



STATE OF THE ART

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# STATE OF THE ART



## STATE OF THE ART 8

(c) Taral Wayne, May 1986, A Taralble Mistake 163, from 1812-415 Willowdale Ave, Willowdale Ontario, m2n 5b4, Canada, phone (416) 221 3517.

Produced for Rowbrazzle 10, and for a few even funnier animals than those found in Brazzle.

### WAIVE GOODBYE TO THE LAST ISSUE

As some of you may have noticed, the reproduction of the art folio in the last SotA was less than ideal. The fault was in buying that particular kind of paper, which was the cheapest, decent white that I could buy in a hurry. But since it wasn't mimeograph paper, it didn't take the ink very well. Art with less black, and without dense screens would have worked fine. The wood-burning spaceship presented no problems, nor did the Bambioid commandoe a couple of issues ago. Next time I'm going to try a photocopy place downtown, near the UofT campus. They do 3¢ and 5¢ copying, which brings xerox within my reach. The other possibility is that I'll suddenly get rich, and thereafter have all my Brazzle zines and New Toy done in four-colour offset. Don't let's hold our breath though, shall we?

### A MINORITY REPORT ON THE LAST FEW MAILINGS OF BRAZZLE

Well guys, I know that all of you are satisfied and inspired by each mailing of Brazzle as it arrives in the mail. But for myself there's been decreasing excitement with each mailing, as the probable contents become more and more familiar. Many of the members have on-going series which offer no surprises. There will be so-many adventure strips, so-many stories about fox bondage, so-many sketch pages from members

who are too busy that month, and one or more guaranteed gaffs by members who loose their heads and call somebody a scuzball, or claim to be ultra-professional born-again conservative misunderstood geniuses, getting everyone's dander up. It's virtually routine.

"Well, why did you join a comics apa?" I seem to recall John Cawley asking me sometime ago. Or words to that effect. (I was brain-dead at the time Schirm asked me to, how's that? Oops. My turn to gaff.) Actually, the question is irrelevant, but I knew somebody'd bring it up. Now let's go on to something more productive than "love it or leave it".

"What might be done to improve Brazzle in your eyes?" Glad you asked that rhetorical question. I could want the apa to be crazier, less earnest than a lot of the members seem to be. I'd like to be surprised by something I've never seen in any mailing before, like Brazzle play-money, or funny-animal cut-outs, or a cover by R. Crumb, or a fold-out poster, or a board-game, or a comic strip about Brazzle members... Not every mailing lacks a surprise. Among the best were those that came with Equine the Uncivilized and Albedo. Dave Bennett should be commended as well, for the cells tipped into his contributions. But by and large, you have to dig pretty deep in the Crackerjacks for a prize.

The latter suggestions -- all made off the top of my head, by the way -- touch on another point I want to make. The apa lacks interaction between members. Few enough members write mailing comments at all, and fewer still write at any length. A two or three line comment is typical. And though I admit that I haven't been counting the pages, I have the impression that over the last mailing or two the number of mailing comments has shrunk. (This issue of SotA for instance.)

Mailing comments are the normal panacea of any mailing apa, though. Brazzle can do so much more than most apas... and doesn't. We can not only write to each other, we can draw to each other, about each other, and with each other. Yet the examples are relatively few. We don't interact at anywhere near the level we're capable of, preferring, I suppose, a Rowbrazzle that's a comic magazine, or anthology, of un-

related stories. There've been notable exceptions to this generalization too, of course. Jerry Collins, Mark Wallace (to the extent that he uses Jerry's characters), and Richard Konkle's cover on the third mailing come immediately to mind, and there are others, such as Penguin Island.

Let's not misunderstand me, though. I'm not calling for mailings that are 100% in-jokes, jams, gossip, and mutual back-patting. If that was how things were, I'd be writing a Minority Report calling for more professional strips and sketch pages. I prefer variety, a roughly equal balance of material, and above all a restless instinct for originality.

Surprise me next mailing.

#### A FEW WORDS TO OUR SPONSORS

A number of people have written lately, some to remark on New Toy, (my generally available or general interest zine), others just to say hello. I feel I owe them a gesture of thanks, so, thanks to:

Charles Garofalo, who thinks Schirm's illos in New Toy are pretty wild, and wonders what fandom will be like in the future. "I get the vision of a lot of prim and proper elderly citizens sitting around and talking how wild they were back in whenever and how great those days really were." Actually, fanzine fandom is much like that now... He also likes the gag in New Toy where Saara is puzzled by a comparison of her ears with Elfquest. "I liked the Elfquest gag," he says. "As I've heard people say, upon seeing some of Saara's pictures, 'Oh no, not another cute elf!' Pointy ears do bring out the prejudices of Jersey fandom." Elfquest brings out my prejudices too...

Mark Ashworth, who asks what about Schirm's and Collin's art so appeals to me that I operate New Toy as virtually a closed shop for them. He was hoping for pointers, and got an answer which I hope helps.

Tom Linehan, who has the surprising news that Disney (Touchstone) is producing "Who Censored Roger Rabbit"! "I saw a still from the film in a French magazine. I didn't recognize the actor. Roger looked like the hare at Alice's Tea Party but with longer ears! And a trench-coat. As you've figured out already, it's gonna be live action and animation." Why do I have a horrible feeling that it can't work?

Steve Galiacci, who sends \$2 for the next issue and likes what I "can do with a little hint of pelvic form and such -- and with such minimal line-work." Aw, shucks. I only work hard at it... Seriously, money from a professional is the sincerest compliment, and if ever I have any of my own I'll send you some. Steve also took the liberty of a small sketch, which I've inked as closely as I could so it can be printed here.



Jim Groat, last and far from least, who wrote to say he was happy things were on the right foot again. He provided a detailed inventory of his scary home arsenal, and mentioned "sQuad", an apa started by a friend of his for the militarily minded. I had to decline Jim's invitation. Unfortunately fanac takes up about 10% of my time as it is, and the situation is becoming critical. It was no time to get involved in another apa. But after I wrote him, it occurred to me that if Jim wanted, he could copy what he wanted from my Brazzle zines. Merely send me your zine when you do that. Hope that isn't too much like eating my cake and having it too. Comment? And Jim sent a sketch too, also printed here.



