



HELL IO





HELL  
TEN











### HOW B-RO BROUGHT THE SERMON DOWN FROM THE MOUNT

The tribes of Hell were leaderless. Their Ghod, M'LingList, had deserted them and for fully seven moons they had wandered in the wilderness, being forced to perform a strange rite known to the Elders of the tribe as 'Playnit Beiyeeear'. This rite had resulted in a plethora of holy relics, or 'Zaheens', which were stacked high against the tent walls of one of the tribes holy men.

Now, in those days, the leaders of the tribe were two-fold and one of these, by name Skel, did go forth unto the other and did speak thus to him:-

"B-ro, yesterday the Angel of the Lhord came down upon my sleeping rug and, without disturbing my concubine, did counsel me to give unto thee a message. Thou art to go up near unto the summit of mount Pendul 'Bree and consult there with the Lhord thy Ghod, and He will make Himself manifest before you. Thus the Angel did bespeak me."

And it came to pass that B-ro went up, near unto the top of the mount. And lo, the Lhord made Himself manifest before him in the form of ten stone tablets. Upon these stone tablets was B-ro commanded to carve the names of all the tribe, that the holy relics might be distributed according to the same ritual, yeah even unto the tenth generation of the sons of LoC.

And B-ro came down from the mount and showed the tablets to them, saying:-

"See, our Lhord M'LingList is with us again. See, He is manifest before us all. Once more we are the chosen ones of M'LingList. And all the tribes of Hell must be regular in the practice of His devotions. All who transgress and fall from grace in their worship shall have their names struck from the tablets and they shall be banished from the tribe to wander forever in that wilderness known as the Void of Fandom, and a new member of the tribe shall come forth in their place.

And it will serve the sods right!!!



And there you have it. Pages one through six of the original HELL 10 as was. A curio, nothing more. A relic of a past more ancient than the mere passage of fifteen months can account for. He is not me, or rather I am no longer he. The person who wrote page six is no more. I bear his name but not his attitudes or his aims, though I am grown from his seed. Strange this.....I cannot put myself in his mind.....and yet there has been continuity.

Most of this fanzine is his fanzine. I shall not intrude any more than is necessary. I do owe him one favour at least though, which I shall grant him that he may sleep in peace in his not-grave. He made a right Tit of himself in the rest of his editorial, or so time has proven. The ripping sound you might be hearing is a ream of paper being unceremoniously sacrificed to vanity.

I do not intend to just sit here, in the void of his editorial, a guest at the wake who stayed on and married the widow. First though, let me errate the errata which time has dusted lightly across the preceding pages:-

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ERRATA - ERRATA - ERRATA - ERRATA - ERRATA - ERRATA - ERRATA - ERRATA - ERRATA

(1) There are more things in Heaven and Earth than are dreamed of in your philosophy.....and than are listed on your contents page, Skel baby. Some additional material has been tagged on at the end, because.....

(2) The next issue will not be out 'whenever'. It will not be out period, ergo LoCers, Traders and Contributors can get stuffed. Nymphomaniac femme-fans may still apply if they so wish but.....

(3) They should apply to :- 25 Bowland Close, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire, SK2 5NW, at which address the Skeltribe is now in residence. The only thing Robinson has moved is his bowels.

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Despite what I said in the 'ERRATA' it would be nice to hear from you again, but as a LoC will not bring anything in return my cynicism prevents me from installing a larger letter-box.

Trades to will be welcome. Not for HELL, but for INFERNO which, with issue number five, I am withdrawing as a 'strictly OMPA only' zine and which I intend to run as an open letter cum zine review zine cum personal zine cum nothing on earth. In fact, very much as it is now, but taking in fandom as a hole instead of being OMPA-based.

I would like to apologise (apologise, pull out his eyes, apologise) to our contributors who sent in their material in good faith, for the time it's taken to get their stuff into print. Sorry guys.



What's been happening since I was here last? Not a lot really. S'funny really.....I mean, how can a year and more go by and not enough happen to fill even one stencil?

I finished HELL 9 with the words "Cas is pregnant." It is now the twenty-second of May and our daughter, Bethany Leigh Skelton, is nearly five months old. That's another way I've changed. Hell man, baby daughters are fannish. Cuter than a Tim Kirk illo. Of course, she was late, but she got that from her mother.

I moved house too, of course. Instead of a self-contained flat with self-contained problems, a room with a view, I now have more rooms.....but a lot less view. Instead of the Pennines cutting starkly across the infinite horizon I now see houses fifty feet in every direction, and worst of all, a mutely mocking garden.

The bad guys made their presence felt in between times too. Last November I was made redundant. They did offer me alternative employment but I developed a sudden rush of guts to the head and told them where they could stick their 'Wages Office Supervisor'. Then I squandered my redundancy pay by taking a looong holiday on the dole before getting another job. Mind you, of the four men in the Cantrell & Cochrane (Northern) Limited Regional Accounts office, the three who read SF were all gotten rid of in one way or another. It's amazing the lengths they'll go to in order to squelch us fans isn't it. The firm I work for now has neither a roneo nor a gestetner, so it is goodbye to cheap corflu. They do have a Banda, but even I would never sink so low as to put out a spirit-duped zine.

I got fifty quid from my grandma, which was another bad thing. It was in her will.

My father-in-law developed diabetes and was invalided out of the R.A.F. Another bummer.

I made it to TYNEcon, by the simple expedient of going it alone, but missed Cas to such a degree that I vowed never again to go without her. A con is a time for sharing experiences, not for wandering round feeling that something is missing. Also, I did Newcastle 'on the cheap' (hah!) and stayed at a bed-and-breakfast place some distance from the Royal Station Hotel. It was a mistake and one which I shall not make again. Apart from the obvious drawbacks there was the inconvenience of having to use Brian's room as a base of operations which made the simple task of popping upstairs for something a good analog of Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece. First I had to find Brian in order to get the key, -then upon returning, I had to seek him out again in order to return the bloody thing and half the time he hadn't got it anyway because John Mottershead (who was kipping on my airbed, on Brian's floor) had borrowed it.

I conquered my nervousness at meeting new people in the same way as I did at Bristol - got smashed out of my mind on the first night of the con and



made an ass of myself. I also made myself so incredibly sick the following day that I spent the rest of the con on fruit juices and the occasional pint of lager & lime.....and even brought home some of the whisky I'd taken.

Still I managed not to call Chip Delany a greasy dago, which I'm told I did at Bristol.

Finish with a song, the saying goes, and I would like to do just that. It's a little ditty entitled 'She Was Only The Stencil-typer's Daughter But She Sure Knew How To Cut It', sung to the tune of 'Leavin' On A Jetplane'.

All my LoC's are typed, I'm ready to go  
I'm standing here by the mimeo  
Can't wait to start her up 'n let her fly.  
But the drum is breaking,  
The stencil's torn,  
My back is aching  
'n the mood is gone,  
Already I'm so pissed-off I could die.

