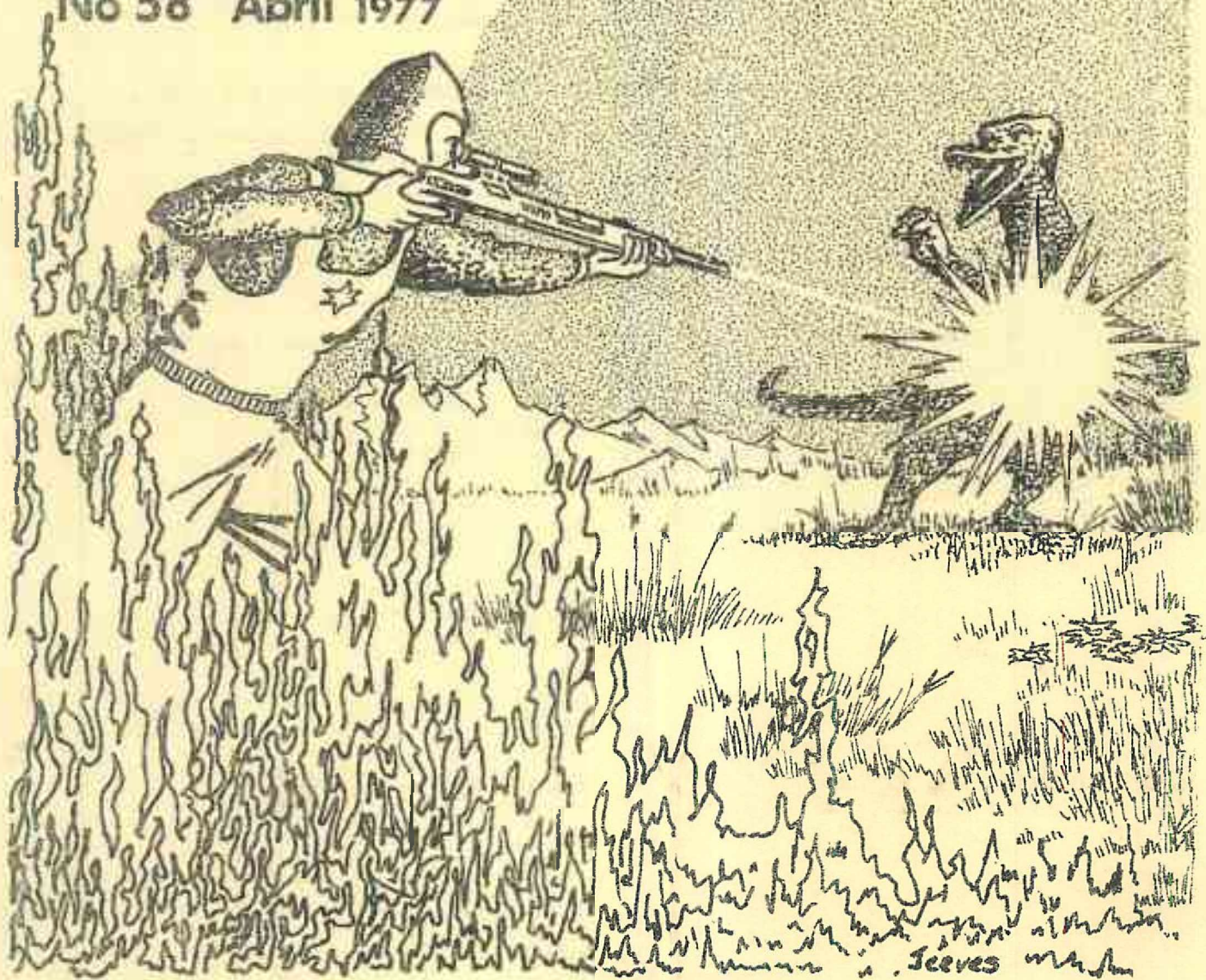


ERG

QUARTERLY

No 58 April 1977



(.....)

A cross indicates
that your sub has
expired. I hope
you'll renew.

A 'T' if I remember
it, means that we trade.

This is,

ERG (QUARTERLY) No. 58 April 1977

and marks the start of ERG's 19th year.

ERG comes from,

Terry Jeeves
230 Bannerdale Rd.,
SHEFFIELD S11 9EL
ENGLAND.

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dollar bills, cheques lose too
much in exchange)

~~ILL-OFF AUCTION~~

Make your bids for the original cover art for..

ERG 55 Spaceman & alien peddler ERG 46. Soggy in control seat.

ERG 57 'Which way up ?' scene in giant spacecraft

TRIODE 22. Montage of two spacemen 'Sirois & Jeeves'

TITAN 2 Underwater scene. Spaceman & octopus,

BACK ISSUES of ERG. I'd prefer a single bid for the lot, but by all
means bid for a single issue...and I'll settle for the best
arrangement.

No. 1 (April 1959) 16 pages No.9. Aug.61..Satelite 2-colour issue
No. 3 2-colour, 12 pages 20 pages...drawings & dates.

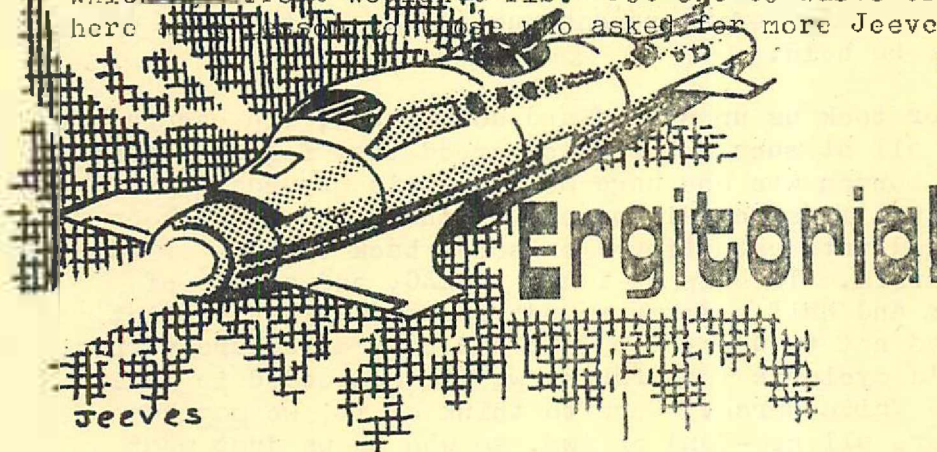
No. 5 16 pages, 2-colour send up of women's magazines

No.12 14 pages No. 23, 12 pages No.33, ten pages

No.34, 24 pages No. 35, 20 pages No. 36,22 pages

No. 37,20 pages No. 38 20 pages

This particular ERGITORIAL comes about as the result of a coincidence. Several (kind and intelligent) readers had written in to say they wanted a bit more Jeeves in the magazine....and then Geoff Kippington returned an article I had written for him in answer to a request for a piece about the early conventions...seems he now has a new policy into which my effort wouldn't fit. Not one to waste effort, I present it here ~~to those who asked for more Jeeves~~. Read it and let me know if you still feel that way. T.J.



ERG 58

APRIL 1977

TERRY'S TOTTERINGS, or 'Those were the days'

In 1947, in between plugging the gaps in my Asf collection, and as a means of keeping the wolf away from the back issues, I enrolled in teacher training college...and it was at this time that I heard about .. and decided to try.. My First Real SF Convention !! Being an impecunious student existing on an bounty of £162 a year (including marriage allowance), the idea of booking a room at the Ritz, or even staying in a cheap doss-house, was as viable as an icicle in a blast furnace. The alternative was to drag myself out of bed at 5-30 am, catch a bus full of Henry Moore type, shrouded and soporific figures and on reaching the railway station, stagger aboard the 'Master Cutler'. This fire-belching monster was one of the real engines which the LMS (B.R.s grandad) used to own, and it hurtled down to St. Pancras by 11.30. Reluctantly handing in half of my little green ticket to a bewhiskered non-fan in a shabby blue and beer-stained uniform, I cautiously entrusted myself to a noisome passage leading to dark and subterranean depths. Labelled 'King's Cross'..or some such stupid name, it led, after numerous cryptic slogans scrawled on the tiled walls, to a brightly lit rotunda. Now was the moment of testing. The time when one must declare one's faith for all to see. From its lair within my raincoat, (A Humphrey Bogart style everyone who was anyone wore), I drew out my identification colours of the day...a copy of Astounding. With this held high before my chest, I paraded sheepishly in a widdershin direction around the central bookstall.

