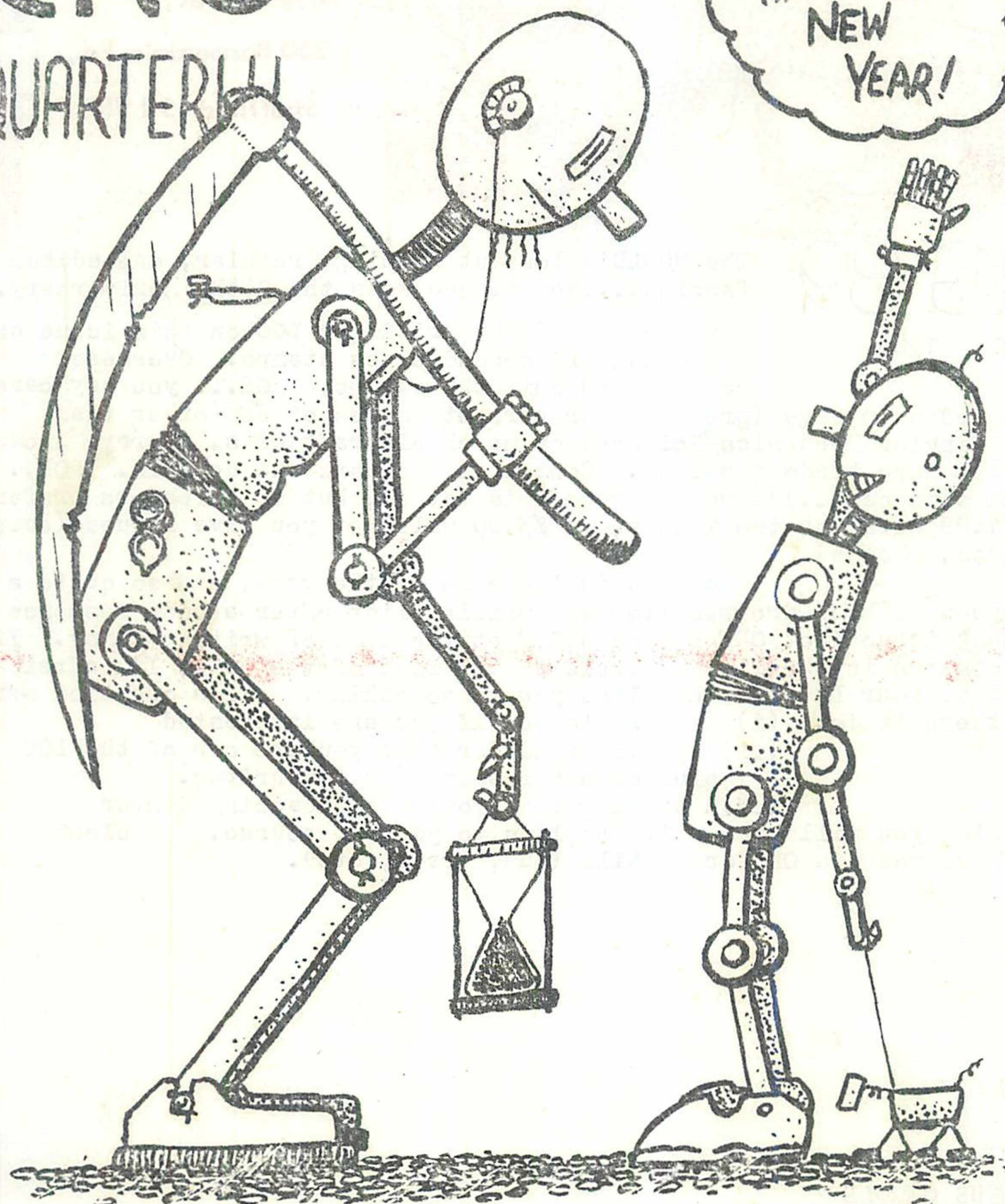


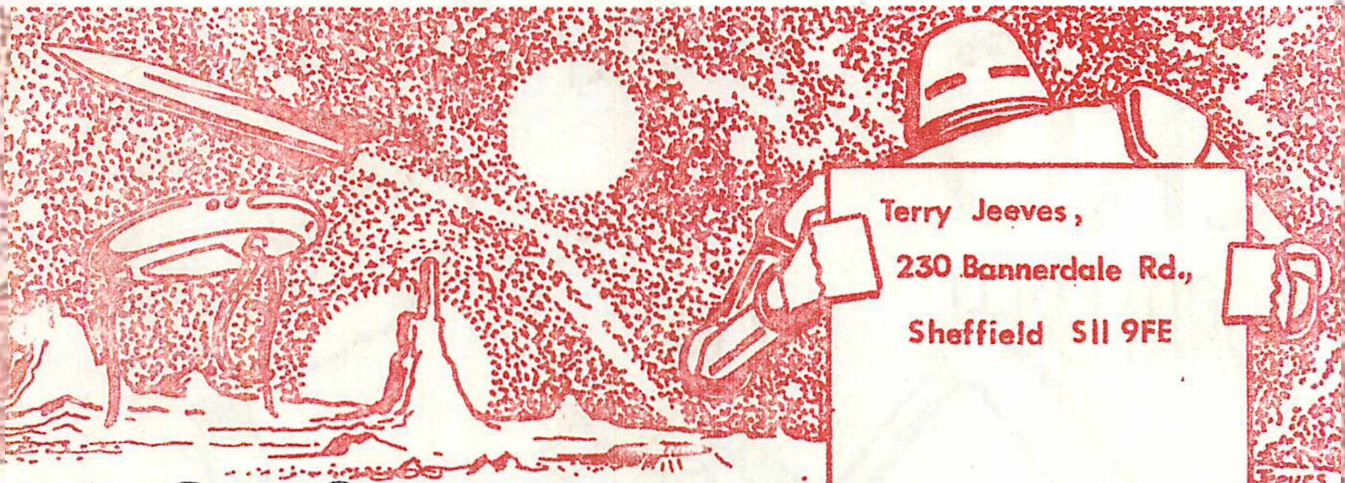
ERG

QUARTERLY

JANUARY 1985 N° 89

HAPPY
NEW
YEAR!





Terry Jeeves,
230 Bannerdale Rd.,
Sheffield S11 9FE

ERG 89

JANUARY 1985

The WORLD'S longest running, regular, one-editor fanzine....next issue sees the 26th. Anniversary.

You can get ERG by writing a LOC on this issue and enclosing two second class stamps. Overseas readers can omit the stamps. OR... you may care to trade old pulp mags (pre 1940) or current issues of SF (other than Analog), Popular Mechanics, Science, or model aircraft mags. Sorry, I can't take on any more trade fanzines. Contact me to work out details. OR.. ..you can send cash..I'm not keen on this method, but some readers prefer it..so \$1.00 gets you two issues, or \$3.00 will get you five issues (cash, not cheques, please).

Response is the name of the game, and so quite a few people have been dropped from the mailing list after a poor response to the last issue (not ONE oversees LOC at the time of writing this). If a cross appears in the little circle at the foot of the page, I'm afraid this will be your LAST issue unless you do something. If a question mark appears there it is...(i) A query to see if you are interested

(ii) A gentle reminder that you are one of the LOC plus stamps readers (my favourites.

(iii) A warning that you're approaching danger

I'm assuming you will know which applies to you, of course. A blank circle shows you are OK for a while (Sub, trade, etc).

STATUS CIRCLE

A MATTER OF GRAVITY



I seem to remember that it was a character called Sir Isaac Newton who 'invented' gravity by putting his head in the way of a falling apple. Naturally, once gravity was available for everyone, it wasn't long before some protesting malcontent came up with the concept of anti-gravity...and one of SF's favourite themes was born.

Speak of anti-gravity and one is reminded of H.G.WELLS and his 'FIRST MEN IN THE MOON'. That trip was made possible by the use of a ship coated with 'Cavorite', the anti-gravity properties of which, allowed the spaceship to float up and off to the Moon. The lift was controlled by shutters used to screen off the Cavorite, but Wells never told us what the shuttering material was...but had it been used in a more judicious manner, he could have incorporated free energy and perpetual motion into the yarn...simply by having a windmill type wheel composed of Cavorite vanes...with half the thing screened by the shutter material. Oh well, Herbert George couldn't think of everything.

An even earlier example of anti-gravity..and perhaps the true inspiration behind Blish's 'CITIES IN FLIGHT' appeared with the use of the floating city of Laputa in Dean Swift's 'GULLIVER'S TRAVELS', another breeding ground for many an SF plot. However, it is so long since I read this tale that I may have missed a hidden spindizzy.

I think it was during the late fifties that a story in ASF took a group of scientists, all convinced of the impossibility of anti-gravity, and confronted them with films and documentation which 'proved' it had been discovered by an inventor killed in an accident. The befuddled bods duly went out and now that they had no fixed ideas in their noddles, actually achieved the goal. Which duly brightened up the Government Department which had set the thing up because it dearly wanted an A-G machine.

Fictional Governments are fickle...it was only a few months later that another story came up with another inventor who couldn't interest the Government in his device..until he put the thing inside a toy space rocket and began to sell it in local stores.

