

# ARIEL

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## ARTWORK

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Any unassigned material in  
this zine is the responsibility  
of the editor.

My thanx to Ralph Harrison's RAPID PRINT, Southern Cross Arcade,  
Adelaide, for the reproduction of the cover and the photographs.  
Thanx also to Joan Salmon and Morphett Vale High School for  
doing the bromides, and Rob for the loan of the IEM.

The fact that I got up off my arse and produced this thing is  
the direct responsibility of Linda Smith. Blame her.

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THE INCOMPLETE HEROINE

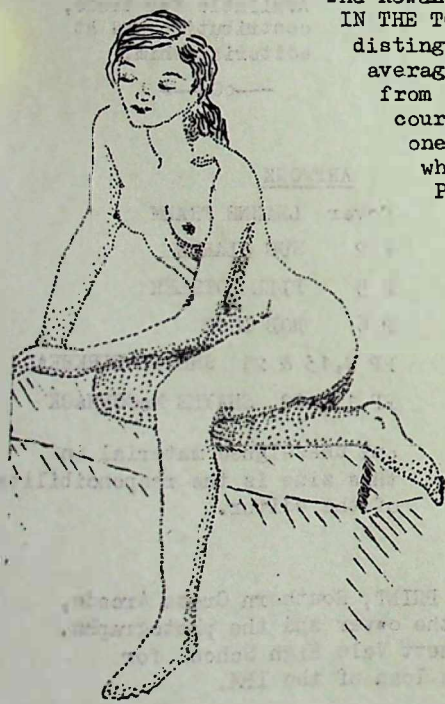
" How could she have blundered around so, looking for a mind that was superior to hers, completely overlooking the fact that a woman's most important function in life begins with physical domination?"

Question:- Who wrote the above paragraph?

All right, hands up all of you who answered John Norman. No, sorry, that paragraph comes, not from the annals of Gor, but from the pen of Anne McCaffrey. The story is MEETING OF MINDS and was published in the January 1969 F&SF. Those particular lines go a long way toward explaining why McCaffrey is not particularly appreciated in feminist circles. In this article, I'd like to look at a few of McCaffrey's female characters, and at what I see as a recurring theme in McCaffrey's work; the tendency for her female characters to form a lesser part in a male/female partnership.

First, however, allow me to clarify one point. McCaffrey does not create powerless female characters. Her female protagonists tend to be exceptional people. Lessa of Pern, Dragonflight's protagonist, comes from a long line of powerful nobles which has, in the past, produced several noted weyrwomen. Helva from THE SHIP WHO SANG is the most extraordinary of the Brain Ships, no minor status, since the Brain Ships are the elite of the shell people.

Damia, whose thoughts are quoted at the beginning of this article, is a Prime Telepath, as was her mother, The Rowan, in the previous story in the series, LADY IN THE TOWER. Sara, from RESTOREE, whilst not a distinguished person on Earth, shows greater than average courage and initiative in freeing Harlan from the asylum and in her dealings with the court of Lothara. Why then must each and every one of these females fall into quivering heaps when presented with their mates, Far, Parollan, Afra, Jeff Raven and Harlan?



In the case of Lessa, most of her actions may be attributed directly to the society in which she lives. Pern is the pseudo-medieval society so beloved of many sf writers. In Earth's past, the role of women in such societies has been strictly limited. Women, when they are considered at all, are considered as chattels, to be used or to be disposed of, profitably or politically.

"They (the barons) could be brutal, even in dealings with their women: A man 'took' a wife, calculating her value as an object for political and economic ends."

Friedrich Heer THE MEDIEVAL WORLD. p 40.

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Compare Lytol's comments on Fax in DRAGONFLIGHT. The Lady Gemma is Fax's wife.

"Even the Lady Gemma has learned. It'd be different if he didn't need her family's support....So he keeps her pregnant, hoping to kill her in childbed one day."

Females with no power or position are fairly well written off in the Dragon novels. Some are presented as kitchen drudges, and some are the bitchy young aristocrats encountered by Menolly in DRAGONSINGER. McCaffrey deals only with the exceptional females, Headwomen such as Manora, exceptional women such as Menolly, and talented women like Lessa.

Also to be noted is that McCaffrey deals with the first women to make breaks in the society of Pern. Lessa is the first strong weyrwoman in a goodly while. Menolly is the first woman harper. Thus, I suppose it is not overly surprising that they rise to prominence mainly through the agency of male help.

Pern is a strongly male dominated society, both in the Hold and in the Weyr. (Take a look at the ratio of male to female dragon riders. Why is it that only males ride dragons, other than the gold dragon? Green dragons are females.) Lessa in particular, knows this, and she uses her powers to control the men who can implement her plans. Yet note that when she does use her powers in this way she achieves negative results. She destroys Fax's satisfaction and profit in the conquest of Ruatha, and she forces F'lar into such a position that he must challenge Fax, but these are destructive uses of power.

Even in the weyr Lessa's actions are uncertain and foolish. She precipitates the crisis with the Lord Holders by initiating thoughtless raiding, and, chaffing under the restrictions placed on her by R'gul, she still dreams of ruling Ruatha.

After Ramoth's mating flight however, she gains in maturity and wisdom. Whilst not willing to buckle down to weyr tradition, she is capable of using her position and power to useful ends. Her well timed entrance on Ramoth does as much to convince the Lord Holders to cooperate with the weyr as does F'lar's abduction of the Holder women. (Note again the use of female pawns.) She discovers, albeit accidentally, the ability to fly between times, and in bringing forward the weyrs, she saves Pern. However, separated from F'lar, she loses much of the confidence she showed earlier. She needs F'lar to be complete. This can be seen in Ramoth's refusal to be flown by any bronze but Mnementh.

Take as a comparison Kylara. Kylara is an independent woman. She doesn't allow herself to be tied to one man. She has her own plans, and she uses men to realise those plans. McCaffrey's treatment of Kylara is, to say the least, unsympathetic. In DRAGONFLIGHT she is portrayed as a foolish person. In DRAGONQUEST she comes across as an out and out villain.

And here we find another reason for the secondary role played by women in McCaffrey's novels. McCaffrey is a self admitted romantic, convicted on at least five counts of perpetrating romantic stories on audiences. There is no place for strong independent women in romances.

