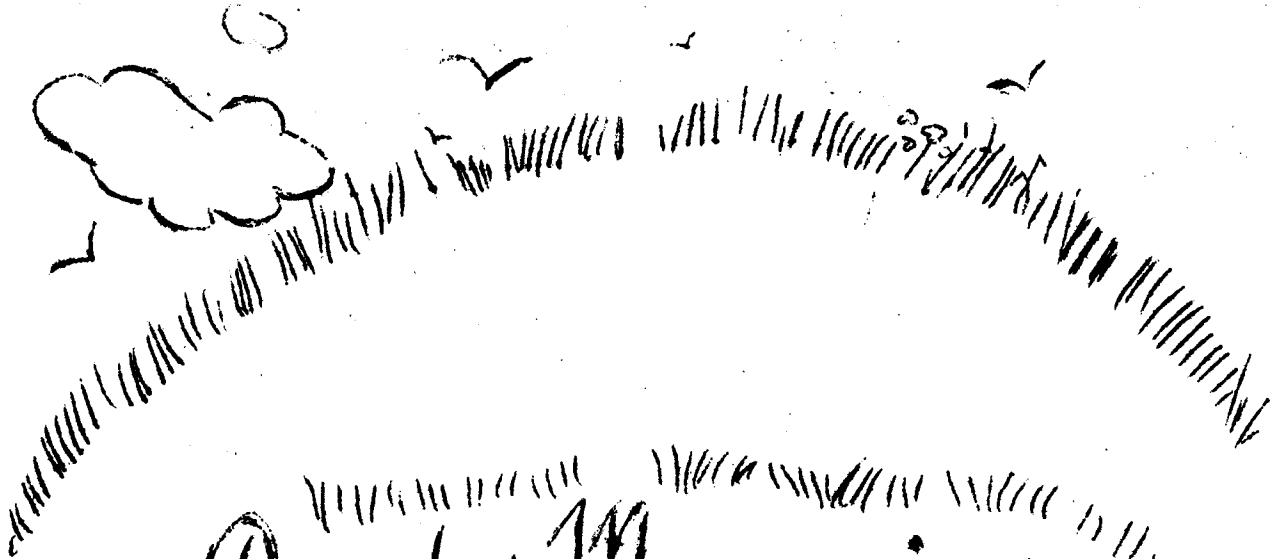


NORTHLIGHT

THE LAST





Powder Magazine

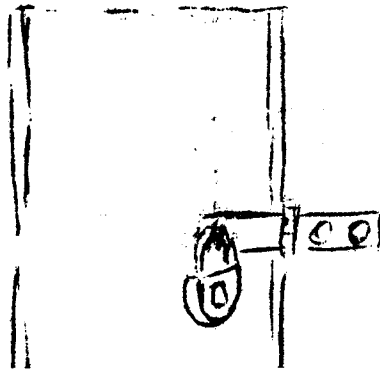
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SKYLIGHTS

There are all sorts of things one is conventionally supposed to say at the last issue of a fanzine, but I have not the slightest desire to say them. My reasons for closing N are twofold. The first is that I can't do anything useful with N, and secondly I find the time devoted to producing N very much begrudged by me. Though not a reason I find that the financial side of fan pubbing is devotable more enjoyably to other things. So this I say. I've had some fun with N, I've met a lot of nice people and received some very interesting zines in exchange, zines far better produced, labours of love in fact. Whereas N was never anything more than a burden. By the way, just in case anyone's interested I do not have a rotary duper for sale, this is mainly because I do odd bits of duplicating for various organisations with which I am concerned, and who knows, I might want to put-out another zine some other day.

A certain amount of water has flowed under the bridge since the last N. Main items of news is that I have gone overboard for 8mm film-making, and am enormously chuffed by the 350' that I shot in Majorca during my holiday, as an when I get the time the film has to be titled and then it's ready for showing. I've also got a new tape-friend in the shape of the redoubtable Dave Prosser. Dave is an opera addict and I seem to spend hours madly taping opera for him, still it's good fun and he sends me interesting tapes back which is how things should be in fandom. Round here socialwise I note that the busybodies have been at work again and that delightful little book Fanny Hill has been most incontinently banned, while other books far mor immoral continue to be published, I just don't understand the whole set up, heavens if they would corrupt our young ones I would agree to them being banned, but corruption doesn't need the impetus of a book to start it, if the rot's there it will come out, book or no book. Newcastle has also seen the arrival of topless dresses and the

