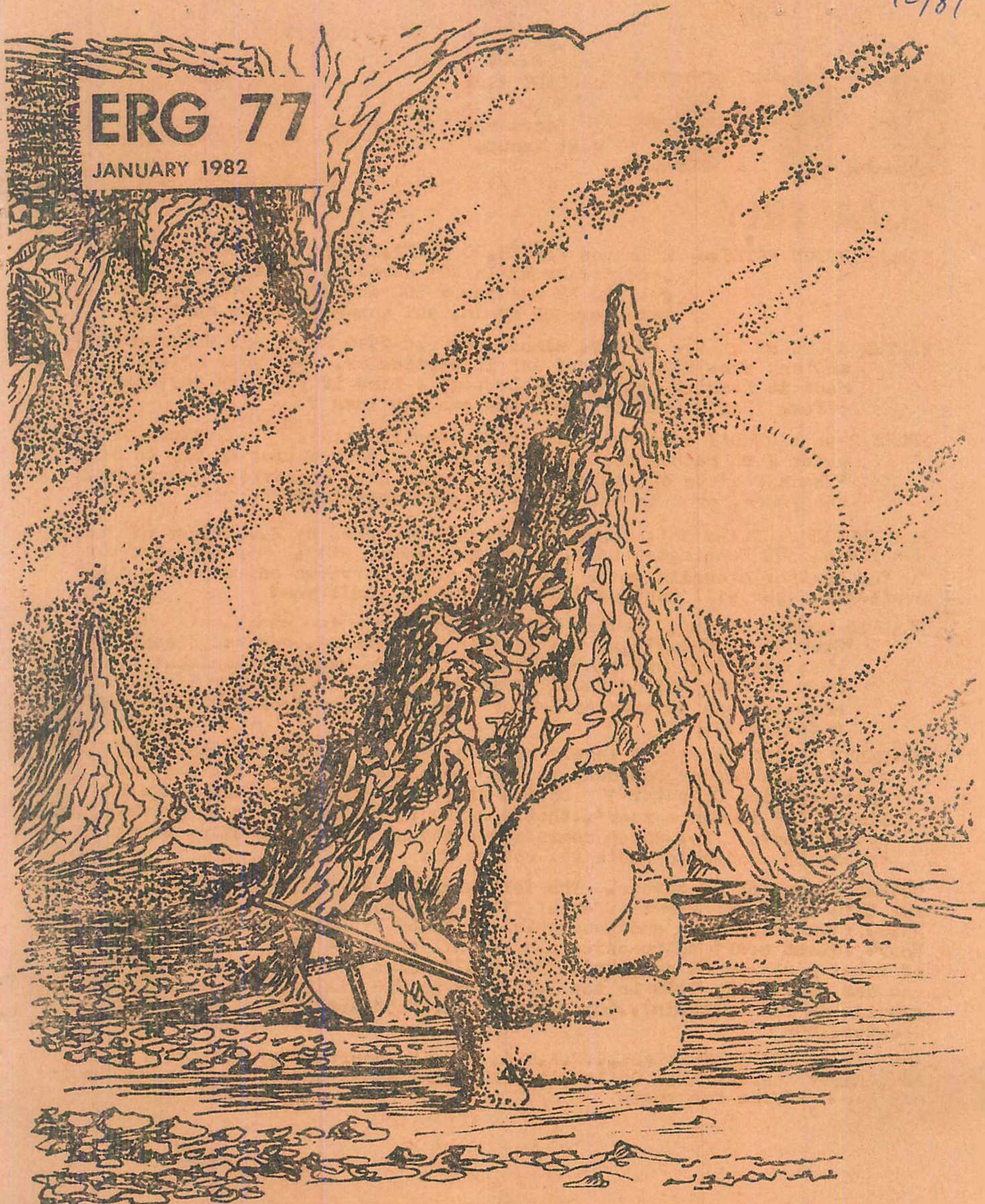


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ERG 77

JANUARY 1982



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ERG24 Years old
next issue.**B. T. Jeeves,****230 Bannerdale Rd.,****Sheffield S11. 9FE.****QUARTERLY**

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 send dollar bills NOT cheques. Otherwise, you can
 get ERG by sending a LOC and 30p in stamps. Postal
 rates are UP again, and non-responders must go.

WANTED IN TRADE by the editor. Almost any pre-1940 SF or Air War magazine and any pre-1935 issue of ASF in particular. Set your price and I'll meet it from my sale list. Drop me a line if you have anything to offer. Best terms offered, how can you lose ?

ERG'S 24th BIRTHDAY comes with the next (april) issue. A milestone of which I am rather proud..which seems as good a time as any to say 'Thank You' to all the good people who have supported me through the years, even to the extent of cash donations.

ELECTRONIC STENCILS this issue (as always) are done by H.J.Bridge of Rectory Row Press, 363 Kennington Lane, Vauxhall, London SE11. 95p for oge, plus 10 for further stencils up to 20. Many other services and supplies also available...you will mention ERG when writing won't you?

PLASTIC MODELS wanted. Having made up Monogram's two excellent models.. 'Grunman Gulfhawk' and the Dornier 335 'Arrow'..and had disasters when they fell off the wall...I'd like to replace them..but Monogram seem to have discontinued those two lines...so if your local model shop happens to have either or both still in stock..maybe we can do a deal ?????

NOVEMBER ANALOG carries a lovely spoof advert by Michael A. Banks and P.J. O'Connor..I wonder how many applications Mike will get for his new CompuOrganics Computer ? Notice also that Analog contents page now lists, '13 issues a year'..that's going to play hob with my indexing and cover 'photo file..which reminds me..anyone willing to allow me access to pre-35 issues to photo the covers ???

COVERS..speaking of covers. The following are up for grabs Cover original for this issue for first offer of £1. Also cover originals from:- No.60 (Armed spaceman and landvehicle. No.69 by R.Oden, montage crags Saturn No.74 (Giant craft approaching planet. All above at £1. Also Erg 62 cover of robot & aliens at newstand..75p No.71 Alien observing spacecraft (This one has 'No71 July 1980 in top left..but no ERG title..space left blank for running in red letterin)..60p Ditto for No58 Aprkl 77 of Soldier shooting monster..60p

AND THE COVERS AT THE BACK...N.A.S.A. come by courtesy of that very good man, Harry Andruschak. Quite literally, ERG would not be the same without his support over the years

EDITORIAL

by
Terry Jeeves



IT'S ABOUT TIME...