Kylara, in DRAGONQUEST, becomes a plot device to allow the satisfactory culmination of the romance of Brekke and F'nor. As a weyrwoman, Brekke seems obliged to make love to the rider of whichever bronze dragon flies Wirenth, her gold. F'nor, being a brown rider is not in the running, and, Brekke being, as are most of McCaffrey's heroines, monogamistic, will not accept another lover. Now, there are two ways around this. One is for Canth, F'nor's

brown dragon to fly Wirenth. McCaffrey prepares us for this possibility, but it is not an elegant solution. The fight between Wirenth and Kylara's queen Prideth which kills both queens, and sends Kylara mad leaves F'nor and Brekke free to establish a permanent relationship, and it provides a couple of emotion wrenching scenes. In disposing of Kylara, McCaffrey also rids herself of some awkward plot complications, as Kylara has been meddling in Hold politics. A rogue queen and rider would provide a real embarrassment for the weyrs, especially at a time when decent relationships between the weyrs and the Holds have just been re-established. Thus Kylara must go, but it is a pity, because she is the most independent of the women in the Dragon series.

Menolly, the protagonist in DRAGONSONG and DRAGONSINGER is not so subject to romantic manipulation, but again, her rise to prominence is only achieved through male help. Were it not for Petiren's recognition of her talent, she would not have received the early training that leads to her becoming a harper. She is saved from Thread by a dragon rider, and taken to Harperhall by Robinton. Here she is championed by Sebell, Piemur and Robinton. She receives nothing but trouble from her own peers. Even when she finds a female friend in the person of Audiva, she finds that she cannot really feel at ease, a marked comparison to her feelings when playing in quartet with Sebell, Talmor and Domick. Her relationships with older females seem more variable. Her mother seems intent on clipping her wings, and though her motives in doing so may be laudible, her actions cause a great deal of suffering for Menolly. More balanced are her contacts with Dunca and Silvina, Dunca hindering and Silvina helping. In the short time she is at Benden Weyr, Menolly is helped by both Manora and Felena.

In many respects, Menolly is one of the most complete characters McCaffrey has created. It just remains to see whether or not she does collapse into some male's arms when she is a bit older. One awaits the third Dragonsong book with bated breath. ( My one apprehension is that McCaffrey might repeat the plot of MEETING OF MINDS and have Menolly and Robinton match up. There are similarities between Afra and Robinton, though Menolly is no Dania.)

Before leaving the Pern novels, there is, of course, one other factor involved in the rise of Lessa and of Menolly. For Lessa it is Ramoth and for Menolly it is her fair of fire lizards. Julie Temple, the ex-Reading Senior at Morphett Vale High, pointed out that possession of a dragon could easily be equated with the possession of artistic talent of some sort, and considering McCaffrey's association with the performing arts, this suggestion has much to commend it. Seen as an allegory dealing with the rise of a female performer, the Dragon series takes on a whole new depth. Knowing McCaffrey is acquainted with Bob Dylan's work, it is tempting to equate F'lar and Dylan and Lessa with Joan Baez. Thus Thread becomes de-humanising influences on people, and the dragons, so long ignored become folk music. Playing with this ideas can lead to all sorts of fun, but the male dominance of the music field is very similar to the male dominance of the weyr.

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The story of Helva in THE SHIP WHO SANG is another romance, but, naturally, things are complicated by the fact that Helva is permanently encased in a titanium shell. Helva, perhaps, has the greatest potential of any of McCaffrey's heroines. She is totally self contained, capable of commanding high wages anywhere, and is a particularly intelligent person. However, she is still not complete, and her major quest throughout the book is for a male brawn partner. ( Again, note that the partner must be male. Helva shares

with most of McCaffrey's other heroines, the ability to get on better with males than with females.)

There are two promisingly independent females who crop up in the stories THE SHIP WHO MOURNED and THE SHIP WHO KILLED. However, both are hung up over the loss of their male partners. Theoda has spent her life as a therapist trying to make up for the fact that she was unable to save her family from plague. Kira of Canopus mourns a lost love, but all is set right again when Helva works out a way she can produce a child with the genetic characteristics of her dead lover and herself.

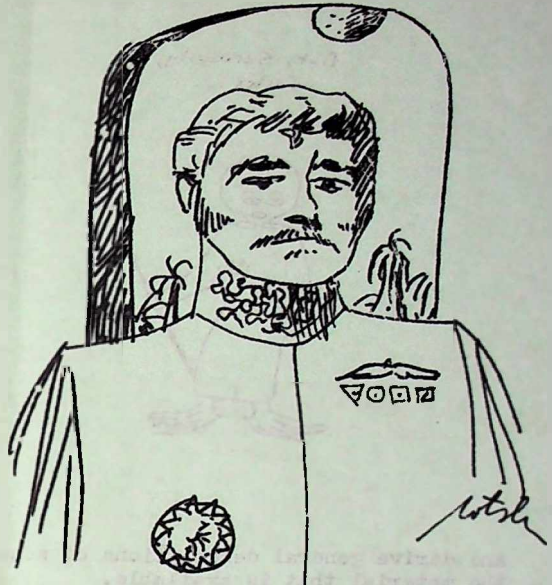
The other characters fit neatly into types already seen in the Dragon novels. Ansra Colmer shares many of Kylara's attributes, and Kurla Ster shares much with Brekke. In the story DRAMATIC MISSION, McCaffrey perpetrates one of her most blatant romances. The involved parties are members of an acting troupe performing ROMEO AND JULIET for a planet load of aliens in exchange for a super-power source. Ansra is ambitious, but Kurla cares only for the Leader of the troupe Solar Prane. Finally Kurla and Prane are transferred to alien bodies permanently to get over the problem that Prane's human body was dying. Ansra is similarly transferred, thus her ambition is thwarted. There is even a Manora type person in the form of Nia Tubb, the matron of the troupe.

Helva eventually gains her permanent brawn, and all is well. She has become complete. Here though McCaffrey was not content with a symbolic fusion, and Helva's physical form made physical union out of the question, so, in her follow-up story HONEYMOON which appears in GET OFF THE UNICORN, Helva and her partner Parollan return to Beta Cervi, the planet visited in DRAMATIC MISSION, and, whilst in Cerviki bodies they undergo fusion, and when they return to their original bodies, they discover that they are still linked. Perhaps this is McCaffrey's ultimate attempt to complete her heroine.

Well, I didn't get round to dealing with all the heroines I had intended to, but I think you get the picture. And, as a final disclaimer, despite all the above material, for some reason, I continually return to McCaffrey. She's an excellent story teller, and in the final analysis, perhaps that's all that really matters.

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In the next issue I would like to print a selection of different people's opinions on their favourite female character in sf. Length between a paragraph and a page. Deadline April 30th 1979. I'd like to hear from you.



