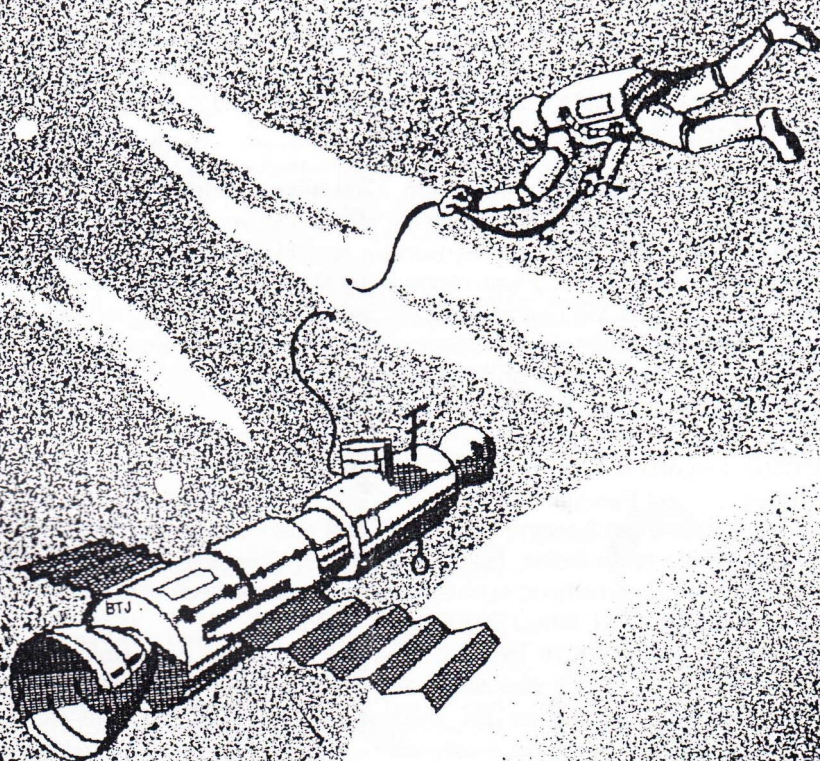


**ERG 143**

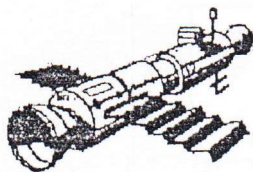
**QUARTERLY**

**OCTOBER 1998**



## ERG 143

OCTOBER 1998



Terry Jeeves

56 Red Scar Drive

Scarborough YO12 5RQ

If you would like the next issue,  
all you have to do is to respond  
to this one

## Nuptial News

Our daughter Sandra was married to John Hastie, on Friday, August 14th., at the Ravenhall Hotel, Ravenscar, about ten miles North of Scarborough. A beautiful setting on an isolated cliff top overlooking Robin Hood's Bay. The weather was kind, everyone survived the experience and a good time was had by all.

**The story behind the cover.** First step, Mask.1 was made up to shield the borders and the planet. Mask.2 was made with the planet uncovered. Mask 2 was laid down and the planet's dark side stippled using a toothbrush loaded with Indian ink and scraped with a knife. Mask 2 was replaced by Mask 1 and a few 'nebulae' cut from paper were laid down, the overall black stipple was then added. Then I moved to the PC. Using 'Paintbrush', I drew the Spacecraft, the spaceman and the ERG heading, printed them, out, cut 'em out and pasted 'em on the cover illo. Life line, stars and a few other details were added freehand. Do you like the result?

**EGOBOO Department** I was both surprised and shaken to find I had been nominated for First Fandom's 'HALL OF FAME'. I'm honoured and highly delighted to be considered even though I don't stand any chance against the other nominees - stalwarts such as Brian Aldiss, Mike Ashley, Marty Greenberg and Langley Searles. Still to even be included among such stars is an honour in itself. I'm pickled link.

## AND SOME LAST-MINUTE FANZINE REVIEWS

**THE KNARLEY KNEWS.** 70 Henry & Letha Welch, 1525 16th Ave., Grafton WI 53024-2017 USA 20pp, nice cover, Seattle trip account by the editor, a piece on fandom's future, an Australian fan alphabet reminiscent of the cons-old, "A is for Astounding", The on-going and totally amazing epic of a round-Australia cycle ride, assorted musings and an excellent lettercol. Get it for the usual or \$1.50

**THE METAPHYSICAL REVIEW** Nos. 26/27 & 28/29 Two MASSIVE issues (06pp & 72pp + card covers) from Bruce Gillespie. 59 Keele St., Collingwood, VIC3066, AUSTRALIA. Both are absolutely crammed (in small print) with personal comment, articles, and loads of LOCs. 26/27 covers travel (Easter Island, London, Jerusalem etc.,) assorted reminiscences and plenty of photos. 28/29 deals comprehensively with books, listings of favourite films writers, fanzines and more. Fully serious and constructiv, get it for 'the usual' or £20.00 - presumably the latter is for a year's supply.