#### MAILING COMMENTS ON BRAZZLE 9

Louis Scarborough Nice stuff. I'm certain that other Brazzlers will take the trouble to be more generous with their praise than I, this time. I hope. The brevity of most mailing comments in this apa is not a virtue when you have egoboo coming... It interests me that you're using a freer hand, I think, in these drawings than in earlier ones. It enhances the differences in our art.

Dave Bennett Doing "The Heart of Dixie" in funny animal form is debatably calling the shots wrong, to coin a phrase. Some friends of mine that I described "Dixie" to thought it wouldn't work. On the other hand, they saw how it might work when they read the script. I think it will, obviously, but here's the reasons for it: For one thing, a funny animal treatment lightens the tone. (At the same time, perhaps lending the funny animal form a bit more depth than it's accustomed to.) Also, the convention gives me license to simplify the story and background more than I could with a human cast, producing a more concise effect. Did I sit and figure this out ahead of time? Naw. Like most artists, I do things by instinct, and figure out what I did later. I drew the picture of Dixie and wrote the story the way I did because it felt right to me, wouldn't be the same person or story in any other form.

"Unca Buck" Schirm in a tie? Did I ever meet this man, with the vague memory and egghead conversational style, or was that some other marc schirmeister, 1555 Vista Lane, Pasadena?

John Spiedel Ah, deso! "The Many Perils of Pauline" has led me to make an embarrassing mistake. Ron Sutton is not the only honourable member of Brazzle with an artist's interest in ducks, and whose splendid vocabulary includes the derogation "bozo". Shimata!

Steve Martin Yeah, I could rip Disney off for Tinker Bell with ease. Her saucy manners appeal to me, even if her conversation is somewhat limited. I'd have trouble with the light-bulb you mention though. How on earth do you draw one of those wobbly-filament things? That sort of motion is something I find difficult to catch and combine with my otherwise realistic drawings.

Schirm sent me one of the soft plastic, life-size figures of Tinker Bell a couple of years ago, after he found I'd been looking for one for ages. I cut the base off, painted her in life-like colours, and replaced her wings with transparent ones cut from clear acetate. Then gave her a book-shelf to inhabit. A few years ago I did a drawing of Tinker Bell for a fanzine called Mythologies. You probably remember

that Hook tied her to a candle. I allowed the candle to be lit, and drip warm melted wax down her nubile little body, until the wick went out and Tink solidified into the candle. The candle is suggestively phallic as well. "What does it mean?" I dunno if I want to be told. I don't necessarily endorse everything that I draw.

Everbody Else            Work! Slave away at your  
   drawing-boards! Maybe I'll  
have kind words for you next time...



## Interview with Rocky the Flying Squirrel

SotA    The first thing you might as well tell us, Rocky, since I know it'll come as a surprise to some of the readers, is what *does* the J. stand for?

Rocky    Jasmine. You'd think with my obviously girlish voice that the little tots in TV land would have figured out that Rocky J. was a girl squirrel. Just so that you don't ask, I've been a female ever since I can remember. My folks told me that I was a girl at least as far back as September 9th, 1925, when I was born.

SotA    In Frostbite Falls Wisconsin?

Rocky    That was just some gag of Ward's. Maybe he was born there, if there is such a place, but I was born in a poor section of central park, New York City. I grew up in the middle of the depression, you know, and had to beg for peanuts as a little girl.

SotA    Were people calling you Rocky even then?

Rocky    Oh no. I picked that name up in flying school, where I was... well, let's start from the beginning. I'd been a tom-girl all my life, and when the war began I joined the Woman's Army Corp so's to run away from home. Since I was only 16 I had to lie, without knowing how useful a skill it'd be later. From the WAC's I transferred to the new Army Air Corps, hoping to get nearer to some action. But all I did was office duties at Edwards ((Air Force Base, in California)). Then I got fascinated by flying, but I was still a WAC, you know, and couldn't transfer to active duty. What I did was borrow fatigues from one of the supply sergeants, who was also a WAC, and dress like one of the boys attending flight class, whenever I could. I guess I didn't expect I really would, but by the end of '42 I qualified for my wings. By then it was an open secret among the other students that one of us was a bit "odd", of course. Once they nearly set me up to date myself! After that, whenever I was asked how my romantic life was, I'd just answer, "rocky, rocky as usual," and that was what they started calling me, "Rocky". It was only natural that the flight instructors wondered who the quiet student in the back was, and finally learned he had a name after all. But there were no records on a "Rocky" in flight school, so I couldn't get my wings, you know? With the help of some of the boys I faked "Jasmine's" records, and thereafter belonged to the 141st. Army Air Corps fighter squadron. Under full name I wrote, "Squirrel, Rocket J." I loved flying, but, geez, that was a dumb move.

SotA    Your fans know you flew in the Pacific during the war. You shot down eleven confirmed "kills" before you were discovered and quietly discharged from the service. How was becoming an air ace and hero a "dumb move"?

Rocky    Why? Have you ever tasted quinine tablets? Talk about bitter, quinine tasted so bad that some of the boys preferred to palm them, and caught malaria instead. They said they never regreted it either. The pills would literally turn you slightly yellow, and there used to be jokes about whose side we were really on. It rained every night, except the nights the Japs flew over and dropped bombs. There was nothing to do but drink and play cards. Your clothes were mildewy, and stank all the time of sweat. And then, if you were lucky enough not to come down with dengue, you had a chance to be shot at by the Japanese. What they didn't tell us in flight class was that in those days the Zero was far superior to anything we could put up in the air, and their pilots were first rate. They shot us down in most fair fights until we had more powerful planes, and worked out ways to use them successfully.