It worked ! Within seconds I had been grabbed by a heart character called Buckmaster and dragged into a small group of refugees furtively stuffing their own copies of Astounding into

4. various hiding places. We milled around until about twenty people had been assimilated into the gestalt personality lurking by the news-stand. Finally, fission took place as we were split into small groups of about half-a-dozen (which surprisingly, even in those pre-metric days was still six). Each group had a Londoner in charge, and off we scurried for a brief tour of the city before rendezvous at the White Horse where the convention was to be held.

Our leader took us up stairs and down tubes, via escalators and over bridges and all at such a breakneck speed that for ages after, I was convinced that London was one huge Mobius strip of underground mouseholes. My only previous acquaintance with the capital had been when I was press-ganged into escorting a prisoner back to the RAF camp at Swannington in Norfolk. To help me I had an LAC, and a pair of handcuffs, a revolver and half a dozen rounds of ammo, plus a strict instruction that I was not to use 'em. That had been a leisurely trip, but under Buckmaster's cyclonic leadership, we all succeeded in making a safe journey to the White Horse. Come to think of it, we may have lost a neo-fan (we were all neo-fen) or two, so who knows just what historic BNF is still wandering round the tube system trying to find his home or his convention ??.

The White Horse proved to be a little pub tucked away up a side alley in Holborn. Nearby was a jeweller's shop. Which has nothing to do with Sf except that their alarm bell was ringing as we arrived, and continued to do so throughout the rest of the afternoon. Presumably, the police were either attending our convention, or one of their own. Whichever it was, they never came to check on the bell, and it could be heard as punctuation to each speaker. Grabbing a quick beer at the bar, I filtered up the stairs and into the Con hall, a room teeming with hordes of people...maybe as many as fifty or so, and all talking a blue streak. Fen en mass !! Around the room were magazines...Astounding, Amazing, Wonder, and many I had never heard of before. Like most fen of that era, I had been blissfully unaware that other SF lovers existed and had assumed that my own collection was not only unique, but virtually complete. I soon found I was wrong on both counts....and a happy finding it was. I met John Carnell (Then called Ted by everyone). I met Wally Gillings and was amazed to find that the cover paintings for Tales of Wonder were on show...and were bigger than the magazine itself. Strange looking men pranced around selling bundles of dirtily mineed paper (I had never heard the word 'fanzine' then). Others flogged drawings, magazines and assorted odds-and ends.

There was a programme..I'm sure there was..but I can't remember anything of it. All I do know is that I enjoyed every minute of the affair. The war was over, I was out of the RAF, and here at last were other star born humans. What more could anyone ask for ?



I can still recall the feeling of being an utter neo when I turned to my neighbour..his name was Thorne - indeed, I fancy it was the Tony Thorne who later

organised the Medwaycon...and became the (Medway) section of Ken Slater's Fantast (Medway)Ltd. Whoever he was, this bloke was scribbling away covering acres of paper with a tight little scrawl, and embellishing the edges with various contorted doodlings. Seeing my interest, he offered the information that he was covering this affair for Operation Fantast. Being a timid neo, and not knowing an Operation Fantast from an Operation Gallstone, I wisely nodded my head and assumed an expression of benign idiocy. It was many years later before I found out what all that had been about, and actually met Capt. Slater, 13Gp R.P.C in the flesh.

The rest of the day went in a haze. I finally left the White Horse around 7pm, caught the nine-o'clock puffer from Pancras to Sheffield and landed in at 2 am. Then came the long walk home. A tiring day, but one I wouldn't I have missed for the world. I vowed to be back again the next year...and I was, and have been almost every year since except when kept away by finance or illness.

Conventions have grown and matured since those days, but it was many a long moon before I could afford to make an overnight stay...and that was at the Avondale Hotel in Woburn Place. The cost ? 17/6d a night for bed and breakfast. 97¹/₂p in what passes for money these days. Strangely enough, that first convention had only a few more people present than the recent mini-FANCON in Derby. For contrast, a report on that one appears later in this issue. The two events were similar in several respects, but the most important one was that both were small, intimate, meet-each-other fun affairs. We need more of 'em...but the cost is the killer for such endeavours. Meanwhile, I just got word of a FAIRCON to be held in Glasgow in July 1978. If you're interested, drop a line to Bob Shaw, 2/L 19 Park Rd., Kelvinbridge, GLASGOW. Supporting Membership is 50p, and Progress Report No. 0. (repeat 0) is now out.

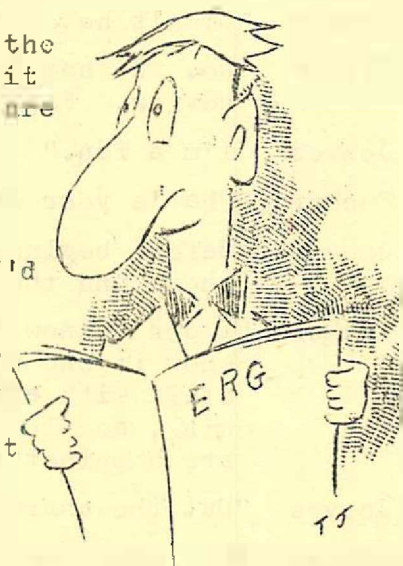
I tried a new electro stencil source for the cover of this issue...a paper base, not vinyl, and it only cost 67p as against the normal £1.50. If you are interested; contact (or send your artwork to) :- B.C. Sexton, 14 Ventnor Court, Wolstenholme Rd., SHEFFIELD S7 1LB. (and that 67 p includes postage at the moment). Vinyl electros are also available, but they cost just over a pound...if you try him, I'd appreciate your mentioning ERG.

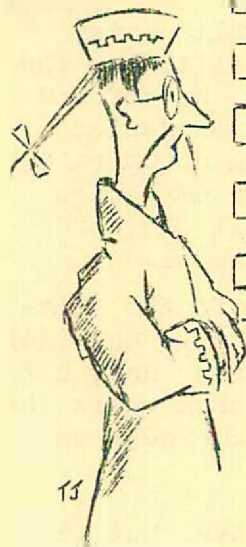
Final glad news..even if I don't get this out before Eastercon, I have managed to finish my latest film SUPERFAN..and hope to bring it along, although at the time of writing (March 10) I haven't had booking confirmation.

Well that's it for another issue. Don't forget to write and tell me your views on ERG.

Bestest,

Terry





Being an interview in which
WILSON, 'Hoy Ping Pong', (Bob) TUCKER *
(writer of, 'City In The Sea'
'The Time Masters', 'The Long Loud Silence'
and many, many others)
interviews himself under an assumed name **

Jeeves: "Forgive this trite question, but where do you
get your ideas for stories and books?"

Tucker: "I steal them. It's the best way. I've never
had an original idea in my life. Other writer's
books and short stories are chockfull of good ideas, good
plots, and award-winning themes. I steal from those writers,
but they never recognise their own work when I'm done with it.
And the fanzines, too: some of the best science fiction pub-
lished today is appearing in fanzines, and I borrow from them
without a qualm."

Jeeves: "Will you cite an example?"

Tucker: "ICE AND IRON, published a couple of years ago. It was stolen
from a Minneapolis fan named Dave Wixon who was writing in Rune.
Dave said: "By Hugo, it has been an incy winter in Minneapolis!"
I swiped that and ran with it."