But, Seriously,  
folks ...



A Note Concerning The Dragons  
Of Pern

Darryl Aesche

Information from Pern (Rukbat III) is, at present, very sparse, consisting of a number of popular romantic stories. These stories are not designed to include definitive descriptions of the fauna of the planet, but the glimpses gained from them has sparked some considerable interest in scientific circles. Studies of the fauna of Pern are not expected in the near future, so we are forced to come to some conclusions

and derive general descriptions of some of the better known animals from the material that is available.

To be able to glean definite information from the stories at present available, we must make some assumptions, but care has been taken to ensure that these are well founded and in accord with simple scientific knowledge. For this note, and for other studies, I have assumed that the humans involved have not deviated greatly in size and body chemistry from what we consider the norm. Also assumed is that the original colonists chose a planet that was not overly different from their home planet:-  
i.e. Surface gravity Approx  $10m/sec^2$ ; Rotational period 20-30 hours;  
Local year (One Turn) approx one Earth year.

Finally, the plant and animal life of Pern must have a chemistry very similar to that of Earth species, as witnessed by the fact that they serve as food for the humans on the planet, and advanced food processing equipment is not used. For this reason, I have assumed that local species and the artificial species derived from them, are so related that obvious skeletal structures and organs can be traced from one species to another.

Pernian animals are then generally bisexual for reproductive purposes; egg laying; six limbed, and warm blooded. Fine characteristics can, however, vary to a large extent. In addition to this, an ecological infrastructure of bacteria, para-insects, para-fish etc. must exist.

The family of animals of particular interest here, dragons, fire lizards, watch whers and wild whers are flying animals with the central pair of limbs forming wings, and with other obvious adaptations for a flying life-style. They have developed large, retractable talons for perching and for grasping prey; a long tail for balance and the well developed eyes and visual processing required by any flying species that searches for ground living prey.

From general reading, one gains an immediate idea of dragons as large



animals, but the true size of these animals can only be calculated after considering many small clues to size mentioned in the text. A newly hatched dragon is very much larger than the late adolescent humans to whom they are usually compared. Its head is about the size of a human torso, and it can, in error, and with no obvious effort of strength and reach, badly injure and in fact kill a human with its talons. This would imply that the dragon, on hatching, has a body weight greater than that of the larger Earth carnivores, such as the tiger, an animal that often has difficulty killing a passive human. (An active running human is more easily killed by pouncing.) As an animal grows, the size of head usually decreases in relation to body size by about one half, i.e. from 1/10 to 1/20 of body weight, if this holds true for dragons, it gives us some idea of the size of the dragon hatchling, and considering that a queen can lay up to sixty eggs, it tells us that the full grown dragon must be huge.

The adult dragon is described as having eyes larger than a human head, and these eyes are at human head height when the dragon is resting its head on the ground. The head is thus implied to be human height from jaw to the top of the often scratched eye ridges. These same adult dragons can carry one large meat animal (herd beast) in each forepaw. They can also form a cage large enough to hold a human with these forepaws. If humans are assumed to average 1.6m to 1.7m in height, a full grown dragon could be 20m long from head to tip of tail, the body would be 5m long and 3m wide. The wing span would be about 15m. The whole dragon would weigh about 60 tonnes. The gold dragon, Ramoth, the largest dragon mentioned, would then be 30m long and would weigh more than 150 tonnes, whilst the smallest blue could be as little as 15m long and weigh only 30 tonnes. Considering these sizes, it is little wonder that other animals and most humans, are wary, or even terrified of dragons. Indeed, the largest carnivore of Earth's past, T. rex, should, if it had enough sense, be very careful not to antagonise a dragon.

The obvious question to ask is how can an animal of such great size fly. Simple calculation of power required indicates that, for a dragon to fly by flapping its wings, it would require huge amounts of food, i.e. it would need a quantity of food greater than its own body weight for six hours of flight (the duration of a normal Threadfall). From indications of feeding habits, and amounts of food consumed, one must draw the conclusion that Pernese dragons cannot fly by any normal means. (A jet aircraft, the Boeing 727 is similar in size to Ramoth, though heavier when fueled, and even with the effects of fixed wings and obtaining lift from forward motion which increases efficiency, it could not fly much longer than six hours with a fuel load of Ramoth's total weight.)

The ability of dragons to go "between", both in space and time indicates a psionic ability, and control of great power. This forces me to conclude that dragons can and do, to a large extent, neutralise their weight by an as yet unknown psionic mechanism. An indication of this is given in the prelude to DRAGONQUEST where the word fly is given in quotation marks to indicate that "fly" may not be the correct term in this case.

Besides the ability to "fly" and to "go between", dragons display other psionic abilities. They are telepathic and empathic, both within their own species, and with other species, including humans. Indications exist also of abilities such as clairvoyance in space and time. A species with these abilities would rapidly develop a type of intelligence which

would be incomprehensible to humans, even to those who interacted directly with it.

From snippets of telepathic conversations between dragons and men, and the reported intelligence of dragons, I am forced to ask whether, on Pern, it is in fact men who keep dragons, or dragons who keep men. It would be a great cosmic joke if the human race has forced the evolution of a species that is more intelligent than itself and that on the same planet the technology to recognise this intelligence has been lost.

---oOo---

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* FIRST IMPRESSIONS \*  
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A crack appeared in the golden shell and was greeted by the terrified screams of the girls. Some had fallen into little heaps of white paper, others embraced tightly in their mutual fear. The crack widened and the cylindrical barrel broke through, followed by the handle, gleaming silver. Lesser wondered with unexpected detachment how the shell had contrived to hold the monster emerging before her.

Lesser was aware of a loud hum emerging from the egg. The hum increased in volume as the shell shattered into fragments, and the black dripping body emerged. It spun from the site of its hatching, and jarred to a halt, its handle sunk deep into the soft sand. The humming increased yet again, and with sudden and unexpected violence, it dashed towards one of the girls. She turned to flee, but the beast snatched the hem of her skirt, and drew her inexorably towards itself. Lesser averted her eyes as the luckless maid was drawn into the terrible maw of the beast, only to emerge seconds later, a thin red, black and white sheet.

Lesser moved. Why hadn't that silly clunk headed girl stepped aside, Lesser thought, grabbing for the handle, at this stage no higher than her shoulder. A feeling of joy suffused Lesser; a feeling of warmth, tenderness, unalloyed affection and instant respect flooded mind, heart and soul. Never again would she lack for membership in apas, or fannish success. She turned the handle, then turned to Fella.

