

Can ya dig it?

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SMALL

FRIENDLY

DOG

(I'll sing it again)

SFD

QUARTERLY

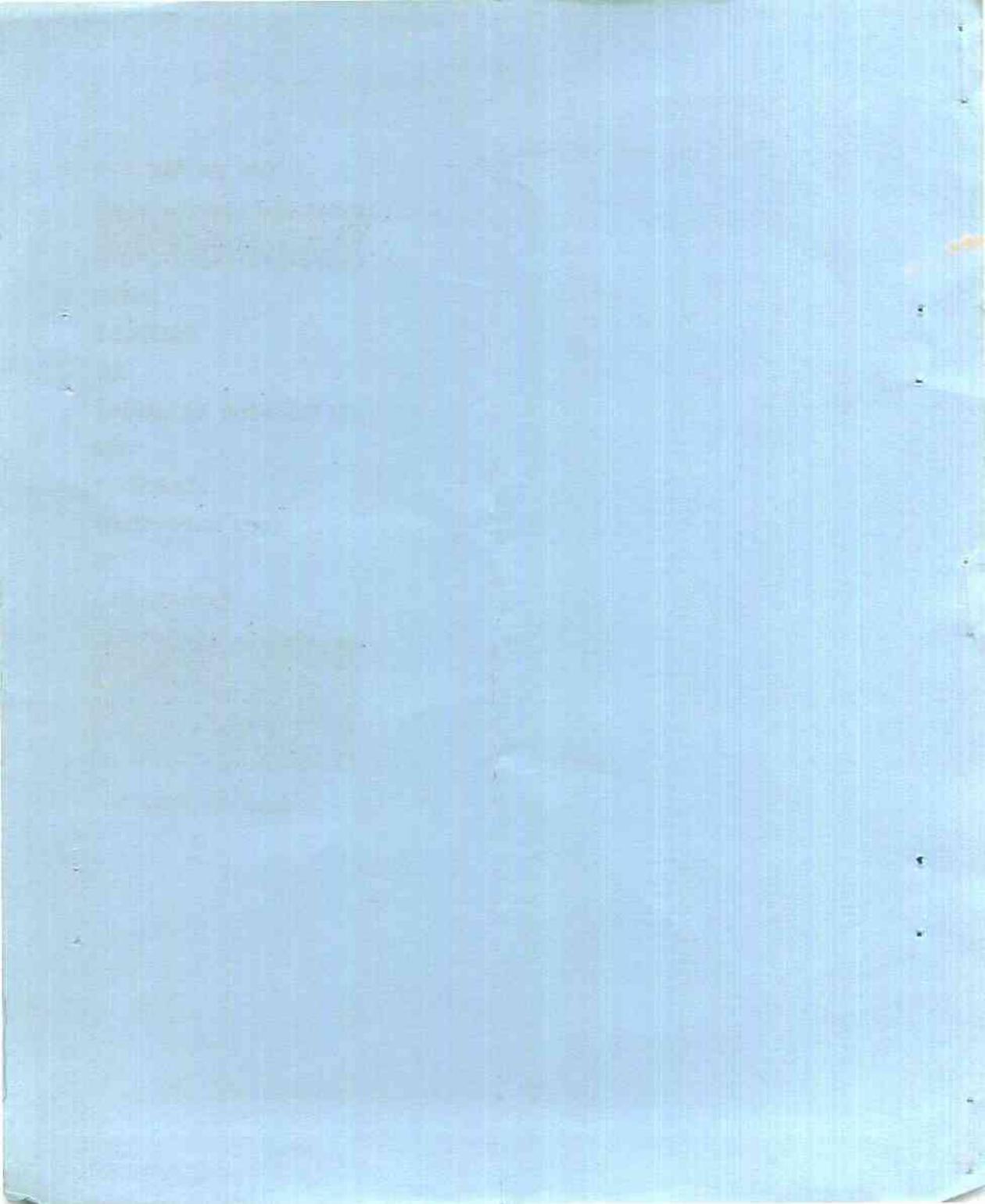
(one more time)

16

(sha-la-la)

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...like Hep, uh?



This is the colophon, I thought I'd better tell you this as not never having done one before I shall probably balls the whole thing up. Now whoever heard of anyone balling up a colophon, after all it's such a simple little thing - now if I could only remember who the hell I am and who the hell he is then we might get somewhere. Ah, yes, it's all coming back to me - I am Cas and he is my husband and we (hang on a mo I've got jam on me jeans) live at 25 Bowland Close, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire. SK2-5NW and this is Small Friendly Dog 16 (NOT REALLY IT ISN'T, IT'S REALLY INFERNO 16 but he said I'd get a painfull boot up the arse if I didn't call it S.F.D. so shush, let's just keep it between us, HE need never know) This colophon has been brought to you by the makers of Harveys Bristol Cream, to whom this zine is dedicated. No it isn't, I've changed my mind, it is dedicated to - ME - well nobody else is likely so to do. Will someone please tell me how to get out of this damn colophon - HELP.

THE DAYS OF METCHS AND DAISIES

I now know why most fan eds are drunken bums, they have to be to put out a zine. Last week I spent ghod knows how many hours addressing zines for my lazy sod, it is sooooo boring writing out Surface Mail - Printed Paper - Reduced Rate - Name - Address - time after time after time, I needed a drink to keep me sane. Unfortunately I had nothing alcoholic to sup at the time which was probably a good thing as while sober I managed to address a zine to Brian Earl Bridges, Lord knows what I'd have done if I'd been stoned.

My thing is trying to turn me into a dipso. I was quite happy not drinking, well only occasionally, but he insisted on taking me to places of ill repute and buying me booze, cheapo sherry was what I decided to drink. He kept telling me that I'd like Harveys Bristol Cream, so I tried it - I like it - trouble is that after about 3 glasses I am totally pissed out of my head. Well it's like this, I'm on yet ANOTHER DIET (yes folks it's the same old Cas) and on an empty stomach it dont take much to get one stoned. Hey I sound like Princess Anne with her one does this and one does that. One can get stuffed.

Jeezus it's much more fun typing when one is stoned. All this hyperactivity on the typer is just to show a certain nameless Canadian Fan (Hi Mike) that I can type more than five lines if I really want to.

This bloody typewriter is supposed to have been fixed but as I type I notice that it keeps loosing power, or maybe that's just me drinking too much.

You know IT IS MUCH MORE FUN doing it whilst stoned, it's more fun typing too, you don't have to bother about all the ty-poes and all the silly things you are saying. This is an experiment really as I've never typed for Inferno whilst stoned before.