All these ideas were, of course, pure speculative entertainment. What about reality? Well, another item which first surfaced in ASF was the notorious 'DEAN DRIVE'..whereby two off-centre weights counter-rotated..and their centres of revolution was allowed to shift whilst their opposing forces were matched in equilibrium. Powered by a small electric motor, this gadget was supposed to convert rotary motion into linear force..and so produce a liftin force...as demonstrated on a bath-room scale. John W. Campbell (and others) published some fuzzy photos of the bath scale's dial showing this effect. (I never could understand why, if as the axis moved one way..you got a lift...why you didn't get a downward thrust on the return movement??). Articles and photos only

4 indicated a weight reduction, but the implication was that the thing only needed a few measly million dollars spending on research to take everyone to the moon. Articles on the thing, and involved calculations appeared in many a journal, with even the prestigious, s&c trade journal, MISSILES AND ROCKETS devoting a couple of articles to it.

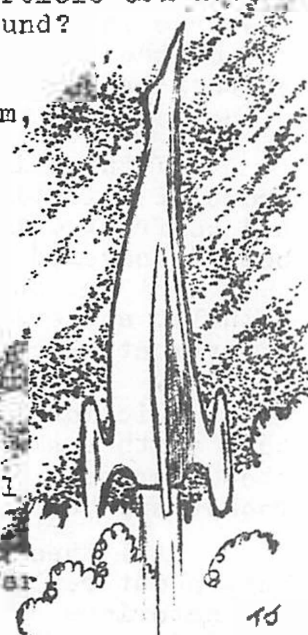
Strangely enough, it was also MISSILES AND ROCKETS which ran occasional news items on certain mysterious mineral deposits...bauxite, I think, which displayed a partial resistance to the effects of gravity. Every five or six months, a small news snippet would refer to 'experiments' with the stuff, but as to any final outcome, I never heard. Can anyone out there add further details? (No, none of the issues was dated April 1st.).

Then of course, as particle physics advanced further and further into the atom's inner realms, it was established that the hitherto speculative 'anti-matter' was actually possible...small particles of it even being created in accelerators. This raised another question of parity..if anti-matter exists, then why isn't roughly half the Universe made of it? ..or even half the Solar System? (it isn't, otherwise meteorites and dust fragments would put on a grand display on reaching the anti-matter body). Having got this far, it was inevitable that someone would soon speculate.. 'If we can have anti-matter..might it not exhibit anti-gravity?'

'Will Stewart' (Jack Williamson) wrote a series of stories on the contratorrene theme, but as far as I can recall, he never endowed it with any anti-gravity properties. His 'seetee' artifacts were manipulated by magnetic fields or something similar, rather than floating freely by mutual repulsion. Nevertheless speculation remains..if an anti-article can have polarity or spin reversed, might its gravity also turn around?

Einstein spent much of his life in trying to construct a Unified Field Theory linking together Magnetism, Electricity and Gravity. The connection between the first two had long been established...move a conductor through a magnetic field and it will generate a current. Put a conductor in a magnetic field and pass a current through it and the conductor moves. But what can one do with either of 'em which will affect gravity? ..or vice versa? Magnetic effects between two objects diminish with the square of their distance apart. The same applies to gravity. There is also some evidence that a rapidly rotating object of sufficient mass can generate gravity waves...and that 'gravitons' are subatomic particles which create gravity by their interchange between bodies..control them, and you control gravity. All very confusing, but so far no positive link between the three forces has been established...which leaves the anti-gravity spaceship as far away as ever.

Acceleration and gravity exhibit similar effects, as witness the oft-quoted time dilation effect. Their equivalence is also supposedly 'proved' by the presumed inability to distinguish them apart in the lift/gravity experiment whereby two objects, if dropped in a lift behave exactly as they would on a planetary surface. That's the theory..but in practice, I think the effects DO differ. In a gravity field, the two bodies would gradually move together as they converge on the centre of mass. In a lift, their 'fall' would remain parallel. UNLESS, their own minute mutual



gravitic attraction would tend to bring them together at exactly the same convergence angle as that produced by a planetary mass. Highly improbable, as such attraction would remain constant, whereas the planetary convergence angle would depend on their distance from the attracting body.

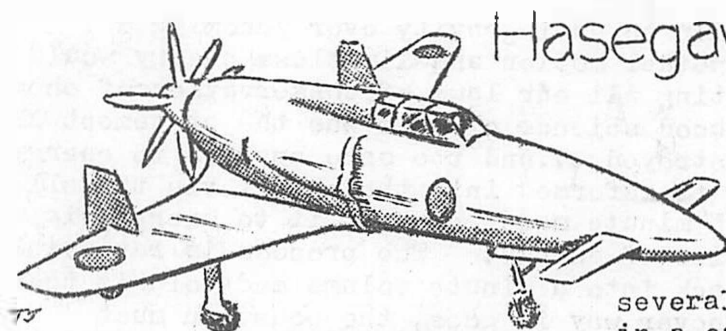
Perhaps the biggest objection to anti-gravity ever becoming a practical proposition is that perpetual motion and limitless energy would follow in its trail....thus violating all our laws of conservation of energy. One of the cornerstones of my boyhood science classes was the statement that matter could not be created or destroyed....and the same applies to energy, strange as it seems. One can be transformed into the other..via the all too familiar $E=MC^2$ formula. Take a minute mass, convert it to energy via A-bomb or H-bomb..and you get oodles of energy. The process is reversible if you can push ~~and~~ that energy back into a minute volume and hold it there, you'll get a tiny mass...but whichever way it goes, the equation must remain in balance. However, if you have an anti-gravity machine working a generator and producing energy from nowhere, then you ARE violating that law. So I reckon anti-gravity is just something we'll never see...unless there happens to be a slight change in the law under special conditions...just as Newton's physics applied to so much of the 'real world' ..but when you start to near light speed or gigantic masses, then in comes Einstein's qualification formula. Nice to know there's still an opening for the up-coming SF writers isn't it?

Harking back to the D an Drive...that used off-centre weights being moved in unusual ways. That ~~sort~~ of thing happens with a gyroscope. Spin one of those widgets up to speed and then give it a sideways push. Reams of mathematics have been written about the result...instead of moving off along the line of pish...the self-willed gyroscope moves off at right angles to the shove. Don't ask me why..the books babble learnedly about precession and suchlike esoterica...but it makes you wonder....hitch a gyroscope to your spaceship, then shove it sideways and UP goes the whole shebang! Oh well, maybe it wouldn't happen quite like that...and if it did, I have no doubt that the amount of side thrust required would be the same as the force needed to lift the craft in the normal way...but if you want to experiment...and have a spare gyroscope handy...feel free to try out my idea.

Still on gyroscopes...every so often (in Practical Science and the like) I see photographs of buses utilising this principle to save petrol. Usually, a huge flywheel beneath the floorboards is spun up to speed by an electric motor (linked to the power lines). The flywheel is then clutched into a gear train which drives the bus ten miles or so before it pulls into a charging depot to re-boost the flywheel. Seemingly it works..but what has me puzzled is what happens via the gyroscope principle when that bus drives through a sharp dip, or high bump in the road. Does that sudden sideways movement of the gyroscope's rotational axis manifest itself as a sudden swerve to left or right by the bus? Could be hazardous if used on some of our local roads.

Maybe the answer to all this is an anti-matter powered D an Drive coupled to an electro-magnetic gyroscope....but whilst speculation remains, we can still look forward to some good, speculative stories on the subject. ...or even factual articles. In the case of the latter, I hope they will treat the subject with due gravity.

Bestest, Terry.



Hasegawa's 1/48 SCALE

'SHINDEN'

I'd been hunting this kit for several years ever since I saw it listed in a catalogue. Success in finding it eluded me until one day when I walked into the local model shop...and LO! There was a new consignment stacked on the counter. I snapped one up...and then, as usually happens, left it on my kit pile until I was in the right mood for modelling...which in this case, was nearly a year later...sb if you find the price has risen from the £2.95 I paid, now you know why.

In case you think this canard with a six-bladed prop is a refugee or rip-off from Star Wars, (though it is ripe for a conversion along those lines), the Shinden was designed and built in 1944-45, taking only 16 months from specification to first flight! That lasted less than an hour, but with a projected top speed of around 500 mph and an armament of four, 30mm cannon, it would have proved a very formidable threat to the B-29s it was meant to attack.

Hasegawa have done a superlative job with the kit. 5 sets of moulding frames, cockpit transparencies, English instructions and a two-view multi-colour plate to aid you with the painting. The mouldings are entirely free from 'flash'..which in itself is a rarity in model kits. Moreover, each item is clearly numbered and to make part location even easier, the five frames are lettered A to E...and this coding is used in the instructions to enable you to find a part in an instant without any of the usual hunting through everything in sight for some tiny elusive component.

I usually paint as much of the model as possible before assembly..and then run into trouble if the parts fit badly. No such trouble here, the Shinden goes together like a charm, not only without 'flash', but without any warped or mismatched parts. Dihedral is built in, fins lock smoothly into place and the six-bladed prop totates happily when you blow against it. All in all, one of the best models I have had the pleasure of making. The cockpit is well-detailed and even the wheel wells are built up inside to avoid those unsightly gaps which can only be filled by tedious work with thin plastic card.

Conversion buffs could have a field day with the kit...leave off the airscrew, scratch-build some rocket motore and you're 90% of the way to a 'Dyna-Soar' or scout-cum-fighter. If Hasegawa have any more kits in their stable half as good as this one...I'm off to hunt through their catalogue.

Happy Modelling.....T.J.