"Oh, it's beautiful Fella, but do you really think it will last?" she enquired, giving voice to that terrible fear of gafia that so haunted her.

"Of course it will," soothed Fella. "First Impressions are always lasting."

(With apologies to Anne McCaffrey)

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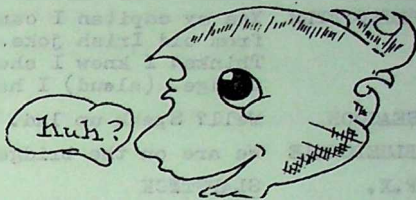
Just a final note, despite my article, and the gentle satire above, I really enjoy the works of Anne McCaffrey. Indeed, some of the most interesting conversations I've had of late have been centred around the Pern novels. (Part of the reason was, of course, that I was working on the article, Darryl was working on his article, and Linda was working on her Chronology of Pern for Perry Middlemiss's next fanzine.) There is something about dragons and fire lizards that makes one want to establish all one can about them. How do their eyes work? How big is Pern? What is the relationship between dragons and fire lizards? Naturally we are all dying to get our hands on a copy of THE WHITE DRAGON except Linda who read Shayne McCormack's copy in Sydney. (And she will keep dropping the most annoying hints.)

THE CASE OF ECCLES' DOUBT

With apologies to Spike Milligan for use of Goon Show characters, and apologies to John Rowley, whose idea it was in the first place, and whose original script I still have and should return.

Lobochevski published first.

---oOo---



ANNOUNCER This is the BBC.
SEAGOON Wait! This is nothing but an empty space!
ANNOUNCER No mere empty space is this Med. It's the setting for this week's exciting episode of the Goon Show entitled
GRAMS THE "STAR TREK" THEME
ANNOUNCER or
McGOONAGAL Will ya nae get me tae tha kirk on time.
ANNOUNCER So if listeners would please don the cardboard replica space helmets given away free in this week's RADIO TIMES, we can join the intrepid crew of the Starship Good Queen Bess as she continues her mission to spread British culture throughout the known Universe.
SEAGOON (posh) Tea?
GRYTPYPE And well you may say it Neddy, but don't you think you should do the old opening bit properly then? Eh?
SEAGOON (Put out, but still posh) You mean that wretched ship's log? Oh, very well. (Puts on Horn voice) Ship's log, Stardate 34, 26,36. Tea time. Whilst passing through the twin sun field Hector Major-Minor, Eighth Officer Eccles came apart, due to gravitational stress. Bones assures me that he can be cured, otherwise conditions are satisfactory. Recommend that ship steward Flowerdew be given shore leave at the next opportunity.
FLOWERDEW I really can't understand why.
SEAGOON There now. First Officer Thynne, what is our exact position?
GRYTPYPE Don't you think you should ask our Navigation Officer?
SEAGOON Must I?
GRYTPYPE I fear so Neddy.
SEAGOON Oh, very well then. Navigation officer, report to the bridge immediately.
BLUEBOTTLE I heard you call my Captain. (aside) Pauses for audience applause. Thinks. This is an early entrance for Bluebottle. That ounce of dolly mixtures I gave the writer was worth every penny. If I give him another ounce I might not get the dreaded deading this week. We ha..

NEDDY Bluebottle, can you give us a star fix?

BLUEBOTTLE Yes my capitan I can. Takes out string and cardboard computer from old Irish joke. Places fingers in holes. Does sums. Thinks: I knew I should have done that homework for Miss Quodge. (aloud) I have done it captain!

SEAGOON Well? Speak up lad.

BLUEBOTTLE We are on the bridge of the starship Good Queen Bess.

F.X. SLAPSTICK

BLUEBOTTLE Here, you can't hit me! I'm the ship's navigation officer. I got an important part this week....

F.X. SLAPSTICK

BLUEBOTTLE I don't like this naughty game. I'm going home to Mum. Thinks That naughty Grytpype Thynne will regret that.

F.X. SLAPSTICK

BLUEBOTTLE Exits nursing fractured lughole.

SEAGOON Blast! Now we'll never know where we are.

ANNOUNCER Pardon me gentlemen, but according to the script you should be approaching line 84.

SEAGOON Line 84! But that's in enemy territory. Quick, man the guns; All hands on deck; Batten the hatches and splice the mainbrace. Turn her into the wind! Stand by to repell boarders!

GRYTPYPE How do you repell boarders?

SEAGOON Well, first you make sure that the airlock doors are tightly locked, then you post Space Marine guards there to prevent the enemy from gaining access to the ship.

ANNOUNCER Listeners who have heard TALES OF OLD DARTMOOR might have expected a slightly different answer. For their benefit, we present version two of that dialogue.

SEAGOON Line 84! But that's in enemy territory. Quick, man the guns; All hands on deck; Batten the hatches and splice the mainbrace. Turn her into the wind! Stand by to repell boarders!

GRYTPYPE How do you repell boarders?

SEAGOON Stop changing the bed linnen.

GRYTPYPE You silly twisted captain.

SEAGOON You're right. This is no time for old jokes. We must prepare the ship for battle... Thynne, where are you going?

GRYTPYPE Down to the ship's lundry to see if my white flag is dry yet.

SEAGOON Righto ho. Could you bring mine up while you're at it?

GRYTPYPE Certainly sir. (aside) Little does he know that I am not going to iron my white flag, but to use my secret radio to contact the Klingons to whom I've sold this ship for scrap metal.

SEAGOON Finished? Good. Communications Officer... put me through to Major Bloodnok.

COM.OFF. (Drippy telephone operator's voice) Sorry, the number you have

asked for is engaged. Would you like to ring back later?

SEAGOON No, I'll walk over. Maestro, some walking music please.

GRAMS THE DEATH MARCH TRANSFORMING INTO THE BLOODNOK THEME

F.X. EXPLOSION

BLOODNOK Curse. I should have known carried eggs and freefall wouldn't mix. Engineering!

McGOONAGAL Och aye.

BLOODNOK Turn up the air filters in my room would you. There's a good chappie.

McGOONAGAL (muttering) The engines willnae take it.

BLOODNOK Now, where was I? Ah yes.

F.X. WRITING

BLOODNOK Dear sir, with reference to your advert, please send me your full set of fine art studies at your earliest opportunity. You may charge it to the Officer's Mess Fund of the Good Ship Bess at... Wait a minute, where are we? Bluebottle....

BLUEBOTTLE (Muted as if over an intercom) Yes major.

BLOODNOK Where exactly are we lad?

