide invading aliens from the long-gone planet, Ceres. All come neatly together in this second book of the Brentford Trilog, as wackily hilarious as its predecessor, 'The Antipope'

MOTHER EARTH FATHER SKY Sue Harrison Bantam £3.99

Newly promised in marriage, Chagak returns from a berry-picking foray to find her prehistoric village in the ice-bound Aleutians has been pillaged by vandals, homes burnt and all the inhabitants killed, including her husband to be. She finds refuge with old Shuganan, an ivory carver, but even there she is not safe from one of the killers who would force her to be his woman.

ONLY YOU CAN SAVE MANKIND

Terry Pratchett Doubleday Children's Books. £9.99

Johnny Maxwell is happily zapping Scree Wee aliens on his computer game when they surrender and demand safe conduct home. Johnny agrees and at night his dreams take him into the action where he must defend the Scree Wee against other gamers. He contacts one of them, a neighbouring girl, Kirsty and together they try to save the little creatures. Some inimitable Pratchett humour and some neat satire. Buy it for that youngster hooked on computer games.

DARK FORCE RISING: Star Wars.2 Timothy Zahn, Bantam £9.99

Second in the saga, Admiral Thrawn is rallying the Empire Fleet and is aided by the mad Jedi C'Booth and the treacherous Fey'lya of the Republic Council. Smuggler Karrde knows the whereabouts of 200 Dreadnaughts wanted by both sides. His aide Mara has sworn to kill Luke Skywalker, but must seek his help when Karrde is captured by Thrawn. Leia, pregnant with twins is marooned among the warrior Nohgri and Han Solo discovers a third group to aid the Republic. A complicated, action-packed space opera, but all the threads gradually merge - but leave room for further yarns.

SERPENT MAGE M.Weis & T.Hickman Bantam £14.99

Volume 4 of the Death Gate Cycle. Wizards have divided the world in four realms, sky, stone, fire and sea. (See FIRE AND SEA, on first page of 'Books') This time, Haplo is sent to the sea world to prepare the way for his master, The Lord Of The Nexus. Islands drift in air bubbles and humans, dwarfs and elves live in peace but are now menaced by dragon-snakes. Haplo seeks to help and begins to question his allegiance as the final conflict approaches. Epic fantasy from two of the genre's most prolific exponents.

BURYING THE SHADOW Storm Constantine Headline £4.99

In Sacramento, humans live in a peaceful symbiosis with the vampyric elois, two of whom, Beth and Gisel are worried about increasing suicides among their race. They seek a 'soulscape' to find a solution and after killing thirteen, they bond with 8-year old Rayojini and hope her maturing powers will help them. Meanwhile, an impatient group claim that subjugating humans will do the trick. A richly painted tapestry of an involved society. A different, enthralling and delightful read.

THE LOST PRINCE Bridget Wood Headline £5.99

Set in old Ireland, Medoc and the Dark Lords have driven Wolfqueen Grainne, her Court and the ancient Druids out of Tara Hill to take refuge on the isle of Innisfree. Queen's lover, Fergus pledges his life to sorcerers to enable him to travel futurewards to the time of the Apocalypse to seek weapons and help. Lugh of the Longhand is to spy out the enemy, Fintan seeks to solicit the aid of the evil Cruithin and young Tybion discovers Medoc fears the return of a legendary 'Lost Prince.' A lighthearted fantasy told in an amusing style which is a welcome change from standard S&S.

THE CINEVERSE CYCLE OMNIBUS Craig Shaw Gardner Headline £5.99

The three tales of the cycle now in one hefty volume. SLAVES OF THE VOLCANO GOD sees Richard Gordon's heartthrob Dolores kidnapped by Dr. Dread, and taken into the alternate world where films are real. Richard pursues, aided by his Captain Crusader Decoder Ring. BRIDE OF THE SLIME MONSTER has Dolores lusted over by a horrible creature and in REVENGE OF THE FLUFFY BUNNIES, Roger again tangles with Dr. Death and meets the Plotmaster. Overpowering, anything-goes humour with so many gags that some are bound to hit your funny bone.

ALL THE WEYRS OF PERN Anne McCaffrey Corgi £4.99

AIVAS, the Artificial Intelligence left by the original colonists has been re-activated to educate the peoples of Pern. It can also help eliminate the Thread. Jump-starting a feudal system into a high-tech society seems easy, (plastics chemistry, hydro-electricity, cryogenics and ultrasonics inside two years?), but there are Luddite types and conspiracy to contend with. A good start, but the pace slows, and bucketsful of klah are drunk.