Time is one of those things of which we never seem to have enough. In youth we squander it, in old age we cherish it. It flies when we enjoy life, yet drags when we are bored. We pass it, spend it, mark it, gain it, lose it, save it, waste it; criminals even do it. Yet, despite all this cavalier treatment our clocks insist that 'Time Marches (inexorably) On'..or does it ?

The SF reader is accustomed to the stuff being manipulated by authors..each with his own variation enabling characters to move freely through the ages. In the early days, when 'Machinery' was God..huge, mysterious and menacing; writers such as Wells used mechanical devices of whirling wheels and clattering cogs to whizz their adventurers into the far future or distant past. Heroes would yank levers or start up huge engines as they set off through time.

Then writers began to explore more sophisticated methods such as 'time warps' or 'gates'. Mental control was another favourite, often enhanced by the use of drugs. Perhaps the most unusual..and my favourite..was employed by Stephen Leacock's 'The Man In Asbestos'. This traveller ate a huge pork pie, followed it with a mound of doughnuts, and then sat down to read his way through a giant stack of comic papers. The induced torpor carried him into the future. In another tilt with time, Wells allowed his hero to sleep his way into the future, where, on awakening, his savings compounded over the ages by the interest, bid fair to make him owner of the world.

Time wasn't always a straight to and fro business. Murray Leinster in 'Sidewise In Time' had his characters moving across time warps into other ages. Today, this would be classed as an 'alternate universe' yarn. 'Coils Of Time' by P.Schuyler Miller saw time as a coil or helix with travel being limited to hops to adjoining coils. Time leaps of several thousand years were possible..but it was of no use for nipping into next week to pick the winner of the Grand National.

Rip Van Winkle (who may have inspired Wells' Sleeper) nipped up in the hills behind New York to play ninepins and booze with the gnomes..his reward was to sleep for a lustrum or so and a return to find the British ousted and nearly all his contemporaries dead. Then there was astral projection which allowed the visitor to view events, but not effect them. With the advent of Black Holes a few writers suggested nipping between the event horizons of a rotating hole and thus leaping not only through space, but possibly time as well. When the faster-than-light tachyon was postulated, not only did it slow down and gain mass if you pushed it, it also travelled backwards in time. Authors began to propose hitching a ride on a passing tachyon.. a process which strikes me as being akin to leaping aboard Concorde as it goes by at Mach 1 !!

WE've had Paratime Police, A Legion Of Time and with Fearn's 'Liners Of Time' we even had computer travel. Heinlein in 'Lifeline' used it to forecast life expectancy and one writer even used a time device to plant rivets in inaccessible places before the machinery was put where the rivet was going to appear, ('Blind Time', G.O. Smith). Sad to say, all highly fictional. Like Omar Khayam's moving finger, time could not be recalled or otherwise messed around with. That at least was the position until attention focussed on Einstein's Relativity equations..particularly the one that goes

... $t = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}}}$ This indicates that time can be manipulated..at least on paper. However, experiment with clocks in fast flying aircraft showed that time in the 'real world' behaved just as the figures on paper said it would...it passed more slowly the faster you went. For that matter, it also slowed down in a gravity well such as surrounds a Black Hole. Don't let that panic you into rushing out to live down a coal mine because it is nearer Earth centre of mass..it might give you an extra .0001 on your life expectancy..if you didn't die earlier of silicosis.

This time contraction has often been used in fiction as a way for a star traveller to extend his life. Many tales have our hero return after a ten year trip to Alpha Thingummi to find himself a sort of Rip Van Winkle with everyone at home having aged a century or so. Well, for openers, his 'extended' life just isn't..as far as his ageing is concerned. His birth certificate may record him as having been born (say) 130 years earlier..but he hasn't been living through that period. Thanks to the time contraction, his body has not only been ageing more slowly..but his body and mental processes have also been slowed down..in other words, if he started off with a life expectancy of 70 years...that's all he gets no matter how much longer it seems to others..he only experiences 70 years. There is another aspect to that time contraction though..one I have never seen mentioned in any work of sf or otherwise. I reckon I'll call it the Jeeves effect and look forward to seeing it used in a story. Let's say our hero belts off to the stars and zips around at .99c which according to Einstein's formula means a tau factor of around .14...i.e. 100 seconds to us, is reduced to 14 seconds for him. Putting it another way, his body (and mind) have only got through 14 seconds of operation while we zip through 100 seconds. OK, then our hero picks up his instantaneous Dirac communicator and calls up bade. In fiction, this has always been a normal conversation piece..but hang on there...his body reactions are now slowed down by about seven times. The poor bloke back on Earth will hear him as a very low pitched droning sound as 14 seconds of speech are strung out to 100 seconds. rather like playing back a tape recording at 1/7 of its normal speed. Worse is to come. When the Base operator replies, as far as the astronaut is concerned, the bloke is squeaking away at 7 times normal speed. The whole thing would be rather like a bull frog conversing with a bat. Kinnison never had it like this!

Then again, contrary to popular belief the time differential on a star trip is not as great as popularly imagined. Imagine our hero heading off to the nearest star some 4.3 light years away. Under a 1G acceleration it will take him just under a year to reach .99c (if we ignore mass effects). allow the same period for slowing down and during these spells, he will have covered just under a total of two light years. The remaining part covered at .99c will seem like half a year...total trip time out coming to about 2.5 years..or the round trip as far as he is concerned will have lasted 5 years. To those back home he was away about 8.8 years. All that danger, effort and worry to gain less than four years....

Seems a waste of time, doesn't it ?

Terry Jeeves

Where is S.F. Going?



Judith Boffery

The birth of mass-produced pulp magazines in the early years of this century, firmly divided SF into two camps. Previous SF such as FRANKENSTEIN had been classed along with other popular literature of the day; but publications like ASTOUNDING were never accorded the same general acclaim that accrued to BLACKWOODS or other 'literary' magazines. Whilst dismissing the magazines with ease, the Literary Establishment had more difficulty with books like THE WAR OF THE WORLDS. Great as H.G.Wells was, his SF production was never put into the same class as his other works - THE HISTORY OF MR POLLY for instance - and the L.E. merely put the SF into the same category as Churchill's bricklaying - a little relaxation on the part of a great man.

With Orwell's 1984, however, the L.E.'s problem was not so easily shalved: there was a world-renowned establishment author with an unquestionably brilliant

book - which was also SF. In the end, the book was treated entirely as a mainstream literary classic and was never acknowledged as SF. This pattern has not only continued, but increased over the years with more and more establishment authors writing works of a type that SF fans would readily recognise and yet they are classed as 'literary novels' and never reach the SF market. Books by people such as Anthony Burgess and Doris Lessing are frequently up for major literary prizes, yet, apart from the odd slip-of-the pen by the inexperienced reviewer, their true nature is never acknowledged.