Jeeves: "Didn't he catch you?"

Tucker: "No. He had forgotten that he said it first, and gave me a nice
review. Fan's aren't too bright, you know."

Jeeves: "I'm a fan."

Tucker: "What's your wattage?"

Jeeves: "Before beginning a novel how do you establish the plot, the
theme and the characterisation?"

Tucker: "I don't know the difference between plot and theme, and wouldn't
know if one or the other bit me. I just write a lot of good
stuff with space ships and monsters and a good guy and a pretty
girl, and let the critics prattle about plot and theme. They
are happiest when they're prattling."

Jeeves: "But the characterisation, you do have characterisation."

Tucker: "Oh, sometimes I find a comic book hero that I like, and copy
him. Characterisation is for the birds. Characterisation is

* Accept no substitutes

** Any resemblance between this name and that of any real person,
is purely coincidental.

one more of those silly rules invented by English teachers and writing instructors to intimidate students. I hardly ever bother with it."

Jeeves "Do you think comic book heroes have character?"

Tucker "Of course they do. Why do you think they always wear the pretty costumes, and colourful underwear? Now that is characterisation. The reader can always tell who is talking, who is the good guy. Some girl heroes have more character than men heroes. I like the costumes and underwear the girl heroes wear. Very good characterisation."

Jeeves "What significant changes do you think will come about during the next 25 years?"

Tucker "We will all grow older."

Jeeves "I meant changes in science fiction? Books and magazines?"

Tucker "The prices will go up. Analog is going to \$1.25."

Jeeves "May I say, the prices may go up for you Americans, but in the U.K. we don't have that problem. Science Fiction is shipped here as ballast, and we buy the magazines for a few pence at Woolworth's."

Tucker "I never expected Hugo Gernsback to be called ballast."

Jeeves "Is science fiction the literature of the future?"

Tucker "I doubt it. It's just filling the gap until westerns and mysteries and nurse novels come back into popularity."

Jeeves "But aren't you aware that nearly 900 sf titles were published in America last year?"

Tucker "That's too damned many. It's no wonder I can't find any westerns and nurse novels on the stands."

Jeeves "But SF is populare with so much of it around."

Tucker "The same can be said for measles."

Jeeves "Several of your books are based on time travel. Why is that subject a favourite of yours?"

Tucker "Because they are easier to write. All I need do is send some joker into the past, or the future, and then copy his adventures from the history books."

Jeeves "There are no history texts of the future."

Tucker "There are on my shelves"

Jeeves "Do you ever use fans or pros in your stories and books?"

Tucker "No, never. The bastards are just waiting for a chance to sue me. They envy my indoor swimming pool, my Mercedes, my summer home in the country."

Jeeves "How do you write?"

Tucker "With my typing fingers, like everyone else."

Joe: "What advice do you have for struggling British writers?"

Tucker "I'd tell them to explain to American readers what knickers are. You can't imagine how puzzled American readers are when they find a scene in some of your books about knickers. We can't get excited about some girl who is wearing a pair of pants that cover her bod from the waist to the knees, a pair of hiking pants like our girl scouts used to wear. There's not much sex or excitement in that. It causes almost as much puzzlement as nappies."

Jeeves "Are American readers naive ?"

Tucker "Not at all. British writers don't know how to write good American English, like our forefathers talked."

Jeeves "One last question. Is science fiction in a rut?"

Tucker "It always has been."

My thanks to Bob for this edifying interview what he has wrote. If you would like to discuss the matter of knickers with him in person..or in knickers, why not support the move to BRING TUCKER TO THE U.K. in 79 For further details stay tuned to these ~~knicker~~ pages. T.J.

ADVERTISEMENT... Michael A. Banks. P.O. Box 312,
Milford,
OHIO 45150
Wishes all and sundry to know of his vest-pocket fanzine, COAX
(pronounced Co-Ax). Sub rates are 3 for 50p or 7 for \$1. I have
a few copies of No. 1 available to interested parties in exchange
for a 62p stamp. Subs direct to me as the agent. Michael also
wants any humour or SF opinion pieces you may write...send 'em
direct to him at the above address

STOP PRESS !!! At last, after THREE YEARS in the making..it is ready.

What is ? Why, DUPLICATING NOTES of course. This is a 54 page, board cover compendium of all the duplicating articles which have appeared in ERG over the last three years...PLUS a section of cover art from ERG and TRIODE. This is a VERY limited edition of only 60 copies, so it is a case of first come, first served. Price is \$1.00 per copy in the U.K. Stateside fan may get their copy by sending \$2.00 in dollar bills. Hurry while stocks last. I would appreciate other fans mentioning the availability of DUPLICATING NOTES in their zines.

...and of course, if sending in dollars, why not also enclose a further dollar for the next four issues of ERG ???

LANGON

by
Harry Jeeves

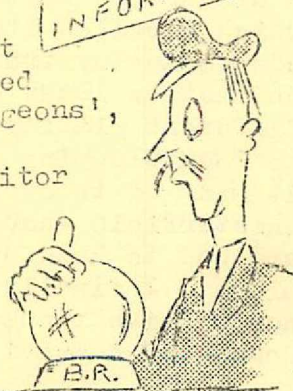
Friday, the 4th. Feb. saw me hoofing it down to Sheffield station to get the train for Derby, (Val wanting to hang on to the car for the weekend).

Now I know it is fashionable to make jokes about British Rail, but on reaching the station I was delighted to find a large TV screen announcing arrival times and an even larger roller screen giving departure details. Closer inspection revealed that the TV screen was showing the morning arrivals, and the roller board was an hour fast and so missing out the trains in which I was interested. Luckily, I had scanned a poster outside, so knew that I needed Platform 4...but the ticket collector told me Platform 3. Being a seasoned traveller, I naturally took up my stance on 6 and crouched down ready to run in either direction. Naturally, the train came in on 2...and I was amazed to see it had no funnel, no clouds of steam, and no big clanking piston rods. They never forecast such changes in SF. Anyway, I clambered aboard and eventually reached the Clarendon Hotel in Derby.

Set like a jewel on the slum clearance part of the city, it was a cosy little place; about the same size, and giving the same friendly atmosphere as earlier Kettering shindigs. My room was number 10 and bore a notice over the door... 'FIRE EXIT'. I thought this was merely the result of some happy fannish prank until I happened to look out of my window and noticed a handrail circumnavigating a skylight and vanishing over the horizon of the nearest roof. Obviously, if the hotel caught fire I was in danger of being trampled to death by a horde of fleeing fen as they funneled frantically through my Fire Exit across my bed and out through the window. I did consider having a book of admission tickets handy, but not being one to worry over trifles - apart from jelly trifles, I contented myself with stretching a trip wire outside the window and went downstairs to meet everyone.