DOWN MEMORY-BANK LANE

Part 11

F A N Z I N E S

Buried in a foot of page advert inside TALES OF WONDER was a lure destined to alter my life. I responded by sending off three shillings (15p) for the next SIX issues of Walter Gillings' fanzine.

SCIENTIFCTION

Each issue ran to 16 pages, approx. A5 in size, and it was PRINTED. Now and then we ever got the odd (?) photograph.

The first issue was January 1937 where Walter pleaded for more subbers in order to expand. Under a pseudonym he gave us details of a possible SF mag (which I fancy was the TOW in which I found the advert.) Another shy violet,

'moon Man' relayed various news items about magazines, authors etc., and then came a John Beynon interview. Messrs Herbert (Benson), Fearn and Pragnell predicted, respectively.. more and better British SF films, that SF would become THE predominant literary form, and (Pragnell) cagily suggested we couldn't really forecast what would happen..this from an SF writer! Three books were reviewed. 'Trumpeter' looked at current magazines and the issue wound up with a report on the first British SF 'Conference' (sic) held in Leeds in January 1937. A darned good tannersworth and it treated SF seriously without being dull, dusty, over pedantic or pseudo-literary-arty-crafty.

Succeeding issues saw interviews with, or article by.. Pragnell, Beynon, Fearn, Russell, Herbert, Keller, Hugi, Carnell etc. After seven issues the fanzine merged with 'TOMORROW The Magazine Of The Future' along with a doubling of page size and more photographs. It was edited by Doug Mayer of the Leeds SFL Chapter and Gillings was listed as Associate Editor.

THE BRITISH

SCIENTIFCTION

FANTASY REVIEW

Vol. 1. No. 1

JANUARY, 1937

Sixpence

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FANTASY REVIEW

Vol. I, No. 1

SIXPENCE

FEB.-MAR. 1947

REVIVAL

If your experience of science-fantasy goes back to the days when a magazine devoted to it was a rare discovery, you will probably remember *Scientific Fiction*—*The British Fantasy Review*. That there were in these islands at that time enough fantasy readers to justify a journal catering for their interests was a significant factor in the developments which followed. It was not long before the first British science fiction magazine, *Tales of Wonder*, appeared. Hard on its heels came *Fantasy*; and had it not been for the war, which separated most British readers from the American magazines as well, there is little doubt that the medium would by now have established itself firmly in the field of popular literature.

But the war did not stop the continued evolution of fantasy fiction in America, whence to a fortunate few have come evidences of a change for the better in the method of its presentation—not so much in magazines as in the more permanent form of books. This elevation of fantasy to a more distinguished sphere has brought an intense activity in the reading and collecting of volumes of both science and weird fiction, a trend which has had repercussions among well-informed readers on this side of the Atlantic.

With the return to peace and the effects of war-time influences on reading tastes, there is ample indication of a desire on the part of publishers on both sides to meet the increasing demand for fantasy. New magazines; new books; new publishing concerns specialising in the medium. The fantasy fan has no cause for complaint, now—except, perhaps, that there is nothing to keep him up to date with all the information he needs to pursue his fascinating hobby.

Hence *FANTASY REVIEW*, which has been revived under its new title to cover the entire field of fantasy fiction and its allied interests, to reflect its growing popularity here and abroad, and to serve the discriminating reader and collector. To fulfil this function, we have recruited experts in every branch of the medium to serve its readers, and we shall keep its columns open to all who wish to express their views on any aspect of the literature in which they delight. It is the journal of the fantasy reader—produced by fantasy readers. As such it should make a valuable contribution to the further development of the medium; and as a source of reliable information and guidance, it should be indispensable to all who are interested in any of its ramifications.

THE EDITOR.

Happily, all the flavour of the old mag was retained. A.M.Low wrote on the future and I.O. Evans described how he compiled the 'WORLD OF TOMORROW' series of fag cards. There was a piece on a recently buried time capsule, and even a letter column! TOMORROW vanished after three issues to leave me without fanzine contact until after the war, when I linked up with several.

In early 1947, the indefatigable Wally returned with *FANTASY REVIEW* (which later became *SCIENCE-FANTASY REVIEW*..in the same format as *STF*, but boasting 20 pages and, even after 10 years..still only 6d a copy.

It gave news of the new (slimzine) *FANTASY* (3 issues), of *NEW WORLDS*, the Liverpool one-shot, *OUTLANDS*, an interview with Chandler, book reviews, mag news and other goodies. It was like manna from heaven even though by Jan 1949, the

price had risen to 1/- (Any coincidence we had just got a Labour Govt.?). This superlative little zine breathed its last with No.18 in 1950..a 40page issue on *Destinatiin Moon*, article on Gernsback, contris by Ackerman, Clarke, and all the usual delights. Gillings had one final fling at the fanzine field when in 1969 he produced three issues of *CSOMOS* with coloured card covers, 20 pages (2/- a go), still printed and as entertaining as ever.

OPERATION FANTAST

9

To my mind, it is a great pity that when the BSFA's VECTOR assumed a similar (but tattier) format, it didn't use any of the Gillings' fanzines as a model for what could be done.

More or less co-existent with FANTASY REVIEW, was Captain K.F. Slater's OPERATION FANTAST. Duplicated for a while, in 1949 it emerged as an offset fanzine A5/16pp/6d a copy. O.F. featured science news, short stories, 'General Chuntering' on SF, book reviews and an item on the 'Shaver Mystery'..which had (via Ray Palmer's editorship) got many gullible State-side fans believing in beings living inside the Earth. Ken gradually built the magazine up into a lightly serious blend of fiction, review, news, criticism and comment, but the usual fate overtook it, despite a few side offshoots in the form of the OPERATION FANTAST HANDBOOK, and after 18 issues, OF was no more. Pity, as it had featured (in mimeo and litho) my very first fanzine contributions in art and writing. I actually drew the cover for OF1 and a later issue printed my very first story, 'Inso;ation'

Good as all these 'little' zines were, it fell to Manly Danister in the USA to produce the first (or nearest) cousin to a professional pulp-style fanzine NEKROMANTIKON. Measuring 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", the 54 page first issue (1950) had a two colour cover and was duplicated on heavy paper. It held 5 stories, two articles, 4 scraps of verse, a newspaper UFO reprint and numerous well produced illustrations...at a total cost of 25¢. Number 2 had 60 pages offering 6 stories plus other items. The third issue had 62 pages and a 4-colour cover. Number 4 slimmed to 50 pages but ran yarns by Lin Carter, Stanton A Coblentz and a verse by Marion Zimmer Bradley. The mammoth, 90 page 5th and final issue gave us Wilson Tucker, Ed Ludwig, Ted Tubb, Alan Hunter, Lilith Lorrained (and myself) among many others. Nekromantikon was a superb achievement and I treasure my file of copies, but, as so often happens..it represented too great a work load and expense to be sustained as a one-man hobby. A wry note, is that whilst Danister was publishing his fanzine at 25¢ a copy, the F&SF Book Co. was selling back issues at 75¢ each!



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It was around this time that Walt Willis was producing the legendary SLANT from the wilds of Belfast. I believe that he was (according to the grapevine) aided no end by Manly Banister, who, when NEKROMANTIKON folded, is reputed to have mailed/consigned his printing press direct to Walt. Be that true or otherwise..Slant was a delight..material by Bob Shaw..who can forget his incomparably hilarious 'How to Convert A Bicycle Into a Duplicator'? No lesser a person than James White was Art Editor..and he brightened the little fanzine with some excellent linocuts and other drawings. Running somewhere alongside SLANT, was Walt's other zine, HYPHEN which, among other things, featured the doings of the Goon Detective Agency as related by John Berry and illustrated so ably by Arthur Thomson (no P). I graduated as an Honorary Member of the GDA by virtue of two article I contributed on the 'gentle Art Of Disguise'. When visiting Antwerp in 1957 (before returning for the first UK Worldcon) I was tickled to see a suburb named 'Antigoon'. Eric Bentcliffe and I had plans for that place...but they never came to fruition.

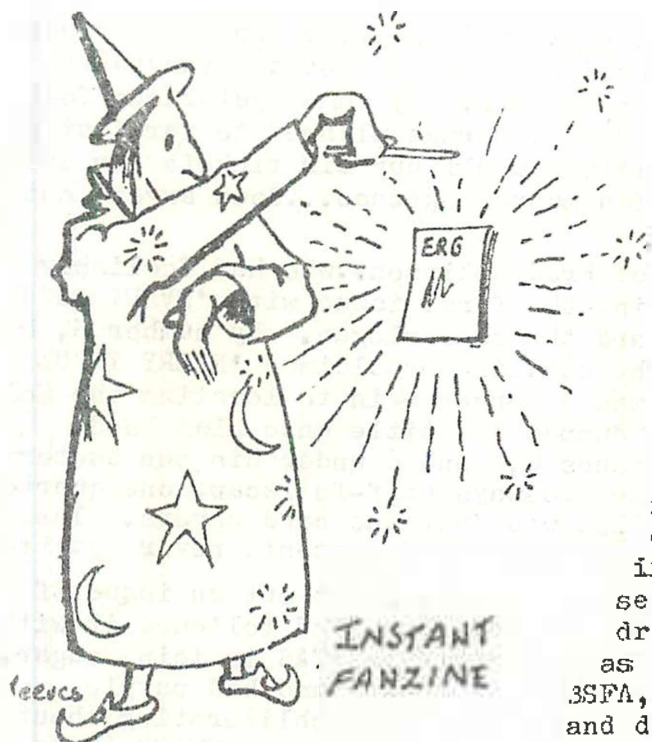
Also in the fifties, Statesider Henry Burwell and a friend pro-dated the Ace Doubles by producing their own back to back fanzines COSMOS and SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST. You read through one, turned the zine over and then read the other one. An excellent way to share postage and allow both zines to retain their own integrity, right down to individual cover art. The catch is that few fans like to write ONE letter of comment...let alone TWO.