This was in the early days, though, when we were hanging on to the Canal by the skin of our teeth. People picture the Japs as ragged, barefoot, starving, and racked by jungle disease as they crouched in treetops, but that was us in '42. They were well dressed and well fed, and the Marines were ragged, starving, and diseased. Later it'd be the Japs' turn, when they were loosing.

We were flying a handful of Wildcats out of Henderson field, a bit north of the main fighting. ((A few USAAF personnel were on loan to the Marines temporarily.)) I don't know if you ever saw a Wildcat, but it was a barrel-shaped, stubby-winged antique even in 1942. It was slower, clumsier, and more poorly armed than the Zero it flew against. Even when we outnumbered the enemy, we generally lost more boys in a mix-up than the Japs did. But if you were good, or had a break, you could draw a bead on a Zero, and the Zero was remarkably flimsy.

I must have had a break, because I know I wasn't all that good to begin with. Nobody is, you know. Most casualties in the air are pilots on their first few flights. If you live to your fifth or sixth flight, you have a better than 50/50 chance of completing your tour of duty. The odds are much, much worse until then. All the same, a fight materialized around me on my second time out of Henderson, and somebody hung a Zero in front of my sights. My first impulse was to roll away. I think I was sure I'd run into him. Then I remembered why my thumb was poised over the joy stick, and pressed the firing button, putting four streams of .50 cal. bullets into his tail. I still remember it was dark green, with huge red meatballs. He rolled over two or three times, then I banked and saw him go into the drink without exploding. After that I had to gain some altitude and was away from the thick of the fight until it was over. These things rarely last more than a minute or two.

So that's how I got started as an "ace". Dumb luck. That Jap had no business being where he was, and must have been as green as I'd been. We lost three planes -- I was the only one to even get a good shot.

SotA Surely you didn't have a lucky break for each of your eleven confirmed kills?

Rocky Don't be too sure. In a way, every time you climb out of your cockpit after combat, you had a hell of a lucky break. But you're right. With a little experience I turned out to be a pretty good flyer.

SotA You're too modest. You led your own squadron in the end, and several aces, Dick Bong for one, said you could fly rings around a bat in a dark hanger. What was it "Pappy" Boyington said? --

Rocky On "Baa, Baa Black Sheep" he said I was born with wings. What he actually said was that I was conceived on the wing, and he embellished the story with a textbook description of the aerial acrobatics necessary for the feat. The nonsense that I was literally a flying squirrel grew out of that. I got even with Boyington later, by sticking a dead rat under his seat. He must have smelled it the next time he climbed in, but you're in a hurry at such times, and can't stop to look for dead rats. Have you ever smelled a dead rat that's ripened in the sun and then baked in an aluminum can? Then climbed in with it and pulled the lid shut?

SotA Boyington was a pretty tough customer, as I recall. How'd you get away with a stunt like that?

Rocky He couldn't punch a girl. So I knocked him down, then shook hands and we were friends.

SotA What was your closest call? Your most difficult victory?

Rocky Let's see... They were pretty much the same occasion, I guess. Most victories are literally shooting ducks in a barrel, and pilots were mainly killed when they've let their guard down, and suddenly found someone shooting at their pinfeathers. That's about what happened to me. This was in '44, when we were trading in our lightnings for Mustangs. The Aerocobras and Tomahawks and Wildcats were long gone, and we had air superiority then. The average Japanese pilot was less experienced and less well trained than our own by then too. But there were crack groups. One was led by a notorious ace who painted the cowl of his plane with rabbit ears, and we called them the Banzai Bunnies. ((Lt. Mizusako Usagi who died shortly before the end of the war, was never decorated for his bravery, and was unknown by name to American flyers.)) It was my group's bad luck to be flying against them during much of the bitter Okinawa campaign, and we barely held our own.

Well, this one time we were dropping 500 lb. high explosive on an enemy held ridge, and six or seven Franks -- high performance jobs -- came diving out of the sun on us. It was a big surprise since we usually had high altitude cover, and thought we did this time too. Right away they nailed two of my boys, and a third ran right into the ridge in panic. So it was six (or seven) against three. I slid over the ridge and down the other side, pulled the rudder hard over to the right, and literally skidded around in a 90 degree turn, and caught a Frank square in my sights. I flamed him, and damned if there wasn't another Frank right behind. I got him too. It was then I realized that I was still carrying my load of two 500 lb. bombs. A single bullet in either one would blow me out of the sky. I pulled the release. Nothing happened. They didn't drop the next dozen times

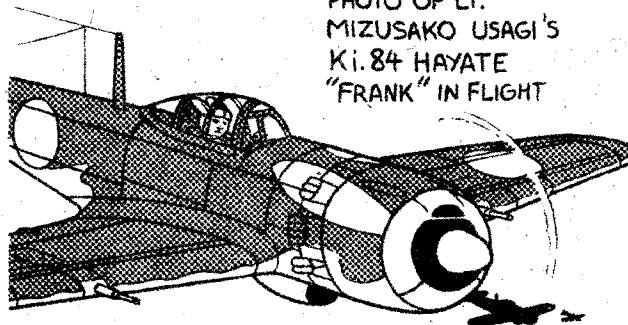
I pulled the release either. So I pulled around again, and broke for cover in a pall of black smoke coming up from our crashed P-51. At least two of the Franks were up high enough that they never lost sight of me, and took off in hot pursuit.

With two bombs hanging in the airstream I lost my 40 m.p.h. edge on them, and another 20 or 30 besides. They were catching up. So I slammed the rudder around again, then slammed it the other way an instant later. I'd hoped to trick them into a turn, to get inside mine, and then get out of it before they could react. And that's when the shackles picked to break on the starboard bomb. The release threw me one way, and the bomb in the opposite direction, which turned out to be more or less straight ahead. One of the Franks behind me flew right into it. Bam. The other had turned as I'd hoped, but because of my own unpredictable manouever, we were flying parallel. That's when I noticed the rabbit ears painted on the cowl, and knew it was the Banzai Bunny himself.