My first contact was Con organiser Mike Meara, who reversed normal con practice by giving me a quid, a truly trufannish way to start a weekend. Fortifying myself with a pint of Tuborg I began to meet up with fen virtually popping out of the woodwork. Fred Hornings and several others were upstairs playing 'Dungeons', though logically, they should have been in the cellar. The Gannets arrived around ten pm, and Rob Jackson, editor of the superlative fanzine Maya (unpaid advt.) handed out Gillycon leaflets. I had a long natter with a beardless Dave Cockfield, a briefer one with Paul Thompson and ditto with Dave Langford. Pamela Boal was there fascinating as ever and selling the first issue of her new newspaper 'Passion' - (which is for

TRAIN
INFORMATION

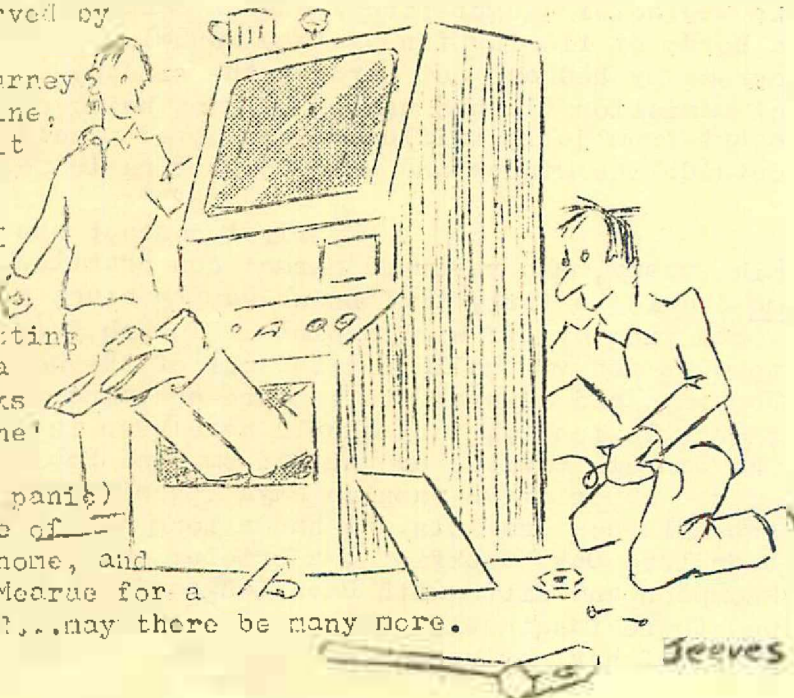


the disabled, not the over sexed. Puns flew thick and fast. Norman Woodall kept the barman happy and in no time at all, the clock was only prevented from striking twelve by the fact that it wasn't a striking clock. Cinderella-like (and scared of turning into a wiener schnitzel) I headed off to bed. Unpacking my case, I realised that I hadn't eaten since noon, so unwrapped the goodies Val had thoughtfully provided and tucked into a chicken leg and two cheese sandwiches before dropping off to sleep.

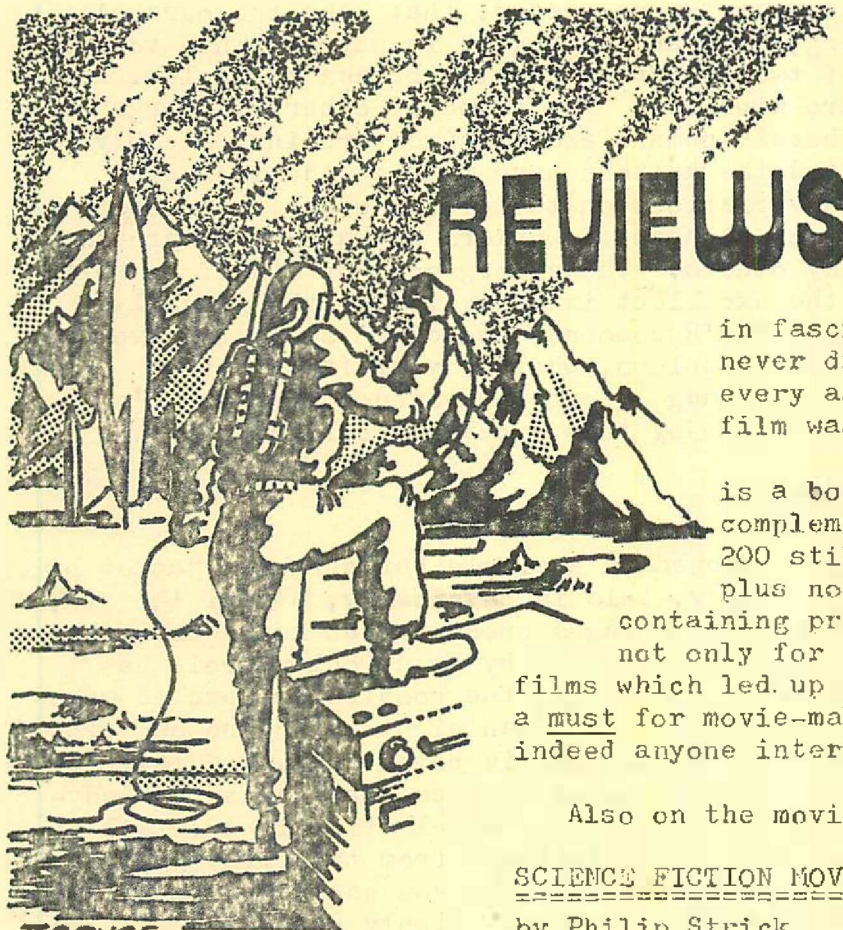
Saturday saw me breakfasting with Dave Rowe and Pamela Boal, after which I wandered off into town, discovered the local market and from a magazine stall, flushed a copy of 'Bizarre Science-Fantasy', another of 'F & SF' and a hardcover, 'Anderson's Fairy Tales'. That lot set me back 46p..which seemed a good buy..so I said goodbye to the baler and headed back to the Clarendon where Mike and Pat Meara had borrowed Gilbert Gosseyn's 'Games Machine'. For 10p, you could engage in games of Squash, Tennis or Football. By Saturday evening, the machine had cleared its rental, so Mike opened it up to convert it to 'FREE PLAY' - a simple task which involved removing all the panels, shoving Brian Hampton inside, and two strong men to stand around offering advice and periodically earthing Brian with a piece of copper wire to prevent him from exploding. Within an hour, they had solved the problem. Panels were replaced, and Pat Meara sat by the machine for the rest of the night, handing out 10p pieces to all those wishing to play. Ah the marvels and benefits of a technical education!

Doctor Who caused a mass exodus from the bar to the TV room so that all present could supervise part 2 of the latest epic..in which Dr. Asimov's laws are obviously getting a clobbering. Following this, food was indicated, so accompanied by Dave Cockfield as look-out man, I took my driving test on Pamela Boal's wheel chair and we and we sallied round to the local Chinese chippy for traditional British fish-and-chips, served by an inscrutable Oriental. Midnight saw a football tourney starting on the Games Machine, so I retired to my Fire Exit for some well-earned rest.

Sunday morning, I again braved British Rail which excelled itself by cancelling my train and putting on another later one from a different platform. Thanks to 'Men Sleeping on The Line' it managed to overshoot Chesterfield (causing much panic) and had to back up a couple of miles. I finally made it home, and hereby give thanks to the Mearae for a damn good convivial weekend...may there be many more.



Jeeves



THE MAKING OF LING KONG

by O. Goldner & G. Turner
Ballantine \$9.95 (C1.95)

REVIEWS

No less than 290, 8"x10 1/2" pages of inside information, general background, gossip and anecdote, all in fascinating detail. The account never drags as it covers just about every aspect of how the classic film was created.

The text itself is a book in its own right, but is complemented and enhanced by some 200 stills and artist's renderings, plus no less than eight appendices containing production and cast details not only for 'Kong', but also for the films which led up to it. Excellent value and a must for movie-making bugs, Kong fans and indeed anyone interested in the cinema. (T.J.)

Also on the movie scene, we have :-

SCIENCE FICTION MOVIES

by Philip Strick. Octopus £2.50

Physically, this one runs to 160, 8 1/2" x 11" pages with some 170 film stills in black and white (sepia actually) plus many in colour. Hardcoverd, it has a beautiful space scene from 2001 on the jacket front and title lettering is in the old familiar Amazing, 'Comet-tail' logo.

The introduction comments briefly on defining SF, then sets the guidelines for the comments to follow. From here on, Strick moves at a rapid pace through a vast range of films sorted loosely into eight chapters. The sheer number of titles covered permits but a brief comment on each, but despite this, the book is excellent reading (although Strick is overfond of cheap jokes on films he dislikes). Otherwise, this is not a scholarly, nit-picking account, but one to read for pleasure. The stills themselves are many, varied and well-chosen, but surprisingly, nothing appears from 'Things To Come'. To round out the volume, there is an excellent index which makes for quick and easy reference.