In the UK, Cheltenham fans produced their own zine SPACE TIMES under the editorship of Eric Jones. They also had their own clubroom in a basement. It featured a library, bar, and by virtue of Eric knocking a hole through the wall...a cinema projection booth. The operator sat outside on the stairs. One feature was the fannish wall mural...covered by the work of many a contemporary fan artist. Eddie Jones and I were represented by a game of noughts and crosses..I drew Soggies, Eddie used his own little character for crosses.

From the wilds of Manchester, Harry Turner produced (beautifully) his occasional NOW AND THEN..which was the birthground for the inimitable Eric Needham humour and many of the pseudo-advertising jingles for Widdowers Wonderful Whatever's. ..viz

The jet plane that through, the blue sky careens
Was invented by someone called Whittle
He'd have done it much sooner
With the aid of a spoona
WIDDOWERIS WONDERFUL BEANS

By now, fanzines were thick on the ground..and included single-copy items such as Dave Wood's STELLAR and Ken Potter's CENTAURUS..which were typed, hand illoed and circulated like a round robin. Dave Cohen and the Manchester Group got the bug..and inveigled me into duplicating their blue-paper zine ONCE IN A BLUE MOON..which was followed by TWICE IN A BLUE MOON..and then THRICE IN A BLUE MOON. Whereupon it foled..I suspect they just dare't issue FRICE IN....! Its demise left me more time for TRIODE which Eric Bentcliffe and I had started in the mid fifties when I lashed out and bought a Gestetner. We were rather proud of that zine..it featured regular colour work, an occasional photopage, regular use of brush stencils cartoons and one of the first fannish serials THE FUTURE HISTORY OF FANDOM each episode being written by a different author.



It was during the TRIODE years that a Kettering Con saw Ted Tubb railroad the attending fans into forming the BSFA. Eric Dentcliffe and I were honoured (??) by being made joint Secretaries..and as an extra accolade, I was to run off the official magazine after Ted Tubb had, as editor, sent me the material (I also had to type it onto stencil and do all the artwork). At a meeting in Cheltenham, Eric B., Eric Jones and I met to thrash out a name for the forthcoming fanzine. Unable to agree on a name, we put our three ideas into a hat, and Eric J's wife..the sensible, intelligent, inspired woman, drew out my suggestion..VECTOR..which as I had said in my plugging.."Like the BSFA, we hope it will have both magnitude and direction"...well, we can't be right all the time.

Things began to move.. a bundle of material arrived from Ted Tubb..along with his resignation from the editorial chair owing to pressure of work. As a result, I ended up being editor of Vector for its first $3\frac{1}{2}$ years (Any offers for my file copies of those first 4 issues?). Eric B took over the full Secretarial load, and Archie Mercer handled the Treasury. Despite the hassles of producing 4 issues a year each of VECTOR and TRIODE, I also managed to arrange an early BSFA freebie...the GALAXY CHECKLIST. This was compiled by Karl Dollner, typed up by Keith Freeman, and was to have borne an introductory letter I had wangled out of H.L.Gold. At the end of that first hectic year to my successor..the whole shebang typed up and ready for duping...aforesaid shebang was then LOST. It finally surfaced, several years later...without the Gold letter, and with no credits to Dollner, Freeman, or myself. Such is fandom.

London fandom had a go at producing a fanzine..a brainchild called, if memory serves, 'I' This did nothing memorable for a while but finally came up with a colossal 200 page issue! This was indexed by colour, each section using a different tint of paper. The effort involved in producing the monster caused I to sink without a trace. From somewhere in the middle East appeared a new fannish name..and fanzine. JOAN CARR became the nearest thing to a women's libber in fandom...stationed as she was, so far from most other fen, her only actual contact being with another fan, H.P. Sanderson, an Army sergeant at the same station. It turned out to be a very close contact..after several male fen had begun to initiate a hotting up correspondence with Joan, it was revealed that it was all a hoax..and 'she' was Sanderson all the time. Other fem fen (Ethel Lindsay, Frances Evans etc) started up FEMIZINE. A. Viné Clarke put out his informative SF NEWS and Ron Bennett's SKYRACK kept us au fait with all sorts of things..as well as the doings of Ron's mythical elephant, 'Cecil' In my files, I have a photo of Ron actually feeding the beast..you can see the trunk at least.

One strange affair of this era was a scheme devised by Norman G. Wansborough...who listed his occupation as a mind-boggling 'Bread-letterer' on his BAFA application form. He proposed a scheme to get any fan to the USA if he would agree to buy only £10 of SF mags. By some mysterious form of alchemy, known only to letterers of bread, Norman planned to farm out these magazines to all and sundry..and the profits would buy air tickets for every contributing fan. Clearly the plan of a master ngtcase...does anyone out there have any further details to add?

Alan Dodd took over CAMBER from Fred Robinson..who had foolishly begun his fanpubbing career by headlining the first issue with 'EVERY ISSUE BIGGER'. Number 2 had six more pages and the same slogan. By number 3, he had seen the red light and this time the headline proclaimed 'EVERY ISSUE BETTER'....then he realised that this was a target akin to locating the Holy Grail or the Fountain Of Youth..and so dumped the title onto Alan Dodd. Alan dropped the slogan..and put out issues 4,5 and 6 under his own esoteric scheme...each issue was different. Once sideways half-foolscap, one quarto and another somewhere in between..and that was just the card covers. Inside, he used a different size of paper so that covers and contents never matched! Oh the queer things fan do.

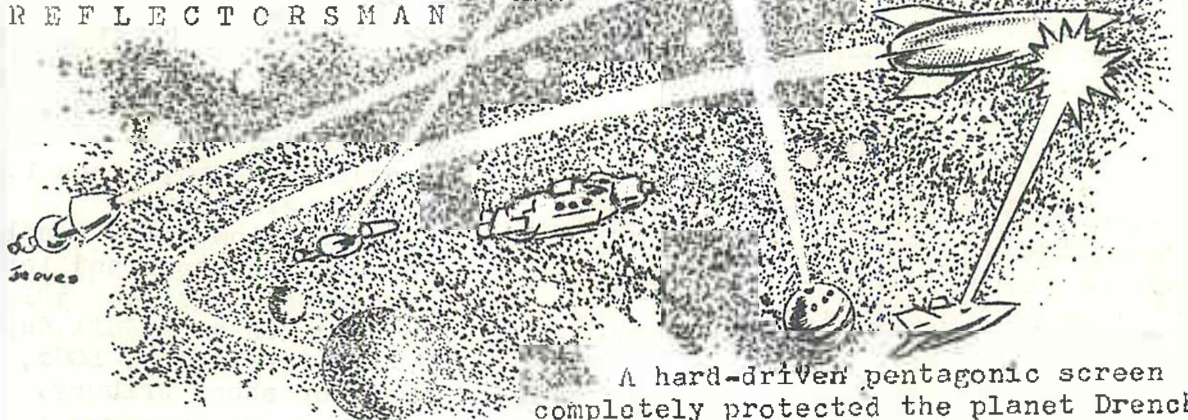
John Roles of Liverpool put out an issue of MORPH using home made ink which took six YEARS to dry..and followed it with an EDIBLE Christmas card..duped on rice paper and with X'MAS in icing sugar. Eric Dentcliffe produced a Magazine Checklist in hekto (and had purple fingers for months after..my copy still has a huge blob obliterating about six magazines. Walt Willis (+ Mercer & Clarke) worked on the MWOC (More Writing On Christmas Cards) plan..with cards carrying a fannish story..and the recipient's name included in a suitable space.

In 1959 I joined the Off Trail Magazine Publisher's Association and for the April '59 mailing I produced the first issue of ERG. I chose the title for two reasons..(i) an ERG is a small amount of work..and that is what I meant it to be. (ii) ERG is a title easily drawn onto stencil, even with a ruler if I use the alphabet I designed specially for that purpose. I am exceedingly grateful that I didn't select some such title as URATRONIC DIGEST AND SCIENCE FICTION-FANTASY QUARTERLY..such titles play hob with a logo and the artistic layout of a cover illo. It is now 26 years since that first issue. There were times when it faltered a bit..such as when I was so crippled by asthma (which descended on me out of the blue in 1961) that ERG only appeared by virtue of Brian Jordan cranking the duper for me.

It doesn't seem like twenty-six years...the time has simply flashed by...but then, it always does when you're having fun.



LAST STAGE REFLECTORS MAN



A hard-driven pentagonic screen completely protected the planet Drench III; that screen, powered as it was by disintegrating xenon atoms and calculated by no lesser brains than those of the Pueruns, had heretofore stopped every beam, bar or hexagon of energy that the Macromic Fleet had been able to bring to bear upon it. But now, Reflectorsman Nikkinson was hurtling towards it, away from Puer, at the high to inconceivable planetary velocity of his non-cuprous speedster.