So print for me, collate for me,  
Tell me what the cost will be.  
Mail it, I just wanna see it go,  
'cos I'm leavin' off this fanzine  
Don't know when I'll be back again,  
Oh Babe, I hate the So-'n-so.

Now the time has come to fold it,  
One more time, let me pub it,  
Then close the file, 'N I'll be on my way.  
Dream about the zines to come  
Which I must finance on my own  
Come that time I won't have to say....

Print for me, collate for me  
Tell me what the cost will be.  
Mail it, I just wanna see it go.  
'cos I'm leavin' off this fanzine,  
Don't know when I'll be back again,  
Oh Babe, I hate the So-'n-so.

Leavin' off this fanzine,  
Don't know when I'll be back again,  
Oh Babe,  
I HATE TO GO.

Skel - 22 May 1974.



T H E R E   M U S T   B E   A   C A C H E   I N   I T

Some time ago there appeared, in LINK 5, an article by Gray Hall about the strange and peculiar items secreted by the Victorians beneath Cleopatra's Needle as a form of 'time capsule'. These were :-

A standard foot and pound(av.); a 1:24 scale model of the obelisk; copies of 'Engineering Magazine' with plans of the various machines used in transporting and erecting the Needle c/w its complete history; a fragment of the obelisk; a jar of Doulton ware; a complete set of British coinage (inc. an Empress of India rupee); a standard guage of 1,000th part of an inch; a baby's bottle and childrens' toys; a copy of the translation of the Needle's inscription; a portrait of Queen Victoria; The Bible in French and English, the Hebrew Pentateuch and St. John chapter 3 verse 16, translated into 215 languages; a shilling razor; a copy of Bradshaw's Railway Guide; a case of cigars; some pipes; a box of hairpins and sundry items of feminine adornment; a hydraulic jack (used to raise the Needle); a two-foot rule; specimens of wire rope and submarine cable; 24 maps of London; copies of daily and illustrated newspapers; a London directory; a copy of Whittaker's Almanack; and 12 photo's of beautiful English women of 1800.

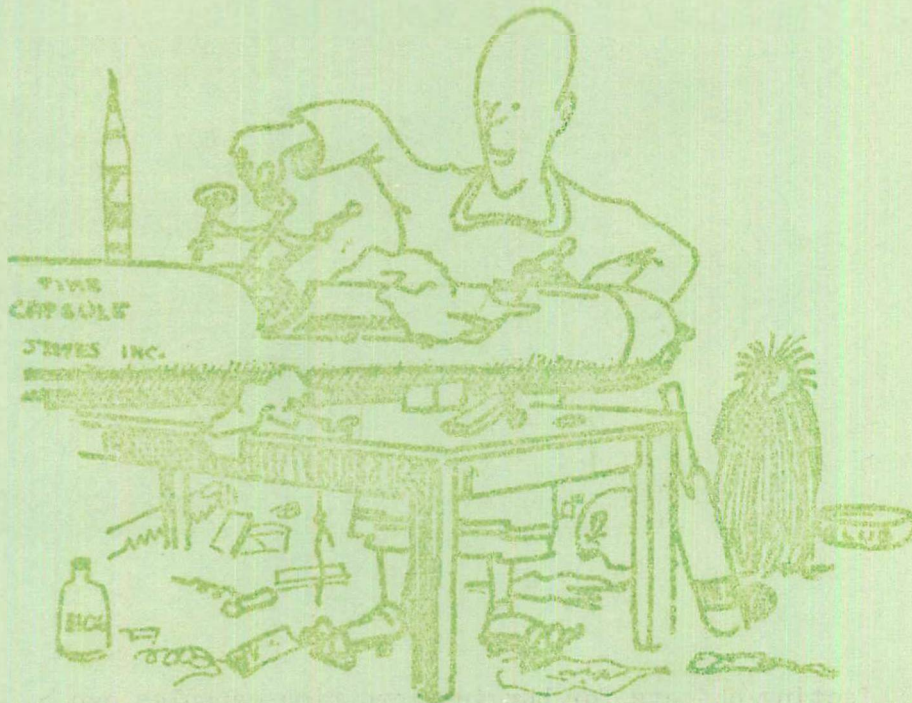
What ten things, we asked Terry, would you preserve for posterity to represent our society?



TERRY JEEVES

Selecting objects for bunging into time capsules can be hard or easy, depending on what guidelines you set. I reluctantly abandoned the idea of postulating some future atomic Armageddon and then stuffing my capsule with crossbows, knives, slings and other unfortunate arrows, as this seemed rather like chickening out. Instead, I raised my chins to the stars and repeated three times, "The future will be one where man loves man, and science/technology its upward exponential curve"....then I uncrossed my fingers and added..... "But I'm betting that pollution and the squandering of natural resources will continue." Because of this, some of my objects will be slanted this way....and because such Utopian man will naturally have preserved all our current museums and suchlike junk, and because mass production will have ensured a long life for many items purely by sheer weight of numbers, I have also tried to include for posterity many of those things which are so trivial that we simply use 'em and throw 'em away. Historians digging up Rome may find oodles of scutums and suchlike junk, but never come across the Roman equivalent of a betting slip, or a B.C. bikini. Likewise, those who pry into our lives may have a few hundred Hondas, umpteen crumbling newspapers and lots of photographs of such important subjects as Ted Heath, the Empire State Building and the first A bomb....but wonder what the heck we did with our spare time, or who wore the Boston Redsox. So, I choose the intrinsically unimportant.





Before choosing my items, I also decided to chuck out a capsule and its miniature, jam-packed models, microfilm and instructions as to 'how-to-build-your-own-equipment-to-play-these-recordings'. To hell with it. My sponsor (HELL Publications Inc.) (?) has put unlimited funds at my disposal, so be buggered to unpacking the past on some future kitchen table. My junk is to be entombed in some gargantuan underground vault sealed off and filled with helium.....and size, expense, and complexity needn't hamper the selections which are (and not in order of merit) :-

1. A selection of model kits for boats, cars, trains and aircraft.
2. A rarities box, containing samples of things which the future may lack.
3. A trivia box, for things which we don't lack, but which we might be glad to.
4. A complete sound/vision playback system.
5. TV, film and tape library to be played back over item 4.
6. Full size anatomical models together with 'average' body recordings.
7. A collection of joke and cartoon books.
8. A compendium of indoor games.
9. A sample of every energy-consuming device found in a home.
10. A large generator to supply 240v 50c/s for powering all the above, plus the lighting and heating of my vault.



Going more closely into the items so that you can more readily understand the crazy logic which governed their choice :-

1. Pastimes and hobbies come and go. In a few thousand years, historians may give their eye teeth to find out how we amused ourselves when not in bed. Model making is one of today's great hobbies, but models are ephemeral (especially when my wife dusts them) so a complete range of kits (both static and operational...such as flying models) not only reveals our pastime, but also umpteen artifacts of our society.