**THE RELUCTANT FAMULUS.** 52 Tom Sadler, 422 West Maple Ave, Adrian, MI 49221-1627 USA 68 beautifully produced and illoed pages, some coooor photos and a superb art folio by Peggy Ranson. You get the editor's personal notes, Swedish Fandom, two sets of Book Reviews and another on Fanzines. Delve into Underground railways, an instalment of my 'Wartime Daze', read of Dracula's Bram Stoker, a day in the life of a vet, another for a lady firewoman and a real hefty LOCcol. A top-notch zine with something for everybody. Get it for \$2.00 or the usual.



# The 'Ads'

3



Browsing through the piles of old pulp magazines which serve as loft insulation and insurance hazard in my home makes me wonder why America is not crammed to the gills, ear-flaps or duodenum with highly qualified experts in every possible field of human endeavour.

Take the May 1937 issue of Mechanics and Handicraft with fascinating details of floating, Mid-Ocean airports. Read how to take a packet of grass seed and create an 18 hole golf course in your basement. Maybe you would like to add solar power to your lawnmower or convert your septic-tank into an aquarium. Acquiring these skills was simply a matter of clipping a coupon.

It was impossible to read the pulp magazines without being tempted by the advertisements. Probably the best known one was the strip cartoon for Charles, 'Have a body like mine', Atlas. When a skinny is humiliated by a bully kicking sand in his face, he nips off, takes the Atlas course and returns in the next panel to knock the stuffing out of his tormentor. If you didn't feel like rebuilding all your body in one fell swoop, some advertisers offered the means to do it on the instalment plan. For a measly 25c you could find out 'How To Build a Mighty Arm', an offer accompanied by a drawing of a muscle-bound character breaking a steel chain by merely flexing his biceps. With successive 25c helpings, you could continue to build a mighty chest, neck, thigh etc. Students must have looked rather lopsided half way through the series.



MOULDING A MIGHTY ARM  
25¢

EVER-READY Dated Batteries ran regular strips recounting 'true' stories of how lives had been saved by carrying a torch using their batteries. These magnificent beams guided rescuers up mountains, down coalmines, through blizzards, and even under water. One was even used by a character buried beneath rubble in a London air-raid .. This rather ignored the fact that anyone using such a powerful beam during an air raid would have immediately drawn another stick of bombs on his noggin.

Gillette razor blades had a strip where the hero usually ended up removing his whiskers and marrying the bosses daughter. Another ad showed a cloth-capped, manual worker take a correspondence course, and become a rich radio engineer in a fedora and business suit.

Wish fulfilment was a favoured sales technique. Fleischman's Yeast showed a pimply-faced youth shunned by all the



girls. After scoffing half a ton of Fleischman's Yeast, the pimples vanish, the girls drool over him, and miraculously, the yeastcakes have even given him the power to play the banjo!

The Rosicrucians hastened to tell you they were 'Not a religious organisation', but offered to reveal 'the mystic powers that dwell within you'. No demand for 25c, they would serve it up, piping hot, at the drop of a coupon. My friend Sid responded and was offered plans of how to join their Outer Circle for only \$100. Once in, their course of study would enable him to release his (still hidden) powers by progressing through an unspecified number of concentric circles at \$100 a time. Sid never replied, but for a year or two afterwards kept getting 'Special Offers' at lower and lower rates. They never got down to the sixpence a week either of us could have afforded, so our mystic powers never got released.

Kalamzoo offered stoves the size of the average British kitchen and the Midwest company offered us a 22-tube radio. I drew up schematic diagrams using extra RF and IF stages, push-pull output and magic-eye tuning. Try as I might, I could never find a use for more than a dozen valves. Then an American friend assured me that half the 22-tubes (valves to us) were just for show and only had their heaters connected to make it look as if they were working. Clearly a case of 'You can fool some of the people'



Mattingley and Moore were two Southern gentlemen who capered around reciting jingles designed to sell whisky, whilst the bushy-bearded Smith Brothers plugged cough drops. Perhaps the best known slogan was for music lessons by post - "They laughed when I sat down to play". That one must have roped in many a sucker. I suspect that people would have laughed even louder when the playing actually began. Similarly, who can forget the lad who clipped the coupon, took harmonica lessons by mail, won a talent contest and was immediately beseeched by all the local girls to come and liven up their parties.

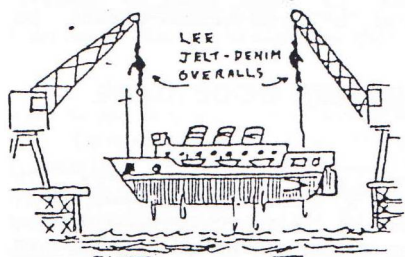
Many 'ads' seemed designed to help clueless young men to attract the girls. To cater for those who managed this feat, but didn't know what to do next, various informative books were offered. One of the most common depicted a fully clothed man holding a frill-bedecked woman in a wrestling hold. Seemingly engaged in Judo, Karate - or a spot of vampirism, they were the come-on for a book with such chapters as,

'How to Hold Your Loved One', or 'Secrets Of The Wedding Night Revealed' - one such secret being how to make love with both parties wearing evening dress. The advertisers wanted cash money, not just 25c and a coupon, so we never did find out the terrible secrets.