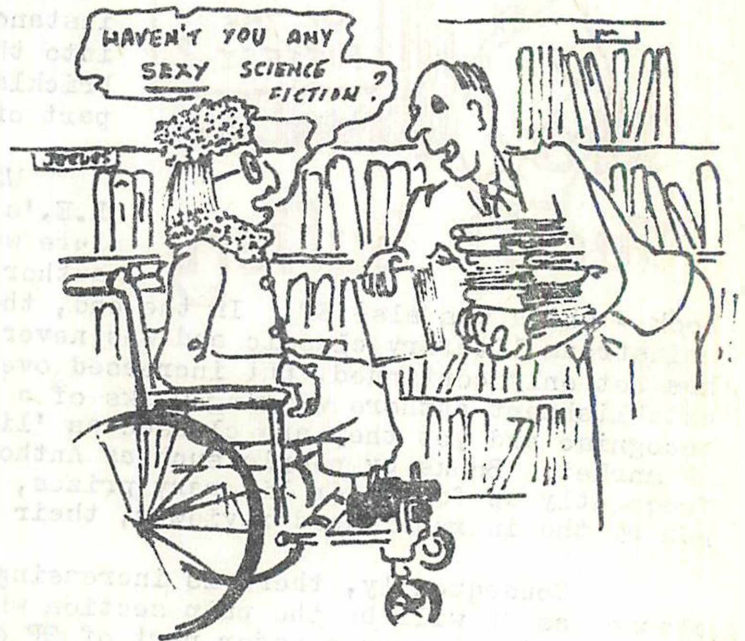
Consequently, there is increasingly the danger that the only fiction classed as SF will be the pulp section which, necessary and entertaining though it is, leaves a major part of SF cut off from the very readers who would appreciate it most. Some 'serious' authors are trying to counteract this by writing such high-class SF the L.E. cannot dismiss them as pulp. Christopher Priest comes to mind here; hopefully, he and others like him will bridge the gap between the L.E. masterpiece and the book that's actually read for pleasure.

In other literary genres, today's pulp is tomorrow's literary classic - Agatha Christie for instance. Where SF is concerned, tomorrow seems to be a long time coming. Any long-term popularity for SF (e.g. STAR TREK) is claimed as a cult and never commercialised. I have never heard the admiration of - say - certain crime writers, or fiction such as that of P.G. Wodehouse, called a 'cult'.

The trouble is that the buying power of the teenage market (the biggest buyer of pulp) has dwindled with the economic recession, and - perhaps more importantly - today's teenagers are less interested in reading as a pastime. Moorcock's 'NEW WAVE' boosted the sales briefly in the sixties; but what is now classed as 'sword and sorcery' frequently slips towards the soft porn end of the genre, thus limiting its readership even further. It is generally agreed that the two sections of the public that buy the bulk of

the books are children and middle-age women. In an effort to cash in on this, publishers are now issuing what were once adult books as being suitable for children (If you haven't been there lately, a visit to the children's section of your local library might surprise you). But children don't stay children for long, and any book classified as 'for children' is immediately dead to any other section of the market.

The real money is with the middle-aged women and it is towards them that the publishers aim their 'blockbusters'.. the hyped-up book written to a rigid and very limiting formula. It does not seem to have occurred to the publishers that many women over sixty might like any other sort of book; provided there was enough publicity to bring it to their notice. After all, at least half of today's SF fans will one day be middle-aged women - do publishers really think that their literary tastes will deteriorate along with their figures? In fact series such as STAR TREK and BLAKE'S SEVEN already have many such fans and yet not a single SF 'blockbuster' has been produced for their consumption. These people are a 'cult following' - not so fans of other pulp literature like that written by Harold Robbins. Even Douglas Adams' brilliant HITCHHIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY was only acknowledged by the L.E. after sheer fan-pressure had forced two repeats out of Radio 4.



The recent popularity of SF films has done little to help the books, since nearly all these films had specially commissioned scripts with the book-of-the-film appearing afterwards. STAR WARS etc. has shown that with today's technology, decent special effects are possible. So - whatever happened to the film of DUNE? And why not a series based on Zelazny's AMBER or Vance's DEMON PRINCES? When attempts have been made to film an SF classic - as with Bradbury's MARTIAN CHRONICLES - the result was unmitigated disaster.

So, upmarket SF is about to be taken over by the L.E. and will no longer be classed as SF; while the pulp end is being forced into obscurity by lack of investment and the media keep any SF writing within their own circle. Is this too pessimistic? Perhaps it is. But it seems to me that if SF is finally to lose the inferiority complex it got in the early days, to 'come out' as it were, fans must declare themselves more openly and generally. The introverted and enclosed world of SF conventions and Fanzines only increases the isolation of SF, giving fuel to the media's publicity machine with jokey reports on computer programmers who get together every year with false points on their ears.

Judith Buffery

NASA NEWS



AS PART OF NASA's Severe Storms and Local Weather Research, a Doppler Lidar System was test flown during 1981 in a Convair jet transport. The aircraft flew at various altitudes near storm edges and a Doppler/Laser technique was used to work out wind vectors. If the new technique is accurate, it will greatly enhance traditional measurement systems. WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?..among other things, better weather forecasts, safer travel, an aid to farming, and how to minimise smog and airborne pollution.

NASA HELPS BRAIN-INJURED CHILDREN to crawl by using a special device which reduces the friction barrier and has allowed children to improve their skill at movement. Basically a flat, air-cushion-supported platform, use of the

device has allowed children to move farther and faster and learn how to do it in much less time before being weaned to movement without its use.

THE GALILEO MISSION TO JUPITER is moving along. Components for the 1985 launch are nearly completed with Galileo as a two spacecraft configuration.. orbiter and entry probe. Four previous missions have reached and passed Jupiter (Pioneers 10 & 11 in 1973 & 74; Voyagers 1 & 2 in 1979) with this latest mission, the probe will actually enter Jupiter's atmosphere, entering at some 115,000 mph., before atmospheric deceleration at some 300g.

FUEL-SAVING 'WINGLETS' are currently being test-flown aboard wide-body jets. They are small, wing-like structures attached to the normal wing tips and almost at right-angles. They cut fuel-consuming drag by lessening wing-tip vortices and show a fuel reduction of some 3%..or about 250,000 gallons each year of normal service...and that ought to please both conservationists and the finance department..as well as helping to keep fares down.