He is sat int tother room watching "Hang Em High" and has just yelled for a cup of coffee, 'spose I'd better go and TRY and make one for him. I'll be back, so don't go away. Well I managed it without scalding myself and I also made Paul a cup of coffee.

By the way the above mentioned diet is known as the Glicksohn Diet, when one is tempted to eat one just says the magic words Mike Glicksohn, Mike Glicksohn and one refrains from eating (you didn't know that P.A. was on a diet, did you)

God but I'm stoned, I sit here giggling away to myslef or even to myselfd (try again Cas) to myself, got it right at last and boy am I glad that you lot out there can't see me. I bet Paul wont let me plish this in Inferno whoops I mean S.F.D., who wants a drunken wife for a co-èditor anyway. Well at least this way he gets me to write more, even though it is a load of drivel. Fifteen men on a dead man's chest, yo ho ho and a bottle of sherry.

Ve haf jyst bogged the nunch, vell he has whilst I lay on the floor with the room spinning around me. Bogging the Nunch is an Olde English Custom which involves taking one nunch whilst still asleep (the nunch that is, not you, you fool) placing her on the bog and saying, "Do wee wees" for Mummy or Dadd, depending on who is doing the bogging, so that said nunch will not wet her bed.

Oh my fiddy aunt, all of a sudden I feel incredibly sick, I think it's time I went to bed with a bucket, sounds perverted doesn't it. Goodnight all. Oooooooooooooooooohhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh.

6 AUGUST 1978 (SKEL)

It's surprising how little one really needs for a satisfying, civilised holiday. A long weekend is good enough. Add the Readers' Digest 'Book Of The Toad' and a fistful of CAMRA's 'Real Ale Guides'. Heavily season with a couple of good friends and their car and there you have it. Good weather is nice, but not essential. Towers of London are definitely not required.

Plotting one's way from pub to pub, trying to take in as many different brews as possible, at the nicer sounding pubs, in the brief allotted span of the English licensing laws.... is one of the nicer ways to see the british countryside. As one rushes through the winding lanes at sixty mph (so that Mike can get back before his failing brakes fail completely), bumping over ex-hedgehogs, weaving drunkenly from side to side as Mike yells "It's the ruts, the RUTS I tell you!"....fills one with a sense of peace and contentment and an understanding of a quieter, more placid era. Ones aesthetic sense urges one to slow down and enjoy this splendid scenery, but ones bladder cries for more speed and the imminent relief to be found at the 'Thatched Ferret', still ten bursting miles away.

Some pubs are remarkably hard to find. Take the case of 'The Four Horseshoes' at Throckenholt ("A superb Fenland pub with fresh vegetables on sale in the bar"). Needless to say, the 'Book Of The Road' which covers every hamlet in the UK makes nary a mention of Throckenholt. The required technique seems to be driving around within the border of Lincolnshire, in ever-decreasing circles until one's radiator boils and to trust that one will fortuitously coast to a halt in the pub car park. This seemed unlikely, to say the least. However, perseverance brings its own rewards and we were finally able to sample the delights(?) of Elgood's mild and bitter served by gravity (That's when they turn a tap on the barrel and hold

the glass underneath it). Sitting in the pub, chovelling our Walker's crisps we there and then decided to form a society to be comprised only of persons who had found this particular pub and who had a photograph of themselves taken outside as proof. In typical sexist fashion it was decided to found two societies, one for women (Society for Having Actually Found Throckenholt) and the 'Society for Having Investigated Throckenholt' for we superior menfolk. Thus successful women will once again find themselves SHAFTEd whilst we men will be in the SHIT as usual.

Another elusive inn is the 'Fox' at Brookbottom ("Delightful pub in a hidden hamlet"). The only directions for this pub was a National Grid reference! Knowing the approximate location we trogged off to New Mills in Derbyshire and eagley eyed the bottoms of all the valleys and roads which turned thither, for this hamlet lying, as is obvious from its name, in a valley near a brook. After giving in and asking directions we eventually came upon it, right at the top of a fuckin' hill at the termination of a (seemingly) twenty mile dead-end road. Fortunately the Robinson's mild was well worth the candle (there's inflation for you - it used to be three matches and a flint). Entertainment was provided by the quaffers themselves who had to pile out and remove their cars from the car park halfway through the evening so that the local fire engine could turn around...a weekly event so I'm told. 'The Fox' is one of those pubs I mentioned last issue, with a reasonable selection of good cheap nosh.

Another such pub, although more expensive, is 'The Highwayman' at Rainow ("A 300-year-old pub") which is almost equally hard to find. What they don't say about getting to this pub is that when one comes to the final sign entreating one to turn right to Rainow one should in fact turn left for a few hundred yards. Not only does this pub offer an excellent pint of Thwaites mixed (dark and nutty, heavy on the mild) but one of the meals on offer is 'black pudding and chips'. This is the meal immortalised in that famous hymn "And did those feet in ancient time" as one of England's "dark, satanic meals". William Blake must have eaten a lot of black puddings in his time. Fortunately Mr. Meara did not get an attack of the ruts as we plunged homeward. Small mercies, as they say.

ELI COHEN 2236 Allison Rd, Vancouver, B.C. V67 1T6 Canada.

Now at last the truth can be told: For the past year fen by the tens, nay, by the hundreds have accosted me - "Where is KRATOPHANY?" they demand. I have fobbed them off with ambiguities, with promises, with outright deceit (real soon now, I have told them). Some of my (former) best friends, whose columns I have filed away, have said harsh words to me.

Why have I endured such torment? Well, quite simply: I've said to meself, how can I put out a KRAT and cause poor Skel to suffer such severe pangs of conscience? Everytime I was about to weaken and pub my ish, I visualized the consternation this would cause in the Skelhome ("KRATOPHANY, fer chrissakes, even bleedin' Cohen has gotten another issue out before me!"); 'twould surely drive the poor man to drink (which is better than having to walk to it, admittedly, but think of the cost in petrol).

But now, with the arrival of SFD uh, QUARTERLY (it says here) I am released from my vows and can proceed forthwith to publish my fanzine (let me see, where is that review of the new FOUNDATION book? And that letter from Degler.....)

Ahem. So why am I wasting my time writing a loc when my readers (not to mention my contributors) are pounding on my door?