We were coaxed to 'Become a G-Man' by the picture of a slick, man-about-town seated behind a desk. To show his high status, a top hat, cane and gloves were visible beside him. He was passing assignment orders to an aged and subservient flatfoot. This had the double advantage of seeming to offer you the chance to become a Government agent, but also implied that simply by returning the coupon, you would then be able to order coppers around. Reading the small print revealed that it didn't make you a G-Man, nor even train you to become one. It simply offered a copy of 'The secret reports of Operator 38' - whoever he was.



I never had a hankering to become a G-Man, much more tempting were the casting kits for making models of all the Buck Rogers' strip characters, monsters and spaceships. They came complete with a miniature electric furnace! A different advertisement showed a road junction jammed with vehicles whilst a perspiring traffic cop tried to unravel the mess. You had to pick which car to move to sort it all out. A blind moron with figs in his ears could have done it first go -- but of course this was just the 'come on'. If you were 'skilful enough', then you would be allowed to sell the advertiser's salve and thus win valuable prizes such as bicycles, radio sets and the like.



Lee Jelt Denim overalls had a Ripley style, 'Believe It Or Not' cartoon which showed their overalls being used for some incredible purpose such as replacing a broken hoist cable whilst lifting an ocean liner out of the water. Elsewhere, we were lured to 'Get On Aviation's Payroll', 'Become An Electrical Engineer', 'Play The Guitar Like a Hawaiian' or 'How to Stuff Birds'. Camel cigarettes had a hammerlock on back cover ads in

which all sorts of athletes explained how they 'got a lift with a Camel'.

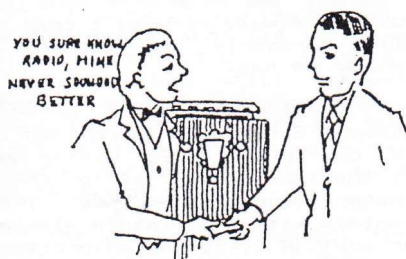
There was a benevolent soul offering a hearse-like car, free, if you merely sold his coffee. A chap called Kolne was ready to aid you in pepping up the unused bits of your brain. A woman clad in a one-piece bathing suit did an agonising back bend on a giant feather. Closer perusal showed she wasn't selling bathing costumes or overgrown feathers, but simply advertising rupture appliances. A simple tool enabled you to re-groove well-worn tyres and sell them at

a profit. Another device enabled you to convert them into bath-mats.

By clipping coupons you could 'Get On Aviation's Payroll', 'Reduce Your Waist-Line', 'Be Tall' or rub 'Japanese Oil' into your scalp. You could learn plastic surgery, buy nose-modelling harnesses, waist-slimming corsets or height-increasing 'lift' shoes. Alternatively, you could become a millionaire overnight by using skills acquired by simply sending for the advertiser's free booklet.

In the heady days of the thirties, there were many of these generous philanthropists willing to place the entire resources of their mighty establishments at the reader's disposal. All they asked in return was the that you filled in and mailed, a simple, no-obligation coupon. I'll have you know that these big-hearted souls were not just any Tom, Dick or what's-his-name. No sirree, they were actually Presidents of their companies. President Petersen of the 'Electric Institute' offered you electricity and the chance to earn an extra five dollars a week in your spare time.

President Smith of the 'National Radio Institute' (Box 6A, Illinois) would hand you radio on a plate and fifteen extra bucks a week. Mark you, it can't have been a very big Institute to fit inside Box 6A. 'Engineer Dobe', wasn't a President, but he could give you Draughtsmanship. Clearly, he wasn't an airy-fairy academic, but a real practical man. To prove it, there was a picture showing him in worker's overalls and an engineer's cap.



All these generous men were not alone. Others offered Radio, Electricity, Draughting, Welding, Cartooning, Taxidermy, Saw-sharpening, Money-making (counterfeiting must have been legal in those days), and many other highly desirable skills. Moreover, not one of them asked for money, you just had to send back a measly little coupon for their book, catalogue, or information sheet. Do that and the world was your oyster.

## Jobs Now Open

**ENGINEER DOBE** Div. 2649  
Libertyville, Ill.

Correspondence courses offered more tempting ways to self-improvement than you could shake a stick at. Law, Art, Engineering, Astronomy, Appliance repair, Buggy-whip-upholstery, edible frog-rearing and how to become a saw-sharpener, mailman or railroad engineer, were all on offer.

### All Working Tools Furnished

Here's a valuable set of tools—sent at once (also a drawing table)—all without extra charge the day you enroll.

Complete Outfit, size 20x25 in., furnished to you.

These **TOOLS** and Other **EQUIPMENT** Given When You Start

**Free Book!**

With all these wonderful opportunities around in the thirties, America should now be crammed to the seams with experts in every possible field, each earning at least fifteen dollars a week extra. I wonder why not. Maybe the Rosicrucians know the secret.

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## THE OLD MILL STREAM -- A Country Column of City Life by Penelope Fandergaste

Last year, an editor of note decided to put together a new anthology of short stories and invited submissions, a decision he regretted almost immediately. He was inundated. "What can you say," he is reported to have asked, "to someone dumb enough to send a manuscript marked 'Copyright 1991?'"