25 EXPERIMENTS FOR SKYLAB 4 in Oct. 1985 .. including 6 cardiovascular and cardiopulmonary studies, three vestibular, three renal and endocrine plus hematology, immunology, muscle studies, bone studies and general biological work. Spacelab 4 will consist of a double habitable module fitted with a biological lab. Some 14 American Universities, plus NASA and foreign institutes are participating.

AMATEUR RADIO SATELLITE was due for launch last October..aboard a Delta rocket launching the Solar Mesosphere Explorer. The amateur satellite is designed and built by the University of Surrey (G.B.) it will transmit pictures of the Earth which can be displayed on a domestic TV, plus a voice synthesiser to 'speak English' to give its observations. Standard amateur VHF (presumably FM) will be able to pick it up via a simple fixed antenna. Frequency is given as 145.825 MHz ((I wonder if that , should be a . ?? It seems awfully high otherwise. With a, it comes to about .2cm wavelength but only 2 metres with a full stop..??)) ((Course, you might pick it up on that back filling if it IS .2 cm))

HALLEY'S COMET MISSION AXED thanks to NASA's 12% across-the-board budget cut according to Harry Andruschak. DAMN! If all the money spent policing anti nuclear/unilateral disarmers and National Front idiots could be sent to NASA, we could have gone to the stars..instead of the surapheap...T.J.



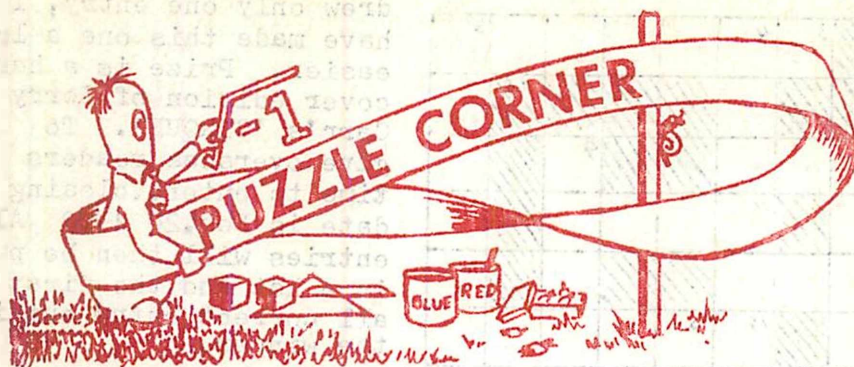
Part of my long-term retirement plan involves moving (at some future date as yet undetermined) into a small flat..without a large garden plus acres of grass which regularly demand hacking to submission. Sadly, this will also mean other, bulkier activities vanishing with the garden. Two duplicators, ERG Quarterly, a mass of tools (and the workshop) and of course virtually all my collection of books and magazines.

This upheaval is at least five years in the future, but even so I find myself musing over which books I just can't bear to be parted from. They comprise a sort of 'core library' akin to a desert island selection and can be divided into two sections for

fiction and non-fiction. Obviously, time may wreak a few changes, but for those who are interested..here is my current top twenty non-fiction list.

THE COLLAPSING UNIVERSE by Issac Asimov must head the list. In my view, it is the definitive layman's book on particle physics, stellar evolution, novae, pulsars, and black holes etc. If I could only keep one book, this would be it. If you haven't had the pleasure, rush out and buy a copy right now. THE IRON SUN, Berry. This muses on star travel via Black Holes and holds a neat appendix on Einstein's General and Special Relativity. Berry has also supplied THE NEXT TEN THOUSAND YEARS with upbeat speculation on Man's future..with further appendices on Relativity and Dyson Spheres. Many have argued over Berry's ideas..but they still make fascinating reading. THE AMBIDEXTROUS UNIVERSE, Martin Gardner...looks at the seemingly universal right/left parity of the universe. Since publication, parity has been overthrown by a Japanese researcher, but the book is still good. INVASION OF THE MOON 1968, Ryan. Rushed into print immediately after Apollo 11, this still recalls the magnificent sense of wonder as it happened. PERPETUAL MOTION, Ord-Hume..looks at all the crack-brained ideas, grandiose schemes, theories and hoaxes which have cropped up through the ages. MATHEMATICAL DIVERSIONS 1,2,3, & 4 (with diverse titles), Gardner. These supply that king-sized assortment of puzzles, problems and posers which grab my interest..and help to waste my time. V-2, Walter Dornberger is an enthralling, human and historical account of the missiles development and turns a could-be-dull tale into one which could be a classic of science fiction in a different time frame. Three 'SCIENCE STUDY SERIES' titles come next...'Near Zero' dealing with low temperature physics, 'ACCELERATORS' on nuclear particle machines, and 'GRAVITY' dealing with relativity, FTL travel etc. and etc. EXPERIMENTS IN TOPOLOGY, Barr looks at Mobius strips, Klein bottles, torus problems and much more. EYES ON THE UNIVERSE, Asimov The history & future of astronomy & techniques. BIOLOGICAL TIME BOMB, Rattray Taylor. speculation on future discoveries and advances in genetic engineering and allied fields. OUR CHANGING UNIVERSE, Gribbin covering Astronomy, cosmology, Black Holes and star travel.

Having got so far, the fight begins as to what goes in next. As of now, a string of computing books has the edge..but only time will tell. If you would like information on any of the above titles, just drop me a line



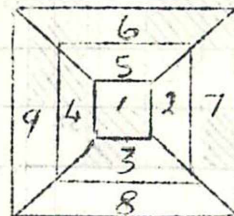
Being an assortment of teasers and trivia old and new.

Nothing Earth shaking...but just for fun.

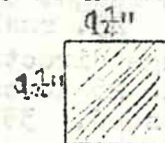
T.J.

N.B. You only get a prize for the crossword.

1. What number multiplied by itself gives the same answer as if you had added it to itself?
2. Tom has twice as many toffees as Bill. On Monday, each eats half of his supply. The next day, each eats half his remaining stock and so on until all the toffees have gone. How many more days can Tom eat after Bill runs out?
3. I have two large cans of paint with which to colour in the numbered areas of the diagram on the right. One tin is blue paint, the other yellow. How must I use the paint so that no two adjoining segments have the same colour?
4. If $a=1$ $b=2$ and so on up to $z=26$, then the two letter word 'be' is worth $2+5...$ namely, 7. What is the largest two letter score you can get?
5. I have a hole in a tin measuring 1" along each side as in the first diagram... 1" and a biscuit measuring 1 1/2" along each edge as in this diagram....