Of the SF film books published so far, this to my mind is certainly one of, if not the best, and as such should be in every SF readers collection. You will not find every SF film here, but Strick has made a pretty good try to achieve that goal, and one very big point in his favour is that the text describes the films and is not just there to fill the gaps between the pictures. Buy it, you'll not be sorry. (P.J.)

HUMAN MACHINES

by M.H. Scortia
and
G. Zobrowski
Robert Hale £3.75

Far too often, anthologies strive to please so many different tastes, that like the curate's egg, they are only good in parts. This volume of twelve cyborg stories breaks the rule..ALL are winners. The theme of cybernetic organisms wherein humans and machines are inextricably linked, has many facets and the authors have ranged wide in their selections to give us two variations on the cyborg space ship (from opposing viewpoints), a look at adapted workers on Mars, star probes, re-created humans and many others. The cyborg concept itself is ably and lucidly explained in the excellent introduction, although sadly, a section referred to there on 'Recommended Reading' seems to have been dropped from the book. Nevertheless, whether your fancy be the weirdly human Deirdre, or the gadgety cyborg cylinder of Kuttner's 'Camouflage' I fancy you will enjoy this excellent collection (T.J.)

....and now for two block-busters

THE BEST OF FREDERIK POHL
Sidgwick & Jackson £4.95

Wrapped in a simple but striking jacket by Hardy, this is physically, a real 'biggy', its 360 pages open with an introduction by Lester del Rey and close with an afterword by Fred Pohl wherein he discusses some of the tales. In between, the goodies are packed more closely than sardines in a can. No less than eighteen top-notch yarns and one article (on number systems). Pohl is never dull, and in this collection he is positively scintillating on themes as varied as body-rorting, (Day The Ice Works Closed), or the cruel sting in the tail of 'Tunnel Under The World'. Sheer entertainment from the first page right through to the last, and a book to which you can return again and again for the sheer variety of its contents. Highly Recommended. (T.J.)

...and to prove that good things never come singly,

THE BEST OF HARRY HARRISON
Sidgwick & Jackson £4.95

Slightly slimmer (313 pages) but holding no less than 24 stories and as a real bonus, each is prefaced by a brief historical anecdote by Harry, explaining how the yarn came to be written. Individually, each is a little gem, be it the bitter, angry, 'Mute Hilton' or the tongue-in-cheek parody of 'Captain Honario Harpplayer R.N.' The author has a lovely touch with humour (as distinct from the normal slapstick of SF) as is witnessed in 'Space Rats Of The CCC' - a send-up of 'Galactic Patrol'. He is equally adept at depicting the horrifying reality of 'A Criminal Act' or any of the many other themes handled so deftly in this volume. The Dust jacket is garishly poor, but despite that, I fancy this collection is even better than the Pohl. Buy one or both..whichever way you choose, there'll be no regrets. (T.J.)

Incidentally, either of these would make a grand gift for anyone you would like to get hooked on science fiction. Every single story makes it point, entertains and winds up neatly without a scrap of padding between the two volumes.

ROBOT The Mechanical Monster

David Annan Futura £1.95

110 Pages (6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ") of SF movie stills loosely linked by a scanty, and rather futile text. The author struggles to pad out the 'mechanical monster' by

referring to spacemen 'Looking like robots', and 'underwater explorers moving like slow machines'. The stills themselves wander far from the given theme, 'Incredible Shrinking Man', the young couple in the 'Things To Come' Moon capsule, Kenneth More in a spacesuit and even Claude Rains as the Invisible Man. Strangely, many well-known robots are missing; Houdini tangled with one in the early thirties, Gene Autry met a horder in 'Phantom Empire' and Pat Kirkwood became one in 'Perfect Woman'.

The message is clear, ignore this as a 'Robot' book; enjoy it as I did for a feast of stills. Particularly worthwhile was the section on SF film posters (in colour). You also get clips from 'Flesh Gordon' and a surprising number of females (with exposed bosoms) being carried in the arms of men, monsters...and now and then, robots. I liked it. (T.J.)

NEW UNIVERSEWilliam B. Ellern
Orbit 60p

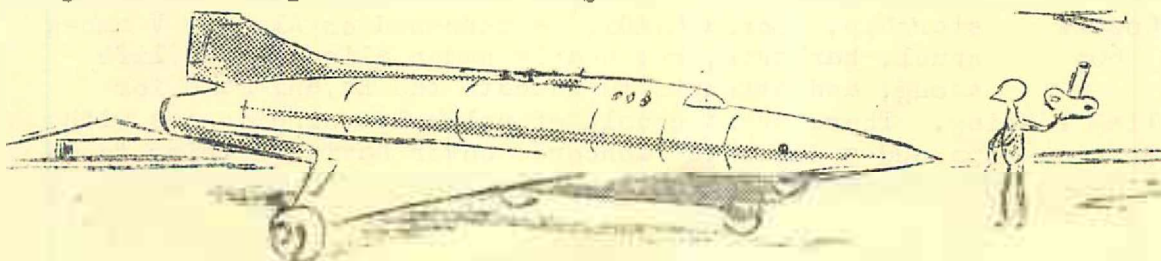
Way back in 1966, 'Doc' Smith gave the writer permission to write a space yarn set in the Universe of the Lens. The story appeared in Analog under the title of 'Moon Prospector'. Now, Ellern has expanded his

yarn by at least a factor of ten to form a complete space-opera concerning Lieutenant (then Lensman) McQueen, a full-scale sabotage attack on Moon Base Copernicus, and an all-out battle with the Black forces. Characters include Niven, Ellik, and Rog Phillips. There is some minor variance between Smith's Lens Universe and that of Ellern, but otherwise here is a superb addition to the saga of the Lens which should delight newcomers or veteran Smith addicts alike. I thought it great, and hope there will be many more to follow. (T.J.)

BEHIND THE DEADRobert Silverberg
Coronet 60p

A collection of three novellas by the Hugo and Nebula Award winning author. The title yarn is set in a world where death is but a transfer point to becoming a zombie. One never finds just how this society

evolved, but the 'deads' have their own towns, come and go as they please and on the whole, do all right. In this tale, Klein's wife dies, is revived and he tries to win her back. 'Thomas The Proclaimer' tells of a roistering, thieving mercenary who becomes God's disciple. He calls for a sign, and the Earth halts in its orbit. This rather confounds orthodox religions. Finally, in 'Going', Silverberg investigates a society in which longevity is balanced by voluntary euthanasia (although he rather overlooks the financial and population pressures it would bring). The author is fascinated with death - and the real meaning of life; here he gives his imagination full reign. (T.J.)



CASE AND THE DREAMER

Theodore Sturgeon
Pan 60p

Three excellent tales by the master, reprinted for your delight. The title story (Galaxy) is about the space-wrecked young couple who land on a strange planet where anything can happen.

'If All Men Were Brothers, Would You Let One Marry Your Sister' (from 'Dangerous Visions') deals with a near-perfect, but isolated society and is really a vehicle for a ten-page argument in favour of incest. The third piece, 'When you Care, When You Loved' (F & SF) shows just how indomitable a rich girl's love can be. In short, a feast of Sturgeon, but one that would have been even better without his usual off-beat sex platform. (T.J.)

OPTIONS

Robert Shockey
Pan 60p

Pilot Mishkin lands on Harmonia in a damaged spacecraft. Accompanied by a robot 'protector' he sets out to get spare parts. So far, understandable, but from here on, the rest of the book reads like an LSD

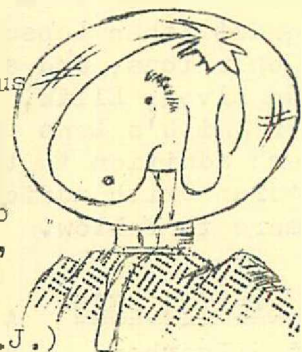
nightmare trip in the vein of P.K. Dick. I suppose it is meant to be funny; you could have fooled me. Even the jacket limits its plug to 'A famous and skilled exponent of science fiction'... Brian Aldiss. A quote which does NOT recommend the book. Personally, I used to like Shockey's stuff. In the future, I'll be more circumspect. (T.J.)