The next couple of minutes were hectic as I tried to outmanouever one of Japan's leading air aces with a hobbled aircraft. Several times the Mustang shook as it too hits. More by accident than anything else -- the effect of the drag created by the remaining bomb on a left turn was like grabbing a pole as you went by -- I got behind his tail for just long enough, and put a well placed burst into the Frank's wing and rudder. It hit something vital since he began smoking immediately, and broke away from me. He didn't go down, but I'd won, and being alive still was prize enough.

The rest of the squad brought down one of the remaining two or three Japs without loosing another Mustang, so the score was four to three, in our favour, but just barely.

ONLY KNOWN PHOTO OF LT. MIZUSAKO USAGI'S Ki. 84 HAYATE "FRANK" IN FLIGHT



SotA You were mustered out shortly after that, right? One of those bullets tore through your arm, and you were found out in hospital.

Rocky Yeah. The squad knew. I think even the Japs knew sometimes. But not the brass.

SotA What did you do then? You didn't go to Hollywood immediately.

Rocky Far from it. I did stunt flying from the end of the war until 1954 or '5, then tried to get into plane racing. The war department was selling off surplus aircraft for a song at the time. I saved up and bought a P-51J, the light-weight, souped up model that came out so late in the war it didn't see much combat. Fast as hell. Had a top speed over 480 m.p.h. I painted it gold, from tail to spinner, with some red trim and a black panel out ahead of the cockpit. But it takes money to keep one of those flying. Unless you win prizes you have to be rich. I did alright for a while, but as the Pocket Rocket IV got older, the cost of running it ran far ahead of my winnings. And the worse maintenance got, the fewer races I won. In the end I was wrapped

around the end of a monkey wrench instead of around the end of a joy-stick, and was helping other pilots win races from the ground.

SotA So what happened to this gold plane of yours?

Rocky I had a bit of property with a run-down ranch house near Barstow, in the Mojave, where I had the Rocket towed. It sat next to the house under a carnival tent I got from a travelling circus. On weekends I'd roll up the sides so people driving by could see, and oddly enough that's how I got into show business.

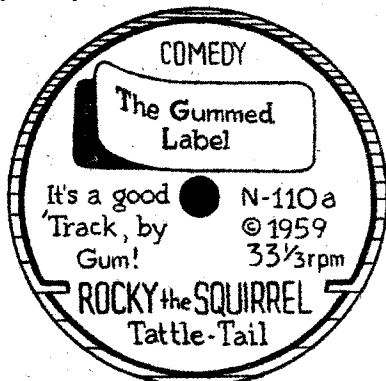
SotA How's that again?

Rocky A producer on a Sunday drive with his mistress happened to go by my place, and saw the Rocket. He stopped and asked if he could rent it for his next film, some beach party thing for teenagers. Gave me a thousand dollars and paid for the towing. After that, it got to be one of those in-jokes in Hollywood, and over the next few years the Rocket appeared in... must be about a dozen movies. All junk, of course. The only one you'd likely remember seeing the Rocket in was Goldfinger. Flew it myself. The part where Goldfinger is overseeing operations at Fort Knox from the air, and straffs Bond and Pussy Galore. (Now she was a cool cat!) The important thing was that I was mixing with people in Hollywood, you know, and met Jay Ward. He heard about the stand-up routine I was doing around Barstow, and dropped in one time to see me. From there it was a logical step to the Rocky show.

SotA Let's back up a bit. You were doing a comedy act for two or three years. I've even heard a record of yours, and I must say it was pretty surreal the way any word in your act could be the jumping-off point for a complete change of topic. But how did you get to the stage from repairing aircraft?

Rocky Well, I didn't, of course. An old buddy of mine from the 141st. came to me one time and asked for a loan, and I wanted to know what for. He had a small record company that was on the skids. I looked at the business, liked what I saw, and bought in as a partner instead of making him the loan. His problem was that he had a poor repertoire of worn-out crooners and retreaded show-tunes that nobody wanted to hear. So I made him a condition of buying in, that he'd drop all the nostalgia and try recording local talent for the young audience. All sorts of music was being performed in bars, at dances, and occasionally even over the air at that time, including 'Track. So in my spare time I began managing a 'Track label. It was being ignored by the major labels then, so I was able to record a lot of good people.

SotA Bunny Holly... Chuck Bear... The Birds...



Rocky Yeah, so I got around to a lot of bars, scouting bands, and they got to know me. I suppose it was inevitable that sooner or later someone would have dragged me onto the stage to introduce me, but it was such a small world at

the time that it was sooner. I was pretty flustered the first time. The next time was almost as bad, but soon I was bantering with the band leader like an old pro. I still acted naive and got cross at jokes I pretended I didn't understand, playing straight-man to the band leader, who turn out to be too smart for his own good. Somehow I'd get him all tangled up in what he was saying, changing the meaning of his words, my Gracie Allen to his George Burns. Didn't know I could do it until I did it, but I guess it wasn't any different than how I'd look innocent at the brass while double-talking them. Later it wasn't spontaneous, and I got paid a pittance for performing. A pittance was about a peanut less than the band played for. Certainly not enough to give up tuning carburetors for a living.

SotA I think the Gummed Label you produced was swallowed up in endless corporate mergers, wasn't it? Do you still own a piece of that action?

Rocky Naw. Everybody got gucked over when 'Track music got to be big business. I sold out the year after I joined Ward at his studios. It seemed like a good offer at the time, and I was busy with Rocky and His Friends. Although it doesn't technically exist anymore, the Gummed Label repertoire belongs to Paul McCartney, now, or the mafia. I forget. I don't want to know. I don't care. 'Track is where Rock'n'Roll, and R&B, and Folk have gone, wherever that is. Bye bye American pie.

SotA You began working with Jay Ward in 1960, and people are still talking about Rocky and His Friends. Nobody can take that away from you. What sort of man was Ward to work with?