BLUEBOTTLE I don't know about you major, but I'm curled up in bed with my stuffed tiger.

BLOODNOK You filthy swine. Here, take this for your troubles.

F.X. SLAPSTICK

BLUEBOTTLE No thanks. I've already got three of those. Thanks. That's the last time I waste my good dolly mixtures on that twit of a script writer. Next time I save them for Felis Splinge. Ne hee, it's a sailor's life for me.

F.X. KNOCK ON THE DOOR

BLOODNOK Wait! (aside) Quick Lieutenant Uhura, out the back door.

F.X. AIRLOCK DOOR CYCLING, LONG DRAWN OUT FEMALE SCREAM.

BLOODNOK Oh dear, she forgot her spacesuit.

SEAGOON (Bursting in) Bloodnok... That scream....

BLOODNOK Me, I'm afraid. It always happens when I discover no money in my pocket.

SEAGOON Well, here, have this hologram of a Romulan three credit piece. Can't have the rest of my crew woken by your continual screaming can we? Not in the middle of the day. The lads have to get their mid day nap or they'll never have the energy to get up for afternoon tea.

BLOODNOK True, true.

SEAGOON Now, major, I want you and ten of your best men to mount a guard on every airlock.

BLOODNOK You filthy swine! I'll have you know my men aren't at all like that.

SEAGOON No, no. You misunderstand. We're in enemy space.  
BLOODNOK Enemy space? Quick, where's my white flag?  
SEAGOON You coward Bloodnok. You'll wait till mine comes back from the laundry. After all, rank has its privileges. But meanwhile post the guards whilst all the bootleg recorders in the audience put their cassette players on pause for

THE MUSICAL INTERLUDE

ANNOUNCER We, now take you to the ship's infirmary where two dedicated healers are at work.

MINNIE (singing) The shin bone's connected to the shoulder bone and the knee bone's connected to the back bone.

HENRY Stop that sinful singing Min and hand me the scalpel.

MINNIE I'm trying to put it back together now Henry. (Continues singing) The ear bone's connected to the toe bone. Henry, it's no good buddy, I can't get this scalpel to fit together properly.

HENRY That's because you're not holding the scalpel Min.

MINNIE Then what am I holding Henry?

HENRY That's me Minnie.

MINNIE Oooooooo. You're not very sharp Henry.

HENRY I know Minnie. It's the weather you know. You just can't get the wood.

ANNOUNCER Listners with a degree in higher Astrophysics will appreciate that Henry's reasoning is not congruent with present knowledge in the field. The reason Henry is not particularly sharp relates to the speed of the ship and Mrs Fitzsimmons Contraction. It's these little bits of information that make me glad I passed second grade.

HENRY Mnk. Get out of here you naughty announcer. I won't have it do you hear me? Mmmm nnk hmp yim bom mukk Get out!

MINNIE Henry! Stop chasing that announcer type person. The patient's coming around,

HENRY What do you mean coming round Min?

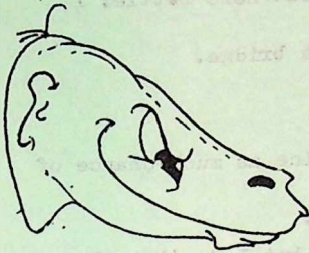
ECCLES (singing) I'll be coming round the mountain when I come  
I'll be coming round the mountain when I come  
I'll be coming round the mountain  
Coming round the mountain  
I'll be coming round the mountain when I come.

F.X. ECCLES DOING A DUET WITH HIMSELF  
Singing ki yi yippie yippie yi  
Singing ki yi yippie yippie yi  
Singing ki yi yippie  
Ki yi yippie  
Singing ki yi yippie yippie yi.

HENRY Oh dear Min. There's two of him.

MINNIE Don't worry. He'll never find out.  
 HENRY Why not Minnie?  
 MINNIE Because he can't count that far Henry.  
 HENRY Perfect Min. We must tell the captain.  
 MINNIE But we haven't got a telephone Henry.  
 HENRY I know we haven't got a telephone Minnie.  
 MINNIE Then we'll have to use that one.  
 HENRY All right Minnie, and I'll put on the brown Indian tea.

ANNOUNCER Since there is no sound effect for the ringing of a non-existent telephone we'll leave you to imagine one for yourself. In the meantime, we return you to a certain cabin where, even now, First Officer Thynne is concocting a foul plot.



GRAMS A LOUD HUBBLING SOUND AND MIXING NOISES, FOLLOWED BY A LARGE EXPLOSION.

GRYTPYPE Curses, I knew I shouldn't have used Bloodnok's plot boiling pan. Now, where's that radio?

GRAMS SOUND OF RADIO BEING SWITCHED ON AND SPUN THROUGH THE BAND, SNIPPETS OF ASSORTED RADIO PROGRAMMES, THEN MORIARTY'S VOICE WASHED OUT BY STATIC. THE STATIC WILL REAPPEAR EVERY TIME MORIARTY SPEAKS FOR THE REST OF THE CONVERSATION, BUT WILL CUT OUT WHEN GRYTPYPE SPEAKS.

MORIARTY Moriarty calling Grytpype Thynne. Moriarty calling Grytpype Thynne. Come in please.

F.X. DOOR BEING OPENED AND CLOSED

GRYTPYPE Ah, there you are count.

MORIARTY Owwwwwwwwww.

GRYTPYPE Save those fuel laden owws for later. Did you get the money?

F.X. SOUND OF A LARGE SACK OF COINS BEING DROPPED

MORIARTY Yess Grytpype, and it's all in silver!

GRYTPYPE Blast! The nearest branch of my bank is light years away, and there won't be room in the lifeboat for both of us and the money....

MORIARTY (thoughtfully) Yes, but listen Grytpype, the Klingons want to collect the ship tonight.

GRYTPYPE Right, You go back and tell them I'll leave the key under the mat. The signal to attack will be the playing of the glorious national anthem of Yacabarcoo in French.

MORIARTY Fine Gryttype. Over and out and owwwwww.

F.X. SOUND OF DOOR BEING OPENED AND CLOSED. STATIC STOPS.

GRYTPYPE So, onwards ever onwards, pausing only to hear Chris "I'm not a Vulcan I just stuck my ears in a pencil sharpener" Finnen play his electric thing.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

ANNOUNCER We re-join The Good Queen Bess where two of its staunchest officers are standing guard outside the airlock.

ECCLES Dum de dum dum dum. Floating in space, it's the finest way to be. Oh, it's good to be alive.

BLUEBOTTLE Eccles, do you like this being a guard game?