He had to penetrate that screen and get back to Terra if the Macromic Fleet was to prevail against the terrible weapon even then being forged by the Pueruns. Even now, when scant lightsecs separated him from its deadly energies, he was busily computing his striking angle and cancel-beam energies in order to break through that hellish veil. Seconds later, he flipped over a switch, and from the nose of his speedster there flashed a beam no less powerful than those of the Puerun fort itself. There was a blinding flash as the two forces met, the very fabric of space was torn for an infinitesimal microsecond, then he was through! Even as he went loose and his ship accelerated to interstellar-eating speeds, the screen behind him vanished as the Puerun fleet rose in pursuit.

The Pueruns gained in spite of everything he could do. In the omniplate their stubby hulls grew larger and larger, until at last, out flashed a tugger beam and his tiny vessel made the instantaneous stop peculiar to loose vessels. Within seconds, he was englobed and they were beaming him with their primes. Nor was Reflectorsman Nikkinson idle; well was it for the Puerun Captains that day, that their screens were xenon-driven, for Nikkinson fought....fought while his outer screen glowed pink...fought while they passed from visible light down to infra-red...fought while they dropped even lower...still he fought when they dropped right down to D.C.! And even while he fought, he was frantically reflecting a thought to Port Pilot Aynes. But no thought could get through that madly driven thoughtference generated by the Pueruns and which filled space for daysecs around. Now his outer screens were gone and they were working on his inners; they too fell and his wallshield was the only protection between him and the ravening forces of their beams.

Nikkinson laughed; that wall shield was driven, not by xenon, but by the newly discovered power of krypton atoms and nothing then computable could disrupt it. Hexagons, rhomboids, parallelopipeds and even triangles of force were tried by the Pueruns, but all in vain. Then the Puerun Commander tried his last weapon, the Decacone Of Force. He knew it could no be deflected, knew it was invincible. With a cold thought he ordered his gun-

Continued on page 15

FANORAMA

For newcomers to ERGLand, this is where I natter about various odds and ends..such as fanzines, mags or the state of my ulcer. First off the pile is...

SOMEWHERE BEFORE No.2 18.A4.pp from Ian Bambro, 14 Eskdale Tce., Jesmond, Newcastle On Tyne.

A lighthearted affair on Ian's personal thoughts, a con rep, a nifty glossary of fanalang, tomatoes, fondlers of banister tops and letter excerpts. Just the thing to brighten up a dull day. Get it for stamps, LOCs, trade or sheer bribery.

WEBER WOMAN'S WREVENGE is beautifully produced, A4 size and runs to 18 pages on the joys of rape, molestation, how men put on women and much entertaining news about Pre Menstrual Tension. If you're into Women's Lib and the all men are sex maniacs-cum-rotten-bastards, this will thrill you to the core. From Jean Weber, PO.Box 42, Lyneham, ACT 2602 AUSTRALIA. PS, You also get a bit about Jeremy the sheep..best item in the issue.

REAL TIME has 20, Qto pp from Eric Lindsay (address, as for Jean Weber)(H'm, seems there is one man who isn't a louse) and is devoted to Eric's doings with, in, about or even under (and in the vicinity of)...computers. If you like 'em, this is fascinating stuff..but if not, you'll be bored silly. There is also a brief, Book Review section and you get it for the usual.

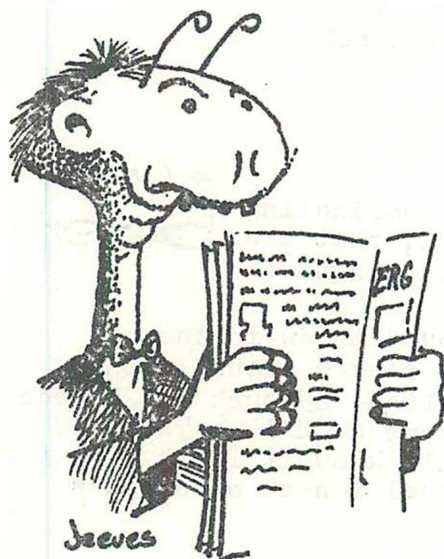
RATAPLAN 28, 42, A4pp mimeo (on blue paper) from Leigh Edmonds, PO Box 433, Civic Square, ACT 2608, AUSTRALIA supports my belief that all (all?, well nearly all) Aussies fanzines are SERIOUS. A brief con item, a length book review, comments on Uranium/politics, then some personal notes, a very good piece on writing fiction, comment on fanzines (Aussie ones only..this is discrimination against us UKers who send Leigh our fanzines..Leigh, you will be listed, and come the revolution....). Lots of letters, a Wedding Report (!) and book reviews round out the issue. Get it for all the usual faunchings, especially if you like the more serious vein in fannags..and can manage to read black print on blue paper without undue eyestrain.

GROGGY 22 18pp, ditto, from Eric & Kathy Mayer, 1771 Ridge Rd E. Rochester, NY 14622, USA. Showing that ditto CAN produce clear, legible copies, and boasting a multicolour cover, this is a CHEERFUL fanzine..with a little personal matter, a SUPERB nostalgia item on Eric's adventures with a Tinkertoy set and a short but good, lettercol. There's also a very off-putting (to me) metaphysical item by Mae Strelkov which I could not understand four ways from centre, and the results of the Groggy Poll. A really friendly offering for LOC, trade or contrib. Faunch for your first one and hang in there by LOCing...it's worth it.

LAN'S LANTERN 13 is 46pp, A4, mim.

and comes from George 'Lan' Lankowski, 652 Cranbrook Rd. No.3 (or 4 as on the mailing envelope), Bloomfield Hills, MI 48103, USA. Lan on Education, Stanley Schmidt's Con Speech, Lan again giving an excellent crit of the Hugo Award items, a nice short story, art folio, interview with Katherine Kurtz, Conreps, speeches and letters. LOC, trade contrib or cash. Nice, light-hearted but basically serious without overdoing it.

A 'flier' from METHUSELAH PRESS (and using the Trimble's address) gives the sad news that they have resigned from the editing of the Hubbard magazine, TO THE STARS. A great pity, as that devoted pair have made the magazine into a collector's item in the short time it has been appearing. Good luck to the Trimbles..and to the continuing magazine. Terry Carr is to become Fiction Editor, and Bill Rotsler the Art Director...and expansion plans are under way...hence the delay in subs.



I can't recall whether or not I mentioned BOOK AND MAGAZINE COLLECTOR before..so in case I didn't...no shelf-filler should be without it. Published montly at 90p, in addition to hordes of buyers offering their wants..and sellers their wares, Now get articles on all sorts of special areas... The October issue had Mike Ashley on

British SF magazines, March covered James Bond, and July included 'Pulp Magazines'.. in June we had 'Marvel Comics'...don't fret, they have a back issue service..so try it out.

A warning..only the bigger newsagent (Smiths etc) seem to carry this digest-sized magazine..but it's worth seeking out..I flogged a stack of 'William' books to an advertiser for \$26...who knows what you may have to sell?

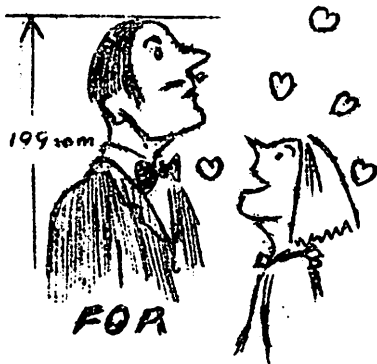
LAST STAGE REFLECTORMAN Conclusion

layers to prepare the Decacone. Then it was fired. The Puerun Commander thought that nothing could withstand that awful blast.

He was right.

(Last of the Last Stage Reflectorsman)

MEASURE



Logical as the metric system may be.. after all, it IS based on the scientific division of an incorrect estimate of the world's circumference.. I hate to see those advertisements offering..

"AN EXCITING, BIG, 75mm THINGUMMY"...when that 75mm boils down to a measly three inches. Even more do I detest seeing a length given as 276543mm long, when 907ft 3inches would mean more to my noggin sor firmly buried in the past.

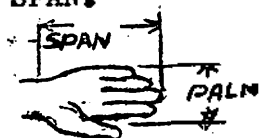
Can you remember the good old days when rulers had inches on them instead of fiddly little millimetres? The back of every exercise book was filled with loads of informative tables such as...

12 inches	= 1 foot
3 feet	= 1 yard (or ell)
5½ yards	= 1 rod, pole or perch
22 yards	= 1 chain
10 chains	= 1 furlong
8 furlongs	= 1 mile
3 miles	= 1 league

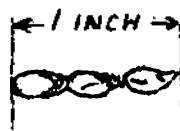
MEASURE

by Terry Jeeves

Informative, but what was usually omitted was the fascinating information that 3 barleycorns stretched for 1 INCH, that the width of a man's hand (about 3") was a PALM and its length a SPAN.



To get really complicated we could throw in the invaluable fact that surveyor's played around with CHAINS... 7.92" constituted a LINK, 25 such LINKS made a ROD and 100 of the things became a CHAIN. Those of you who have seen the gadget will know it looks like the



prototype for one of those metal puzzles. The actual length of a man's foot was often used as a foot measure, and to get round the obvious fact that though all men are horn equal..some don't stay that way..the practice was to ~~measure~~ a dozen of 'em as they left church (thus ensuring God would smile on the operation), line them up heel-to-toe and use the distance to mark off a 12 foot pole.. very useful for not touching people with.



Other measurements had equally unusual derivations..those three barleycorns had to be taken from the centre of the ear to ensure a proper INCH. When the Egyptians were mucking about building Pyramids they used

the distance from elbow to fingertip to establish their CUBIT.