Rocky Actually, the show can, and was, taken away from me. But let that pass and let's talk about Jay. He was a madman. I'm sure you've heard everything there is to know about him, but it's worth talking about anyway. Jay would do anything for a gag, and once cemented an arm into the sidewalk out in front of his studios. He signed "Walt Disney" in the wet cement, which didn't amuse anyone over at the mouse-factory. You can still see the hole in the sidewalk where the rubber arm was. Unfortunately it was stolen after about a week. At work he was just the same, and you really had to watch that your bath-tub wasn't full of bannana-cream pie before you got in, or that Jay didn't dub a new soundtrack over your rushes. The worst of it would be that his ad libs would be funnier than your original lines.

SotA You worked to a script?

Rocky At first, yes. Later we got the message and began taking off from the script, using it for a launching pad at best, and only coming back to Earth when we needed to make a gesture of plot development. Usually we had to tie up all the loose ends in the last episode. It didn't make any sense, but Jay never wanted it to. We could never be crazy enough for him. For a wild-man, though, Jay was curiously shy. He hardly ever let strangers take pictures of him, for instance, though he would talk freely with anyone.

SotA Did you meet Bullwinkle for the first time at the studio? Tell us about Bullwinkle.

Rocky I had seen Bullwinkle before working together. It was at a Barstow club, and he was performing -- are you ready for this? -- as a musician. Bullwinkle, whose real name is John Robert Alces by the way, blows a hot trumpet. Bullwinkle performed as Bullwinkle though. Nobody seems to know where he got the nickname. I heard that he was pretty wild in person, but didn't know him

at the time. When I did meet him it was rather a shock, because he was just like Ted Baxter, you know. If he were still alive I don't think I could say this... but Bullwinkle was incredibly vain. About his acting, about his looks, about everything. And like Ted Baxter he could always find a way of lousing up his lines. Fortunately whatever he did was always funnier. There wasn't anything prim about his sense of humour. He'd do anything on a dare, and always brought a keg of some cheap local brand of beer he'd just found to parties. He'd drink the stuff all by himself, dressed like a dandy, then when the keg was empty he'd try log rolling with it in the swimming pool. I've no doubt at all that his animated life style led to his early death.

SotA Never did drugs, did he?

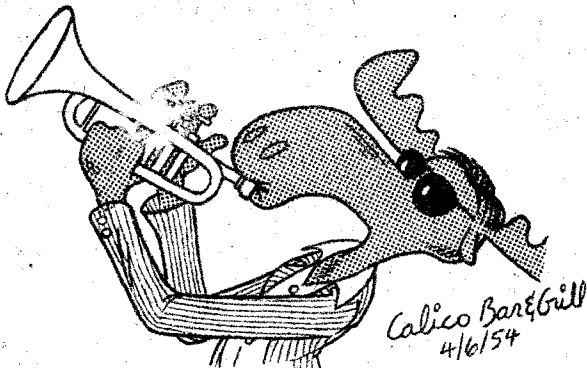
Rocky Too sophisticated. Too au courant. Bullwinkle had course tastes, and probably didn't own anything worth more than about \$10, except his clothes and a motorcycle he won once in a crap game. And his trumpet. I sometimes wish he'd stuck to the trumpet. I like to think that he'd be alive if he had, but he would have had as many opportunities for self-destruction in the music business as in the movie business. A lot of people who only knew Bullwinkle through the show thought he was dumb. He wasn't really. He would just do goofy things as a result of a thought process no-one could follow. And he was so wrapped up in himself that he wouldn't explain. But he didn't miss a clause in his contract. It was no accident that the show was retitled "The Bullwinkle Show" two years later.

SotA You were good friends with Bullwinkle, weren't you? What did you think of retitling the show that way?

Rocky We were awfully good friends, and I won't pretend that Bullwinkle didn't hurt me. I think he was afraid I was in love with him, and was scared into slapping me in the face like that, every now and again.

SotA Were you? In love with him?

Rocky No. Most of the time I didn't think so, at least, but we were damned good friends, and still were after the show.



SotA Gossip columnists had you involved with Boris Badenov for a while, didn't they? I understood that there was nothing to it, but do you know how the rumours got started?

Rocky How does news about two-headed babies and flying saucers get started in the National Enquirer? Same way I suppose. Boris was actually a very charming man, if you knew him well enough to break down his reserve, who did have an east European background. Educated in the classics, impeccable manners, very witty. He suffered terribly during the McCarthy era, when a certain actor who had a later political career denounced him to the Committee of Un-American Activities as a communist. Boris hated the Russians. He had relatives he's never heard from

that he's convinced died digging the Moscow canal, like thousands of others, and the idea that he'd collaborate with their murderers drove him to tears. Then to drink. But he said he wouldn't inform for the Nazis, and had no intention of informing for McCarthy either. When I met him he'd managed to overcome his drinking problem, but he still went through terrible fits of depression. He used to joke that it was his slavish temperament. He also saw the irony of his role as a spy from an obviously totalitarian police-state. But frankly I thought it hurt him as much as it made him laugh. When Rocky and Bullwinkle ended, Boris retired from show business, relieved of a great burden it seemed to me. We continued to meet each other from time to time, but it's been years now since I've heard from him. He never married after Natasha died in '79. He owns a limousine service in Santa Barbara that supports him and his wine cellar and his regrets. A very sad man.

SotA Let's see, there's Sherman and Peabody, Dudley Do-Right?

Rocky I never knew them well off-stage. We never worked on the same segments of the show, remember? Dudley was cold and always correct. The rumour around the studio was that he was a prominent official in the KKK, but nobody ever really knew much about Dudley's private life. His name was actually Dudley, Dudley Milque. How he ever got to be a comedian kept me guessing for months until Jay told me he'd found Dudley performing for kids in a Children's Aid Society home. He loved kids! And unbent around them like he couldn't for anyone else. In a way, the mountie character was the Dudley he was too shy to be. Jay was so much an overgrown kid that somehow he got Dudley to unbend for him too, and brought him into the show. I don't know what's become of him.