THE CRACK IN SPACE

by Philip K. Dick
Nothuen 70p

The 21st Century sees Earth putting its population surplus into deep freeze. As the

crisis mounts, Presidential Candidate Jim Briskin ensures his election by revealing a solution - but one which is complicated, not only by a surgeon who has been looting the frozen 'bibs' for body organs, but by an unforeseen difficulty. This is Dick at his imaginative best, painting a future society which is different..and believable. Very good. (T.J.)



THE OVERMAN CULTURE

Edmund Cooper
Coronet 60p

Michael Faraday grows up in a London of anachronisms and among playmates such as Horatio Nelson, Jane Austen and Emily Bronte. The group is formed from people who can bleed,

unlike the 'drybones' who outnumber them. The 'Family' begins to investigate the peculiarities surrounding them and what they discover makes for compulsive reading. Cooper is in good form here, despite the plot cliché, his story has warmth, credibility and sufficient twists and surprises that it holds you to the end. A good read (T.J.)

A EAR SUNSET

Edmund Cooper
Coronet 60p

Paul Marlow, sole survivor of the self-destructing starship, Gloria Mundi, is marooned on Alatair V among cruel, barbaric, but nearly human aliens. His life among, and attempts to educate the Bayani make for

enthralling reading. There are a couple of unlikely coincidences with two other starships and a ducklike 'Concorde' cover having nothing to do with the yarn, but otherwise it is a cheerfully satisfying narrative.

(T.J.)

PRISONER OF FIRE

Edmund Cooper
Coronet 60p

Sometime in the immediate future, Vanessa, a 17-year old telepath escapes from a Government Institute and is first befriended, then loved by a failure of a psychiatrist. She is hunted by a small band of warped Aspers and also by an engaging villain acting for the Prime Minister. The action is thick and fast enough to gloss over the cracks in the cardboard characters. There are plenty of twists to sustain the plot and Cooper handles the permissive dialogue neatly to produce a tale which, if not great SF, is still excellent entertainment. (T.J.)

ORBITSVILLE

Bob Shaw
Pan. 60p

A highly improbable accidental death of a child in his care sends Commander Vance Garamond fleeing from the vengeance of the parent.. Elizabeth Lindstrom, President and virtual dictator of the vast 'Starflight' consortium. The flight takes Garamond to Orbitville - a Dysonworld in the form of a vast sphere enclosing its parent sun, and with enough land to house Earth's millions. This is a story of people, rather than gadgets, and Shaw papers neatly over the cracks in the basic plot with events which move rapidly and sustain interest throughout. Excellent buy at 60p (TJ)

10,000 LIGHT-YEARS FROM HOME

James Tiptree Jr.,
Pan 60p

The pb version of Methuen's £5.60 hardcover giving you 15 scintillating stories based on a variety of SF ideas. You'll find aliens as sex-objects, as slavers and even as missionaries. Then there are intelligent plasmas, gene-hunting mutants, interstellar warfare and the odd time-paradox. I fancied the man who talked to doors, and who carried six miniature girl-lodgers in his jacket pocket. There are problems with interstellar trade and many more, each one different, yet each as fresh as the proverbial daisy. The whole thing is a steal at the price. (T.J.)

THE LAST AVE RIDER

John Brunner
Orbit 35p

This has many aspects of a classic fairy story. In a totally computer-ridden society, the hero has a rough (Cinderella-style) childhood before being selected for higher things. However he has a talent for controlling computers (and can ride his generation's 'shockwave' by writing his own programmes..which is a sort of up-dated version of the traditional three wishes. His activities bring eventual investigation and confrontation with the Government. All of which is unfair to a great story, which deserves all the praise available. The future 'slang' sounds authentic yet is slipped in so skilfully it neither jars nor baffles. The computer society itself is barely 'flicked in', yet attains utter credibility. Literally, I just couldn't put this one down, and rate it as one of Brunner's best. (T.J.)

THE IS THE SIMPLEST THING

Clifford D. Simak
Methuen 'Magnum' 70p

Shepherd Blaine is one of a new breed of space explorers who send out their minds rather than their bodies. On such a trip, he encounters and trades minds with an alien. Returning to his own body, Blaine flees 'Fishhook' base, and is hunted by their security forces and also by the superstitious and psi-hunting rabble which now inhabits America. In his flight, his mind-partner's abilities develop and Blaine encounters many other psi people.

Written in Simak's inimitable 'folksy' style, but with one or two unexplained points - What brought about the sudden upswing in psi power? In a country which lynches any paranormal, is it logical to expect that full telephone services, etc., be maintained to a community of such people? ..and why show a superconic airliner and control tower on the cover of a tale which never mentions them? Quibbling apart, I thoroughly enjoyed the tale, and so will all Simak fans who have not read it in magazine form.

AGENTS OF THE TERRAN EMPIRE

Poul Anderson
Coronet, 70p

Deep into rattling,
swash-buckling space-opera
with Captain Flandry. In the

first of this four story collection, he is shanghai'd with disastrous results for the kidnappers. The second tale sees him rescuing a princess in distress. Number three pits Flandry against his telepathic enemy, Aycharaych, and the final story has him flitting from intrigue on Jupiter, to another fight against Ierseia, with Aycharaych (the name seems to be one of Anderson's rare puns) in action again. Made of similar lightweight cardboard to Retief, and others, Flandry is a character you either like or hate, so suit yourself.

THE SHIP OF ISHTAR

A. Merritt
Avon, \$1.25

Truly a 'classic' reprint, this fantasy hails from 1924. John Kenton, archaeologist finds a model ship within a block of stone and in some strange way, he is drawn aboard it to become first a slave, and then to participate in its endless journeying as he fights for the red-haired love goddess Sharane against the black forces of evil. With three companions he wins the ship, but loses Sharane and is forced to embark upon an assault of the fortress in which she is held. Prejudice made me hold back at first, but the story still has its own spell..and one more potent than a horde of Elriks or Conans, so that I found myself really enjoying it far more than I had expected...and I'm a fantasy-hater. If you're an S & S buff, you'll really go for this despite its age (which shows far less than a straight SF tale of that era). T.J.

Brian Aldiss and Harry Harrison have got together and come up with a new series of anthologies in which they have attempted to select tales which are both the best, and typical of the decade in which they first appeared. Published by Pan, at 70p each, they are :-

===== The 1940's =====

This could have been sub-titled (chosen from Asf' as that is where each of these originated. Only eight yarns..but all indisputably excellent. Opening with a vanVogt 'Azazel' Rull yarn, then an Asimov robot piece, 'Reason'. These are followed by Brown's 'Arena', the 'right to survive' story which made a Star Trek episode. 'Fireproof' sees Hal Clement pointing up an unforeseen physical effect in spaceflight. 'Last Objective' by Paul Carter is a chilling account of subterranean warfare. Simak has a Webster tale, 'Huddling Place', and joy of joys, my favourite by D.F. Russell, 'Hobbyist' is here, telling of the space scout who discovers God's museum of experiments. Lastly comes Lathan's account of the death of the Universe, 'The Xi Effect', and I'd rate the whole volume as the pb anthology of the year.

===== The 1950's =====

Has a round dozen stories, perforce of smaller wordage. Less gadgety, more cerebral, sleeker and to me, slightly less memorable. Notable are Bradbury's brief but telling 'Pedestrian' and 'The Star' by Clarke, detailing the agony of a space going priest who discovers a civilisation destroyed by the Star of Bethlehem. With Kuttner's 'Two Handed Engine' comes robotic law enforcement and a murder case. The author line-up positively scintillates... James H. Schmitz, Catherine Maclean, Budrys, Bradbury, Matheson, Dixby, Checkley and others, all in top form. Both volumes are excellent 'buys' but I'll put my money on the 1940's set as leading by a nose.