2. In my rarities box, a lump of coal, a chunk of wood, can of petrol, a canister of 'fresh air', container of sea water and so on. All things which might no longer be available to future man. The 'fresh air' would enable him to compare the stuff we breathed with his own environment. The sea water would give an insight into a changing ocean....and thinking along these lines, it might also be of interest to deep freeze a dozen eggs, two or three chickens and one or two other items of modern diet which are already showing signs of deterioration under intensive production methods.

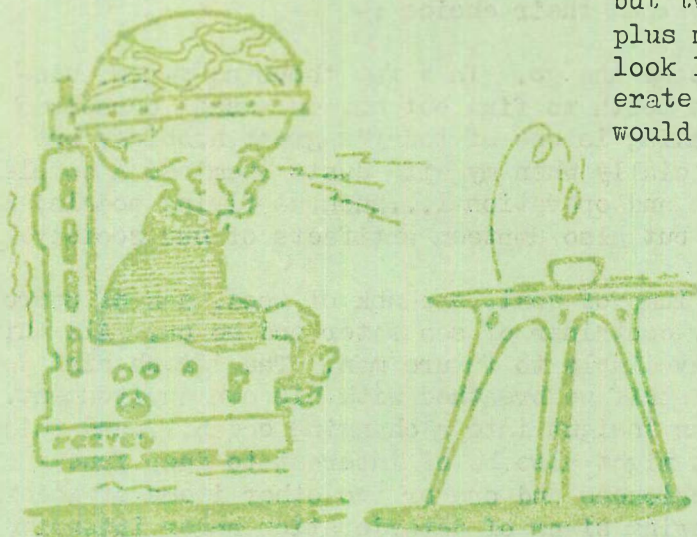
3. Trivia are the things no one saves, and then in a few years time, wishes they had. I have thrown away heaps of pre-war magazines and other similar items....now fetching high prices simply because no other blighter saved 'em either. On the other hand, I do have a 1935 Radio Times, an Illustrated London News of the same period....and both are fascinating at showing things everybody knew, but which are now forgotten - like a garden shed for thirty bob!!! in a Radio Times ad. So, in my trivia box would be a current Exchange & Mart, plus issues of every other contemporary magazine, fanzine, throw-away ad leaflets, appliance instruction manuals, Record Club and Book Club ads, and a scad of mail order catalogues.

4. To simplify things for the future, all items in my TV/film and tape reproduction equipment would be designed to operate off the 240v supply, and the equipment would not attempt to cover all permutations in film and tape standards. 16mm optical sound projection equipment at 24fps, and a standard two-trak tape play system running at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips together with a truckload of spares would be all that is required.....

5. ....because all material in the vision/sound library would have been re-dubbed either onto 16mm film for all TV and other vision items, or onto the standard sound tape. Material so recorded would be a representative item from each TV series, each radio series, and a wide cross-section of normal theatre films. I cherish the thought of the impact of such tripe as Constipation Street, Top of the Slops, or the Clottyroe Kid on an unprepared posterity. But again, the background against which such programmes are produced would give a marvellous insight into our mass idiocy which we call entertainment.

6. Looking at paintings by old masters, I have often wondered if women (and men) really did have flat noses and lard bladder faces in days of yore. Modern photographs might avoid this dilemma for the capsule prober,





TELEKINETIC TIDDLEY FLICKER

but two full-sized anatomical models plus medical books on what the insides look like and how the naughty bits operate would most likely intrigue him, as would a complete list of measurements of average body parameters such as heart rate, respiration and so on. It would enable the medical robot of the future to see how much we (or they) have changed.

7. Fun and joke books are excellent guides to life thoughts and current attitudes, as one who wades through back issues of Punch soon knows. So, I include a library of as much material as

can be found, along with a wad of fashion and furniture style books and catalogues.

8. Often at Christmas, some well-meaning (or lazy) relative would come up with a 'Giant Compendium of Games'. Even before opening the damned thing you knew it would contain 'Snakes & Ladders', 'Draughts', 'Ludo' and, inevitably, 'Blow Football'. Maybe that is why today I still look at the Saturday TV listings and mutter, "Blow football." However, things may be different in the future, and creche-reared children may well lack the aunts and uncles essential to the supply of such goodies. So, my box would contain a sample of every available home game ranging from Monopoly, through board and card games, right down to good old tiddley-winks. Who knows, such a selection might well spark off the telekinetic tiddley tournament of the future.

9. To a future which appears to be faced with a growing energy crisis, it might prove interesting for them to see how we squandered their heritage. A range of colour TVs, dish washers, vacuum cleaners, power drills, heaters, cookers, clocks, tape recorders, hi-fi units and so on could even spur the invention of the first time machine.....just so they could send back a few X-bombs to kill off people like Edison, Faraday and the like.

10. Finally, a large 240volt, 50 c/s generator. It would have no prime mover of its own, but an input shaft bearing the exact number of rpm at which it must be rotated in order for the 240 volts to come squirting out of the other end. In this way, whatever power source was available to our vault opener, he could simply hook it up to the generator with a minimum of trouble, and so power up all the equipment of my time vault .....be rather a pity if they had no power sources at all though, wouldn't it?



# BABEL VERSION FIVE

## NO 3

by

JOHN PIGGOTT

As darkness fell, excitement kissed the crowd, and made them wild. An atmosphere of freaky holiday prevailed as Robinson, frenetic with the effects of the bheer, strummed the 1st chords. The strings hummed sympathetically to the thunderous applause, and Biro knew at once feelings of euphoria and despair.

What was the purpose of this life?

Robinson had been born in Lhinwood, the lowest city of all.....level 9. It had only been a strange combination of circumstances which had allowed him to leave his humble place of birth and travel the levels. Biro had night-walked on level 54, in the strange universe of Whalley Range; he had been to the highest levels of the urbmon to perform; his work had once even been sought in another constellation, and Biro never forgot the momentous visit to the barbaric castle of the Gannet, whose inhabitants spoke a tongue which was well over halfway incomprehensible to civilised folk.



And tonight he had been to Level 185 of the Pendlebury urbmon, invited as a guest of Paul Skelton. Skelton had prospects to rise above his present status - his knowledge of bheer-making made him a privileged citizen among his neighbours, and the John Brunner beard which he affected was, in the estimation of some of his fellows, stark evidence of his forthcoming conversion to professional writing.

Yet what prospects had Biro? Cast out from urbmon society by the privilege of his minstrelry, he could look forward to no change in his station. Would he be nothing but an Ompan - forever?