ENDER'S GAME Orson Scott Card Legend £4.99

Card took his Campbell Award winning Analog yarn and expanded it into this excellent novel which went on to become a trilogy. In this first tale, Humanity is threatened by the insect-like, telepathic 'buggers'. Gene-selection produces three child prodigies. The first two seek world dominance whilst the third, Ender Wiggins proves adept in Battle School and achieves more than he realises when set against the buggers.

SPEAKER FOR THE DEAD. Orson Scott Card Legend £4.99

When the 'Porkies' are discovered on Lusitania, contact is restricted because of Ender's previous deeds. The Porkies vivisect their members in the belief of reincarnation as trees. They extend the vivisection to two xenologists! Ender comes, as 'Speaker For the Dead'. In addition to being in contact with a galaxy wide A.I. net, he also carries another secret as he seeks to solve the riddle of the piggies. Top level SF, highly recommended.

XENOCIDE Orson Scott Card Legend £4.99

The Starways Congress is sending a mission to destroy colony world Lusitania, along with its humans, 'Piggies' and 'Buggers'. Ender and others, aided by A.I. 'Jane' seek to avert the disaster, and also the spread of the deadly, *descolada* virus. Elsewhere, the god-speakers of Path find they are the results of cruel gene manipulation by Starways. A trifle overlong, with 'over the top' characters; but enthralling as the numerous threads are brought together.

THE MEMORY OF OLD EARTH: Homecoming Vol.1

Orson Scott Card Legend £14.99

When mankind destroyed old Earth and fled to the stars to establish the colony world Harmony, the A.I. 'Oversoul' was set in orbit to watch over their gene-modified descendants and steer them subtly away from ideas which could lead to another Armageddon. Millennia later, Oversoul is wearing out and aggressive factions are rising, led by the power-hungry Saballufix. Oversoul starts more direct manipulation. 14-year-old Nafai and his elder brother discover this and set out to help the A.I. A gripping yarn which sucks you in and holds you to the end. Once again, Card has written a winner.

STORY TELLING & THE ART OF IMAGINATION

Nancy Mellon Element £7.99

Starting with the basics of telling 'fairy stories' to children, the author describes ways to enhance them by attention-focussers such as candles, bric-a-brac, verse, singing, music etc. She goes on to show how to plot a tale, develop characters and make new twists on old themes. Adults can benefit from the suggestions as although the prose is a bit ' twee', this is not just spell-binding with words, but also a rich source of idea material for writers of fantasy tales.

BROTHERS OF THE DRAGON Robin Bailey N.E.L. £4.99

On a camping trip, Robert and Eric Podlowsky, brothers and martial art experts, stumble through a gateway to the alternate world of Palenoc. They are attacked by, and kill a vicious black unicorn, a creature controlled by the evil 'Heart Of Darkness'. Taken by dragon riders to the town of Chalosa, centre for the Alliance of 'Domains Of Light' they become embroiled in the struggle and find that even the dead can exact revenge. A 15 illustration portfolio at the back, depicts the highlights in this first tale in a new fantasy series.

THE FOREVER KING

Molly Cochran & Warren Murphy

Millennium Hard, £14.99 Trade/Pb £8.99

Saladin, an insane killer escapes an asylum and seeks to regain the lost alien artifact which makes him immortal.

It is held by Arthur, a young New Yorker and saves him and his guardian, Aunt Emily from assassination attempt. A strange series of coincidences wrought by the mysterious 'Taliesin' brings Arthur & Emily to England along with ex-FBI man Hal Woczniaak where they are confronted by Saladin and discover the truth about Taliesin, Arthur and the strange object. An excellent un-putdownable blend of modern fantasy and old legends.

**QUARANTINE** Greg Egan Legend £8.99 (Trade size)

An alien forcefield has engulfed the Solar System for 33 years. Brain implants and nanomechanisms enhance human communication and data manipulation power. P.I. Stavrianos is hired to find the mentally deficient Laura Andrews who has vanished from her secure asylum room. His search earns him an enforced 'loyalty mod', and leads to a research project which allows selection of alternate realities. Despite cardboard characters and background, this is a taut, inventive and fascinating tale of a high-tech future. I enjoyed it immensely.

THE WHITE MISTS OF POWER Kristine Kathryn Rusch

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