Well, I'll tell you. Your little publication is one of my favorite fanzines; your personality shines forth from it with such power that my language is coarsened for weeks after reading it ... wait a minute, let me rephrase that ... ah, piss on it. Suffice it to say that SFD forcefully calls my attention to the current beer strike ragin in B.C. And I don't even drink the stuff.

But. I opened this issue eagerly; and my reaction to the first paragraph was "Oh god, not another one!" There are all these otherwise perfectly decent people who feel called upon to attack feminists, that is, those who think women should be treated like people. The concept of feminism seems to me to be so clear, so just, that you would think everyone would take it

as given and there'd be no need to discuss it. Yet the Equal Rights Amendment (which simply states that equality of rights shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex) is under vicious attack in the U.S.; in Canada (where a woman was not legally a person until 1920) Irene Murdock, after 20 years of working side by side with her husband to build up a farm worth three-quarters of a million dollars, is left with a broken jaw (courtesy of said husband) and not a penny's worth of ownership of the farm; in England, I hear, a married woman's tax refund is sent to and owned by her husband, even if they are separated ... and in fandom Harlan Ellison is villified because he wants to talk about women's rights.

Susan, as you might guess, has been getting an awful lot of flack from people -- some of it concerned and articulate, but a lot of it stupid, sarcastic, and in some cases vicious. What you have to say later on is reasoned and can be discussed; but I think your flippant dedication is in poor taste. (I've had assorted arguments with friends of mine about "sexist" jokes; my personal opinion, which I believe would carry over to racist and other such jokes, is that wit can raise what would otherwise be in bad taste to a state higher than it deserves. The worse the original taste, the better the wit must be to justify it -- and as community standards change, so does what is considered in bad taste. I have a weakness for puns, and I consider Bierce's definition of "Belladonna" high art, but it does rely on a fairly negative stereotype of women.) ("In Italian, a beautiful woman; in English, a deadly poison. A striking example of the essential identity of the two languages.")

So. Susan is not here to defend herself (she is off frolicking in the San Francisco Bay Area, while I slave over a hot computer all day; these professors...), but I doubt that she would. Her tolerance for such arguments has, I'm afraid, worn pretty thin. I think your heart's in the right place, (Or is it left? Damn, how the hell am I supposed to aim this thing without an anatomy book?)

You say "Anyone is entitled to a sexist outlook to whatever degree." Right on. I agree. But "...everyone has a right to behave in a sexist manner"? Really? A judge? An employer?

A university board? The SF editor of a major publishing house? I'm sure if we worked at it we could find specific instances where such people exercised their unspoken right to behave in a thoroughly sexist manner, at great financial and other cost to the women involved. I don't want to pick at your first draft wording -- obviously what you meant was people have a right to behave, privately, however they choose (with perhaps a rider that they don't hurt anyone). I'm just pointing out that the line is usually drawn on freedom of thought and speech when it starts to become freedom of action, and one of the more insidious aspects of sexist attitudes is that they are very easy to translate into actions that can hurt people. (Good lord, how many brilliant women scientists have we lost because science was for "boys"? "Girls who want to be encyclopedias should remember that reference books never get taken out." That's one example of an underlying social attitude that's caused a lot of harm, and I expect has particular relevance to fans.)

I agree with you on private men-only clubs. I can't imagine why anyone would join one (at least, any male of the heterosexual persuasion) but I assume they will wither away from lack of membership as attitudes change. (I can see the pressures building every time I see in the papers that another woman reporter or lawyer or diplomat has been turned away at the door on her way to some routine luncheon that had been unthinkingly scheduled for one of these places; remind me to tell you about the time the President of Columbia University arranged for a private luncheon with Isaac Asimov, the Columbia Alumni Director, Asimov's old thesis advisor, ... and the officers of the SF Society. Our Vice-President, of course, was female...) Anyway, it's a free country, and these men feel a need to escape from the company of women, so let them.

Which brings us to the Women's Suite at the Worldcon. I think the key to the whole thing is that it is private -- I would object vehemently to any concom officially supporting a segregated facility (and I do think dragging in special interest groups like the SCA or the Georgette Heyer Society is a red herring, since anyone who wants to make the effort can join these things and hence qualify for their closed affairs). But a private group of fen can throw out whomever they damn well please.

The Women's Suite is an experiment; lots of people have supported it to the extent of sending money, but we'll have to see what happens at the con in terms of women wanting to use it (a number of the contributors have been male). I fear, though, that the facts are that there are quite a number of female fans who do feel a need for this sort of thing. That is, in my opinion, unfortunate, but it's not a fact that's going to disappear by attacking feminism. Susan herself says, in AMOR 15, "As long as there is a perceived need in the fan community for women-only space, let's provide it for ourselves, as private space ... and as self-destructing space, looking forward to the day when it won't be necessary." (my italics) (only I'm too lazy to change the damn type ball). In other words, just like the private men's clubs, this should wither away from disuse as soon as the need for it disappears. (Another reason why it must be privately supported, in my opinion.) And unless you can understand the need for it, I don't think you can call it sexist. (And don't look at me -- for all I know it's my breath.)

End of sermon. Gleep! Hey, don't let another year go by, eh? See you at Seacon?

13 AUGUST 1978 (SKEL)

I guess I didn't make myself clear enough...or did I. You should have a little more faith in me, Eli. You say "...obviously what you meant..." and you call it right, but if it was 'obvious', why are you hitting me over the head with all that shit I didn't mean first? Because of that earlier flippant remark?

Bad taste? Well, yes. No, HELL yes! I'm not going to spend my time in my fanzine worrying myself silly about whether something I write is or is not tasteful. I am among friends. Nobody who I actively dislike gets SFD as a trade, out of a sense of obligation. Among friends.

"Friends love your good side, live with your bad...." so the song goes. So what if I am more lived with than loved. I've always known I wasn't the nicest of people, somewhat two-faced (I find it impossible to criticise people to their

faces, and incredibly easy behind their backs, for instance) but the most wonderful woman in the world found something in me worth loving so their must be something there. So please Eli, live with my lapses. You are one of the Good Guys and I like to be friends with the Good Guys, perhaps in the hope that some of it will rub off on me by association. I have this daydream. I want to be one of the Good Guys too. I can see some of us at Seacon, rappin' away. Some relative neo turns to his friend and says, "Seethem over their? That's Eli and Susan and Terry and Mike and Bill and Daveand Don and Skel. Gee, they're swell guys." And they'd come diffidently over and hover nervously on the fringes of our conversation. We would not freeze them out. Being fine judges of human nature we'd discern a couple of kindred spirits beneath the shy exterior and welcome them into the group. They'd be a little awed at first of course, until they realised we were just like them (only better) then they'd relax a bit and maybe bathe my feet. a little, pop dates into my mouth and like that.