The implication, of course, is that the story stinks. Why, if it's been around for half a dozen years, then it just has to stink, doesn't it? Obviously every editor in the Western world, and possible beyond, will have read it and turned it down.

Well, this may be true. And exactly how many editors would that be, hnm? Just how many magazines are there out there offering space to a writer and his masterwork? No, I can't tell you the answer. Not because I've tried to list them and have lost count. More likely that I can't be bothered; a fair percentage of those alive and well as I write this short piece will have gone to that great trashcan in the sky by the time it appears in print.

But 't ain't that many.

Have you ever considered how the fates are stacked up against a new writer? Ot against any writer, come to that? Let's see... You work out a story line about a Martian meeting the Spiced Girls. You plot it out. You have a simply fantastic punch line for the last sentence. You write the story. It's exactly 3,500 words long. After the third draft you decide that it's good enough to submit to a pro mag,

The editor receives the story and, as you're not Arthur C. Clarke or ---- (You can fill in the name of your own tried and tested author), the story goes on to the pile of "I'll get around to reading these when I'm sober" pile. Eventually... whatever period of time that is varies from magazine to magazine, from editor to editor, from week to wee, from mood to mood. Even, in some cases, to the height of this slush pile of story manuscripts. Perhaps when it threatens to topple over on top of the editor in question. Or, indeed when it actually does so.

The editor reads the story. He hates the Spice Girls. Out goes the story. Or, he hates stories about Martians. Out goes the story. Or he likes them but he ran one last issue and he has another on tap. Out goes the story. Or he has another story about Spice Girls and Martians. Yours is the better of the two, but the other is by a Big Name Author - High Profile, they call 'em ... or by the editor's mother-in-law, his live in, girl friend or his boy friend. You think he's going to choose yours?

Or perhaps your 3,500 word story is better than one at 4,000 - and the editor needs to fill a gap of 5,000 words. Well, yes, he might even lput your story to one side for his next reading session in a month or six.

If this happens to a story a time or two, and... remember just how many, many magazine outlets there aren't for your story, yes, this could account for a 1991 story being submitted today.

I'm reminded of Frank Gruber, the prolific writer of pulp magazine stories in the 1940s. In his excellent book, 'The Pulp Jungle' he recounts his easrly writing days before he became established and then went on to turn out highly remunerative film scripsits. When a story was rejected, it was sent out again, somewhere, anywhere, the same day. He'd simply iron out the pages, or type a new frontis and out it would go. He might try ten magazines before a story was made.

Hey, and how about William Golding's 'The Lord Of The Flies'. Wasn't it rejected some eighteen times before it was published?

You probably know of other works which have been on the merry-go-round before hitting pay-dirt.

What can you say to someone dumb enough to send a manuscript marked 'copyright 1991'?

You read the story and assess it on its merits.

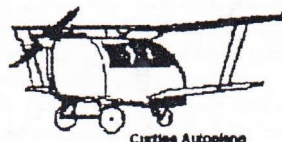
# AIRCARS

Terry Jeeves

Fiction and popular science magazines have often predicted the eventual replacement of the family car by one which can also take to the air. The helicar in the film, 'Things To Come, looked like an example of this 'crazy idea' as did the flying car featured in the James Bond film, 'The Man With The Golden Gun'; but sadly, these were only creations of the special effects departments.

Fiction aside, over the years, inventors have made mighty efforts to realise this dream. Americans always seem to have a keener interest in the idea than their UK counterparts, partly because of the greater restrictions and more limited airspace in Britain. In the USA there have been numerous attempts to create viable road/air-going vehicles. I've dug out a few which actually worked - even if not as well or as world-beating as their inventors hoped.

The earliest I know of was the CURTISS AUTOPLANE of 1917. It had three seats, a 100hp engine, a ground speed of 40mph and a 50' wingspan. It flew, but badly and was soon abandoned



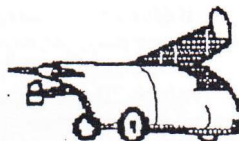
Curtiss Autoplane



Nelsch Autoplane

The NELSCH AUTOPLANE of 1919 was really a light aircraft with wings which could be folded back along the fuselage sides for ground travel. For this, a cage was fitted around the airscrew and the machine then taxied along. No doubt very noisily and with not much ground control as the rudder can't have been very effective at low speed.

The WATERMAN ARROBILE of 1938 had a pusher airscrew, 3 wheels, a 100hp engine and was a road-going version of the 1935, 'Arrowplane'



Waterman Arrowbile



Wernicke's Aircar

WERNICKE'S AIRCAR has only flown in model form, but from a photograph, it looks as though it is only a 'ground effect' flyer with a peak altitude of only a few feet.

The PITCAIRN WHIRLWING ROADABLE AUTOGYRO, 1939, has a four blade, tractor airscrew and three wheels, the rear one providing road propulsion.



Pitcairn Whirlwing





Hafner Rotabuggy

The HAFNER ROTABUGGY was a wartime experiment to find a way of delivering a road vehicle from the air. It comprised a standard Jeep fitted with detachable rotor blades and a tail unit. This was towed aloft behind a Whitley bomber and air released to gyrotate down to the ground where the add-on bits were removed and the Jeep

drove away.