In the heat of the night, the lights of the neighbouring urbmons dimmed slowly. It was time for bed. Biro's eyes fixed on the lithe body of Cas, stretched out on the platform; yet even she could well be denied him. An Ompan minstrel has few friends, he reflected bitterly, and no partners.

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TIDDLYWINKS IS A VERY FANNISH occupation. You laugh? Think again sonny. Or perhaps you might prefer some more rough sport. Rugby football, maybe, or Kettle baiting?

No matter. When I first arrived at Cambridge I gave some thought as to whether or not I should join the Tiddlywinks Club which thrived there. Spurred on by the eccentric subscription figure of £1.00 $\frac{1}{2}$  I went as far as enquiring at their stall at the Societies Fair as I passed it, asking for information on the usual standard of play, but then the SF stall caught my eye and I scuttled off and parted with vast sums in short order. The shock drove all else out of my mind, then.

A year passed. A year filled with the manifold experiences associated with the bustling life of a natural sciences undergraduate. I read SF, I produced and wrote for fanzines, I played Wargames, I even did some work..... And then, early this year, my wargaming partner said to me: "Would you like to play Tiddlywinks for the college next Thursday? Our team is one short - and their team will be mostly novices, so it won't matter if you make a few mistakes," he added ingratiatingly.

I gaped at him. "Er..well, I've got a supervision, actually," I demurred. But in actual fact my ever-active (it's true!) imagination was stimulated. After all, any fool could say he'd rowed for the college - weren't there about six teams entered every year? How many could admit to playing tiddlywinks? I mentally catalogued "Have represented my college at tiddlywinks" along with all the other useful facts about myself which could be used to fill up forms.

And so out came the mat and a set of winks, and I prepared to be taught the rudiments of the game.

"You have four small winks, two large winks, and a squidger," said Andy, selecting me a set. I picked out a thick plastic disc an inch and a quarter



in diameter.

"This is the squidger, I suppose?" I said.

"Yes - you use it to squidge the other winks."

I flipped one of the small winks experimentally with the squidger. Man, it took me back years, to the days when, as a fairly timid six-year-old, I had attained some small skill with a Noddy Tiddlywink set. Fifty points in the cup, ten in the corners of the box, and so on. (I've heard of people getting nostalgic about old copies of FOULER, but this was ridiculous).

The counter I had flipped landed so that it covered one of the others. "Ha!" I exclaimed, "I've squidged that yellow wink!"

I had to have it spelled out for me. "No, no, you've squabbed the yellow. Squidging is the act of flipping - you squab someone's wink if you land on top of it. Get it?"

I got it.

"Also, it's very bad policy to squab your own wink," cautioned Andy. "Now, I can squab that one you've just flipped, and so you won't be able to move either of yours."

"You can't squidge a squabbed wink?"

"Indeed not, and if you try to squidge a squabbed wink you have made a foul squidge - you have to put the wink back where it was before you squidged it, ensuring that the squabbed position is the same as before - and then your opponent squidges in your place."

Still with me? Good, splendid!!

Oh, there are all sorts of extra complexities. You can make your wink leap in the air or glide along the surface of the mat by varying the angle of the squidger. There's a considerable strategic skill required in knowing exactly when to play one's winks into the pot; once they're there you can't play them again, and a player left with insufficient winks will find his opponents squabbing all his remaining winks, and then have them pot out at their leisure.....and so on.

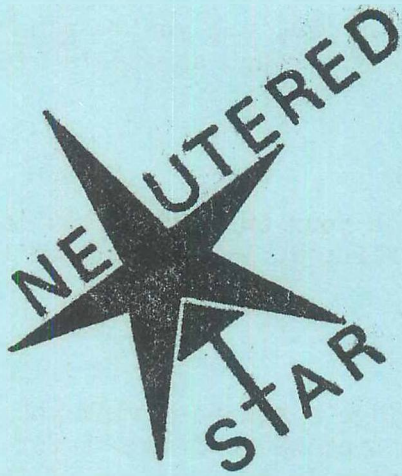
Well, the Thursday came. We trooped down to Corpus with the mat and winks, and set out the equipment in the mail room when we arrived, in order to drum up a bit of interest in the mundane hordes as they arrived to collect the latest left-wing tracts which generally infest our universities. The opposition turned up a quarter of an hour late, and the game started at last.

Oh, did we win?

Need you ask? OF COURSE WE DID!!!



---And now (\*yawn\*) here's a commissioned, sort-of repetition, from the author who, as they keep saying, brought you that start-lingly original look at SF in the cinema, "SOLARIS ---- Nice One Cyrillic.." Da da-dah! (That's a trumpet, you fools)---



---Some pips from a sour apple, being in two parts; a prologue, in which the curiously still far from extinct Hero is introduced; followed by a short glossary, neither of which have anything to do with each other.

By our SciFi correspondent,

STARRY HEAVEN.



SO, HE THOUGHT, gazing abstractedly out of the clearmour bubble of the flyer, he had done it once more. Yet another world modestly but, for all intents and purposes, single-handedly saved from the 'Domino Theory' expansion of the reptilian green Gookz into Galactic-South-East Aries. It had, naturally, been touch and go right up to the end, with incredible odds stacked against him as well as the duplicity and misguided fanaticism of people who didn't agree with the things that he held sacred. He thought of the well-meaning but chickenshit politicians, willing to sell their birthright for the sake of public opinion. He thought of the hysterical but ineffectual muscle-bound sociology-students with their black leather and machine-guns, that were the World Militants for Peace. It was a good job the cool brain and the cold determined eye of a white sahib broke their simple savage nerve and made them cringe. In fact, the more he thought about it, the more it was obvious that they were out and out cads, capable only of such underhand deeds as beating up 84-year old General Knowledge\*, retired head of Naval Intelligence (a link a very palpable link). They were blacker-than-black absolute rotters, and he a very light shade of grey, had a mind to give them a good thrashing. Or had he already done that? He couldn't remember all these little details.

"I wanted to tell you," said Non-Hero Good-Guy, "that I knew you'd win. I knew you'd find the answer. You figured in everything that led up to it. You had to be there."

"I suppose I did...yes, I do suppose I did... Something always manages to draw me near the tree that lightning is about to fall upon."

"Destiny, sir," said Non-Hero Good-Guy, really meaning 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> a word.

"Rather an accidental social conscience and some right mistake-making, I fear."

"What will you do now, Lord?"

"I don't know, Non-Hero Good-Guy. I haven't decided yet."

I've, uh, inherited a planet.

This one, to be exact.

Well--

Hell, I don't want the thing. I mean, sure I'm stuck with it for a while, but I'll work something out.

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\* I'm being very careful here: I don't know if 'General Knowledge' is Ritchie Smith's or not, but it could be. In sillier moments between us we have collected an entire Robert F. Young-ful ---- General Accident, General Quarters, General Hospital, General Disorder, General Postoffice, Major Operation, Corporal Punishment, Private Partz, etc., all the obvious ones. It's something you do riding along on the top of a bus going to Sunderland, looking at the houses and advertisements rather than talking. Have fun, children. Bye.