Fat chance!

Anyway, back at the ranch.... Susan has absolutely no need to defend herself, least of all to the likes of me. She is doing what she thinks is right, also what I think is right, for that matter. This I think is probably the main reason I am so easily fed up with the feminists. GUILT. I agree with them and with their aims. I should be up there with them and I am not. I see you and Susan (and so many others) up there on the barricades, pointing the finger, with a look of the betrayed about you, asking "Where the fuck were you?"and I have no answer. Well, no really satisfactory answer.

Basically, the fight would take more than I am prepared to give. It would take all of me. It is too important, too basic to play it. Individuals are unique. The rights of the individual to seek fulfillment are paramount and should not be thwarted by reasons of creed, colour, sex, sexual persuasion, or any reason whatsoever (into this belief is built the axiom that no individual has the right to hurt another INDIVIDUAL, that is that no individuals rights are more important than those of another, which seems to me to fully take care of all

GIL GAIER 1016 Beech Avenue, Torrance, CA 90501.

Well, let's chalk up another couple of points for Mike and Pat Meara. During one of our talks while they were here for SUNCON they rather intimated that you'd fall into a jealous blue funk for a while at having to watch them trapes off to exotic America. Then I didn't hear from you for a year.....hmmm. But no matter, you were missed and it's sure good having you back again underfoot. (You KNOW I've thought of you. PHOS 7 did arrive, didn't it?). Wasn't the page of British fans a gas? (If only their names had come out a bit darker.) The Mearas came away looking quite handsome, I thought. I sure do like them people.

Dave Rowe, Dave Rowe, Dave Rowe: Let's change the subject and talk about someone pleasant for a change.

If Nick at sixteen confessed to you that he was gay, how would you react? Cas?

Now that you have a thingie that plays cassettes, how'd you like to exchange a letter via that method?

I'm having such a wonderful summer that my worries about whether I can make/afford SEACON next year are only tentative whispers. But they all have English accents.

15 AUGUST 1978 (CAS)

You, Gil Gaier, have the great honour of having me deal with you and I am sober, honest, I can walk in a straight line. We haven't any Harveys Bristol Cream in the house - any small donations to the keep Cas sloshed fund will be happily accepted.

Blue funk indeed, it was more like a LUMINOUS GREEN FUNK, - us poorer beings did try and persuade The Mearae to pass us off as excess baggage but the rotting swines refused. We wouldn't know about the sniff, page of British fans, sniff, cos we didn't sniff, receive PHOS 7. What a quite Beastly thing to do to us, our "stiff British upper lips" are drooping somewhat.

childhood. Boys who played with dolls never were much good at football. I don't know any homosexuals and the idea does leave me vaguely uncomfortable, although I attribute this to a degree of homosexuality I recognise in my own makeup.

However, whether or not my veneer of mature tolerance will survive should he ever ask my advice about makeup, only time will tell.

7 SEPTEMBER 1978 (SKEL)

Meanwhile, back on the box,...

Today is Cas' birthday. As a present to her the TV moguls have decided to repeat 'When The Boat Comes In' and immediately following that she can switch over to the commercial channel for the first of the final series of 'The Sweeney'. Thank god for the new season.

Of late I have been succoured only by the repeat of 'I Claudius' which I saw the first time around and which lost nothing from familiarity ("sensational" would be damning it with faint praise) and "Who Pays The Ferryman" which I never saw when it was first screened and which caught my interest when I contumaciously watched the first episode this time around. Also currently being repeated is the comedy sries/serial "Don't Forget To Write" which Cas and I always refer to as "Thundering Hooves", the subtitle of the second episode. This stars George Cole (as a writer who will do anything rather than write) and Gwen Watford (as his long-suffering wife), their two almost adult children, their cleaning woman, and Francis Matthews (as their friend/neighbour/rival writer/foil).

This series definitely is better for the added familiarity of a second viewing. The humour is definitely several orders of magnitude above anything else currently being shown (with the possible exception of "The Good Life"). The characters, who initially appeared to behave too outrageously are now seen to be exceedingly true to (skelish) life. This series tugs at the chord within me which insists that everyday behaviour of everyday people is as truly alien to me as is the fantasy world of

"The Avengers". The Beeb now inform us that a second series is in production. Good for the Beeb.

Some of us are intelligent and perceptive. Some of us are wise and urbane. Some of us are gifted with valid insights.... and then again, some of us are:-

JOSEPH NICHOLAS 2 Wilmot Way; Camberley; Surrey; GU15 1JA.

I guess you'll have seen my review of this latest issue in Ian Maule's NABU 5 by now, and there's really very little that I can add to what I said there. But still, but still.....

'Blake's Sickness' was awful. The plots were juvenile in the extreme, the special effects pathetic, the sets so obviously cardboard that I have difficulty in believing that a five year old could have accepted them as being in any way "real". The standard of acting, however, was much better than it had any right to be (and certainly much better than anyone would have expected, putting the casts of 'Man From Atlantis' and 'Logan's Run' right into the shade. It'll probably get a second run, if only because there's now an action group of teenage fans busy petitioning the BBC. Apparently the confusing ending of the last episode in the series was a deliberate ploy by the producers; they had no idea of the size of their audience (market surveys apparently being beyond the limits of the BBC budget these days) and wanted to see how many irate letters and telephone calls they got before they committed themselves to a second series. I'm told that one girl who rang the producer got put through to his secretary who, when told that 'Blake's Sickness' was the subject of the call, exclaimed: "You mean somebody actually watches the thing?" Which at least gives you some idea of just how dire the BBC themselves thought it was.

Not that it was really an adult programme anyway; more of a "kidult" one, aimed at an audience that consists of all possible generations, and screened in the hours after Dad has come home from work and before the kids have gone to bed. Yes, you're right; another hideous concept pinched wholesale from American TV.

worse than their predecessors, Pan's Cripples. 'The Kenny Everett Video Show' was pretty crummy really, but the dancers, ah, the *D*A*N*C*B*R*S*.