The SPRATT/STOUT AIRCAR IV built by Convair in 1946 boasted a pusher airscrew, 4 wheels and a parasol wing.



Spratt/Stout Aircar

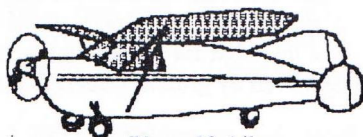


Fulton Airphibian

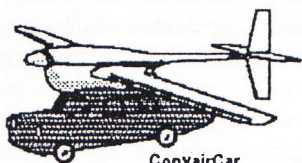
The FULTON AIRPHIBIAN, 1946 (Originally the Continental FA2/3) was a two-seater with tractor airscrew 4 wheels and a 165hp engine. It had a span of 110 feet. For driving, the airscrew was stored on the side of the detachable tail unit which had outriggers to keep it upright

when the car was driven away.

The PLANE MOBILE of 1947 was a 3 wheel, tractor airscrew machine which was really a light aircraft which could be driven on the ground by a powered tailwheel. What happened to the wings is a bit unclear.



Plane-Mobile



ConvairCar

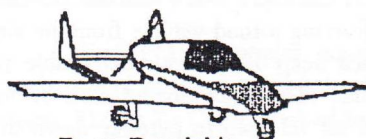
The CONVAIRCAR of 1947 was a standard car. A wing-tail-engine unit could be bolted on top. The car had a 26hp engine, the air-unit had 180hp.

The TAYLOR AEROCAR of



Taylor Aerocar

1949 was the most successful hybrid. A pusher airscrew on a long tail unit was driven by a long shaft. It had 4 wheels, a 125hp engine did 34mph and had a 100' span. The latest model was designed to tow its tail section on a trailer when ground travelling.



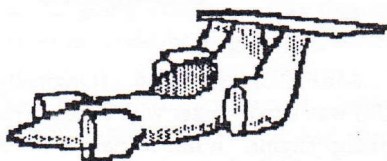
Bryan Roadable

The BRYAN ROADABLE of 1960 had a two-boom tail unit and 3 wheels. A guarded pusher airscrew also supplied ground propulsion. The wings did not detach, but folded up wards, not unlike those of a carrier-borne aircraft.

The MIZAR of 1973 was a combination of a Ford Pinto and a high wing, boom-mounted tail. Sadly, although it looked like the Bond flyer, it crashed on its first flight.



Mizar



Moller Skycar

The MOLLER SKYCAR was a futuristic looking four-seater powered by four engines driving lift fans with ducted vanes for combining lift and propulsion. As far as I know, it has never flown

The Piasecki VZ-8 AERIAL GEEP had a pair of engines driving 3-bladed lift-fans at front and rear. It was a two man vehicle, could fly quite high but was intended for observation and liaison. It could be driven by ground wheels to extend its range, but was not followed up.



Piasecki Aerial Geep

Other designs include the AIRCAR, AVIAUTO, SKY CAR and ROAD RUNNER. The big drawbacks to these hopeful schemes are that in flying mode the machine is lumbered by the dead weight of its road components and when being driven on the road the aircraft bits not only add extra load, but get in the way of driving, are clumsy when on trailers or must be stored somewhere until next wanted. In the case of air-cushion vehicles, they have a nasty sideways drift on turning which would raise havoc in city traffic.

Further details may be found in:-

UNCONVENTIONAL AIRCRAFT P.P.Bowers, Tab Books 1984 ISBN 0-8306-2384-1

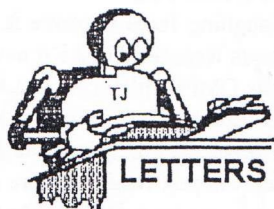
SMITHSONIAN AIR & SPACE Magazine Jan.96

BRITISH PROTOTYPE AIRCRAFT Ray Sturtivant Haynes 1990

The COMPLETE ILLUSTRATED ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WORLD AIRCRAFT

Ed. D.Mondey New Burlington Books

THE WORLD'S STRANGEST AIRCRAFT M.Taylor, Grange 1996



Ken Lake, 46 Chestnut Ave., Buckhurst Hill, Essex IG9 6EW The coverillo is very good: it makes as good sense as any other drawing I've ever seen of a constellation - have you ever seen the Southern Cross? [*Yes, I spent several years 'down under'*] I mean, it's a bent box, much less a cross than the False Cross and the Diamond Cross [*How about the Double Cross?*]

Though I really had to laugh at the American authoress who referred to it as 'cruciform' - imagine looking up and seeing Jesus actually HANGING there, on five stars! [*I don't get that, 'cruciform' means cross-shaped, not 'Jesus shaped'.*]

Alan Burns, 19 The Crescent, Kings Rd. Sih., Wallsend, N.Tyneside NE28 7RE

The Cover, is it supposed to be a set of stars marking the outlines of a flying saucer? No matter, don't want to be critical but a cover is a cover is a cover and leads to the inside. Science snips in SF mags, I recall John W. would announce such and such a breakthrough and it was never heard of again. Penny Fandergaste, well of course it's natural that language changes sometimes for the worse, "Can I have a sandwich?" "Uh?" "Yes, one of those things in the glass case." "Oh, you mean a sarnie, you speak ze English small?"