Then he waited, marshalling his thoughts and brooding over his still untested powers. For though he was master of the world, he was not quite sure what to do with it. He began to suck his thumb.

But he'd think of something.

(Well, readers, how did you do with those little misquotes above? The three correct answers are : 'LORD OF LIGHT', 'THIS IMMORTAL', and of course, '2001'. How many did you get right? If you got 4 points you are an SF Hero/ine; if you got 3 points, Non-Hero Good-Guy; 2 points mean you're a small-time Good Guy who makes The Ultimate Sacrifice half way through the action so that Hero and his trusty Indian friend can go on to save the day; 1 point and you must be a friendly and quaint alien who speaks a poeticised-up corny heraldic-type English; no points...what's a punk like you doing sniggering at a zine like this, you two are made for each other; minus points...go back to South Reddish.)

"Say," said Non-Hero Good-Guy, turning in his seat to face the others. "We've time to kill. Why don't you give us your version of the situation here? Even when I've read it before it's helpful to have the material put in different words," he said to him, reverting to good ol' 'STAR FOX'. "You see, we make a habit of gaily sailing off on huckleberry notions to another star-system without, it seems, knowing anything at all about it. This necessitates inviting some handy Knowing Good Guy to give us a long discourse of often elementary or vital facts. You see?"

He did see. He stroked for a moment the scar that he had picked up off Virgo (now there was a hooker for you --- he began to sweat as he remembered) and then taking his hand out of his trouser pocket, put on his best Jules Verne voice as the flyer dragoned on towards the uplands of Kimreth.

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"Well--- Long, long ago, in the remote past, most of this part of the cosmos was ruled by the Ravers. The Ravers had possessed a strange power, a power like telepathic hypnosis, with which they could affect the mind of any being they came in contact with. This they called 'Hard Liquor'. The Ravers ruled their empire for an unknown period, and their power was said to be so great that they even made new worlds to their own liking. Eventually however they found that a slave race, the Concoctapun, were revolting. The Ravers were forced to use a weapon, a weapon that totally destroyed all intelligence in the known universe..."

"You don't mean---?" The dread name trembled on Non-Hero Good-Guy's lips, smudging his lipstick.

"I don't want to spout plattitudes but just watch yourself the next time you open a can of transatlantic baked beans, that's all.

"The Ravers left behind them fragmentary traces of their passing, such as the occasional rare discovery of a Status Pox; an even rarer find being of



a mummified Raver hand, in the lettercolumn of FOULER. Some of the creatures we see around us today can also be considered relics of the Raver period, such as the frumious Randysnatcher. More noticeably so is the Grog.

"A Grog is one of the last degenerate descendants of the Ravers. Like its long-gone ancestors, it has the 'Hard Liquor' power of mind control. An immature Grog looks something like an idiot god's attempt to make a hairy bulldog. It has long, coarse hair, no nose, and its mouth is a flat lipless slit hiding two serrated horseshoe-shaped cutting surfaces. It snaps, snarls and rushes around and tries to savage anything that moves. It soon becomes however a five-foot high squat hairy pyramid of flesh that sits on its arse all day doing nothing although occasionally it brain-washes lesser forms to willingly or even joyfully take away the turds it produces. Its only noticeable feature is the huge mouth, a yard wide with a slight sarcastic smile playing at its upturned corners, with which it amuses itself by sticking out its large and dangerous tongue at any small creature or lower life-form that ventures too far and thus becomes its prey. Usually these prove to be invertebrates.

"The Randysnatcher is a raw meat animal that it's possible, I suppose, some of the Ravers made. The female is twice the size of a brontosaurus and moves forward on a rippling belly-foot. There are very few breaks in its thick skin. It has, however, a sentient mind of reputed great intelligence. It lives in the lowlands low on Finx, quietly browsing, goblin' anything tasty that comes along. You'd think it the most harmless thing imaginable---until you saw it bearing down on you like a charging mountain, trying to maule you.

"Actually the Puppeteer is more usually thought of when you talk of Finx. You can recognise a Puppeteer by the fact that he has two faces and is an enormous coward. He has the feet of a deer and also the curious, delicate gait of a deer. Why the name 'Puppeteer' is a bit of a mystery but I think it's because of its use of a burrowing creature with a rudimentary intelligence as a slave to produce for it the Worms and Frogs, two staple items on which it sustains itself. What little is known of the Puppeteer seems to indicate a very surprisingly large shere of influence and also far afield interests in trading and diplomacy.

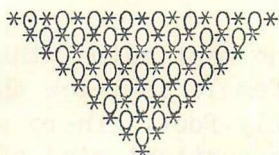
"The varying habitats of the human-settled worlds, like Finx, have resulted in some peculiar deviations from the norm. Ratfanders are typical. They come in two basic types: the tall, thin, low-I.Q. type, and the short, squat, balloonlike, low-I.Q. type. Since conditions of low-I.Q. or even total witlessness, such as experienced when in FREE ORBIT, cause the nervous tissues to atrophy, especially the central, the average Ratfander appears very weak when returned to places of normal I.Q. His suspensory lift-belt and energiser is therefore very important to him if he is to get up and do anything.

"...Which just leaves, I think, the Outsiders and the Kzilberti. Kzilberti are slaving carnivores with a love of fighting, although it is now believed that, contrary to what was originally thought by many, their sharp teeth have completely atrophied away leaving only gums, if indeed Kzilberti



ever had any teeth. Kzilberti fight gallantly, ferociously, and with no conception of truth; and they always take on several times as much as they can handle. Long ago they were famous for the campaigns of biological warfare that they waged.

"The Outsiders are strange, vegetative creatures who spend countless years tracing the path of the seeds of their phanzine foundation, which is said to sail about the known universe blown by nothing more than the simple power of pure moonshine. The Outsiders are by nature a low-I.Q. life-form and would soon fall down in conditions of normal gravity, as was indicated when the Outsider's chairman and his council actually came down to earth for a general meeting of minds. Even though this was near by Rape Kenneady all he could manage were a few seconds before the meeting had to be called to a halt. Instead of the Warp that the Ratfanders have, the Outsiders possess a Driveless Inertia of great power, which it is common knowledge they are prepared to sell to anyone who has the money to buy. Who particularly wants to waste thirty bob though?"



CHANGES OF ADRESS AND OTHER THINGS OF A LAST MINUTE NATURE

KEVIN HALL: now resides at---398 Barlow Moor Road,  
Chorlton-Cum-Hardy,  
Manchester, 21.

RUTH & ANDREW DUNLOP: now reside at-----42 Brantwood Court,  
West Byfleet,  
Weybridge,  
Surrey.