1 1/2" along each edge as in this diagram....



How can I put the biscuit through the hole without breaking it?

6. 4 encyclopedias stand in order on a shelf. A bookworm starts eating in the front cover of Vol.1 and eats through to the back of Vol.4. If each book is 1" thick, how far has the bookworm moved?
7. A snail starts climbing up a ten foot pole. Each day, he climbs up 3 feet, but during the night, he slides down 2 feet again. How long does it take him to reach the top?
8. Two men stand at Greenwich meridian, synchronise their watches and set off in opposite directions (one due East, the other due West), adjusting their watches to local time as they go...including the addition or subtraction of a day as each crosses the date line. How much difference will there be between their respective times when they meet again back at Greenwich?
9. $1 + 1/1 + 1/(1 \times 2) + 1/(1 \times 2 \times 3) + 1/(1 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4)....$ If you add up this series after working out one thousand terms...roughly, what would your answer be?

All are very easy, so don't be frightened by the sight of the numbers.

Answers at foot of page 10.

PRIZE CROSSWORD

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Sundry superb fanzines have arrived in the Stately Crumbling Jeeves Mansion of late.. Herewith a few capsule comments on some of the better ones.

... and a bit of Finnish news.

S.F.COMMENTARY (62,63,64,65,66) June.81 A compendium, photo-offset, 72pp issue devoted to reviews, critical essays, and the more high brow side of science fiction. If you crave the better life, then don't miss this. USA rate 10 for \$12.00 and well worth it..Agent Hank Luttrell, 2501 University Ave., Madison WI 53703. No UK rate..so write to editor, Bruce Gillespie, GPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, AUSTRALIA.

SCOTTISHE 82 24pp issue with which Ethel winds up 27 years of publishing with a batch of capsule reviews, of pbs and fanzines. Some excellent atomillos, a brief but good lettercol, and a spot of 'Natterings'. You might still get a copy from Ethel Lindsay, 69 Barrie Rd. Carnoustie, Angus, Scotland DD7 7QQ. We shall all miss Scot

KRATOPHANY Jly.81 From Elic Cohen, 86-04 Grand Ave, Apt.4D, Elmhurst N.Y. 11373, USA 34 of the best duped pages you are ever likely to meet, plenty of good artwork and good layout. Material covers an obit. for Susan Wood, articles on roamings, 'Wilds Of New York', a Wood reprint, a lettercol..and finally a 'script' for 'Bob Hoop and Hoy Ping Crosby'...I leave you to rate that one. Trade,/LOC/or \$1.50

FINLAND'S first SF fanzine, SPIN was published in 1977 by Turun SF-SEURA. Until now SPIN has seen 11 issues with No.2 1981 being the latest. Address is:- TURUN SF-SEURA, Box 538, SF-20101 TURKU 10, FINLAND. The artwork is superb, 28 photo litho (offset?) pages slightly smaller than quarto..only catch is that bar a one page English Summary, it is all in Finnish. Other news is that by now, Finland will have its second fanzine..AIKAKONE (Time Machine)...44 pages per issue. Write to URSA/SF-KLUBI, Hannuksenkuj 4A4, SF-00260 ESPOO 26, FINLAND. And still more..FINLAND'S third SF Assoc. founded in late 1979 is TAMPEREEN SF-SEURA, C/o Raimo Nikkonen, Pohjolankatu 6-8.C, SF-33500 TAMPERE 50, FINLAND. Maybe you can't read SF..but a lot of those fellows CAN read English..so if you care to send them a spare copy of your fanzine, I'm sure they'd appreciate it.

THE DARK LORD 5 from Jonas Soderblad, Gosvagen 13, S-382 00 NYBRO, Sweden (\$4.00 or equiv. Money Order) OVER 100 pages of A4 on, about, around and concerning all things pertaining to STAR WARS. Fiction, articles, letters, not much artwork (and that not well reproed) but if Star Wars is your bag, then you simply must get this one. Jonas achieves what other fmz play at.



((ERGitorial comments come in triple sets of parentheses...and we open with a brief missive from Alan Burns...))

ALAN BURNS

19 The Crescent
Off Kings Rd
Wallsend
Tyne & Wear

"Many thanks for ERG 76. Well up to the usual ERG standard. There is but one Jim Cawthorn..and Merry and Piprin (was it?)

with Treebeard Hoom! ((Er,.. Yes unless not so or otherwise))) I note NASA News, wonder if they have a magazine or something. ((Yes))) STUPIDMAN wrang the last drop of inanity out of a morass of yeuk. The saving grace was of course the drawing. ((How true))) MY SINCLAIR

AND I..well, you've hazed all we calculator owners by saying you were setting up a program to generate logs. There must be some reason. Anyway, I'm sure you will enjoy it. Can you explain why mathematicians are constantly devising machines to do more mathematics, whilst us ignorant ones only want to solve problems? ((Only a different sort of problem...i.e. 'Can I do it myself?')) Why don't you compile a Best Books of 198... which you have enjoyed most, fiction and non-fiction? ((Great minds..etc. I have been working on a list of 12 fiction and 12 non-fiction which I must retain if posted to that famed desert isle and can only take a fraction of my collection))

JUDITH BUTTERY

16 Southam Rd.,
Hall Green
Birmingham

I thought the picture of me was very flattering; really I look older than that and my hair is dreadfully untidy. I presume the shadowy figure beside me was meant to be Mycaal, but he doesn't really look like that ((It was one of his 'off' days))) I'm sorry to say the computer articles leave me cold. They're fascinating things; of course and I'd love to have one to play with, but I don't really understand a word you write about them - I must be incredibly stupid ((No way; there seems to be a plot among computer buffs to write..and talk..about computers as confusedly as possible. It's hard work sorting the stuff out..and without a computer..almost impossible..rather like learning to drive a car by reading books..you need 'hands on' experience))) The NASA News is always interesting, even if it is a little out of date by the time we get it! The Shuttle couldn't be more delayed if it was run by British Rail. ((Kodak cine film processing labs are even slower))) I enjoyed the comic strip, can we have more please ((One of these days))) I would also like to echo one of your correspondents and ask for more letters. ((Trouble is, they take up space..but I'll try to fit more in))) The book reviews were a delight as ever, so don't shorten these and the Martian pictures will as was the last one, be treasured by my son. Perhaps you should consider producing two magazines..one for those who speak computer and one for humans. You're not turning into a cyberman are you? ((Course not, I still have all my own teeth!)))