Your comments re US television, whilst essentially correct sounded rather insular and reminded me of an occasion this summer when Alyson Abramowitz (pronounced 'w' not 'v' for some godforsaken reason known only to a certain US jewess) stayed over. We never watched TV once. After I yet again put down the TV guide with the comments "Well, there's bugger all on TV tonight." she pointed out that this seemed to have been the case throughout her entire stay in the UK and that this didn't jibe with what she'd seen us write about british TV. Son Of A Bitch! It has been a lousy summer on TV (it has also been a losy summer weather-wise, except for the brief spell Alyson was here when it was glorious). Herr Doktor von Filthengröpen was basically correct when he pointed out that our TV was not so much better than that in the US but rather less worse. There is a lot of crud on TV over here and when you get a bad season when the good shows aren't there to carry the dross it is every bit as bad as US TV is reputed to be. The highspot, for me at any rate, of the summer season has been the upsurge in the TV coverage of athletics. Track and field. Fuck the field. People jumping up and down and throwing things bores me. It's silly. People running around in circles though, that's really something. Especially as the UK now has some track stars who, if they can't be expected to actually win something, can at least be expected to be in with a chance of winning something.

One doesn't want to appear overly patriotic, but it gets awfully depressing watching ones athletes ground into the dust time after time. It's nice to win occasionally, that's why the Commonwealth Games, with their admittedly lower standards, left me with a good feeling that even the European Games (where we didn't even win the ones we were expected to win) couldn't completely nullify.. The charge I got this weekend watching Steve Ovett piss all over Henry Rono to set a world's best over two miles in the IAC/Coca Cola games was fantastic. I am not particularly patriotic, it's just that I like my team to win but whereas in soccer my team comes from Manchester, my

interest in athletics has been nurtured solely by TV where the coverage is almost entirely of International events. So, when it comes to athletics, I'm a rabid patriot.

26th September 1978 (Skel)

Of late, I have been rediscovering the joys of reading. Not just SF either. Herewith some brief (and even briefer) comments:-

McCaffrey-DINOSAUR PLANET:potentially an interesting series, but disappointing as a novel standing alone/Zimmer Bradley-THE SPELL SWORD:The 'Darkover' books have always struck me as slightly more adult versions of Norton's 'Witchworld' series, playing down the dark-secret-female-mysteries-of-the-mind angle just enough to let the SF angle carry the books. All very ordinary though until-THE SHATTERED CHAIN:the first of the series to really satisfy me/Alistair MacLean-THE DARK CRUSADER:pretty good, though not up to the standard of his earlier-H.M.S. ULYSSES:which was excellent when one finally gets into it. Both however are light years ahead of-CIRCUS which is about as abysmal as a book can be. Almost a copy, in parts, of 'Ulysses' is Joe Poyer's-NORTH CAPE:his best, with-THE BALKAN ASSIGNMENT and OPERATION MALACCA:proving inferior second and third helpings. De Camp's-ANCIENT ENGINEERS:lots of fascinating historical anecdotes, but best read in small bites over a long period, unless you find bridges intrinsically interesting.

Busby-CAGE A MAN:nice idea, lousy execution/Zelazney-DAMNATION ALLEY:not bad but poor for this author...I see the new UK edition has 'STAR WARS' written ten times as large on the cover as either the actual title or the author's name-MY NAME IS LEGION:bitty, but rather better/Ross Macdonald-THE WAY SOME PEOPLE DIE, THE BARBAROUS COAST, SLEEPING BEAUTY, THE INSTANT ENEMY:all good. The typical r-macd story involves 'a' killing 'b', raping 'c', bigamously marrying 'd' whose uncle, 'e' is really 'f' in disguise, whilst 'g' is blackmailing 'c's cousin with information about 'd's mad half-sister. Forty years later 'x' bumps into 'y', throws up on the sidewalk, and is promptly beaten to death with a blunt pommegranite by a drug-crazed 'z'. Fortunately this last takes place in the presence of Lew Archer who then unravels the whole thing. But it really is good.

James Mitchell-CALLAN and RED FILE FOR CALLAN:are excellent for anyone who's seen the series but I doubt they'd hook an innocent browser/Anthony-RACE AGAINST TIME:a juvenile that reads like one/Daley-THE DOOMFARERS OF CORAMONDE:enjoyed the hell out of this one, which surprised me as I don't usually go for this sort of thing/Vance-EMMYRIO:not quite as good as he can be, but better than he sometimes is/Dalmas-The YNGLING:Good, but not as good as I remembered it/Ed McBain-LIKE LOVE,EIGHTY MILLION EYES, HAIL, HAIL, THE GANG'S ALL HERE, HE WHO HESITATES, JIGSAW, LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE DEAF MAN, DOLL:another first rate series, these 87th precinct stories/Hershman-THE CRASH OF 2086:fucking awful/Anderson-TAU ZERO:poor-THE MAKESHIFT ROCKET:poorer/Sheckley-THE GAME OF X:enjoyable spoof thriller, less spoofy than some.

Meredith-THE SKY IS FILLED WITH SHIPS:fuckinger awfuller/Herbert-CHILDREN OF DUNE:not as bad as the previous volume. Could anything be as bad as the previous volume?/Niven and Pournelle-THE MOTE IN GOD'S EYE: engrossing, but somehow Niven's longer works never hang together for me, after the manner of a jigsaw puzzle that has been put together by throwing all the pieces down into a neutron star. It's together, but it ain't right/John D. MacDonald-A KEY TO THE SUITE, THE ONLY GIRL IN THE GAME, WEEP FOR ME:he get's you involved with the characters, all of whom are real. Unfortunately there will come a time when I have read all John D. MacDonald's books several times. Such a thing should never happen, so get writing John/Asimov-TALES OF THE BLACK WIDOWERS, MORE TALES OF THE BLACK WIDOWERS:low-key entertainment...but you keep right on reading them/Trout-VENUS ON THE HALF SHELL:boredom on the half brain. One expects more of Farmer than this. The only Farmer novel I have been unable to finish. Now here comes....

Kenneth W. Hassler-A MESSAGE FROM EARTH:Unbelievably bad. Full of gems like:- "Whaddlyouhave?" she asked.

He fished a menu from between two bottles of Scrivo Hot Sauce and looked it over. "I'll have a kalo sandwich, over light. Gimme a glass of gergle juice and a slice of hipsher on the side."

"Asco or wheatum bread?"

"Asco. Light on the mustard."

.....and so the scene is set.....a truckers cafe on an alien

planet...our hero singlehandedly sent to defeat the warlord of a planet bent on galactic conquest...Earth's last hope. realising this, his companion in the cafe reacts....

"A look of awe spread over Venner's face. He took another gulp from the glass of Gerpl."

Wouldn't we all.

28 OCTOBER 1978 (SKEL)

I've decided to write a novel. The time is ripe for a fresh treatment of the victorian heroine.