ECCLES Yep. It's fine. But what are you doing out here Bottle? I thought you was the navigation officer.

BLUEBOTTLE I am, but I got lated on the way to the bridge.

ECCLES Ooooooo. You should be like me.

BLUEBOTTLE Why do you say that Eccles?

ECCLES Well, since there's two of me, I got twice as much chance of getting anywhere I set out for.

BLUEBOTTLE Ere, I didn't know you was smart Eccles.

ECCLES Oh yer. I'm one of yer intermelectuals, but I don't tell no one, on account of my job.

BLUEBOTTLE What is your job Eccles?

ECCLES I'm an idiot.

BLOODNOK I say, you two guards out there. Keep quiet will you. We're trying to get some sleep in here.

ECCLES Wait a minute Major, I think I can see something.

BLOODNOK Well, you keep quiet about it, you hear? There's no one in this uniform but me.

ECCLES No, I meant outside the ship.

BLOODNOK What??? A prowler? Well, you two brave lads keep him occupied while I sneak out the back way.

SEAGOON (entering) So Bloodnok, trying to desert eh? How dare you display cowardise beforevour captain?

BLOODNOK I'm sorry. I didn't realise it was your turn.

SEAGOON Enough of these old jokes. Eccles, what's going on out there?

ECCLES Nothing.

SEAGOON Are you sure?

ECCLES Nope, but that's what the fella with the laser told me to say.

MORIARTY Curses, you have given me away. Now I must kill both of you.

BLUEBOTTLE Not so fast you naughty Moriananty man. Do you see what it is I have in my hand?



MORIARTY It's a sock full of custard

BLUEBOTTLE Yes, and I'm not afraid to use it. Drop your weapon Moriarty or you die from the dreaded custard poisoning.

MORIARTY Don't be a fool. Custard never killed anyone.

BLUEBOTTLE You ain't tasted my mum's custard.

MORIARTY All right. You've convinced me. Take that.

GRAMS ELECTRICAL ARC TYPE SOUNDS MIXED WITH FRYING NOISES

BLUEBOTTLE Ne he, my knees have gone all brown and crispy. I don't like this game. That's the last time I waste my dolly mixtures on twit writers. Exits, heartbroken and parboiled.

ECCLES Well, I'd better be getting along then.

MORIARTY Not so fast. I still need someone to open the ship's door for me.

ECCLES But I don't have a key.

MORIARTY How dare you feed me Firesign Theatre straight lines. Take that.

GRAMS ELECTRICAL SOUND AS BEFORE.

SEAGOON Blast! Both our guards gone. We'll have to abandon ship. Mr McGoonagal beam us down to the nearest planet!

McGOONAGAL But sir, the engines willna take it.

SEAGOON Why do you say that?

McGOONAGAL A writer named Ortlieb paid me to. Said it gave the script authenticity.

SEAGOON I don't wish to know that. Second Officer Willum

WILLUM Yers mate.

SEAGOON Give the abandon ship signal.

WILLUM Right mate.

GRAMS NATIONAL ANTHUM OF YACABARCOO MIXED WITH THE MARSAILLAISE.

GRYTPYPE Do you hear that Moriarty? The crew has deserted the ship. The Klingons are ready to take it over for scrap, and you've got the money there in your bag.

MORIARTY In my bag? But I gave it to you to mind.

GRYTPYPE Oh no! Quick, to the lifeboat!

GRAMS TWO WOOSHES

GRYTPYPE It's gone! Who could have taken it?

ECCLES (singing) April in Centauri. Lots of lovely money. Two bodies are better than one folks.

ANNOUNCER But what of our crew members? To what strange planet and time have they beamed themselves?

PAPERBOY Chamberlain returns. Peace in our time, he says.

SEAGOON Oh no!

ANNOUNCER It's all in the mind you know.

---o0---

1. The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the plane was the fresh air. It felt like I had been in a bubble for the last few days. The humidity was gone, replaced by a cool breeze. I took a deep breath and smiled.

2. The second thing I noticed was the sound of the birds. They were chirping and singing, filling the air with their beautiful voices. It was a sound I had never heard before.

3. The third thing I noticed was the sight of the mountains. They were majestic and towering, their peaks covered in snow. It was a sight that took my breath away.

4. The fourth thing I noticed was the feeling of freedom. I had been so confined in the city, but here, I felt like I was finally at home.

5. The fifth thing I noticed was the taste of the food. It was delicious and hearty, exactly what I needed.

6. The sixth thing I noticed was the smell of the pine trees. It was a scent that reminded me of my childhood.

7. The seventh thing I noticed was the touch of the sun. It was warm and comforting, exactly what I needed.

8. The eighth thing I noticed was the sight of the people. They were friendly and welcoming, making me feel like I had found a new family.

9. The ninth thing I noticed was the sound of the water. It was a sound that had been missing for so long.

10. The tenth thing I noticed was the feeling of peace. It was a feeling that I had never experienced before.

# SYNCON '78



Vice-chairman Jack Herman plotting his next coup. Tony Power in the background working out how best to steal Jack's hat.

*Thinks:- Wait till Keith discovers the Sennapods in his tea.*

*From left:- Blair Ramage, Van Ikin and Michael O'Brien.*

*Blair:- Mike, if you think for one moment that you can bribe me with these high class, fresh dolly mixture type sweets you're absolutely right!*





Chairman Keith Curtis selling the title deed for his grandmother at the Syncon '78 auction. Convicted on charges of aiding and abetting said crime were John Snowden (*left*) and Warren Nicholls (*right*).

# ANZAPACON

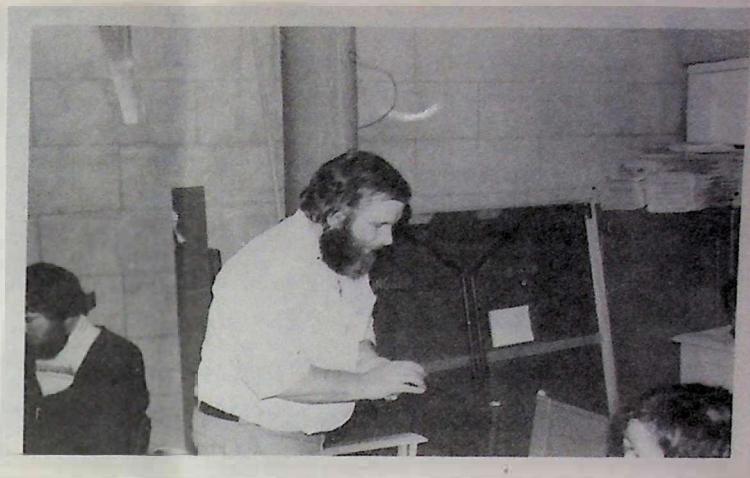
ANZAPA O.B.E. Gary Mason loading up a salvo of nostalgia.