shop was sold out in two hours. My own feelings on the matter are not very definite, other than that everyone should be free to do whatever she or he pleases as long as they don't do harm to other people, and my category of harm does not include offending moral principles. From a practical standpoint I would say that Newcastle is hardly the place to go with bosom bared to the elements, at least not often, but I suppose if a woman wishes to display a well-formed torso then she should be free to do so. It is from this angle that I feel that bathing beauty contests are a considerable waste of time, since the average bathing suit can be practically a corset if the wearer so desires. I agree with the president of the American Nudists Association who said some years since that bathing beauty contests should insist that the contestants appear naked, so that the judges could more accurately assess the quality of the figures.

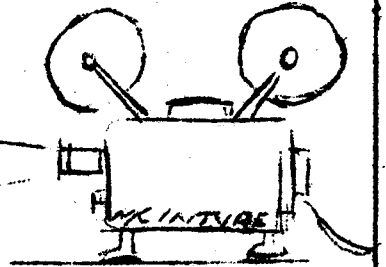
Lately I took both my recorders in for a much needed overhaul and the results are pleasing. I've joined the world record club and am steadily adding to my collection of pre-recorded tapes, although in my estimation you don't save all that much, and also there is some value in having the recording done by the person who first brought it out. Of recordings I am happy to see that a new sound is emerging into the pops, namely the Newcastle sound. It seems that it is produced by a sort of instrumental jangling. The Newcastle sound I like best goes tug, hiss, gurgle gurgle gurgle gurgle as an oesophagus tickling noggin of brown ale is poured out.

Of my Majorcan holiday I will say very little since I don't want to spoil the reception of an article I wrote for Terry Jeeves' *ERG*. However this much I will say, that I often wonder why the meals that they serve on board aircraft aren't sold in more places by an automatic dispenser, for they are very good. In fact I often wonder why it is that the automat hasn't caught on in England as presumably, it has in America. I mean we have hot drink sales machines, so why can't we have hot meals machines, or is it a cartel of cafe owners against it as something to bring down their profits. Speaking of food I often wonder whether any fen have any out of the ordinary tastes in food. In fact I often think that perhaps there may be a relation between food and science-fiction addiction. Or are fen addicted to SF?

Well this is where I look through the skylight for the last time. Northlight, you may remember, started originally as a magazine for a branch of the International Friendship League with which I was concerned, it turned fannish and has stayed that way. I have nothing special to regret except that I was dragged into a discreditable affair with the publishers of *Aphorreta*, but that's dead, all dead. So it is that KenMcIntyre has drawn a crumbling lighthouse disappearing with a splash beneath the waves. Finally the closing of *NORTHLIGHT* does not mean that I'm going Gafia, I feel that fandom has a lot of useful work to do yet, not least of which is teaching people to look forwardly, and not down into the dust.

Goodbye for now,
Alan.

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Home Movie Making

I am delighted to say that I find myself most highly qualified to speak about this subject, mainly because I happen to know nothing whatsoever about the matter. I'm all of a piece with Hal o'the Draft in Kiplings Rewards and Fairies, when he remarked that Guilds talk of the mysteries of their trades when all you have to do is to take hammer and chisel and get weaving to find all the mystery of it under your hand. Well now I feel perhaps that I could have done better than I did in the matter of equipment, since I bought a second hand zoom lens Jelco camera and a Ricoh automatic threading projector. I feel that I should have paid a little extra and got a reflex camera, and a little less and got a projector that didn't have the self-threading mechanism, but still you never know these things until its too late. In any case one of these days I may be able to afford a Bolex and a Toie talkie.

Anyway the secret of home movie making is to find a film that suits you, and that doesn't stop at reproduction. For example I habitually use Gratispool, I like it because if you make a really ridiculous mistake, say threading the film backwards, then you haven't the nagging thought that you've chucked good money down the drain, you can always get another one for a few bobs, or get one from an unlucky type like Alan Dodd whose cine, for some reason, won't use Gratispool. Now in my opinion the colour renderings in Gratispool leave something to be desired, but then that's because you are matching them up with the gloss that your memory puts on things, a very dangerous matter, so that whereas my friend Terry Jeeves gets brilliant colours with his Agfa film, nevertheless I can't help a sneaking feeling that they are too good to be true, but then that's just personal opinion. So far I have not tried black and white. I am quite prepared to believe that the added speed is helpful, but as the producer of the early colour film "Becky Sharp" said, when he saw a black and white film, "What's this? a painting in mud?" No, I must confess that I like colour very much better than B & W and eagerly await the coming of colour TV.