DOORWAYS IN THE SAND

===== Originally serialised in Analog, this hefty Roger Zelazny novel is set in the reasonably near future when AVON 32086 £1.50 Earth's first starship has returned, accompanied by an alien spacecraft. They trade for the Mona Lisa and the Crown Jewels, leaving in their place, a 'starstone' and a 'Rennius machine'. Fred Cassidy, a perpetual, non-graduating student finds he is being hounded by various factions for possession of the starstone, moreover, he begins to get strange telepathic messages. Government agents, hoodlums and unusual aliens all crop up in his path as he is chivvied hither and yon through adventures which include a complete left-to-right reversal in the Rennius machine. Lightweight, but fast-paced and highly entertaining..if you missed the serial, get this edition.

=====

All the books reviewed in ERG (together with many others, plus a variety of magazines, current and second-hand) may be obtained from :-

Ken. Slater,

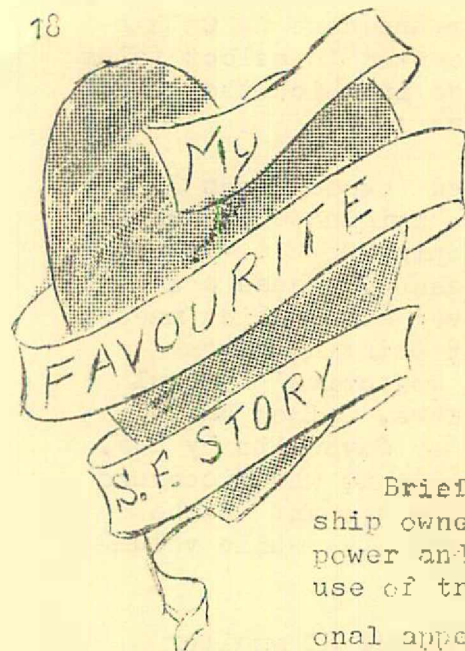
Fantast(Medway) Ltd.

39 West St.

Wisbech,

CAMBS. PE15 2JH

=====



PICKING a favourite SF story is almost impossible, because there has never yet been an SF story that I liked all of, but I think the most likeable bits in the biggest quantity appear for me in the works of Isaac Asimov and the story that most appealed to me is entitled, (in my three-part set of the Foundation trilogy) "THE MERCHANT PRINCES" ** and concerns that Prince of fictional merchants, Hober Mallow.

ALAN
BURNS

Briefly the story concerns how Hober Mallow a trade ship owner from the Foundation world, Terminus, came to power and showed how any war can be stopped by judicious use of trade. We are not told much about Mallow's personal appearance and way of life, yet we end by knowing him as well as a close friend. Physically, he is a big hard quick man, a man of lightning decisions, willing to take risks for trade or the knowledge that will beget trade, and sure in his wisdom. As for his way of life, it is that of a rich man. He has had several mistresses, and from them, as we are told in "Foundation and Empire" he has had at least one son.

A handful of other characters stand out. Jaime Twer, the miserable spy in the pay of Jarane Sutt, Mallow's deadly enemy. The peevish ignorant tech-man and the cultured, kindly patriot that Mallow meets on a secret visit to an Empire Planet. The one gets a personal shield that fails in a couple of days, but the patriot gets a box of food 'strange in manner of preparation but good tasting, and lasted long'.

There is a blow by blow account of a Mallow trading venture, and describes how Mallow realised that the religion on which the Foundation had built power was dead, and trade must take its place.

Of hardware and gadgetry there is little really and put in as asides more than a story part. There is an atomic punch, a sort of atomic cutter. A filming unit that seems to have an indefinite expansion factor. Mallow uses it during his trial, and the hand of one of the characters shown, expands to fill the screen and shows the letters KSP tattooed on one finger. The trial of Mallow as a traitor turns out victory for him, he becomes mayor and Karadellia, the planet that declared war on the Foundation, having had its supply of Foundation Technology shut off, surrenders, after 'the most unfought war in history'.

Looking at what I have said the story seems very trite, but read behind the lines and like many other parts of the Foundation Trilogy it becomes a sociological document of no small degree. (Alan Burns)

(** Original titles, 'THE BIG AND THE LITTLE'. Asf August 1944. T.J.)

Michael
A.
Banks

MY FAVOURITE SF STORY.... hrrr, that's a toughie. A MARTIAN ODYSSEY, by Stanley G. Weinbaum? Heinlein's REQUIEM? Any of Laumer's 'Retief' stories? George O. Smith's LOST ART? Or any of a dozen others?

I can't really single out one story and say, "That's my favourite, the best story I've ever read." I have many favourites, each outstanding in its own way. They all have one thing in common, though, in addition to suspense, mystery, or other factors inherent to each. That quality is best described as 'reader identification', a major part of any memorable tale.

The flamboyant, omni-competent Retief, for instance. There is someone I can identify with in a wishful way, at least. And D.D. Harriman, the hero of REQUIEM. . . a man who has accomplished all his life's goals and dreams, but one. In the end though, he overcomes all obstacles in the way of that last goal, and achieves it, finishing his life in a fitting manner. And in A MARTIAN ODYSSEY and LOST ART, there are situations so unique and real that I can almost say I lived through them.

My favourite story? Any story that reaches out and grabs me, makes me knew I was there.

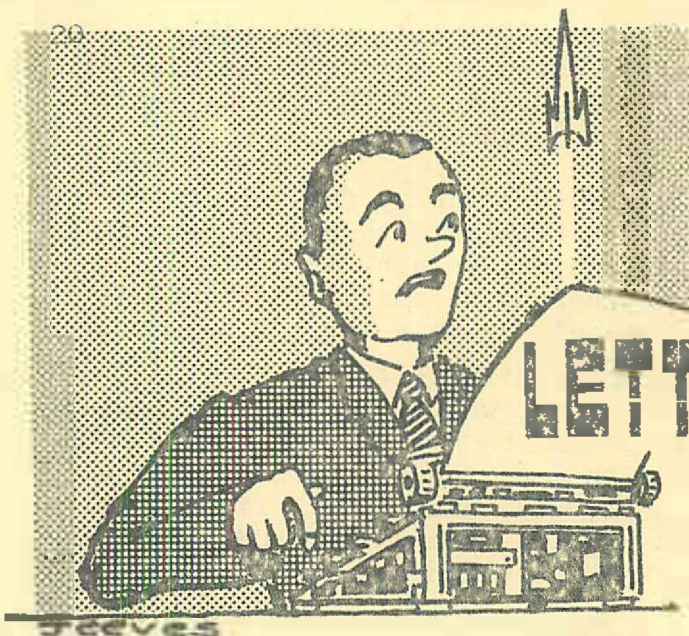
Peter
Hammerton

My favourite story ?? I like Fred Brown's vignettes, Wilson Tucker's 'Wild Talent', and 'Mission of Gravity' from the pen of Hal Clement. One of my favourite short stories is undoubtedly, 'Untouched By Human Hands' by Robert Sheckley. My favourite author is Eric Frank Russell and I must admit

with much hesitation that I would select 'Plus X', 'The Space Willies' and 'Next Of Kin' as my favourites... three for the price of one!

You will have noticed that my selections are all from the 1950s - The Golden Days! Russell, apart from his mickeytaking of officialdom, made no effort to implant his own political or sociological ideas into the stories. In my humble opinion, an author must write to entertain, not just to put over fancy words and phrases; but then perhaps I'm old-fashioned. I like a story to have a beginning, a middle and an ending - especially a nice twist ending!