Ron Bennett, 36 Harlow Park Crescent, Harrogate, N.Yorks HG2 0AW. Sorry about the cover. Prefer your border to the actual illo. Very pessimistic editorial... I have hundreds of films on video cassette and am cringing with fear that technology will 'advance' to the point where I'm unable to play them. Like the 78 records I have and which I'm unable to play. I'd love to be able to transfer them to audio tape but... And, hell, now you mention CDs I've only just managed to obtain a CD player and a half dozen jazz CG discs and here you are telling me that ANY MINUTE NOW they too, will be obsolete. [*Well we gotta have progress*]

Ken Cheslin, 29 Kestrel Rd., Halesowen, West Mid. B63 2PH Old pulps etc. I do recall, in some Hotspur, Wizard or Adventure, a story about a mid-Atlantic airfield constructed out of an iceberg. [*I believe this was seriously proposed in wartime!*] Then there was the cloud of some solidity, formed by trapped gases in/under the snow which took to the air, and was discovered by some RAF types who tried to fly through it ... and which was inhabited by some German flyers who'd had the same misfortune. Ah, they don't write stories like that anymore.. [*Thank Ghu.*] Ah yes, SF has changed.

Roger Waddington, 4 Commercial St., Norton, Malron, N.Yorks YO17 9ES

Stopping the story line with great chunks of exposition didn't die out with the pulps. (Would that it had) During my Analog years, it must have been Mack Reynolds who was the worst offender, [*I'll second you on that!*] closely followed by Christopher Anvil; and yet, from their numerous appearances, they must have been among JWC's favourites. The Tea Party, I found fascinating; who says you need to go to far-distant planets to discover alien rites and ceremonies? I suppose the nearest most of us, the less blessed (?) mortals will ever get to such rituals is viewing the Hyacinth Bucket version in Roy Clarke's *Keeping up Appearances*.



Derek Pickles, 44 Rooley Lane, Bankfoot, Bradford, W. Yorkshire BD5 8LX

The Cover is good, pity the artist did it half size, but the laughing faces improve it. I agreed with every word of 'Pulp Education'. Terms and concepts were used that I'd never come across in the Dandy or Butterfly. I received the first four OMPA mailings - if ERG was in them, then I am one of the survivors Geoff Barker is looking for. *[Sorry, but I wasn't a member then, I just duplicated 'Platform' for Eric Bentcliffe. I became a full member with ERG.1, April 1959.]* Re obsolete equipment latest is that retail CDs are on the way out. You'll order up your own compilations onto your own recordable CDs via ther Internet.

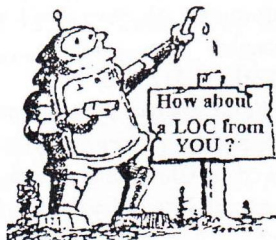
Dave Rowe, 8288 W. Shelby State Rd. 44, Franklin, IN 46131-9311, USA

The first issue of *Infinity Science Fiction* had "nothing really outstanding to stick in the memory cells" Surely Clarke's, 'The Star' sticks with everyone who read it? It certainly won the Hugo. *[I fancy that was for its basic idea rather than its story quality.]* You've given up Analog! Next you'll be telling us you've turned Communist. Your word is taken on Aulisio's abilities or rather lack of them, but 'straight' illustrations often give away too much of the plot or yet-to-come actions and the numbers of readers who can resist flipping through illustrated pages before reading are very few indeed. Long live F&SF. *[I still prefer a well-illustrated story a la 'pulp era' as a stage setter.]*

Roy Lavender, 2507 E. 17th St., Long Beach, CA 90804-1508 USA

Now that the UK is officially free from guns and robbers are assured of unarmed victims, how is your crime rate doing? *[Down a bit and nowhere near yours].* Obsolence, I built several Hi-Fi systems using vacuum tubes. In my opinion, the odern digital systems don't have the same quality. The systems are long gone and the 45s and 78s went to a local jazz station. I can play my 78s with some cable fiddling. The first computers I met personally were Recomps, they used machine language, read punch cards and output to a card/punch printer or a teletype. The memory was a cylinder the size of a gallon jug. The company had mainframe computers. Eventually the Apollo program used them, but only for orbits. The spacecraft was designed using slipsticks. (I still have mine and have turned down 100 times what it cost in 1939. *[I've still got my log/log one, and I'm open to offers].*

Robert Lichtman, PO Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442 USA



Congratulations on pulling Penelope Fandergaste out of retirement. She wonders about the origin of the word 'fanzine' and complains that the entry in *Fancyyclopedia II* doesn't say anything about that. My copy attributes the term to Russ Chauvenet but doesn't provide a date for its genesis. To the best of my knowledge - all of that being contained in fanzines, my memory may not be as reliable and the problem with all knowledge being contained in fanzines is that there's no good retrieval system. Chauvenet invented the term in 1941, you or Ms. Fandergaste could drop him a line at 11 Sussex Rd., Silver Spring, MD 20910-5436 USA and check with him directly.