So, the 1975 Eastercon is to be put on by a group of fen who hadn't the gumption to lay the groundwork for their bid before it was presented to the voters at Newcastle. So, the voters were given a snow-job. The convention which was to be held preferably in Brighton to give Pete Weston the experience to bid for a World Con there, is to be held in Coventry. These 'cheap' six quid double rooms are to be £10.25 and the GoH who was 'unofficially' to be Harlan Ellison, is to be Mike Moorcock. Hmmmm, sounds like it's going to be one of those cons.



SYDNEY - HONOLULU - TORONTO - NEW YORK - SAN FRANCISCO ----- STOCKPORT' ???

.....we herewith  
present a much edited  
transcription.....



B-ro: What fascinating persons have you met on your travels?

Shayne: All of them???

Skel: No, just who was the most? That's a start, isn't it?

Shayne: It's a start...it's also a hard one. Well...say the most interesting - fascinating is the wrong word.- William Rotsler is a very interesting person to talk to. At the worldcon banquet he gave a longish speech. He spoke v-e-r-y slowly and v-e-r-y carefully as though he was chewing over each sentence before he continued, but everything he said was interesting. He's got a subtle sense of humour whilst someone like Asimov has an obvious one. He's witty too, in a subtle way. His cartoons are, I think, very expressive of him. Actually he said to me when I was interviewing him...we were talking about his coming to Australia...a friend of his said, "Yes, a very popular man" and he said, "No, I don't have any friends overseas." A girl said "Yes, yes everyone loves you." He's probably got more friends than he realises I think. He also said, "Everybody thinks I've got a long nose." His nose, for the record, is quite normal.

I think a very interesting person to talk to, because he's willing to talk, is Roger Zelazny. He's a very nice person. He was very, very generous while I was there, as were Jay and Alice Haldeman, while I was in Baltimore. Really nice people. American fans, I love you all.

B-ro: Zelazny, of course, being the person who has a 'Dali' in his third-floor toilet.

Shayne: Actually that's just what Bill Wright would like the world to believe, though when I was there he was contemplating moving it to the third-floor toilet to keep the image alive. Any other questions monsieur.. the most interesting person I've met in the UK perhaps? I don't think I could answer that one anyway, they're all wierdos.

B-ro: But nice wierdos.....

Shayne: Oh yes, yes.

Skel: As a woman of wide experience what do you think are the basic character differences, if any, between the Australian fan, the US fan and the Britfan?

Shayne: This next portion will be heavily censored....Well, it's all I suppose got to do with the way in which the fandom lives. Australian fandom lives in a fannish way because we are all fans. We have no Pro's.....we've got no Moorcocks or Ballards or Aldiss' or anything.

B-ro: But you have the Chandlers and the Hardings and so forth.....

Shayne: We have Captain Chandler when he gets off his ship, which isn't very often. We have Lee Harding when he gets away from whatever he has to do during normal hours.....We had Damien Broderick for Syncon 70 and since then we haven't seen or heard from him again. Jack Wodhams is another one. Jack lives up at a place called Kubulka in Queensland, which is as far out as it sounds.....and Captain Chandler is really not an Australian, he's just a Britisher who lives off the coast on a ship you know.....so it's totally, practically, a very fannish oriented fandom. Most of the conventions are much like the ones



\* before because there's no true new blood in it to change anything.  
\* Everybody knows everyone else...very well. The Melbourne fans have  
\* been living in the same general area for all of their lives and they  
\* know everybody and it's almost like one big family. Sydney fans are  
\* a little different because there's less of them and they tend to be  
\* scattered further apart. They only see each other at monthly mee-  
\* tings and such.

\* American fans? Well, there are more of them - there are more of them  
\* every year. I don't know a lot about US fans so I can't say. I can  
\* only talk from my experiences at a worldcon and that's not really a  
s very good basis for an opinion. I gather that everybody's a little  
t way-out at a worldcon anyway....doing their thing, but they're a very  
i hospitable bunch of people the americans, the fans.

l I had an incredible experience on my way home from Toronto. I had to  
l get from Toronto to New York the cheapest way possible, obviously.  
After cancelling out air flights and such, that left the road. I was  
S informed that Jay Haldeman had a school-bus, a converted school-bus,  
h that he was driving from Toronto to New York so I went along and asked  
a him if I could go along...."Sure, sure, there's plenty of room. Just  
y arrive and we'll take you along." Well, BOY what a trip! It's worth  
n writing a book about, that trip. There were six of us:- Alice and  
e Jay Haldeman, Gardner and Sue (I think her name is) Dozois and Alan  
Who'snameIcan'tremember, and myself, all in a bus which creaked and  
\* rattled and groaned so loud you couldn't hear yourself think. We set  
\* off and travelled...oh, about five hundred miles; and the things that  
\* happened, my god - shall I tell you about one of them?

\* Well, we came to one section, Palisades Parkway by name. You know,  
\* the Americans have three systems of roadways parralleling each other  
\* in most cases: The motorways or parkways which are really beautiful  
\* roads - you have to pay to go on them; then there are the freeways  
\* which are not quite as good and they're free; and then there are the  
\* normal roads which are merely average and small and winding. So we  
\* had a choice of the parkway and the freeway. We were driving along  
\* and we came to a large sign, 'Passenger Cars Only'. Well, is a con-  
\* verted bus a passenger car? There were no signs at the entrance of  
\* the parkway, so we drove on, yakkety-yakking in the bus with Jay  
\* driving. We didn't notice but as we were going along the bus was  
\* slowly beginning to lose power. Slowly we were creeping up this  
\* hill; 30 mph, 25, 20. Jay looks down at his feet and notices that  
\* there's smoke coming out of the engine. He turns to us and casually  
\* says, "I don't want to upset anyone but there appears to be smoke  
\* coming from the engine." A sudden deathly silence...and ten seconds  
\* later there was chaos as everyone leapt in different directions.

\* Gardner tore off down the bus looking for the fire extinguisher and  
\* when he did find it he spent several minutes trying to figure out how  
\* to work it. We pulled over, stopped, and everyone grabbed everything  
\* they could and flew out of the bus, expecting it to blow up at any

(continued on page 55.)



NOTES ON THE  
CAJOLING OF  
A FAN -  
WRITER

A letter came, unexpectedly from Dave Rowe. I say unexpectedly because I have come to expect letters from Dave to be covered with intensively scurrying creatures and illegible hieroglyphics, yet this plain missive carried no such warning.

After sundry courtesies, he admitted receiving a letter from one S\_\_\_, a gentleman and publisher of some notoriety. Possibly this mention was the reason for Dave's sudden semi-anonymity. Said S\_\_\_ had requested Dave's assistance, as he wished to obtain an article (or column) for his publication - from me! "To help improve it," S\_\_\_ suggested, meaning his publication.