Sherman and Peabody were almost exactly what they seemed in front of the camera. Peabody taught history to high schoolers, but was a mine of obscure off-colour stories about anybody you could name, from Churchill to Ramses the second. He also had the most amazing propensity for puns that would kill underarm odour or crash a PC in the next room. You could never check his stories, but the few times he was challenged he'd always produce his source the next day, so no matter how much you doubted him, you had to take his word. I suspect most of his stories were whoppers. But he knew enough true stories that were nevertheless outrageous that he could get us to balk, then he'd prove he was telling the truth.

Sherman was one of his grade 12 students! He was really a nice kid, and a lot like a lost puppy on stage. I'm not sure but I think he's a junior vice-president of Lockheed or something now. Peabody went back to teaching, in spite of rumours that he was an advisor to the CIA, and other rumours that he wrote science fiction under some odd penname. Wainright Jones or some such. He never confirmed or denied anything, but seemed to know an awful lot about Fidel Castro's personal habits, so you'd wonder...

SotA It sounds like you enjoyed working on the Rocky and Bullwinkle Shows, but what did you think of the show itself? Was it good? Has it dated?

Rocky Well, I suppose everything dates, at least somewhat. And yet I can't say that I've heard of anything else like it, except some of Jay's other productions. None of those were ever as popular as Rocky and Bullwinkle, but they were all quite good, occasionally brilliant. But his first show, with us, broke ground, you

know, and nothing he did after could do that again, so in that way Rocky and Bullwinkle was his best show. I also think we were less conventional than, say, George of the Jungle. For all the Jay Ward touches, George still had to tell a story, and lead you to believe you were watching real events happening as they happened. Plot was the furthest thing from our minds with Rocky and Bullwinkle, and we rarely tried to let on that we didn't know the audience wasn't there. We knew that you knew that we knew you were there. In short, yes, I think the show was very good.

SotA The Bullwinkle Show was cancelled in 1962, virtually ending your career on television. Were the ratings falling, or was there a problem with the network?

Rocky Neither, though God knows Jay Ward had constant problems with the network over his scripts, attitude, and everything else. He was thoroughly professional, but they couldn't see where he was coming from. There's no truth to the rumour that Bullwinkle held out for a half-million dollar contract either. The facts are stranger than fiction. If you remember, there was a Beatles cartoon show, and we mingled socially with King Features' doubles. They in turn introduced our show to the real band, who took an instant interest in the Rocky and Bullwinkle Show. They paid a huge amount of money and acquired the rights to Rocky and Bullwinkle from Ward, planning to produce us themselves, with lavish budgets, complete freedom to write our own material, the best promotion money could buy... everything they thought we needed to become the TV show for the Aquarian Age. And like most of the grandiose projects the Beatles took on, nothing ever came of it. Eventually the property was entangled in the Apple litigations, then held in receivership

for years. Meanwhile the show was in suspended animation, so to speak. Several years later Paul McCartney bought the Gummy Label from EMI, because it was once mine. And that's how The Beatles own everything about me but my Mustang. I'll never sell the Rocket.

SotA Do you fly the Rocket at all?

Rocky When I can. Couple of times a year I have it towed out to the airport for a week, and put in some solid flying. Also, I get paid for appearances several times a year, even now. Most of the time I pilot for other people, who want to fly into Kings Canyon for fishing, or whatever, and lease the plane from a small airline that caters to that sort of thing.

SotA Have you considered going into show business again?

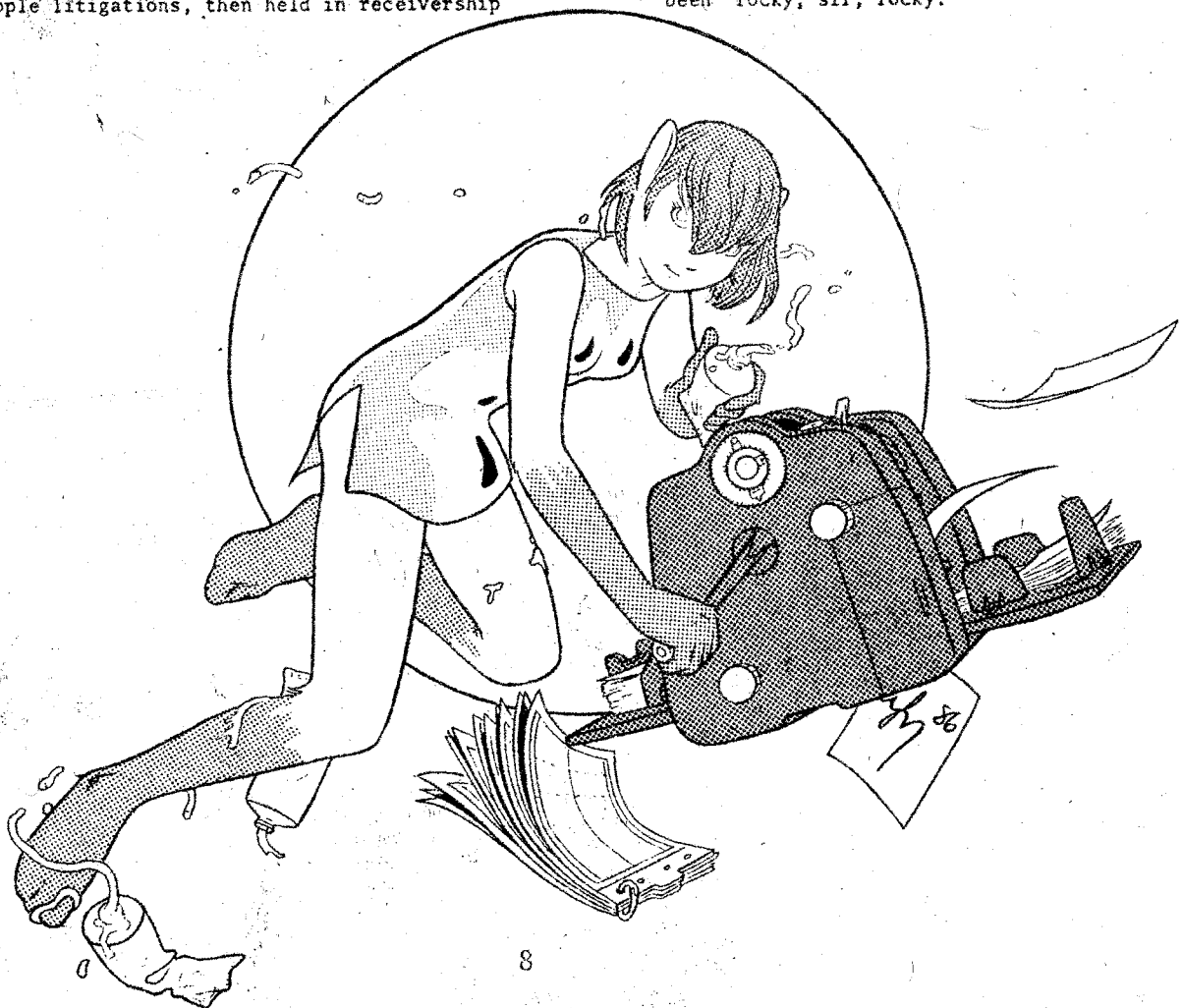
Rocky For Jay, anything. But for no-one else. I was only accidentally a comedian, don't forget. My first true love is still flying. It makes me feel young, like a girl again, and has never, never let me down.