Nearer home, King Henry IV set out to rationalise the higgledy-piggledy measurements. He decreed



that a YARD was to be the distance from his nose to the finger tips of his outstretched arm. History does not record whether or not he made himself available to local shopkeepers as a measuring stick. Nevertheless, arguments still arose when drapers used their own bodies to measure cloth. To settle this, the material was placed alongside two brass studs set into the counter a yard apart. This led to the familiar phrase, "Let's Get Down To Brass Tacks"...and gave ASF/Analog its lettercolumn title.



The height of a man standing up straight defined the FATHOM, and a FURLONG was a group of land strips used in early agriculture. Surprisingly, a MILE was originally a Roman measure of 1000 paces or 1620 yards, but if you really want to get technical, how about the Admiralty measure of 1/60th of a degree...which is taken to be 2026 yards. Incidentally, that CHAIN the surveyor's use happens to be 792 inches long...which must be very handy to know when measuring up the back garden for a load of manure.

Not that length has a monopoly on the weird and wonderful. We have such oddities as 16 drams making an ounce and other useful units such as scruples, grains and drachms. You need a bit of care there...it takes only eight of the drachms to make up an ounce as against sixteen of the drams. Motto to Scotsmen...you'll get MORE if you ask for a wee drachm instead of a wee dram! Higher up the scale come STONES, QUARTERS and even a 100lb CENTAL...to make things complicated, the HUNDREDWEIGHT naturally enough has 112 pounds.

Capacity or volume is not immune from all this happy invention. You can buy your booze (or petrol) in gills (which seem to vary in size according to where you live), quarts, fluid ounces, fluid drachms, or MINIMS. For variety, you can also use PECKS, GALLONS and BUSHELS. That gallon by the way is defined as the volume taken up by 10lbs of distilled water...and if you happen to have 36 BUSHELS of anything kicking around, you can term it a CHALDRON instead.

Land measurement has its ACRES and ROODS (of 4840 and 1210 square yards respectively)...and even time is not immune to all this mucking about. Chopping a day into 24 hours may have been an arbitrary exercise, but when the hours were subdivided into sixtieths...the minute periods so gained were logically called MINUTES...and after another division by 60 and a reduction to a second order of smallness...what else could they be called than SECONDS?

All this is fascinating stuff, but what USE is it? To steal a phrase from Paul Daniels, the obvious answer might seem... 'not a lot'...but look at it this way, instead of something measuring 6453mm long, weighing 4.56 Kg and taking up 2.3 litres of space, you have only to hunt through the good old Imperial Measurement to be sure of finding SOMETHING handier. Take this issue of ERG for instance...Metrically, it is 203mm wide, 253mm long, weighs about 87 gms and occupies 154077 cu,mm of space. Imperially it is almost exactly ONE LINK wide, has a length exactly equal to the width of a Crown Folio sheet of paper, weighs 100 scruples and takes up a volume of 1 cubic inch.

Now what could be simpler than that?

((Wherein some of the readers have some of their say. ERGitorial interpolations being tastefully enclosed within these pretty triple parentheses))



MIKE ASHLEY, Many thanks for ERG 88; as
4 Thistlebank, usual an entertaining and
Walderslade informative read. Reading
Chatham, 'Man Of Copper' reminds me
KENT MES 8AD of one episode of KNIGHT-
RIDER it was my misfortune to see. Your
tale is a goodly chortle, but KNIGHTRIDER
pushed the spoofiness beyond the point of
ridiculousness and made it annoying. A
super car is one thing, but when a chap can jump out of a multistorey
building without looking and the car can be in just the right position to
catch him, then we're getting into the realms of stupidity. I must be
getting touchy in my old age, as a kid, I'm sure I'd have lapped up KR. I'm
all for a good spoof, as in your yarn, but stupid programmes like KR must be
doing more harm than good I fear. ((To the cause of SF certainly...but with
very few exceptions that is all one can expect on ITV. Just look through
their regular nightly rubbish..makes one cringe. Enema Farm, Constipation
Street, Ted Rogers, Bruce Faceache, etc, etc..on and on. Let's face it,
Channel 3 caters 95% for mpronon masses))) Nitpicking time. You mention a
magazine MARVELS OF THE SPACEWAYS, NO such title Mr Jeeves..WONDERS OF THE
SPACEWAYS which you list, did exist. ((Sorry, the memory bank isn't infallible,
but it was a good title wasn't it? I'd better copyright it))) Incidentally,
I'm interested in a lot of these boys and children's magazines you mention
in your nostalgic ramblings in connection with my research into Algernon
Blackwood. He wrote a lot of stories for children during the 1920s and 30s
and most of it I believe turned up in children's annuals **IT MAY BE THAT
SOME OF YOUR READERS have such old annuals knocking around, so I'd be
interested in hearing from ANYONE WHO CAN AID ME IN TRACKING DOWN FURTHER
BLACKWOOD TITLES. ((Hope those capitals draw attention to your plea, Mike))
I have some hesitation in writing to Sheffield after seeing 'THREADS'. I
suspect you saw it ((No WAY))) I'm glad the BBC did broadcast a programme as
bold as that to demonstrate the full horror of nuclear war. (O I avoided it
because I get no kicks out of seeing people killed horribly...and why 'the
horrors of nuclear war'? Napalm, incendiary and plain HE all kill people.
The real enemy is not nuclear..but WAR. Now if we could all organise the
common sense to outlaw THAT! As for horrors..I saw enough in blitzes etc in
WW2 to confirm that belief)))

IT'S LAKE

115 Markhouse Ave Many thanks for your staunch defence of the Prime Minister
LONDON E17 8AY and our Way Of Life. In just over 18 years:- the miner's
REAL TERMS pay has risen 82%, schoolmaster's only 3% and
GP (Doctors) have fallen by 3% and that big mouth Scargyle has the chutzpah
to complain. A few more interesting details are these ACTUAL price rises for
that period:- petrol..540% cigarettes..430% post..550% rail fares..780%
house price..660% TV licence..820% and food for the average family is up
370% since 1966. Now compare those (apparently frightening) increases with
the following identically created figures for average wages..manual workers
up 720% What it boils down to is this.. (a) For those in work or getting the
full State benefits, INCOME is up over 720% but COSTS are up only 480%
(b) 1½ times as many people have telephones in the home, twice as many have

refrigerators, twice as many have bank accounts and 18 million have Access or Visa credit cards. The thing that frightens me is that so many yobbos will take this as proof that Trade Unions are good for the country because they get people rises in excess of the cost of living..whereas the figures actually prove is that WITHOUT unions, this country could have one of the world's most efficient, cost-conscious, profitable, profit-making for-you-and-me industrial/economic systems in the world. (((Too true, cobber..and as for that codswallop of miner's fighting for jobs (and hang those of everyone else who has to close down)..I'd have loved a redundancy payment of £32,000 when I finished teaching. As for being moved at work..TWICE, I was at schools which closed..and TWICE I was moved elsewhere without redress or any form of reimbursement.)))

PAMELA BOAL
Westfield Way
Wantage
OXON OX12 7EW

I don't agree with your replies to Ian Covell. Have you really had to look at all the doles, allowances, grants, supplements etc. (((Don't you like em?))) Have you tried to raise two children on a total income of £37 because your husband has walked out and left you? (((No, I never had a husband..but when I started teaching, I had to support a family on £29 A MONTH in the fifties, and I didn't walk out))) Have you been caught in the trap of can't get a job because you haven't an address, and can't rent a room because you have no employment? (((No, and not many others have either. Few employers would demand you had an address (where did you live..in a box?)..and after all, landlords need to know their tenants are going to pay..they have to live too. Come off it, Pam. We can all cite distress stories and anomalies in any system. The restrictions on pay-outs, entitlements etc are necessary, NOT because of awkward governments, but because of the yobbos who will do their level best to abuse any sign of an 'easy touch'..viz all those with near perfect teeth and sight who rushed for 'free' National Health specs and teeth...or those who regularly took their 'sick leave' even when well, simply to draw the extra benefit.)))

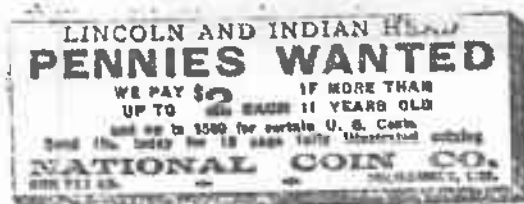
John Milner
25 Viewforth
Edinburgh 10

ERG 88 succeeded in cheering me up a bit. I like Eddie Dean's cover, parts of it are almost abstract. It's a pity it isn't a solid black, but photo-lith or silkscreen would be very expensive. 'LIFELONG AMBITION' on immortality in SF..this is the sort of article I like to read in a fanzine. This is very revolutionary, actually mentioning SF. A fellow Edinburgh fan says that to do a fanzine, you write about "anything but SF". I don't agree with this. (((Neither do I...I write about anything which interests me...and try to make it as interesting for others..be it SF or not))).

'RECENT READING'..six pages of reviews. It's good that ERG has this regular column, I wish more fanzines would do this..the books considered might put me on to something I wouldn't otherwise know of. (((And that is the whole point of Recent Reading...to tell readers what is available..and let them make up their own minds about the quality etc.)))



I like the little ads you've inserted at the bottom of some pages. Keep including them. (((Your wish is my command...if you have any Lincoln Head pennies, the one at the left may make you a MILLIONAIRE!)))