I was flattered - though I admit to considering the task beyond my capabilities. However, I considered his approach somewhat less than satisfactory.

There are, admittedly, many ways of obtaining the services of fan-writers. The means must always be fitted to the writer one wishes to entice, and the best means are not always applicable in every case. Blackmail (as practised by A\_\_\_) requires detailed - and possibly even intimate - knowledge of one's subject, and can't always be relied upon. The less degenerate publisher must rely on other methods.

Flattery, of course, is always useful.

More directly, a common approach can be seen taking place at every convention, or even most Globe meetings. The publisher can be seen standing in a suitably vacant space, situated equally conveniently for the bar and the door. When his ~~target~~ awaited writer arrives, the publisher must be quick to shout, "Great to see you! What are you having?"

The publisher then proceeds to buy drink after drink for the writer until the writer is in such a sodden state of good humour that he will gladly agree to write any piece to any length that the publisher will request. Entire fan-zines have been written by this approach, often without allowing time for the writer to sober up. Indeed, this latter variation is often advisable, as a (too often imperceptable) drop in the quality of the writing must be traded against the possibility of the writer vehemently denying the whole idea when he comes to his senses.



It is not advisable to use this method on writers who are melancholic when alcoholic.

In the present case, however, the co-editor of the publication, one R\_\_\_\_\_, had been observed to pass an entire recent convention without mentioning the key words which start the process. This was unsatisfactory, and noted as such at the time.

It is worth mentioning here, for the ambitious young newcomer eager to try a fresh approach, that this habit does exist in the professional world, but with a variation. The writer is taken out for a dinner by the publisher, and then supplied with free refreshment. This excellent idea has yet to be adopted by the fannish world. My telephone number, for those wishing to innovate, is Kingston 7741, Ext. 237.

Should the publisher be of such miserable character that he considers this approach extravagant, or should he have such personality defects as to be unable to persuade the suitably-lubricated writer to co-operate (the possibility of the writer refusing the drink from even such a character must be considered vanishingly small) then he must turn to other means. Indeed, if the writer does not live suitably adjacent to the publisher, then this approach is only of limited use, as it is usually considered desirable to publish more often than once a year.

The third approach is undoubtedly the most efficacious. The publisher requires assistance from a beautiful girl. The girl is persuaded (one of the above methods will suffice) to pen admiring letters to the writer. After some lapse to allow the friendship to ripen, it will be possible to cunningly introduce the question at hand.

Less scrupulous publishers have been known to make use of young ladies who have been somewhat less than 'beautiful'. It pains me to admit that writers have proven equally vulnerable to this variation, as exercise of his fantasy will bring about the delusion that the girl on the other end of the Postal Service is indeed all that is desirable. Perhaps this fantasizing is an inevitable adjunct to the writer's talent; at least let us charitably believe it so. However, this unpleasant variation may rebound on low perpetrators, as the writer may demand a meeting!

It should be pointed out that initial honesty may pay off in the end, when a combination of methods 2(b) and 3(a) will almost inevitably result in some kind of contribution. Indeed, in such a case it is not unheard of for the writer to even pay the bill! It will be noted that S\_\_\_\_ is reputed to have a wife of not inconsiderable attractions. She has yet to contact this writer, however.

The intelligent publisher can undoubtedly come up with other approaches, some less workable than others (work done under the threat of physical violence is rarely of high quality, I will take the opportunity of pointing out). Possibly this is one of the most intellectually stimulating activities in producing an amateur magazine, and those best at it must be listed amongst the finest publishers in the field. If all else fails, one method is left for S\_\_\_\_\_.

W R I T E   T O   M E   A N D   A S K !



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\*\*\*\*\* GASSY BY FANLIGHT  
\*\*\*\*\* or  
\*\*\*\*\* I(R)ONIC MARK 2  
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A column by HELL INTERNATIONAL's  
man in the middle of nowhere --  
ALAN BARRIE STEWART.

You remember how I told you last time round how I somehow remained ignorant of the existence of that august body, international fandom (I had come across its subdivision, international condom, though) until I was 27? What'd you mean you don't remember? Well, read it again!

To return to the subject, what I don't get is how I missed all that mass-advertising by the BSFA designed to bring the SF-reading masses of Britain into the fandom-fold. You do bring sheep into the fold, don't you? You know what I mean - all those huge billboards along the M1 and the M6 reading "FANDOM WASHES WHITER". Maybe I missed them because I don't have a car.

When I think of all those wasted years of my life when I did all those ordinary normal things like drinking, chasing after women, drinking, chasing after women, etc etc. I mean I could have been a fan and done exciting, action-packed things like publishing a fanzine, writing letters of comment, reading other people's fanzines (I am a relatively new fan, you understand), attending conventions, drinking, chasing after women, etc etc. Do you wonder that I feel deprived. I read that Robert Silverberg (everybody get down on their knees) was a faned when he was twelve, or something equally ridiculous. Poor sod.

I think there must have been a plot to keep me out, you know. But I foiled them. And now I am in. And to prove it I have written LoCs to all the great fanzines of our time, ENERGUMEN, MADCAP, EGG, GRANFALLOON, SFC, HELL, OUTWORLDS, CYNIC, GANNETSCRAPBOOK. If you haven't seen my letters it is because the rotten buggers haven't published them. All I can say is "Wahf to you too, mates".

At this point I might mention that although I am extremely handsome and talented I am no relation of that other extremely handsome and talented Al Stewart. Elke and I do have 3 of his LP's (Love Chronicles, Zero She Flies, and Orange) though. My lovely wife thinks he has 'such a sexy voice'. Must be because he was born in Scotland, I suppose.

The bourgeois capitalist Establishment at the BSFA were so afraid I might stage an armed coup that they quietly let my membership lapse at the end of last year. At present we are having a round of tough urgent talks to see if we can find a basis for negotiation, so with any luck I may be able to rejoin by about 1999.

Hey, maybe I should form a breakaway group. That's an idea. We already have a science fiction association in West Germany, the Science Fiction Club Deutschland(SFCD) of which I am a member. You will please note the German words 'Science Fiction Club' in the name. German is a very difficult language.







It was Friday 28th December, 1973 and I was 9 months and 9 days pregnant and utterly fed up awaiting the event of the year, the birth of our child. At least, thought I, today it will happen. How did I know? 'Cos I was walking towards the labour ward where I was to be induced.

At 10 a.m. in trotted a Midwife who proceeded to take my blood pressure, listen to baby's heartbeat and then ask me a load of questions about my general health and previous pregnancies. She left and another nurse walked in with the dreaded drip.

"I'm not having that thing" says I, "I hate having to stay in bed when I'm in labour." ...and she promptly took it away.