"You thrilled to 'Little Dorrit'. Now, in the great tradition of 'Jane Eyre' comes that shattering new novel, 'Emma Royd'. Thought by even her friends to be a "A pain in the Ass" or a "Right little bleeder", she was always in the shit. A painfully moving story. The author really piles it on. Right up to the final denouement when she meets with Sir Gerry. Now a major motion picture starring Perry Tonitis as 'Sir Gerry' and the electrifying Jenny Raytor as 'Emma'...."

But then, do I want to be shunned like Ian Williams? Come to think of it, do I want to be anything like Ian Williams? Oh well, from the less pronounced to the less pronounceable.

R. I. BARYCZ : 16 Musgrove Road; New Cross Gate; London.

...I have come to the conclusion that Ms Wood has been consistently misquoted. What she really said about women-only space at a convention was about women getting together "in a supportive and non-sexual atmosphere".

Women in a group are very supportive, very sisterly. Introduce a man into such a group and be he bald, deaf, toothless and a wrinkled ninety, no matter --- out will come the knives in an orgy of subtle backstab. A case of 'You may be my sister but, paws off, I saw him first, he's mine etc'. It is called instinct or whatever and it is what keeps the human race a-going. When you come to think of it, what

As a confirmed Paster-In of stuff in fanzines I applaud the lager label on the cover. Even though I suspect you probably bought the things which goes slightly against the purist streak in me.

O. Only in so much as I bought the brewing kit (which I did use) which comes complete with bottle labels (which I do not use - at least not for sticking on bottles). ••

I've never paid for the things I've augmented XENIUM with; I've stolen some, acquired others, or bought something that later provided a lagniappe for my fanzine. Still, the very next issue should contain things that were actually bought and paid for, even though not because I wanted them in a fanzine, so I can't be too outraged. And the mere fact that you took the time to do it is worthy of commendation. I think I'll buy you a membership in Paste In Special Stuff: Ornament Fine Fanzines out of appreciation.

Cas's aberrant behaviour with regard to travelling is in no way unusual. I've noticed similar illogical action on the part of thousands of travellers. The most astounding, to me, example of the failure of modern man (in the non-sexist sense) to adapt to travel occurs in the line-ups that invariably form in airport departure lounges. All it takes is one person to walk up to the door that leads from the lounge to the plane and within minutes two-thirds of the waiting passengers will be standing in line at the doorway, despite the fact that it may be fifteen minutes until boarding time and everyone has a reserved seat anyway so they could just as easily remain seated in comfort until almost everyone else has boarded, then amble aboard without the inconvenience of standing or lining up at all. Cas's desire not to miss her stop is another is another example of the in-bred fear many people seem to have of current technology; that is, the terror that they'll somehow or other be left behind. Personally I enjoy the best chance to relax with one more sip of brandy too much to allow myself to be hurried up just to wait.

You are by no means alone in being susceptible to almost unconscious mimicry of accents and actions. I've always done that myself, and know numerous other fans with a similar pred-

ilection for putting their feet in their mouths. We recently had an unexpected visit from Waldemar Kunning and after five of us had dinner and were headed for the car to go to a small local convention I was stupified to hear myself say, "We vill now all go to ze hotel und ve vill haff a goot time" in one of those exaggerated Nazi accents so common to Allied war films. Waldemar was gracious enough not to comment (or perhaps he didn't hear my gaffe) but I felt even smaller than I actually am. And yet it was entirely unconscious on my part. I just hope I never meet anyone with a cleft palate...

29 OCTOBER 1978 (SKEL)

You must have felt about as embarrassed as I felt after putting a similar sort of line ("Ve haff vays of makink you enchoy yourselves") in the MANCON 5 programme booklet, when Leroy Kettle pointed out to me that "Silverberg", our GOH, was as Jewish a name as one could get.

C.W.B., Jr. 713 Paul Street, Newport News, Va 23605, U.S.A.

I enjoyed the film of MASH, but never got into the TV show - I watch less and less TV. Maybe I will watch a few of the BATTLE STAR GALACTICA (which I hear is already out in Canada as a film) to see if Lorne Greene is really as dumb as a starship commander as I suspect he will be.

The idea that "boys don't play with dolls" is very local and limited, both in time and space... Even in the days before GI Joe and other action doll toys intended for boys, no one thought anything of it if a small boy had a teddy bear. I can't recall ever having any strong attachment to any such thing myself - and look what happened, I grew up to collect typewriters...

What is 1990 about? (Also) 'The Hitch-hiker's Guide To The Galaxy'. I never heard of the book either.

AH, YES, WELL...

The book, 'The Hitch-hiker's Guide to the Galaxy' is a

non-existent book about which the Boeb made a radio series (Hollywood would have been proud of them). '1990' was merely an up-date of 1984 (in spades) as should be obvious from the title.

Whilst dissappointed by the film, the TV show MASH is the only really funny US TV comedy show since Dick Van Prycke who was himself the first since Bilko. But, I ask myself.....

.....whose fault is this? Increasingly nowadays I find myself watching TV with the thought "Would Terry Hughes be laughing himself silly over this too?" or "How funny would Mike Glicksohn think this was?" Or, to put it another way, just how much of the humour in a US TV show do I miss, simply because I am from a different milieu? If I, with an identical capacity for humour, had been brought up in Spokane, would 'All In The Family' seemfunnier (ie would it be even vaguely humorous)?

Apropos of nothing in particular let me list the good TV programmes currently being shown over here (US shows are underlined):-

BBC1: Dr. Who : Film 78 : James Burke's Connections :
The Fall And Rise Of Reginald Perrin : Ebu's Broadcasting Com-
pany : Tomorrow's World : The Good Life : Going Straight :
Target :

BBC2: The Old Grey Whistle Test : And Now The Good
News : Monty Python's Flying Circus : MASH : When The Boat
Comes In : Horizon :

ITV (Granada): Sesame Street : The Professionals :
The Sandbaggers : The Sweeney : Columbo :

Which break down as follows:-

KTDS: Dr.W : EBC : SS : ARTS:F 78 : SCIENCE: JBC : TW :
H : COMEDY: TEARORP : TCL : GS : ANTGN : MPFC : M : COPS &
(a little bit) SPY: T : TP : TS : TS : C : MUSIC: TOGWT :
DRAMA: WTBCI :

Not a lot of good US stuff on the british box these days. Mind you, a lot of the british stuff is repeats, or is due to finish soon (rogetfully, in the case of 'The Sweeney' for the

last time as the stars want to quit while they're ahead...a novel concept this, in these days of the ultimate milk).