IAN BAMBERO
14 Eskdale Terrace
Jesmond
Newcastle on Tyne

"I thought the best bit was 'The Man Of Copper'. Just one tiny quibble; the reference to pop records struck me as anachronistic. If Sock Davidge is the man I take him for, he'd have trained prior to about 1950 ((1935 to 1942 roughly))) on Tin Pan Alley waxings. ((Oh we had pop records then.. from bands such as Cab Calloway's plus Woody Herman, Paul Whiteman, Kay Kayser (whom I had the pleasure of ferrying around a couple of years back) and even that ghastly gut-scraper, Stephan Grappeli))) Apart from that, it's an inspired send-up of a type of writing that I well recognise from the few early pulps that I've read and even more from the long tradition of omni-competent super-heroes. It's interesting that they were always superlatively skilled and masters of disguise, crack shots, expert linguists, pilots and knife throwers, not to mention being handy with their dukes at all times. They frequently had a secret pocket in their underpants or some such place, containing a combination Swiss Army knife, geiger counter, folding helicopter or midget submarine - every boy's dream of the ultimate gadget.... Would a sinister Chinese hair-dresser be a member of a Curling Tong ?..Some Scottish blood perhaps? ((What a hair-raising thought))) A shame the special powder is not available to detective agencies..it would be a boon, but perhaps the recipe is lost! ((Are you making the ticky out of my grypotaphical eras perhaps?)))

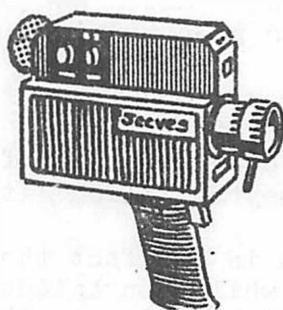
EDWARD P. HUGHES
10 Kenmore Rd
Whitefield
Manchester M25 6ER

ERG 88 Excellent cover. Nice balance. Only complaint Eddy could have been lighter with his stipple in places and heavier in others. ((He was, but my duper wasn't. It hates solid blacks and by a secret process known only to Members of the Row-Knee-Oh, it converts them into stipples))) He can certainly draw, the right hand figure is beautifully done, the left hand one, I assume, is some kind of robot (has to be with a pelvis like that!) I give it 100%. I hope your next cover is as good. ((It ought to be..it's by some bloke called Hughes if you've ever heard of him))) 'Man Of Copper'...Part 2 was even better than Part.1 Could you not prevail on the author to do you a sequel? ((Cor, right glutton for punishment aren't you?))) If they can keep digging up Conan..! ((Been buried, has he? Well, I could always re-hash KORNAN THE BOLD from ERG.1 Anyone care to vote yea or nay on the idea?))) Your comments in PANORAMA and book reviews generally are in marked contrast to your private correspondence. How I loved that sentence...'dream-mist-song-dust-star-fire and/or dragondrek cum sword, spell and sorcery in bucolic kingdoms' Don't it sume it up! I suppose you wouldn't dare put a crit like that in ERG. ((No, in Recent Reading I try to tell people what's available and then let 'em make up their own minds. If they like vapourings about dragons,snakes, sword-toters in space ships and all the current fantasy gobbledygook..that's their look out, and after aiming 'em towards it, I leave 'em to their fate))) I would like to be charitable to other authors, but ain't it all bloody nonsense? ((Only too, too true, cobber. Someone,somewhere is killing (has killed?) SF stone dead. Even Analog has caught the 'go out with a whimper, not a bang' idiocy.)))



SPECIAL CAMERA TEST REPORT

The B L U G P-21



The Blug P-21 marks the zenith of camera making and the culmination of over 900 years in the trade. A Blug 14B was used to record the landing of Columbus in the U.S.A. although the resultant film was lost before a processing station could be built. This new model shows the typical excellence we have come to associate with this famous Slobbovakian factory.

The P-21 has everything one could ask for in a camera. Four film gauges (Trad 8, Super 8, 9.5 and 16mm) plus Beta and VHS video systems, each of which can be obtained at the flick of a switch. In the Trad 8 position this brings in a film-slitter to part the film on its second run, and exposed film is routed into a processing tank hidden within the pistol-grip and from thence, to the relevant type of projection spool..(Editing and splicing in-camera facilities are also available). Ample power for running 243 reels of film or 76 video cassettes is obtained from a bank of six lead-acid accumulators conveniently mounted on a small trolley linked to the camera by a towing chain and a length of cable. Jumps leads for cold weather starting are an optional extra.

Running speed is continuously variable from zero frames per second (for taking still photographs) right up to a stunning 1000 fps suitable for freezing a speeding bullet in flight. This is handled by a fully synchro-mesh gearbox with five forward and three reverse speeds.

A three-element warning device informs the operator when film or tape is nearing its end...(i) A warning bell rings within 6 feet of the end

(ii) A Klaxon cuts in at 4 feet

(iii) As the end of the film snakes through the gate, a small powder charge is ignited to give a flash in the viewfinder and also driven a sand-filled plunger firmly against the operator's forehead. The 10 to 1000mm zoom lens can focus down to -50m, at which setting, it is useful for filming things behind the camera. The through-the-lens viewing is achieved by a tube inserted through a series of small holes drilled through each element..and this tube may be removed and employed as a drinking straw if so desired. Exposure is controlled by the unapproachable H₂S system which no other manufacturer has been able to touch. One only needs to adjust three pointers, two knobs and a built-in sundial to ensure correct exposure to within three f stops on a diaphragm which goes from f.1.414 to f.256, a range hitherto only obtainable in the laboratory.

The gate is fully relieved, book form and with sprung edge guides in all directions. 16lb pressures are used, so there is no danger of film shake whilst the built-in vacuum cleaner keeps every shred of dust out of the way. A new innovation in the Blug range is the use of a 6 tooth claw on the transport mechanism (3 above and 3 below the gate..thus ensuring a perfect match with any style of projector. This, coupled with a superb Maltose Cross mechanism, a 5hp take-up motor and a top-mounted spirit level make certain of a smooth film transport and no tilted horizons.

Other innovations on this truly 20th Century camera are the facilities for backwind, sidewind, chassis and quickstep. Its retractable wind-gauge-cum-drift-sight proves invaluable for working in typhoons. The $\frac{1}{4}$ " boiler plate casing will allow underwater operations down to a depth of 5 miles and for working in artificial light, a built-in candle holder has been provided for use in case of power cuts.

Bad weather filming is catered for by the three-speed lens wiper coupled with the screen heating elements inside the glass of the lens. A two-speed fan heater keeps the camera warm under arctic conditions and for the occasional heat wave, there is a compartment which may be filled with ice.

Our only criticism of this superlative camera is the fact that its weight (of $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons) may prove a trifle inconvenient whilst on holiday. The makers were approached on this point, and we are delighted to say that they have agreed to market an auxiliary optish...The Bug 'Tractomatic' power operated trolley-tripod so that you can take the camera wherever you go.