*Thinks:- ...and in those days we didn't have to put up with lily-livered minacers either. Maybe we should bring back the lash.*



John Bangsund with bits  
of Peter Darling (left)  
and Irwin Hirsh (right).

*Thinks:- If I dealt  
Sally the three queens,  
Foyster must have had  
the straight!*



(left to right) Bruce  
Gillespie, John Foyster,  
Sally Bangsund, John Bangsund,  
Paul Stevens and half of  
Robin Johnson.  
(Background) Allan Bray and  
Leanne Frahm.

*Allan:- If the Chinese find  
out how many bnfs are here  
they might very well launch  
a pre-emptive strike on  
Melbourne.*

Kevin Dillon

*"And then the  
naughty gardener..."*



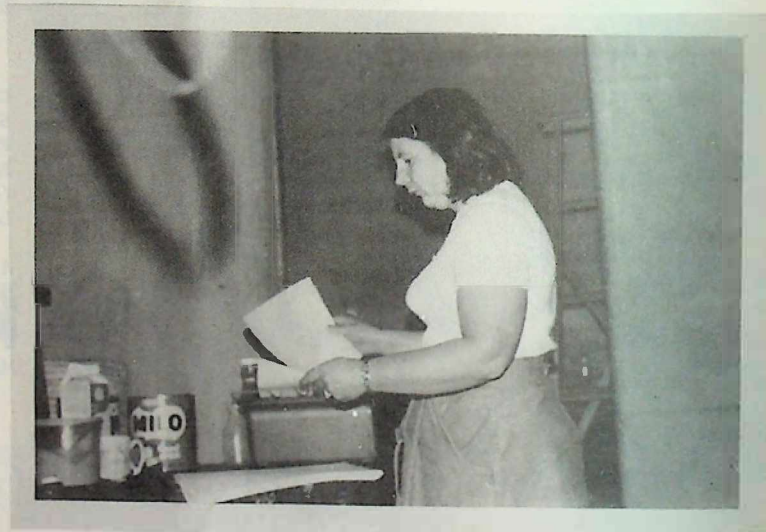


Bill Wright

*"You mean they're not awarding a Hugo for dish washing this year?"*

Elizabeth Darling

*"No Bill. This year's special Hugo is for the most legible dittoed fanzine."*



Leanne Frahm and John Rowley.

*Leanne (Thinks):- I would have thought it would have been easier to use two fingers.*



(left to right) Carey Handfield, Steph Campbell, Mich Cyn-Tang, Paul Stokes and Jenny.

Carey:- Amazing how your aim's improved since we put that photo of Mal Fraser on the dart board.

Peter Toluzzi

"Good shot Linda! Now will you come and help me get the dart out of my hand!"



(left to right) Roger Weddall (rear view), Sue Pagram, David Grigg and John Rowley.

David:- Hold it John. I thing page 296 should have gone before page 325.

(left to right) James Styles and Leigh Edmonds.

James:- And if you say one more nasty thing about CRUX.....



THE SPACE AGE "WELCOME HOME PAUL STEVENS" PARTY.

(left to right) Leigh Edmonds and Chris Johnson.

Chris:- You mean you'll even provide a model for me if I do the next RATAPLAN cover?



Merv Binns

"Me? Holding a Welcome Home Paul Stevens Party? I must be mad!"





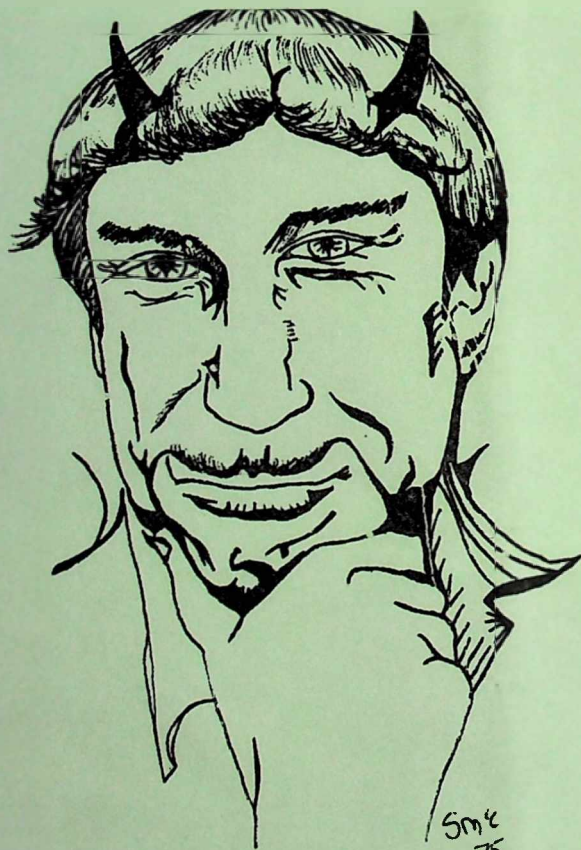
# THE OPINIONATED ORTLER

I have the honor to  
acknowledge the receipt of  
your letter of the 10th inst.  
and in reply to inform you  
that the same has been  
forwarded to the proper  
authorities for their  
consideration. I am  
sorry to hear that you  
are not satisfied with  
the result, but I am  
glad to hear that you  
are still interested in  
the matter. I will be  
pleased to hear from  
you again at any time.  
Very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
John D. Smith



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# THE OPINIONATED ORTLIEB



I guess the first thing is this issue itself. I've been meaning to put out another genzine for months now, but desire has outstripped performance. In this respect, I owe thanks to those nice faneds who keep sending me zines despite my lack of response, i.e. Brian Thurogood, Eric Lindsay, Garth Danielson, Terry Hughes, Alan Sandercock, and all those other nice people I've forgotten to mention. This zine hopes to establish a tri-yearly format, and if yearly doesn't work.....

Seriously though, I would like to put out the next one in May, but I need material, in particular artwork, but also those paragraphs on female characters in sf.

Speaking of artwork, you will note that most of the art in this issue is recycled from previous zines. I hope the artists concerned don't mind. A special thank you to Leanne Frahm for the cover and Sue Clarke for the naked lady. Goes to show that Chris Johnson doesn't have a monopoly on boobs.