I've just finished Pohl and Kornbluth's 'A Town Is Drowning' which was quite satisfying and somewhat before its time. Filmed back when it was written it would have made a pretty good disaster movie but after Towering Earthquakes it would seem a bit tame I suppose. Almost all the dying is done offstage too, which would call for a lot of re-writing these days. Still and all, it would have been a natural for filming way back when. I wonder if that's why they wrote it. It was the only non-SF book they wrote, wasn't it? Was it to have been the one that made them their pile? Do Pohl and De Camp ever get together over a beer and console each other that it is better to be ahead of one's time than behind the times?

DAVE ROWE 8 Park Drive; Wickford; Essex; SS12 9DH.

A handbag! A handbag! That, dear sir, was a shoulder holdall, altho' I suppose it would be too much to expect a drunken sop like you to notice the difference. So, thanks very much for casting aspersions about me and if we ever meet again I'll scratch your eyes out! (Anyway, it's far more butch than Chris Priest's.)

ITV are recording a new Quatermass serial. Unfortunately they say his character will be "up-dated". I only hope Nigel Kneale knows what he's doing.

How could you not like "Hitch-hiker's guide To The Galaxy"? (Mind you, you did like Howard Schuman's "Amazing Stories" and "Blake's 7" didn't you? And Cas prefers "Omega Man" to "I am Legend"! Grrrr! What's your opinion of "Plan 9 From Outer Space?") Back to 'H-H-G'; I really enjoyed that thing. Some gags were dry but when it made me laugh - which it did regularly - I was really shaking with laughter. I can't remember any radio programme so funny since "I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again." The exaggerations were so colossal yet lead to even more outrageous consequences. Peter Jones was at last given the perfect role for his talents, which are too often miscast, and the radiophonic workshop, instead of being

its usually obtrusive self with its standard 'electric sounds', really went to town and came up with different and original sound effects for nearly every character, creature, artifact and situation. Even the choice of that disjointed banjo theme tune was perfect. But surely for a fan the one thing that really made that show was Marvin The Paranoid Android. Isn't he the very tin and diode personification of a certain friend of ours who mumbles a lot and always wears black?

I really can't express too clearly (((that's unusual))) what a flaming great joy it is to see Small Friendly Dog again, altho' it struck as being a fill-gap (I've been out so long I better get some in, no matter what it's like) and it did ramble all over the place.

5 NOVEMBER 1978 (SKEL)

Don't you wish you were lovely like me...

Dave went on to say nice things about SFD 15, but the last paragraph above seems to cover the general view as told and related to me by one and all: friends and relatives, wives and ~~lots~~ women down the road with big knockers ~~who~~ I've never even spoken to HONESTLY CAS!

Well..... FUCK YOU ALL!

The last SFD had the accent on the small. Okay. But... there wasn't a damn thing in it that was filler, pubbed for the sake of pubbing. Some turds from Camberley might consider it dated. Again, Okay... but I've never seen a trip report that wasn't and I wish that some of the stuff in this issue had struck me as being as 'good' as some of that trip report. Look, it was different to previous SFDs, true, but different doesn't necessarily mean inferior. As Cas keeps pointing out to me, I still haven't rediscovered that blend of innane insanity, the SFD that was. Maybe I'm too anxious. I want to get back, but can you ever go back?

I did ask, some time ago, for people not to review SFD. Ostensibly this was for the reason that I couldn't keep up

23 FEBRUARY 1979 (SKEL)

Boy, did those two stencils take some typing!

WILD FENNEL 15 : Pauline Palmer:2510 48th St;Bellingham;
WA 98225; USA.

Okay, Pauline, okay. Despite your constant attempts to polarise your readership into some cosmic CAT versus DOG controversy I have heretofore remained aloof (awoof?). Not, I hasten to add, because of some lack of commitment, but rather to refrain from offending some fannish friends who other than a warped liking for cats exhibit no other outward signs of cretitude. However, a man must do what a man must do (go to the pub, usually) so..... I HATE LOATHE AND DESPISE CATS. Still, in taking this stand I must admit to being my mother's son.

My mother hated cats. No, those four words are insufficient to convey the depth and intensity of my mother's feelings towards all things feline, and I, nurtured at her bosom, drank the bitter milk of this detestation. Now I am truly my mother's child. Whilst I would not actually cross the street in order to kick a cat this is more a comment on my own laziness rather than a sign of any mellowing of my feelings towards the ~~fluffy~~ ~~fluffy~~ ~~fluffy~~ ~~fluffy~~ sweet, dear creatures.

Mother lived in fear. A wild, unreasoning fear, as even my childhood self could realise. She was convinced that were she to leave the back door open for but an instant and relax her vigilance for that merest of moments and in the twinkling of a slitted eye a clutch of cats would rush upstairs and piss on her bed. Hah! I, a child of a much more enlightened age (didn't parents seem *OIE* when you were very little), could laugh, though not openly, at this superstitious old-wives-tale. But, on one occasion when she was out and I was left with strict instructions to guard against this ludicrous threat, I buggered off without properly closing the back door and...yes a cat did indeed effect an entry. Yes, it did too go upstairs and...yes, yes, it pissed on the fucking bed. I swear the sodding thing must have lain half its life crouched round the corner just waiting for its chance. Upon mother's return I was soon made

painfully aware that in respect of cats, logic and reason stood for naught and that MOTHER KNOWS BEST. From that day forth I have not been friends with cats.

Shortly after my parents first moved to Offerton we were adopted by a stray dog. Laddie, according to his identification disc, came from just the other side of Liverpool. A bit of a puzzle this, as the only thing just the other side of Liverpool is the Irish Sea. Laddie (who incidentally was a female, but we never got to the bottom of that either) was at least 90% collie and yet an obvious mongrel. He (?) maintained a perfect cover doing all the usual doggy-type things. He'd take me for walks and let me throw sticks for him and all that sort of shit. Butter would not melt in his mouth (only an idiot would feed a dog on butter anyway) but, occasionally he'd stop out all night. Next however, a digression to set the scene.....