Walter Sommergruber
Mittelschulweg 8
A-4840 Wocklabruck
AUSTRIA

The Cover was not good and no science fiction. The ERGitorial, the NASA News and 'A Corner Of The Market' were all right. And the 'STUPIDMAN! were very well!! Total impressions: A little bit confused and not very easy to survey. If you speak German..I can send you my fanzine 'DARKY' it costs nothing. ((There's a chance for you German-reading fen, drop Walter a line for a copy.))

KEVIN RATTAN

23 Waingate Close

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COVER..I've seen a lot of Tolkien art, but never have I seen a more evocative picture of the Ents on the march. They may not have been exceptionally tree-ish, but they were infinitely better than the potatoes with chicken legs of the film Ent. I really liked the touch of the hand with 5 fingers. MY SINCLAIR AND I I'm afraid these articles aren't for me. I can't conceive of being able to afford a computer for a very long time to come. CORNER OF THE MARKET..An interesting article, and one which left me wondering who Judith Buffery is (((Author of 'The Sheeg', 'Saffron', 'The Iron Clog', and 'Gringol Weed'..reviewed in ERGs 67,67,70 and 73))). I don't know anything about her save what I learned from this article. I must rectify the omission. (((Good!))) NASA NEWS..Mmmh. I do hope they get Columbia sorted out and off soon..how much is that cover drawing likely to be? STUPIDMAN..Very funny..I hope you can manage a sequel well before 1996. RECENT READING..It makes a pleasant change to read some reviews which are not devoted to simply hacking books to pieces because they either (a) use space flight or (b) are not plastered throughout with symbols (I've always wondered why symbolism is considered a higher quality than, say, action. (((That's easy..it makes people feel very clever to have spotted the symbolism. Any clot can spot action. I agree with you entirely))) O.K., tastes may differ, but that doesn't make one superior to the other.

RICHARD ALLEN

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Judith Buffery's article

was interesting. I suppose

anyone who writes is a little

loth to admit what they do (((???))) either for a living, or just for a hobby. Perhaps when he/she has had that first article or story published then they can come out of their hiding place and be a little proud of their achievement. I must admit I was a little goshwow after I had my first piece published in a zine. (((I only hope you used plenty of symbols))) Without wishing to be flippant, and respecting the moral viewpoints raised by your STUPIDMAN strip..WHERE on Earth did you manage to drag it up from? While under the influence of Blog, no doubt. Thankfully we don't have any Super Heroes like him, although he would make life interesting. (((But I thought we all ready had people like Wedgie Benn, Joe Scargill, Ian Paisley and suchlike ????)))

IS THAT A
SYMBOL OR JUST
A FLY
SPECK?



DAVE LANGFORD

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Reading

Berks.

I'm against attempts to help Eastercon on its way out by scheduling alternative conventions on the same weekend. Why pay high rates you ask, when all we need to do is book us all in at some hotel somewhere? Well, aside from quibbles about convention discounts (The £19 a night you quote, even if it includes VAT is rather more than Channelcon's £12.50 a night..and I'm worried about this mysterious 'us'. (((I thought I made it clear..'us' referred to the people who had been suggesting an alternate. As for costs, I said that not having a convention fee..and cheaper travel would go to at least one night's stay at a more central place. Speaking for myself, the London fare is around £20...and Ethel Lindsay was saying for her, the Brighton fare was astronomical.))) Perhaps I misjudge you, and the event is scheduled for some free spot like the Bank Holiday weekend. (((First off, it was little more than speculation..it may or may not happen..but if it does, then only people soured off by recent convention trends would choose it instead of 'Eastercon'. Like 90% of us..Easter is the best time for any con..so it would probably be then. Gotta be viable you know. Such a move would only materialise if enough people felt it justifiable)))

EDDIE BUNDRED

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Your continuing adventures with the ZX81 were very interesting, but I can't help thinking that as you become more proficient you will want to move on to something a bit more powerful ((Dead right, I'm currently dithering over the BBC/Acorn job with 36K RAM for £335..and a BBC course to go with it))). I liked 'Stupidman', although in my copy he escapes from the cauldron before he is put in ((He used a time warp!))) I for one liked the crossword and the reason you haven't received my complete entry is because I couldn't find it ((Lost for words, eh? Cheer up, another Prize Crossword appears in this issue))) The book reviews were varied and it's nice to see that even though I read about 2 SF novels a week, I still haven't read 95% of the material in the average ERG book review section.

Robert MAPSON

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Kelmscott
West Australia

Boston 1980...On straight roads - I don't see why you prefer your roads in grid formation. That to me is singularly boring and unimaginative. I myself only ride a push bike, but would prefer winding roads..they tend to break up the scenery. ((I agree..but my point is that for long distance cross country travel, we also need some sort of a grid system of straighter roads as far too often a journey in England is doubled in length by having to follow two (winding) sides of a triangle to get somewhere.)) The Dream Machines - Enjoyable and readable, but I wonder whether a computer-nerd would have followed the whole thing? It did seem to ~~require~~ a fair amount of knowledge on the part of the reader. ((True, but one can't totally avoid 'buzz words', and enough information was given to get the general idea across and form a basis for further study. How many readers would like an even more basic article on computers ??..and how many would not? Let me know))) I enjoyed the book review section - certainly substantial and managing to cover a lot of the ground adequately.

JIM CAWTHORN

Gateshead

((Jim's opening remarks refer to the hand-cut 'Tolkien' stencils he did ages ago, one of which was used on ERG's last cover))) "Those LOTR stencils seem to have weathered the past 20 years rather better than I have. I hardly imagined, back in '62, that the whole Tolkien circus still hadn't reached its peak. After following the marathon Radio 4 version, it boggles the mind to think of the Third Programme tackling it in the nineteen-fifties. Enjoyed 'Corner Of The Market' and admired J. Buffery's courage in bearding her publisher in his lair. The only time I can venture to do that is when the well-known 'cheque in the post' fails to turn up. ((I gather from Judith that she is currently taking legal action against one publisher for just that.)) ((Me, I'm currently dunning the editor of Housecraft for the non return of a manuscript)))

Reams of SF are obviously still being written and published.. has anyone ever worked out how often Jack (EAGLE HAS LANDED) Higgins repeats characters, situations and whole scenes from novel to novel...or why the fates of Galactic Empires are fought out in BLAKES 7 in settings which would cramp a village cricket match?





For those of you who have exceedingly strong bookshelves..or can beef up the ones now creaking under the strain...SIDGWICK & JACKSON have come up with two more GIANT SF SPECIALS at £8.95 each. Appx 570 pages in each.