Has it ever struck you as strange that whilst some people hunt foxes, others prefer to shoot pheasants, merely catch fish, cull seals or trap rabbits? Whatever euphemism is used, the end result is usually a creature ending up dead - or in the possible case of fish, feeling distinctly put about.

At the time of writing, the British Government is inching ponderously towards the future possibility of perhaps at some time in the years ahead of forming a commission to decide as to whether or not to consider thinking about banning the ancient and honourable 'sport' of fox-hunting. Naturally, all those involved in this honest, home-spun country pastime are vociferously against any such ban. All that is, save the foxes. If they were asked I presume they would almost certainly be in favour of a ban despite the pro-hunters assuring us the foxes also like the fun.

So just what does hunting involve? Well I'm no expert but judging by occasional local activities, I gather that at some pre-arranged time and place, a group of dogs (technically known as 'hounds' which, like cards, come in packs), horses, riders and numerous horse-boxes block off the road outside some peaceful country pub whilst they partake of a ritual 'stirrup-cup'. This is some sort of alcoholic beverage, but nobody every seems to get arrested for 'riding while under the influence' or for 'Having control of a quadruped whilst over the legal limit'. Maybe they have a special dispensation from the Pope. All these jolly fellows and equally jolly ladies, are clad in black hats, polished boots, tight white trousers and most often, red jackets - referred to as 'hunting-pink'. Those wearing black jackets probably call them 'hunting black'. This makes for a pretty scene which even the patiently waiting fox can appreciate.

When all is ready, the hunt master toots his little horn as a warning to everyone to finish off their stirrup cups. He then counts to ten, shouts, "Coming, ready or not" and dogs and riders set off in merry chase down the road and across the fields. Cheerful cries of "Tally Ho", "Whoops a daisy" and "Bugger it" mingle with the tooting of the horn and barking of the hounds as the chase pursues its quarry over or through hedges, across fields of crops, crashing into fences and ploughing through bush, brake and spinney. Like a Sherman tank, nothing can stop the hunt's path across the countryside until it finally runs its exhausted quarry to earth in its burrow. Naturally, even the fox enjoys the exciting chase - except for the little bit at the end where it is torn to pieces by the dogs and its blood smeared across the faces of any new members of the hunt.

It is this last bit which arouses the ire of the anti-hunt brigade, but as pro-hunters explain, the fox is a naughty little pest to farmers, destroying poultry and crops. Rather like the hunt in full cry I suppose. Some insensitive people suggest it would be easier to simply shoot the fox, or perhaps even side-track it by chasing a scented drag instead. Now I ask you, where's the fun in chasing a bag of perfume across the countryside and wiping that across your face instead of real hot blood? Maybe it would be better to combine two ideas. Continue to chase the fox but leave the dogs at home and instead, equip each hunter with a loaded gun. Admittedly, in the heat of the chase that might lead to a few hunters getting shot but surely, that would only add to the excitement of the whole affair.

One great argument of the pro-hunters for retaining their traditional fun, is the great loss of jobs were the heroic pastime to be banned. This is of course true. Farmers would no longer need to hire workers to repair all the damaged fences and hedges or pay workers to sally forth to re-plant trampled crops. Ostlers, blacksmiths, farriers, breeders, veterinary workers, the builders and sellers of horse-wagons and numerous others dependent in some way on a continual demand for horses would all be rendered redundant. These would all join the ranks of the unemployed, as would dog breeders and trainers who supply the hounds so essential to the success of the whole thing.

The threat of unemployment is a powerful argument indeed. Just think, in a similar vein if do-gooders hadn't ended two great World Wars and sundry smaller ones, we could have kept thousands of service personnel in jobs, employed endless munitions workers, aircraft builders, air-raid personnel, doctors and hospital employees and many others. All that lot got dumped on the dole queue just because some busybodies had to go and make peace treaties.

I have no doubt that the abolition of the slave trade must have eventually made jobless, hordes of slave-traders, leg-iron manufacturers, slave-ship builders, auctioneers and indeed, anybody making a living from the lucrative trade. Just think of the increased cost to former slave owners when they had to start paying their workers. For that matter, without the slave trade America may never have had a civil war and there again war workers and soldiers would never have got employment.

Then of course there's that other country pastime of cock-fighting. Banning that must have disposed of quite a few jobs here and there and so dumped more people into the dole queues. Some people just can't leave well alone.

Provided with such powerful economic reasons in favour of continuing the activity, I'm sure that even the fox might support hunting. There's no doubt about it, only spoil sports would ban such innocent fun and games.

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# Bright Spark

15

I was reading the other day about how radio began. The original system used a Hertz spark-gap coil radiating solid interference which could be detected on the crude 'coherers' of the era as a series of burps - which eventually became the dots and dashes of the Morse Code. Luckily (or otherwise) for future generations, some clever soul side-lined the broad-band spark transmitter in favour of a single frequency dollop of radiation. This could be modulated in various ways starting with a Continuous Wave (CW) note which could be heterodyned with a local signal to produce audible dots and dashes. A Modulated Continuous Wave (MCW) dispensed with the local heterodyne oscillator, and then came Amplitude Modulation, Frequency Modulation and Phase Modulation to allow the transmission of actual speech and music. Whilst this was first beginning, another little invention, the electric arc light was making its bid to bring electric light to everyone, but luckily it was gazumped by the arrival of the incandescent carbon (or tungsten) filament lamp.