My camera has a coupled exposure

meter as have many cameras to-day and these meters tend to be awful liars, especially in the matter of against the light photography, so when you start your cinephotography, the first thing to do is to experiment. I made a mess of a roll of Ilfochrome simply playing with the coupled meter setting on the camera, but by now I've learnt the needful judgement as to where it should be set for any particular effect and as might be expected got through my filming of Majorca with practically no mistakes, or if I did make a mistake I knew at the time I'd made it. One of the biggest troubles when switching from still to movie is to get rid of the snap habit. With a still camera you go click and that's it, but with a movie, to get anything usable you have to run the camera for what seems an interminable time. The way to count is (in case you haven't heard it) 301-302-303 and so on, each number when said as rapidly as possible being equal to one second. I've found that a decent run for an ordinary shot is about six to ten seconds. Now the one thing I have discovered with a movie camera is that the pundits who talk about the need for a tripod when panning are wrong, and that it is perfectly possible to get quite a smooth pan shot without a tripod, the reason for this being the fact that the human eye has a built in set of cushions and the result is that any slight wiggles as you are panning are compensated for without the audience being really aware of the fact. Obviously if you are shooting from a bus, as I did, you get the bounce and jerk, but this, in my own opinion adds to the realism of the matter. All right, you complete your film, remembering to expose both sides if it's a double run type you're using, and you mail it off, remembering to put your name on it for return. What I do is, when I open a pack of film I automatically put my name on the pack, this shows me first of all that it's the correct box and also ensures that no box goes off without my name. Also, when I'm doing a sequence of films, as I did in Majorca I number them so that you know how they were taken.

All right, there's a series of thuds through your letter box and the films have come back. Now the wise ones say, next you should start editing. Now me, I don't agree. This only goes for a series of course, but the first thing I do is to run the film through my editor and cut out the bad parts and splice, then I join up the films in sequence and run them through the projector to see whether in fact any editing is necessary. Then having run the film through once or twice to familiarise myself with it I decide what titles I need and start filming those. My titler is from Boots, and I use daylight Gratispool with an 80b Wratten, the results are quite satisfactor. Then, and only then, do I start editing properly. Now this business of splicing is not something I can say much about, I use Quik-splice, or Kodak press-tapes and they suit me, others, Terry Jeeves for example use film cement and it suits him, but in my opinion tape is easier, but again, that's purely because I have used no other. I like the idea of the Ferrania splicer that uses ordinary sellotape. Now your film is all edited and spliced and ready to show, so you set up your projector, prefocussing carefully, and the result looks poor to your friends, but ah the glow in your own heart, who's Fritz Lang, Cecil E. DeMille and the rest, and anyway they should make good films, think of what they spend on wages and equipment, and still they contrive to pull off a stinker as like as not!

THE FANED 'S FAREWELL TO HIS ZINE.

Oh the pages and pages I've written,
The duping by day and by night,
But when the old bug once has bitten
It's hard not to think of the bite.
Considered I have why I started,
What curious things did I mean,
When I and my sanity parted,
And I set out to make a fanzine.
I dragged others in God forgive me,
Like lambs they all went to the axe,
No praise for their efforts could they see,
And nothing from readers but whacks.
My duping was really quite awful,
But at least I had one consolation,
At least I pubbed nothing unlawful,
And bad duping was my reputation.
The zine was at times quite illegible,
But a hint out of Yandro did come,
And the zine became almost intelligible
By inking outside of the drum.
But by then I was tired of pubbing
And fanzines piled up on my shelves,
So I stopped all my writing and subbing.
And called in a party of elves.
These bright little fellows reported,
For duty one bright summer's day,
They quickly got everything sorted
By chucking the whole lot away.
So now I am free of the clutter
Thank God I am wise that I'm past it,
But still in my beard I mutter
"At least it was fun while it lasted."

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~~to Mrs J Ed McKay~~

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