SPECIAL NO 38 holds, GATEWAY TO LIMBO by Chris Lampton..fast action adventure when Carstairs tries to foil tycoon Hawksworth who has opened a portal to an alternate universe and is exploiting the Zzyri. WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS, by F.Paul Wilson..Politician de Bloise plans to foment crisis in the Foundation and sweep his Restructurist Party into power after murdering 'Junior' Finch. Interstellar cloak-and-dagger plus aliens, psi power and a star gate. THE PLANET MASTERS, Allen Wold. McCade comes to status world Seltique in search of the Book Of Aradka..and meets excitement, assassins and other thrills in a vanVogt/Gossey plot which holds you throughout.

SPECIAL No 39 Opens with the superb LEVIATHAN'S DEEP by Jayge Carr The Terrans are beginning to threaten the Delyene matriarchy. The Kimassu Lady is captured, drugged and tortured..but discovers how best to defeat the enemy. A wonderful 'alien viewpoint' piece of writing. HOW THE GODS MOVED IN KYRANNON by Ardath Mayhar. The good, gentle forest people are attacked by the cruel city dwellers but by the aid of psi power and a bit of god intervention sort things out. THE RAVENS OF THE MOON, Charles L. Grant. Power blocs rule after the Oil Wars. Shannon Raille is made a scapegoat and is hunted for an assassination, but gradually, other factions join in and the political coup is prevented. A good future setting and plenty of action and incident.

THE DROWNED WORLD

J.G.Ballard

Dragon's Dream/Windward

£9.95 Hardback (a pb.

edn. is available)

Few readers can have missed this near classic, set in a time when increased solar activity melts the ice caps. Sea levels rise, flora and fauna go wild in the rain-forest conditions with mankind's cities becoming abandoned, reptile-ridden jungles. Some

civilisation lingers, but mankind is regressing with medic Kerans of a survey team finding himself drawn into the change. What raises this above the level of a plain re-issue is the concept of making it a large-sized (12x29 cm), illustrated, glossy paper creation bearing some 37 paintings by Richard French. Like the text, these are superlatively evocative.. and in an age devoted to photographic, airbrush/acrylic techniques, the brilliant idea of using water colours (no pun) has resulted in a strikingly matched gestalt of word and illustration. Some of Ballard's inconsistencies still rankle (a 2 watt heater...Or 62Kw! air conditioning in a hotel suite..and its power source??) but these are minor..the mood and the word picture plus the artwork make this a collector's item.

DARK FORCES Ed. Kirby McCauley Futura \$1.95

The editor avowedly sets out to compile an anthology of horror and the supernatural worthy to stand alongside Harlan Ellison's 'DANGEROUS VISIONS'. Cramming some 23 items into its 550 or so pages, I reckon he achieves that ambition. You will find zombies moonlighting on the graveyard shift and revenge by witchcraft and also by black magic. Monsters attack, troglodytes emerge from the sewers, vengeful stones roam at night, a time traveller brings on what he seeks to avert. Bodies return from the grave and Stephen King supplies a long, film-worthy monsters-in-the-land spine chiller to wind up the volume. No dusty Gothic boredom here. Each yarn sparkles as it gives you the shivers. Excellent value at the money.



WALK TO THE END OF THE WORLD

and
MOTHER LINES

Suzu McKee Charnas
Coronet \$1.25

A post-holocaust tale where women are breeding chattels/slaves and men are ranked by age, never knowing their children. Bek deserts his post to seek his father. Aided by outlaw D' Layo and Kelmz, an unwanted officer they continue the search joined by slave Alldera who has plans of her own. Accept the total improbability of the women's position and the rest of the yarn is richly detailed with Seniors, homosexuality, cannibalism, Dreamers and other facets. Characters tend to be a bit wooden...with the exception of Kelmz who is summarily dismissed rather than developed. In 'Mother Lines' we follow Alldera's saga as she survives solitude in the wilderness, gives birth to a child and encounters a tribe of Free Fems. The two volumes comprise some excellent, out of the ordinary reading... a sort of more realistic Jack Vance style...and cry out for a third part to complete the trilogy.

THE TIME OF THE EYE

Harlan Ellison
Granada \$1.25

Twelve tales of speculative fiction, and despite Ellison's disclaimer I'd still term them downbeat in their exploration of moods and ideas. Four deaths, one suicide, a blinding and the end of the world vie with triumph over a maniacal robot and human isolation in various forms. What raises the yarns out of the rut, is Ellison's pyrotechnical style. Enjoy them individually, but not all at one sitting. Colourful, sparkling and varied...their only common denominator is that concentration on the downbeat.

WE ARE ALL LEGENDS

Darrell Schweitzer
Starblaze \$4.95

Another in the beautifully presented Starblaze editions which come midway between hardcovers and paperbacks...or king-size pbs if you prefer. This one is exceedingly well illustrated by Steve Fabian...and has an introduction by L.Sprague De Camp which more or less gives a story precis...so don't read it first. Here are 12, episodes in the life of medieval knight Julian, and a couple of generations ago, would have been classed as 'fairy stories' in that they include beauteous maidens, witches, magic and acts of the Devil. Despite his vows, Julian is not stupid enough to put death before dishonour and the result is a lovely collection of tales and mood pieces which should delight the heart of an fantasy lover...with the added bonus of those Fabian illos. Reckon Ken Slater can get it for you...around \$3 to \$4 at a guess.



SHAKEHOLE

R.W.Mackelworth
Hale £6.25

Marcus Grindley returns to a riot-torn Britain when his old love, politician Elspeth McLaren is kidnapped by terrorists. A cryptic telegram gives a clue to where she is held captive, so Grindley aided by a small band sets out to rescue her from a pot-hole beneath the Yorkshire moors. It soon becomes obvious that the pot-hole isn't so secret, and that for their own reasons, the terrorists want their hands on Grindley.