SotA Love. We've hardly talked about love, except to correct the story that you'd been involved with Boris Badenov. You've never married, and I believe you've broken off more than one serious relationship. You dated Secret Squirrel --

Rocky He was a shallow twit. One gag comedian who took the womanizing part of being a spy literally.

SotA -- and it didn't work out either. If it isn't to personal a question, have you had a very successful romantic life... er, Jasmine?

Rocky ((Sighs.)) I don't mind too much I guess, but all I can say about love is what I used to say as a young girl with her new shiny wings. It's been "rocky, sir, rocky."





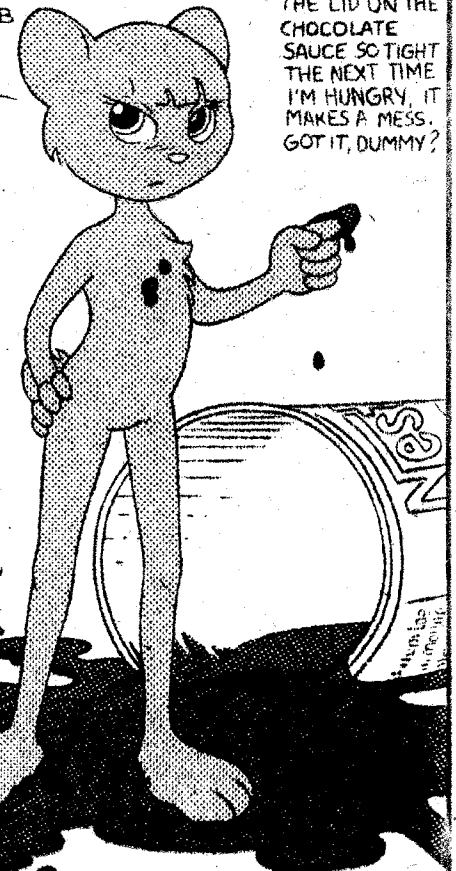
# THE COMMON HOUSE GAMIN

• BASIC FACTS BY TARAL •

CHILWAHMIHTILWEH  
OH NODILUONIB  
SEPEES DINNA  
"CHOCOWIT"  
SHAWOL? •

IE; DONT PUT  
THE LID ON THE  
CHOCOLATE  
SAUCE SO TIGHT  
THE NEXT TIME  
I'M HUNGRY, IT  
MAKES A MESS.  
GOT IT, DUMMY?

• HOUSE GAMINS CALL THEMSELVES "SALAGOOSIE" (PLURAL "SALAGOOSING"), AND ARE A MINOR HOUSEHOLD NUISANCE AT BEST. AT WORST THEIR FIERCE TERRITORIALITY MAY DRIVE THE HOME OWNER FROM HIS OWN PROPERTY. THEIR NUISANCE VALUE DEPENDS GREATLY ON GETTING ALONG WELL WITH THE GAMIN COLONY ONCE ESTABLISHED IN YOUR ATTIC OR BASEMENT. HOWEVER, FRIENDSHIP WITH THE HOUSE GAMIN HAS ITS OWN DRAWBACK. THEY'RE CONTAGIOUS. PROLONGED OR CLOSE CONTACT CAUSES HUMANS TO BECOME RATHER GAMINISH THEMSELVES, (SYMPTOMS ARE HIGHLY INDIVIDUAL.) THE ALTERNATIVE TO FRIENDLY RELATIONS IS STILL MORE COSTLY - BROKEN DISHES, SPILLED FOOD, HOLES CUT IN RUGS, SUDDEN LARGE NOISES AT ANY TIME OF DAY OR NIGHT, HAIR PULLED OUT OF YOUR CAT, DEAD MICE IN YOUR PILLOW... HAVING YOUR GAMINS MAD AT YOU IS STILL LESS DESIREABLE. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES EVER TRY TO EXTERMINATE THEM!



FFEH! DIMMERKIN-  
TOTFORKOOT-  
MISMOMIMBOB-  
BERAHAWITER-  
SITTANGOHEL!