Offerton in the fifties..... Offerton is a three-phase community; Old Offerton, middle-period, and then New Offerton. Pretty obvious really. Old Offerton has always been there. In the beginning God created Offerton and only then did he stop to wonder where he was going to put it. Don't believe all you read in the Bible. The world was created on the third day as a sort of cosmic handbag for him to keep Offerton in, and anything else he might happen to create if he felt like it. Old Offerton was a mixture of mini-mansions in reasonably spacious grounds and terraced houses sprawling out along the main track between Stockport and Poland (must have been, there was bugger-all else out that way at the time). No one in old Offerton could have conceived of Middle-Period Offerton. Obviously. You can't conceive in the middle of a period. (You should've seen that one coming) In the thirties the Urban Sprawl came to Offerton.

There were banners up in the streets. Posters proclaimed it from walls. "Urban Sprawl comes to Offerton". Everybody rushed out in the streets to see. They thought it was a Rock Group. Young girls screamed and fainted, partly from hysteria and partly because this was during the days of Stockport's infamous 'flashing' mayor START AGAIN SKELTON!!!!

Urban sprawl came to offer-ton. Large estates of semi-detached suburbia giving way, with time to council houses. This was the Offer-ton of my youth. My parents bought a semi just around the corner from where the privately owned houses gave way to rented council property. Now a feature of these council houses was that they all had a brick-built single story out-building. This was a storage shed and a built-in recess for the dustbin. There were roads of these houses, all with these out-buildings, and these outbuildings were great for cats because they had flat roofs. Cats could get up there and dogs couldn't. Cats tended to have a greater life-expectancy if they lived on the council estate, hence there were a lot of cats there when Laddie (remember him/her) came on the scene.

It was quite a while before we discovered what Laddie did when he stepped out all night. What is the traditional thing to do with a cat when one goes to bed? Yes, you put the cat out. So there it was. At night the outside world was full of cats whose immediate reaction, when threatened, was to leap up onto the shed via the dustbin, where no dog could reach them.

Where no dog but Laddie could reach them. Laddie was apparently the canine equivalent of Superman. With one mighty bound etcetera..... This would normally have been no problem as cats are not stupid. As Laddie went up one side the cat would come down the other and make for the nearest tree, reverting to older survival habits. Only they hardly ever made it because Laddie had somehow pulled up with a small killing machine, a terrier, which would be waiting around the other side for the cats as they came down.

Between them they completely de-catted two entire streets before Laddie was traced to us and Dad took the only course open to him. He traced the previous owners and Laddie was soon on his way back to Liverpool.

My mother would often recount this 'anecdote' with such glee that tears of mirth would trickle down her cheeks and she would rock back and forth in her chair in an ecstasy of delight. Mother does not like cats.

ED CAGLE - Star Route South; Box 00; Locust Grove; OK 74352.

I envy you your public houses. Except for private clubs, a mixed drink cannot be served in the state where we live and the alternative is what can most charitably be called a beer joint. Here they serve US made beer with less than 3.2 alcohol content, and that alone is enough to cause terminal depression. If food is served in a beer joint it is usually restricted to some unimaginable specialty of the house, or cardboard replicas of food from a vending machine. Vending machine food you can imagine. Specialties can be anything from highly salted and spiced meat that is given away to promote beer drinking, to overpriced but palatable b-b-q ribs or brisket.

An unusual item is sold by a guy who has a brother in the turkey business, who provides deep-fried turkey testicles. There are many variations, but most can be eaten off a napkin, with no need for plates and things. There is a reason for this. People tend to throw things when a fight starts, and if there is anything in all creation that is equally as inevitable as a baby crapping his diaper, it is that sooner or later, in an Oklahoma beer joint, a fight will start. And until that aspect of beer joints is eliminated, they are destined to remain the lowest of dives.

9 MARCH 1979 (SKEL)

Apparently it is not just the corn that gets as high as an elephants ocular.

I've never witnessed a brawl at a hostelry, possibly as I only tend to go into pubs either at lunchtime or early of an evening when, thanks to that great nonsense rhyme of Edward Lear's, the English Licensing Laws, nobody has had time to get drunk enough to start a fight. Evense, I do have my moments, and have actually managed to get myself barred from one local tavern, The Hatters' Arms in Marple. I tell this fact to hard-drinking loons that I occasionally come into contact with and they are impressed. I do not tell them that it was because I complained to the landlady that my crisps were the wrong flavour and argued for ten minutes before she slammed my 7p on

NOBODY EXPECTS THE LARGE, LOUD AND EXTROVERT CAS

If I wasn't so sweet, charming and ladylike I'd tell that SMALL, SNIVELLING SNOT-HEAP, Williams what I thought of him but I have better things to talk about. Small, hairy, Peruvian things. Once upon a time a lovely fluffy little Gwine Pig named Glick came to live with us (remember, I mentioned her in the last ish). Well, last October we provided her with a companion which was supposed to be another female (but because of a bit of a cock-up on the Guinea Pig front, she turned out to be a 'he'). Anyway, this companion was named Guinness (what else could you put a Glick with but Guinness...we didn't think Chivas was a very good name for a Gwine Pig). I had various explanatory talks to my furry friends telling them that as they were not married they musn't do rude things but the randy little sods did not take a blind bit of notice of Auntie Cas and four weeks ago to this very day Glick produced three gorgeous Gwine Piglets. One female and two males, so at least we have two little Glick sons on the premises. Soon one little Glick son will be off on his travels to Wales. Pete Presford's daughter Justine is to become his owner. Little Glick daughter is to be sold to the local pet shop and hopefully other little Glick son will stay with us (if me and my gang can ~~blabber~~ persuade Paul that he really does want us to have a third Gwine Fig, which is all sweet, cuddly and aah). We already have a name for him, Vomit (well, he is by Guinness out of Glick). Hey! Have you noticed anything different? I'm not stoned. Gil, Gil Gaier, are you there? You no doubt will be wondering where the cassette is that we promised earlier in the zine. We did do one, honest, just after Chrimble whilst Mike and Pat were here. Unfortunately we were all so stoned that it came out an utter shambles and the other three wouldn't let me send it. (And if I hear one snigger from you Mike Glicksohn, when you read the bit about me "clamming up" when a microphone is put in front of me I'll set Guinness on you, or, worse still, Ian Williams). You all want to know what I've been doing with my life lately, don't you? You don't give a damn? Well, it's like this...I get up at 5.00 am, do some housework until 6.15, do my exercises, at 6.30 take him a cup of coffee. Between then and 7.45 I getdressedgetkidsbreakfastsreadymakesurekidsarereadyforschoolsaygoodbyetohusbandscreamandshoutatkidsfornotgettingreadyfeedgwinepigsleavehomeandwalkthreemilestowork. I then do a full day's work at the ~~blabber~~ office, come home and die. A woman's work is NEVER done.