Not strictly SF, but a taut adventure set in the near future. Some of the characters motives are over complicated but this is never allowed to interfere with what is an exciting action with no other pretensions

DIRECT ENCOUNTERS

Judith & Alan Gansberg
Coronet £1.25

A 'factual' investigation into U.F.O. visitations opening with a brief survey of various 'authorities' such as Doctors, Professors, Police etc. It should be remembered that such people are still human and can lie, mislead, or be misled just like anyone else. Next we have personal U.F.O. contact accounts from a select group followed by media reactions and those of friends and neighbours. There's a chapter on 'cover ups' (how does one cover nothing??) and further contact reports. If you're a sceptic like me, there's nothing here to change your mind..but if you want to believe, then this book will give you a lot of cosy support

CITIES IN FLIGHT

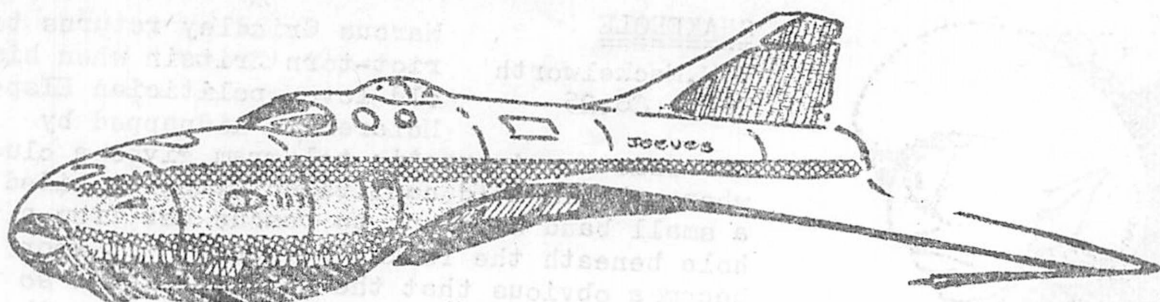
James Blish
Arrow £2.50

The 'invention' of the 'spindizzy' which allowed cities to wander through space, must rank alongside Smith's 'Bergenholtm' and Wells' 'Cavorite' as one of the great fictional space drives. Adding the longevity drugs raised 'The Cities' out of the generation starship class into a whole new range of possibilities. Here in one volume are:- 'THEY SHALL HAVE STARS', the scene-setting tale of the bridge on Jupiter. 'A LIFE FOR THE STARS' sees Mayor Amalfi and the city of New York heading for the stars. Their adventures continue in, 'EARTHMEN COME HOME' and 'THE TRIUMPH OF TIME'. Finally, an afterword by Richard D Mullen examines the Spenglerian basis of the society and times of the flying cities. Indubitably one of the best 'collection' books around and a must for any SF lover's book shelves. Highly recommended.

THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER

Gene Wolfe
Arrow £2.50

Good news for those unable to afford the hard-cover is the issuing of this 'Book Of The New Sun' 4-partner in paperback form. Apprentice Torturer is expelled from his Guild for showing mercy to a 'client' and we follow his wanderings, involvement with Vodalus and his robbers, and helping out when a headsman is needed. He also acquires the jewel 'Claw of The Conciliator' (which gives its name to the second book in the saga). Richly depicted, highly credible settings and characters which really come alive all bid fair to make this series the next 'cult' book after Tolkien and surpassing 'Thomas Covenant..Unbeliever' or 'Morgon: Prince of Hed' Not all of the series is written yet..but book two is all ready in hardcover, so make sure you don't miss out on this one.



THE PROPY EFFECT

Wonda McIntyre the Enterprise picks up Dr. Mordreaux, a criminal going
Orbit £1.25 for rehabilitation after charges of murder and illegal
experimentation..including time travel. Barely aboard
ship, Mordreaux appears and kills Captain Kirk..while still under guard.
From here on in we follow a most weird and (sometimes) wonderful web as
Spock tries to experiment with time and resurrect Kirk. Rather hampered by
'fixed characters'..but I fail to see how one character intends to fly no
less than across a star system..by unpowered solar sailcraft. Maybe he was
immortal and in no hurry.

THE BOOK OF HEROIC FAILURES

Stephen Pile I missed this the first time round, so even
Futura £1.25 though it is not SF, I'm particularly delighted to have a
second chance with the re-issue. The book details all the
crazy or otherwise things which have happened to various
people whilst aspiring to other..or higher things..such as the B.R. Chairman
who caught the wrong train..or the convicts who tunneled out of jail and
into a nearby courtroom during a trial. Then there is the newspaper editor
who had 50,000 copies printed..but forgot to arrange for distribution: a
poem by McGonagall; Part of Woodroffe's famous 'the bloody fleet's all lit
up' radio commentary and many other strange but ostensibly true tales. This
..not only funny..it might even be a plot source for authors. Try it.

THE ISLAND OF DOCTOR DEATH

Gene Wolfe Arrow £1.95 A pyrotechnic display of some 14 tales of
Speculative Fiction' which because of their
unsecured endings I would place in the 'New Wave'
class. A youngster fantasizes over a pulp magazine (empathy anyone?); alien
contact (superb hard-core, this); a Christmas Witch; cannibalism; a therapy
capsule in space; a new ruling breed on Earth; puppet masters, a strange
chase in arctic conditions and many more all different and all superbly
written. Wolfe writes with the descriptive power of Ballard merged with the
poetry of Moorcock or Bradbury, but with an added credibility which makes
this collection a feast for his fans and a girder towards that 'establishment
bridge' called for by Judith Buffery.

DRAGONDRUMS

Anne McCaffrey Young Piemur's voice breaks and he is moved from the choir to
become Master Robinton's spy and messenger. This arouses the
Corgi £1.25 enmity of his fellow apprentices and leads to Piemur himself
being hunted as a spy. He witnesses the inevitable dragon 'impression',
escapes 'between', makes his own 'impression' and generally has fun. This
is a juvenile riding on the dragon-wave, but should appeal to would-be dragon
riders of all ages. The original hard-core action of Pern has mellowed into
straightforward fantasy-adventure without the sex and sadism trappings which
appear so often in other tales. Make a nice present for a teenager 'fancy.



National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Office of Public Information
Jet Propulsion Laboratory
California Institute of Technology
Pasadena, California
Telephone (213) 354-5011

RADAR VIEW OF EASTERN CALIFORNIA was taken by the SEASAT satellite on July 7, 1978. Covering a region 200 by 62 miles (322 by 100 kilometers) it was received in less than a minute during a 9-minute sequence starting below Mexico's Baja Peninsula and ending on the British Columbia coastline.

Surfaces which reflect radar waves poorly are dark and the best reflecting surfaces are bright (note the spot of the Goldstone antenna which was receiving signals from SEASAT).

SEASAT's launch June 26, 1978, began the first experiment to monitor the world's oceans and coastlines from space with a unique set of microwave sensors able to operate day and night during all surface weather conditions.

Because of a short circuit in its power system, SEASAT ceased operating on October 9, 1978, during its 1,502nd orbit.

When the analysis of SEASAT's data is complete, project officials expect that nearly all primary mission objectives will be met.

RADAR VIEW OF EASTERN CALIFORNIA BY SEASAT