Price for the Bug p-21 is a mere £2100.37 for the Standard Model. The de Luxe edition bound in pink Morocco and with its own tooth-brush holder costs a little more at £2100.43. We recommend you to buy both.

~~~~~T.J.~~~~~

BACK ISSUES etc. A sort-out has located various items :-

ERG 66..the 20th annish...80p    ERG 70..21st annish...80p    ERG 76....60p  
 ERG 80..60p    ERG 82..24th Annish..80p    ERG 83...60p    ERG 85....60p  
 ERG 86... TWENTY-FIFTH annish... a unique item...£1.00    ERG 87....60p  
 ERG 88... 50p

ERG IN THE USA...Combined trip reports for 1980 & 1982.....£1.00

A CHECKLIST OF ASTOUNDING..Part.3 1950-1959    52pp Qto. Mimeo....£1.00

BUNDLES..to clear.. No.1 Microwave.3    ENIGMA 2&3 (Aussie fmz) and MAD

SCIENTIST'S DIGEST.6    £1.20

No.2 HOLIER THAN THOU.15    MICROWAVE.15    CATANARY TALES.1    DRILKJIS.6

PANELOLOGIST.6    MAYA.14    £1.60

No.3 WALDO, MRU 139 (German Fmz), MATRIX.35    SPACE HABITAT.2    QUARTZ3    £1.50

No.4 CON PROGRAMME BOOKS.. Eastefcon.77    NOREASCON TWO..reports 1, 2 & 3    £1.60

Prices include postage..which is why they're not all that cheap..but you can have Bundles 1,2,3 & 4 for £5 inclusive.

ASTOUNDING..April 1954 (shabby cover)    Oct.54    Nov.54    All spines taped    £1ea

POPULAR MECHANICS/ SCIENCE etc. runs and isolated copies between 1972-84    £1.20 each. These weigh a heckuva lot to post..but I'll dicker for a bulk buy...send your list of what you want...or S.A.E. for complete lists of Mags, books, fanstuff, paperbacks etc.

ALL above prices include postage..no hidden extras.. SEND NO CASH until you get your order...thus saving me messing with refunds if an item has gone.

Also kicking around somewhere when I can locate 'em...some issues of TRIODE..and possibly BLAZON. Anyone interested?

All cash will go to a good cause....supporting ERG for another 26 years.

Terry Jeeves

# RECENT

## READING



This issue, we open with a couple of role-game playing books. Volumes 1 & 2 of.. Sagas of the DEMONSPAWN

J.H.Brennan Fontana, \$1.50 ea.

No.1 first describes in detail the use of dice to set up the attributes of your super hero, Fire\*Wolf, then a brief scene-setting tells how the Demonspawn are about to descend on the realm of Voltan The Magnificent.

Your adventure starts as Fire\*Wolf, outcast by his tribe meets adventure and/or crisis point. At such times, facing slavers, monsters,

warriors etc., the outcome is decided by choice, dice or your attributes. In theory, each game will give you a slightly differing adventure, but in practice, I found most of these terminated at the same point 13 where your hero 'dies'. Persistence led me to Point 37...at which point an infinite recursion prevented access to the rest of the adventure..I suspect a misprint at Point 37, where 'goto 38' should have read 'goto 39'. Vol.2 repeats the instructions and you're into another adventure..this time with Fire\*Wolf's powers heightened by sorcery. If you're an addicted role-gamer and lack partners, then here's how to enjoy your hobby on your own. For a bonus, the stories are enhanced by some excellent illustrations.

### THE ZEN GUN

The Empire is becoming decadent, tributes are denied Barrington J. Bayley and Admiral Archier must use the fleet to put down rebellion. Biological constructs are under-citizens, Methuen \$1.95 then chimpanzee-man Pout acquires the ultimate weapon, misuse of which opens a space rift allowing an alien life form through. Elsewhere, a space pirate takes over a derelict and hopes to rule the Empire. Pigs also make a take-over bid as Bayley gives us space opera on the grand scale. He throws off ideas like sparks from an anvil..plus mutated animals a la Cordwainer Smith, moving cities as in Priest's 'Inverted World' and even a reference to a 'Vargo Gridban'. A pleasant enough yarn, but the characters seem lifeless and the whole action rather remote from reality.

### THE 25th PAN BOOK OF HORROR STORIES

Ed. Herbert Van Thal  
Pan \$1.50

Readers familiar with this excellent series will need no further information than the fact that a new issue is available. Newcomers need to know that you get 14 stories of horror, suspense and outright nastiness for your money. I'd better not say too much as to the quality because this 25th. volume also contains my own short story, 'Upon Reflection' ..which of course I think is the bees knees. However, in addition to the odd vampire or two, you also get sadistic killings, rape, vengeance and one or two unusual offspring. If you go for this type of yarn, at less than 11p a story, how can you miss out?

### EYE OF CAT

Roger Zelazny Sphere £1.95 Billy Singer, Indian and expert hunter/trapper is called in to intercept a shape-changing alien bent on (an improbable) murder mission. To aid him, he bargains with another shape-changer, Cat, an intelligent creature he has earlier caught for a Zoo. Cat agrees only on condition he can then carry on to get his revenge on Billy by hunting him! The two missions are on ..first to stop the assassin..then Cat v Billy...with Billy having a seeming edge in his access to the matter-transmission network. Scene-setting (Indian lore) and other asides tend to slow the pace of an otherwise excellent 'hunt' yarn which I felt would have been far better at a shorter length.

### FEVRE DREAM

George R.R. Martin Sphere £2.25

The strange Joshua York takes Steamboat Captain Abner Marsh into partnership and builds him 'Fevre Dream', biggest and best boat on the river. Her voyages begin and Marsh is perturbed by the nocturnal activities of York and his friends.. as well as by sundry atrocities along their routes. He investigates, faces York and a strange alliance is formed. Then in steps 'Bloodmaster' Damion Julian with his ghastly crew to confront the Fevre Dream's passengers. To say more, would ruin a terrific yarn which ought to scoop many Awards. Not only does Martin admirably capture the riverboat atmosphere, the slave society and the period, but in Captain Abner Marsh he has a living, breathing character which grows in breadth and stature as the tale progresses. As did Bram Stoker with 'Dracula', so has Martin successfully blended reality with legend before adding that touch of difference which makes the tale into a masterpiece. Definitely a winner!

### The Aurum Film Encyclopedia (2): SCIENCE FICTION

Edited by Phil Hardy Aurum Press £17.95

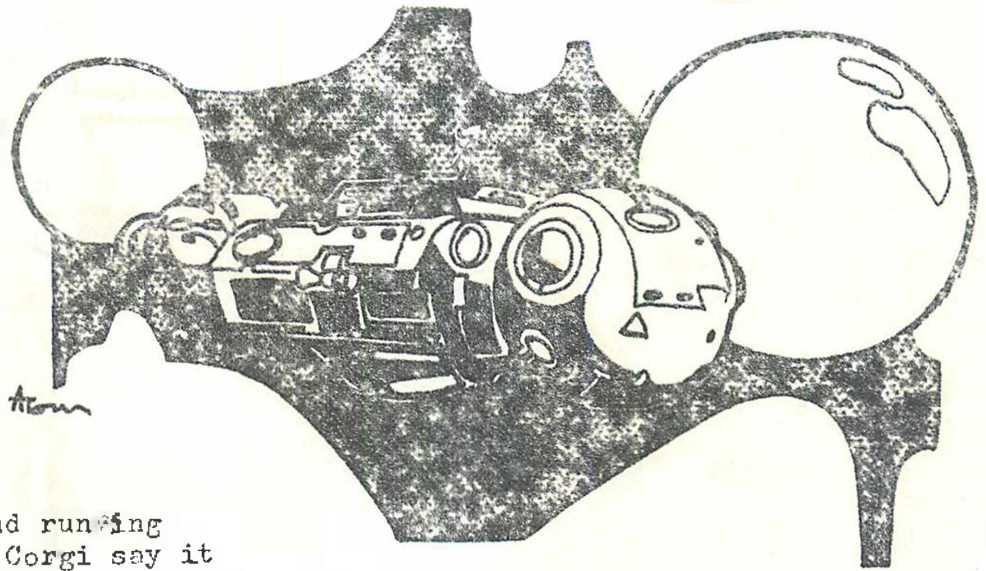
No less than 400 large, (24x30cm), slick-paper pages and over 450 photos (including a 14 page colour section)...all on SF Films! A brief essay on 'The SF Film In Perspective' and you're into the reference section which is arranged chronologically in yearly sections - very handy if you're trying to locate a partly remembered film. Alphabetical order rules within each year section with each film having a brief synopsis plus details of Company, running time, Director, Stars etc. There are six appendices listing:- 1. All-Time Rental Champs (Gross Takings) 2. Most Successful Films (Takings adjusted for inflation) 3. Various critics list their 'Top Ten' 4. SF Oscar Winners 5. Trieste Festival Award Winners. 6. Bibliography. Finally, an excellent Index lists films by date, thus sending you straight to ALL the details without, as is common in other works, having to wade through numerous pointless references. Not a cheap book, but highly recommended to all SF Film buffs strong enough to lift its 4½ lbs weight. Omissions?..well, surprisingly..no KING KONG, SON OF KONG, or WHITE PONGO are listed but on the other hand..you get a carload of films I've never seen mentioned elsewhere. Get your copy while stocks last.





THE  
DUNE  
ENCYCLOPEDIA

Compiled by  
Dr. Willis E.  
McNelly  
Corgi \$5.95



Not a cheap,  
week-end read,  
but physically huge,  
23 x 15 x 3.5 cms and running  
to over 500 pages. Corgi say it  
was eight years in the making and  
I can well believe it. This is NO"

a 'Concordance' listing and laying out for  
inspection all the stories, places and characters of the Dune Sagas. It is  
virtually a work of documentary fiction in its own right. Alphabetical  
entries elaborate on and explain various background facets which are only  
touched upon in the stories:- 'Stillsuits', gives a detailed explanation  
of their operation, 'Contraception', explains the Arrakis methods in detail,  
the 'Water Customs' are here, Houses & Insignia, family trees, organisation  
charts, event chronology, the Dune Tarot and even a lengthy (and totally  
fictitious) 'Bibliography'. Sadly, you cannot use it as a reference to  
check up on stories or characters for argument settling. Plenty of artwork  
(by Howarth & Walters), plus charts and diagrams. I would like to have  
seen a 'publishing history/illustrators/editions listing', but one can't  
have everything. If you like to feel your fictional worlds are coming to  
life, then this will extend your background concept of Dune's 'reality'.  
An absolute 'MUST' for Dune fans everywhere.

### QUARKS

Harald Fritzsch  
Pelican \$4.95

Once upon a time, the atom was a nice, solid 'billiard  
ball'. Then, for a while it was thought to consist of  
one or more electrons orbiting a central nucleus of  
protons. Experiment continued to reveal more particles -  
hundreds of them..with even all the positive protons bafflingly staying  
close together in that nucleus proving to be held there by interchange of  
the even tinier mesons! All this, and much more is lucidly set out, in  
layman's language in this book which sets out to review the progress made  
in the last thirty years..with particular reference to the 'quarks' which  
seem to be the ultimate particles of which almost everything else is made.  
It isn't easy reading, but persevere and you'll get a whole new insight  
into the structure of the universe, not to mention the people who are  
examining it and how they are doing so. Enriched by numerous diagrams and  
photographs, plus an excellent Glossary, which, as it summarises the main  
points, provides a handy aide-memoire as you read. If you are interested  
in what makes this universe tick, then this is fascinating stuff...and  
may even spark a few yarns..after all if several hitherto unexpected forces  
operate in the nucleus..and mutual attraction is caused by particle inter-  
change...might not gravity operate this way?? ..or even telepathy? Read  
it and ponder.

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