# ASFAA

There has been a lot of nattering of late about the Australian Science Fiction Achievement Awards, perhaps better known as Ditmars, and I thought I might put in my ~~part~~ five cents' worth.

Part of the problem is that people aren't quite sure whether the award is a popular award a la Hugo or a committee award a la Nebula. General assumption would have it that the award is a popular award, but a couple of Convention Committees have confused matters by adding committee awards to the presentation. (Half the fuss over the Unicon IV Ditmars seems to have been that the supporters of the Ditmar as a populist award considered that the Unicon IV committee had made it a committee award.)

The categories traditionally awarded seem to lend themselves more to a committee award than to a popular award. The William Atheling Award is one that seems to arouse little interest amongst fandom in general, and I would venture to guess that the number of nominations in this category are way below nominations in any other category. The Athelings would be far better handled by a committee of interested people.

The fiction awards suffer two major shortcomings, as I see them. Firstly there is the publication problem in the International Fiction category. Seldom do a reasonable number of the books published during a certain year make it to Australia in time to be read by the fans who nominate works for Ditmars. I note for instance, from DITMAR NEWSHEET 1 published by Peter Toluzzi, that, in this year's International Fiction Category, there have already been nominations for Anne McCaffrey's THE WHITE DRAGON. Now, I'm sure the novel deserves nomination, but how many people in Australia have read the book. It hasn't been released here, and, by all accounts, it won't be for quite a while. The Australian Fiction Category fares a little better, though, if my memory serves me right, Cherry Wilder's LUCK OF BRIN'S FIVE was on the ballot last year, long before the book was published here. (Come to think of it, I don't think I've seen a copy yet.)

The short coming in the Australian fiction category is that there should be two awards. This has been stated regularly since A-Con 7, but nothing has been done yet. I would be very disappointed if there were not two Australian Fiction Categories for the 1980 Awards.

The fan awards are at least more accessible to fandom in general. They seem to fit a popular award well.

Anyway, if you wish to nominate items for this years ASFAAs, send a signed piece of paper to DITMAR SUB-COMMITTEE, P.O. BOX 146, BURWOOD N.S.W. 2134. The categories are BEST AUSTRALIAN FICTION; BEST INTERNATIONAL FICTION; BEST AUSTRALIAN FANZINE; BEST AUSTRALIAN FAN WRITER and WILLIAM ATHELING AWARD. To be eligible for nomination, an item must have been published during the 1978 calendar year. If you think your name might not be known to the administrators, mention the name of a fan or a fan group who will vouch for you. Deadline for nominations March 1st 1979. Any ideas on the awards can be sent to the same address.

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# CONVENTIONS, ZINES & THINGS #  
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WAYCON '79 March 2nd to March 5th. 1979. OZONE HOTEL Adelaide Terrace  
PERTH W.A. GOH LEIGH EDMONDS

Cost, attending (Easterners only \$10-00)  
supporting \$6-00.

Correspondence to WAYCON '79  
11 the Quaterdeck,  
Willetton  
W.A. 6155.

EASTERCON 7 April 13-16th. 1979. MELBOURNE SHERATON HOTEL SPRING ST  
MELBOURNE VICT.

Pro GOH A BERTRAM CHANDLER Fan GOH BRIAN THUROGOOD

Cost, attending \$10-00  
supporting \$5-00

Correspondence to EASTERCON 7  
P.O.Box 175  
South Melbourne  
Vict 3205.

QUASARCON June 16-18th. 1979. CAPRI CINEMA ADELAIDE S.A.

GOH DAVID J. LAKE

Cost, attending \$10-00 until April 30th  
\$15-00 thereafter.

Correspondence to THE BLACK HOLE BOOKSHOP or PAUL ANDERSON  
11 CHESSER ST 21 MULGA RD  
ADELAIDE HAWTHORNDENE  
S.A. 5000 S.A. 5051

SYNCON '79 August 10-13th 1979 THE NEW CREST HOTEL DARLINGHURST RD  
KINGS CROSS SYDNEY N.S.W.

GOH GORDON R. DICKSON

Cost, attending \$10-00 until March 1st.  
\$15-00 thereafter  
supporting \$4-00.

Correspondence to SYNCON '79  
P.O. BOX 146  
BURWOOD  
N.S.W. 2134.

NOUMENON Not a con but a zine, produced by Brian Thurogood Wilma Rd  
Ostend, Waiheke Island, Hauraki Gulf, NEW ZEALAND.

A beautiful and consistent zine.

CHUNDER John Foyster GPO BOX 4039 Melbourne Vict 3001. 8 for a dollar.  
A rolling libelous newszine. Subscribe and do your stirring.  
(John also trades for juicy bits of news.)

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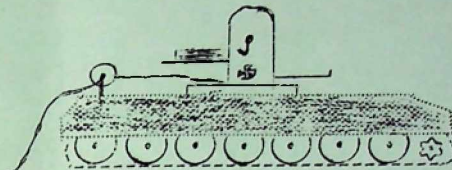
PzGst 430 Self propelled  
Duplicator

Early during World War II, German High Command realised the advantages of having instant propaganda support for their troops. The first attempt to secure this support was the PzGst 430, a standard Gestetner 130 mounted on a captured Renault tank chassis.

This marriage of parts was not a harmonious one. Initial problems matching the Renault's electrical system to the Gestetner motor were never really solved. As a stop gap measure, German power points were installed at strategic locations on the battlefield, and the 430 was provided with a 1,000 metre extension cord drum.

The 130 was not the ideal duplicator for the job either. Its registration left much to be desired, and the paper feed tended to jam under battlefield conditions. Its good features included easy replacement of ink tube and a rugged construction which was not disturbed by the harsh jolting provided by the Renault chassis.

PzGst 430 Mk. III



430s saw service during the Africa campaigns, but the sandy conditions increased the 130's jamming problems, and eventually the 430 was relegated to service with the Hitler Youth and Volks Sturm Regiments.

The 430 did, however, show High Command the potential of self propelled duplicators, and the later Sturmgestetners, and Gestetnerjagers owe much to this earlier model, as did the Allied Curate, a Roneo 500 mounted on a Lee Grant hull.

SPECIFICATIONS:-

Length: 16 ft. Width 8 ft. Height 7 ft.  
Weight 14 tons Crew 6. Range 1,000 m.  
Rate of duplication: 70 pages/min.

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Anyway, that's it for this issue. Deadline for next issue is 30th April. I will accept most things, but have a particular weakness for well executed satire.

PEPPERMINT FROG PRESS



A in '83

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