FUH!\*

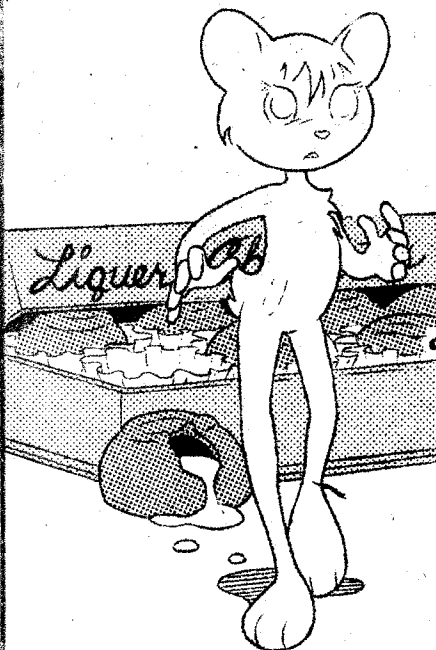
\* FOR TRANSLATION  
SEE APPENDIX

• "SALAGOOSALINTEHT", SPOKEN IN VARIOUS DIALECTS ALL OVER THE WORLD IS A SIMPLE, EXPRESSIVE, EXACT, SUBTLE, AND POETIC LANGUAGE THAT IS WHOLLY TOO GOOD FOR THE LITTLE BLIGHTERS. LINGUISTS CLAIM THAT IT'S THE LANGUAGE OF THE FUTURE, SUPERIOR TO ENGLISH, MANDARIN, ESPERANTO, OR ANY OTHER HUMAN SPEECH. SINCE THE AVERAGE HOUSE GAMIN IS SLIGHTLY LESS BRIGHT THAN A HUMAN BEING, AND USES "SALAGOOSALINTEHT" MOSTLY FOR SWEARING, (FOR WHICH IT IS WELL SUITED), NO ONE CAN GUESS WHERE THEY MAY HAVE GOT IT. ALTHOUGH ITS HIGHLY AGGLUTINATIVE CHARACTER LOOKS DIFFICULT, "SALAGOOSALINTEHT" TAKES ONLY ABOUT A WEEK TO PICK UP FLUENTLY. ACCENT IS QUITE IMMATERIAL. INSIGHT INTO THE INNER SIMPLICITY OF "SALAGOOSALINTEHT" COMES FROM REALIZING THAT THE WORD FOR THE LANGUAGE MEANS ALL OF "HOW THE PEOPLE BETWEEN THE WALLS OF MID-DOORS DISPUTE THE OWNERSHIP OF GOOD FOOD FOUND IN CUPBOARDS." (MID-DOORS ARE WHAT THEY CALL OUR HOUSES. ALLUSION IS MADE TO THE ARGUMENTATIVE AND GLUTTONOUS CHARACTER OF GAMINS AS WELL.) STUDIES MADE OF THE LANGUAGE HAVE NOT YET EXPLAINED HOW "SALAGOOSALINTEHT" WORKS AS WELL AS IT DOES. THE DIFFICULTY CAN BE TRACED TO THE TENDENCY TO FORGET ENGLISH AS THE STUDENT LEARNS "SALAGOOSALINTEHT".

• HOUSE GAMINS HAVE SEVERAL SURPRISING NATURAL ENEMIES OUTDOORS. FLOWERS FOR ONE. MOST FLOWERS WILL SWALLOW A GAMIN WHOLE OR SMOTHER IT, POSSIBLY IN THE MISTAKEN BELIEF THAT THE GAMIN IS A HONEY-BEE. CATS AND DOGS, HOWEVER, LEAVE GAMINS STRICTLY ALONE, FEARING THEIR SHARP TONGUES AND MEAN TEMPERS. THERE IS NOTHING AS MAD AS A GAMIN CARELESSLY SHOWERED WITH DOG PISS. GHETTO BLASTERS, NOW, ARE REAL DANGERS!



• GAMINS NOT ONLY FIGHT AMONG THEMSELVES, THEY CARRY OUT ORGANIZED RAIDS AGAINST COLONIES IN OTHER ATTICS AND BASEMENTS. FORTUNATELY THEY'RE TOUGH LI'L BUGGERS AND RARELY USE ANYTHING MORE HARMFUL THAN Q-TIPS, CAPS, OR THE LITTLE PLASTIC SWORDS THAT COME WITH YOUR DRINKS. ALTHOUGH INCONVENIENT, YOU SHOULD NEVER INTERFERE WITH WARRING TRIBES OF GAMINS.



• GAMINS HAVE SEVERAL ODD WEAKNESSES, ESPECIALLY FOR STICKEY SWEET THINGS IN WHICH THEY BECOME CARELESSLY STUCK. MORE SERIOUS, IN VIEW OF THE CONSEQUENCES, IS THE GAMIN'S INABILITY TO RESIST ALCOHOL IN ANY POTABLE FORM. UNFORTUNATELY FOR THEM, ALCOHOL CAUSES AN IRREVERSIBLE CHEMICAL CHANGE IN THEIR FREAKY METABOLISMS, TURNING THEM INTO STYRENE PLASTIC. FOR A CREATURE SIX INCHES TALL, A DROP OF BEER IS ENOUGH TO "TIE ONE ON" - AND NEVER SUFFER A HANGOVER LATER... HOUSE GAMINS WHO UNWISELY EXCEEDED THEIR LIMITS ARE SOMETIMES FOUND IN THE BOTTOMS OF CHILDRENS' TOY BOXES, OR IN USE BY UNDISCRIMINATING GAMERS.

• GAMINS DON'T LIKE MUCH, BUT THEY DO LIKE HONEY, BROKEN PENCIL LEADS, WARM SUN, TOY SOLDIERS, JAM, RIBBON, POTATO CHIPS, PATÉ, BRIE, ELECTRIC TRAINS, BUBBLE GUM, NUTS, FINGER-PAINT, BERRIES, POCKET CHANGE, SNOW, FIRECRACKERS, FONDUE, DOLL'S CLOTHES, TV, ANCHOVY PIZZA, COMICS PAGES, DEEP PILE CARPET, MARBLES, CHOCOLATES, REEFER SMOKE, CANARIES, STRANGE PLACES, HOME, ATTENTION, AND OF COURSE LIQUOR. BUT LIKE THE REST OF US, NOT ALL THEY LIKE IS GOOD FOR THEM...