'Plus X' was first published in a 1956 Astounding (Not that monstrosity, Analog), retitled 'The Space Willies' in an Ace Double, two versions have passed through my hands and I'm still looking for the one that exists with 'The Ultimate Invaders' ... In a weak moment, I sold mine. The story is of a Terran Scout who has to determine the extent of a rival civilisation's sphere of influence. He is captured by the enemy who have never seen a Terran before. To save his life he convinces them that each Terran is composed of two beings and that if anything happens to the flesh and blood, the invisible half...his Eustace...will take terrible revenge. The story proceeds with many nice touches of humour, and if you like humorous SF, this story is a must.



Roger Wallington
4 Commercial St.,
Norton,
Malton,
North Yorkshire

I have to admit that I'm not one of those fen who play the Great Game; keeping up with all the nuances of modern living is high for me, without any complications. Probably just that I consider a good story above all rubies and so long as it actually moves along at a fast rate of knots, I'm not too concerned about how its made to move, or whether it should move at all, given two completely different concepts.

Oh there are limits to my ignorance; I mean

I'd cavil a bit if one of my favourite writers suggested that the moon was made of green cheese, but in the matter of eccentric orbits, Byson spheres, quarks, quasars etc, I'm as a babe in arms. Writers can flagrantly breach the laws of higher physics right under my nose, and I'll blithely sail thorough - though I suspect that the most exciting of stories have hidden the most flagrant of breaches - but just think what unseen wonders of the physical universe might be revealed if a scientist caught this admittedly illogical and unscientific concept, and translated it into reality!

Didn't Alan E. Nourse (or was it James Gunn ?) have a story about shutting scientists in a room with all those special effects SF films fed in as reality ? (((Yes, and they went right ahead and discovered anti-gravity. However, whatever one's level of scientific interest, there is still the point where one can pick out a slip-up...and spotting such items used to be part of the fun of SF)))

David V. Lewis
Caldis Ave
Stowmarket
Suffolk

"One of the delights of reading Ergitorial (to paraphrase yourself) is the amount of scientific and other knowledge displayed therein. (((You say such nice things))) Being a bear of very little brain I am unable to play the Game you describe but can spot the odd mistake now and again. I think one of the attractions of older SF is to be able to say, 'Well that's commonplace now', or 'That's totally wrong due to recent developments'. My pet hate is book covers which do not portray the content accurately. (((See the (Foss ?) cover to Cooper's, 'At Far Sunset', the story describes a starship perched on its tail...the cover shows a Concorde landing in a cloud of dust))). This seems to be a Michael Banks issue with two good pieces from him. The Gordon Dickson

Michael A Banks
P.O. Box 302
Millford
Ohio 45150

"Clever cover; I found two 'Jeeves For Taff' slogans, one 'Vote Taff' and one 'Read ERG'. Did I miss any? ((Well there was an old fashioned steam railway engine, and a naughty V sign in there as well))) Really liked the illo, reminds me of the cover on

No. 45, the first issue of ERG I ever saw (((Just think, 44 lovely issues you missed !))) Can't think of any SF anomalies at the moment, but I'M certain there are enough to fill up three or four issues of ERG . . . The headings on the ERGitorial, Reviews, and Letters columns were excellent, and the layout of the first page of the World-con report was good -- eye catching.

Have to disagree with whoever did the review of Pohl's IN THE PROBLEM PIT ((Philip Stephenson-Fayne))) ..I liked the title story and have seen many by Pohl that were worse, and thus wouldn't classify it as one of the worst in the book. Granted the writing is a bit contrived at times, but the idea of the story more than makes up for it.

All in all, a good issue Terry. The paper you used was nice (((Well, it was either Chapman's OCD2, or Millway..or maybe even Macleans...I was using up supplies..still am, but hope to settle back to OCD2 when finances permit))) since it contrasts so nicely with the illos.

((Michael now uses his own fanzine COAX...if you're interested, see the ad on another page. T.J.)))

Pete Presford
2 Maxwell Close
Buckley
CHIRP,
P. Wales

"I am still rather shocked by an apparent item on the front cover of ERG 57. If that is a hand, and it is doing what I think it is doing. Though it may be a Churchill sign. (((Naturally, you are quite right..and after all, beauty is in the eye of the beholder))) Your ERGitorial settled in

nicely with an article in the newly arrived 'Mythologies' ((Advertising other zines in ERG, yet !))). I most agree with you that the game is indeed getting harder to play. But then again, I would hate to know too much about the science behind any story. A passing knowledge of any subject is fine by me. 18 years of ERG !!! malfunction 10 (((Advertising more zines he is .))) will mean 5 years of that zine. Where does the time go ?? ((Down these here black holes I fancy. Meanwhile, I hope to keep good old ERG coming for many a happy year yet..which gives me a chance to answer several people who asky why I don't run more letters..articles ..or longer interviews etc. I would dearly love to...BUT, apart from increased paper and postal costs (ouch..they'd be up by 50 to 100%) the main reason that right now, with about 22 pages every three months, ERG IS FOR FUN. I get a kick out of doing it. If I increased its size, the extra work would make it a perpetual chore, take away the fun from the enterprise, and bring about GATIA in short order. There it is folks...ERG will NOT grow any larger, but it WILL keep appearing for many a year yet. I gather it is now Britain's oldest regular quarterly fanzine since Scottishe has gone bi-yearly...so maybe I'll issue a king sized edition on the 21st birthday in 1980. T.J.)))

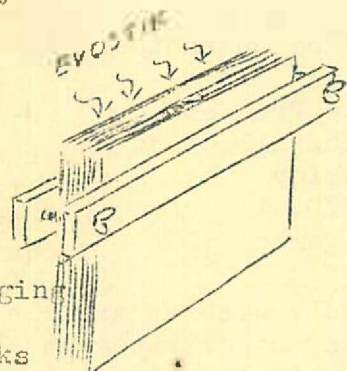
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Interview was fairly good and drew some interesting comments which throw light on the writer's method of obtaining material.

Book reviews are not long but manage to convey the nuances of each book to me (((That's the general idea...I want to leave people to make their own decisions after getting some idea of what a book is about, and whether I like it or not. Opinions vary too much for me to make out that my views needs must apply to everyone else))). The Worldcon report nicely complements the picture show we got at Newcon which unfortunately became a flickering image due to lack of time towards the end.

The article on illos was particularly interesting to me as I like to dabble in that area. I rushed out and got some Instantex and am currently experimenting with it. (((Hope you have got it tamed and can make use of the samples I mailed you))).

Kevin Casthope
6 Ipsley Grove
Brdington
Birmingham B23 7BX

(((Actually, this comment was taken from a LOC on ERG 56, but I have only just got around to making a few experiments...))) "The section on fanzine binding was useful, but limited in that it required the mutilation of the fanzine. Preferably you should not have to remove the staples and use a hole punch to file them neatly. Can't you think of a way of doing this, Terry ? (((Having made a few tests, it seems that this is possible by rubbing Evostik lightly into the spine of the fanzines as they are held firmly together. Preferably held in a clamp. Rub the Evostik up and down the spine edges and leave a while to dry. More may be added if the first go fails to hold the fanzines together. You can do this with stapled zines....but get a better job if you de-staple them first)))



Bob Tucker,
Jacksonville,
Illinois.
In regard your ERGITORIAL and the relay satellite that was hanging in stationary orbit over London, I'm reminded of some nasty remarks

I picked up at Cape Canaveral when I was visiting there last March. Sam Long got me into the inner sanctums because he used to work there, and among other goodies I was allowed to launch a meteorological rocket. Afterwards I was talking to some of the crew in one of the buildings and happened to mention a new commentator named Walter Cronkhite. To a man, they broke into razzing laughter. They despise him.

When he would come down to the Cape for an important launch and set up his news booth, he mangled the facts and the science to an alarming degree, quickly earning him the title as the most ignorant newsman on the scene. The idiot tangled himself in apogee and perigee and other technical terms, trying to 'explain' them to the man in the street when it was obvious that he didn't understand them himself. I've since thought that I ought to write a story about it/him, carefully disguising him of course. I would have a loyal readership at the Cape.

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