All of this led to our modern plethora of radio, TV, Navsats, Radar etc. and etc. .. and what a wonderful bit of luck that was. Both the arc light and the spark transmitter were prodigious radiators of interference across a very large chunk of the radio spectrum. Had they become firmly established, electronic communications would never have come along. Anyone inventing a receiver for radio waves would have heard nothing but a deafening background of static. Modern telecommunications of all sorts would never have got off the ground.

So what might have replaced this modern wonder? Prior to radio, long range communications were by interesting methods; Indians caused air pollution by sending up smoke signals, others used heliographs, signal beacons (very limited in what they could send), semaphore towers or the waving of hand-held flags. Smoke signals involved fires which proved tricky on rainy days, their messages were wide open to any watcher and useless at night. That drawback also applied to the heliograph and the semaphore systems.

But just suppose some genius had developed the hand waved flags. At first limited to one letter at a time, he might have brought in a second signaller so that one could describe a scene whilst the second gave an accompanying description of dialogue. By bringing in more signallers, books or even whole plays could be waved to large audiences. By putting lanterns on the flags, such plays could be enjoyed at night. An even greater idea would be to arrange several hundred signallers in close-packed ranks, each with a large reversible card, one side black, the other white. If suitably synchronised to hold up one side or the other, whole pictures could be transmitted in much the same way symbols are produced in sports arenas. Go a step further and employ very fit signallers with fast reactions so they could switch their cards over at around 25 times a second and actual MOVING PICTURES could be transmitted.

Ah truly, how wonderful is the inventiveness of man which will not be beaten by adversity.



**OUTWORLDS 28th.** Annish Bill Bowers,  
4651 Glenway Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45238-4503

An impressive, beautifully produce, 80+ pages. Personal matter, Skel and Susan Wood talk of Teddy bears, a posthumous Rotsler piece on porn films. Bill Breiding and Eric Mayer wax autobiographical, there's a lengthy item on designing planets, verse, a Con Report and loads of LOCs. Something for everyone, for the 'usual', editorial whim, or \$5.00 Nice one.

**FANTASY COMMENTATOR** Langley Searles, 48 Highland Circle, Bronxville, NY 10708, USA Thanks to missing pages, in my first copy. I missed mentioning several items. Langley kindly sent a second copy. I should have said, "This 50th., 'Moskowitz Memorial Issue' has 72 pages, card covers and opens with sundry fan giving their appreciations of Sam. There's an excellent Leslie F Stone autobiography, and appreciation of Anita Alverio, an interview with Steve Sneyd, a piece by Everett Bleiler, an obituary of C.H. Ruppert, Part 4 of 'The Immortal Storm', a look at Weinbaum's 'source library', Book Reviews and a Robert Aickman Bibliography. Well-written material presented in a near-pro style, a steal at \$5.00

**MIMOSA 22** from Nicki & Richard Lynch, PO Box 3120, Gaithersburg, MD 20885, USA.

No less than 52 pages with wrap-round card covers. A star-studded line up of articles by Kyle, Resnick, Willis, Forry, Bennett and others on subjects ranging from making movies to fire-fighting, as well as Conventions, nostalgia, slant shacks and so on. All well-written and highly entertaining, plus a hefty LOCcol and terrific illos. Plenty of variety for everyone. Get it for \$4.00 or the usual.

**OLAF.1** Ken Cheslin, 29 Kestrel Rd., Halesowen, W. Midlands B63 2PH No less than 80 side-stapled *foolscap* pages holding some 160 'Olaf' Cartoons. Definitely a 'curate's egg' of gags, new, old, good and strained, but inarguably a tour de force. In my pro-cartoon years I turned out close on a thousand 'Soggy' and other cartoons, 450 for one mag alone, but that was over a 30 year period. Ken's are culled from a similar time span and include some by Mike Higgs. No price given, but no doubt the usual would raise a copy.

**THE KNARLEY KNEWS.70** Henry & Letha Welch, 1525 16th Ave., Grafton WI 53024-2017 USA 20pp, nice cover, Seattle trip account by the editor, a piece on fandom's future, an Australian fan alphabet reminiscent of the eons-old, "A is for Astounding", The on-going and totally amazing epic of a round-Australia cycle ride, assorted musings and an excellent lettercol. Get it for the usual or \$1.50

**THE METAPHYSICAL REVIEW** Nos. 26/27 & 28/29 Two MASSIVE issues (06pp & 72pp + card covers) from Bruce Gillespie. 59 Keele St., Collingwood, VIC 3066, AUSTRALIA. Both are absolutely crammed (in small print) with personal comment, articles, and loads of LOCs. 26/27 covers travel (Easter Island, London, Jerusalem etc.,) assorted reminiscences and plenty of photos. 28/29 deals comprehensively with books, listings of favourite films writers, fanzines and more. Fully serious and constructiv, get it for 'the usual' or £20.00 - presumably the latter is for a year's supply.