Five minutes later the same nurse walked in with a glass of water which contained the same drug which had been in THE DRIP. I drank it and waited. At 1.00 p.m. I was still waiting, lazy sod this baby. I had spent the previous few hours reading, listening to my cassette recorder and eating my dinner, a bowl of vegetable soup (I was bloody starving) and a bowl of soup is not what I'd call dinner. Another glass of stuff appeared, I drank it and waited. Guess what.....nothing happened.

3.00 p.m. it was when I was wheeled through into the Delivery Room (now don't get excited) where a chutchy little doctor broke my waters. God but it was hot in there. I jokingly told the doc that I wasn't going back 'till the heat was turned down. Back to my own little bed in my own little labour ward where another glass of mystery juice was given to me.


"Your husband's just rung to say he's on his way" said a nurse. It was 3.30 p.m. At 3.45 there I was having strong contractions every three minutes or so and thinking "If that swine doesn't hurry up he'll miss it and I'll never speak to him again." Five minutes later in walked Paul looking like a reject from Dr. Kildare. He had this long, green gown draped round him, clutching an SF book in one hand and a bag of food in the other.

"What's in the bag, I'm starving?"

"Sausage rolls and mince pies" was the reply.

"Quick, gimme something to eat before the nurse comes in."





So there I was, having contractions every few minutes, stuffing my face with food (I tell you folks NOTHING BUT NOTHING puts me off my food). Time passed, the contractions were getting stronger and longer. I was swearing 'n Paul was sat there like a good little father-to-be reading his bloody book. He was also timing the contractions and making cheerful little comments such as, "That one lasted 135 seconds, luv."

"But that's not fair, they're only supposed to last 90 seconds according to my book" I wailed.

In walked the Midwife, examines my stomach, tells me that my contractions are strong (she needn't have bothered, I was well aware of the fact), that there was no sign of baby Skel on the horizon but she would give me a shot of Pethidine. Out of the door she goes, and all of a sudden.....

"I want to push, for Christ's sake ring that bell Paul."

"Which bell?"

"The bell at the end of the bloody bed."

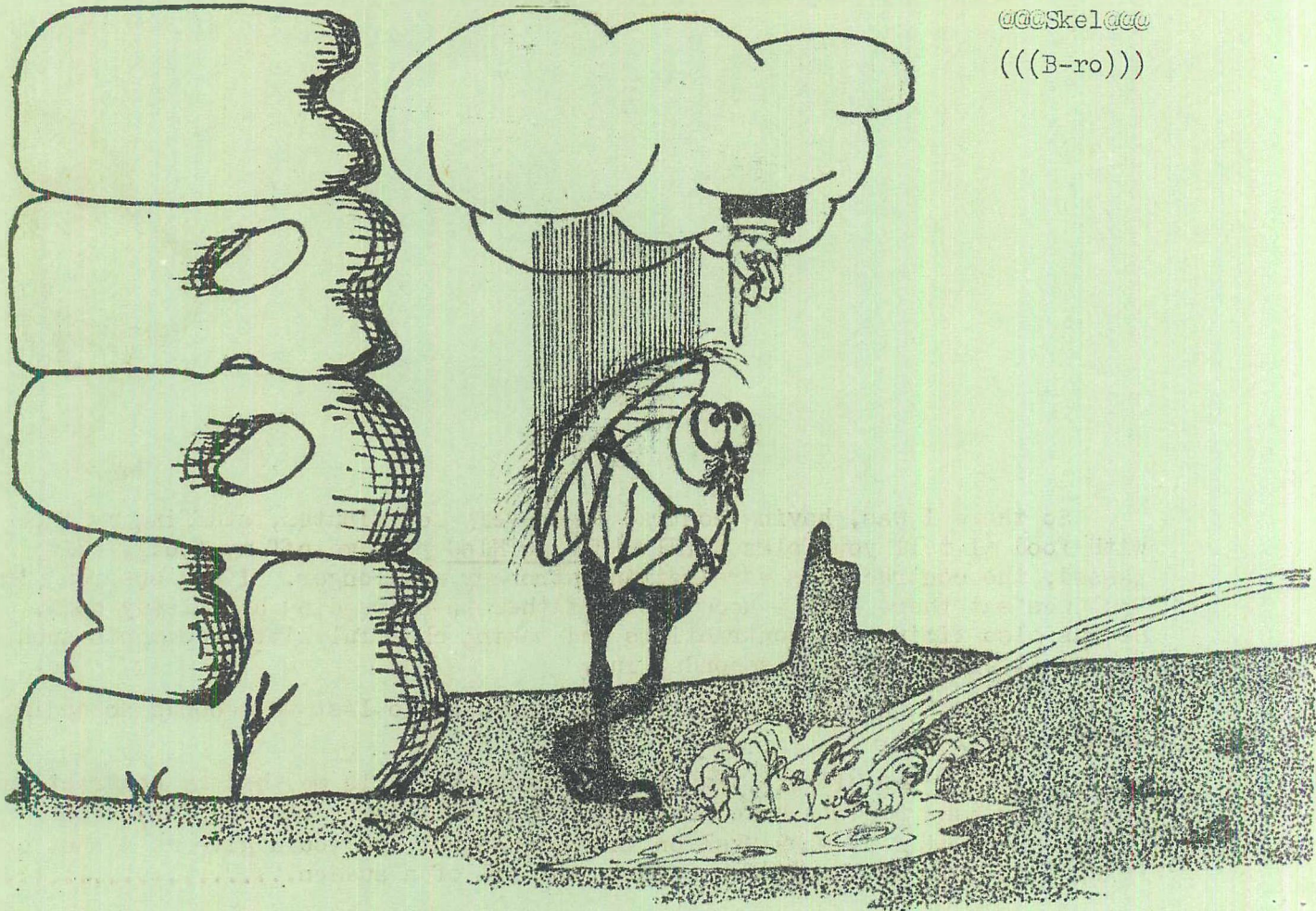
"Where?"

"THAT ONE THERE!" I yelled.

What a panic. In rushed the Midwife..."What's the matter?"...."I want to push"..."But you can't be ready yet"...."I WANT TO PUSH"..."Let's see how things are going, just give a little push -- Nurse, get that delivery trolley in here at once -- Take it back again, there's no time to move her -- Now Dear, with the next contraction give a big push." I lay there waiting for it, hanging onto Paul's hand (which was trembling like a leaf) then I pushed. God I thought, I'm going to split in half. "I want the Gas and Air machine"..."I wouldn't bother Dear, by the time we get it to you it'll all be over -- come on now, another big push - steady - pant now, the head is coming -- one more push" then \*swhoosh\* out slithered this bluey slimey lump which was our daughter. "It's 5.30" says Paul. "Is she OK" says I. "Perfect" says the Midwife, "and she weighs 9lbs 10z."

Then the moment we'd waited for, Bethany Leigh Skelton was put into my arms and the two dotting parents gazed at her and said "She looks just like my Dad -- isn't she ugly."





@@@Skel@@@

((B-ro)))

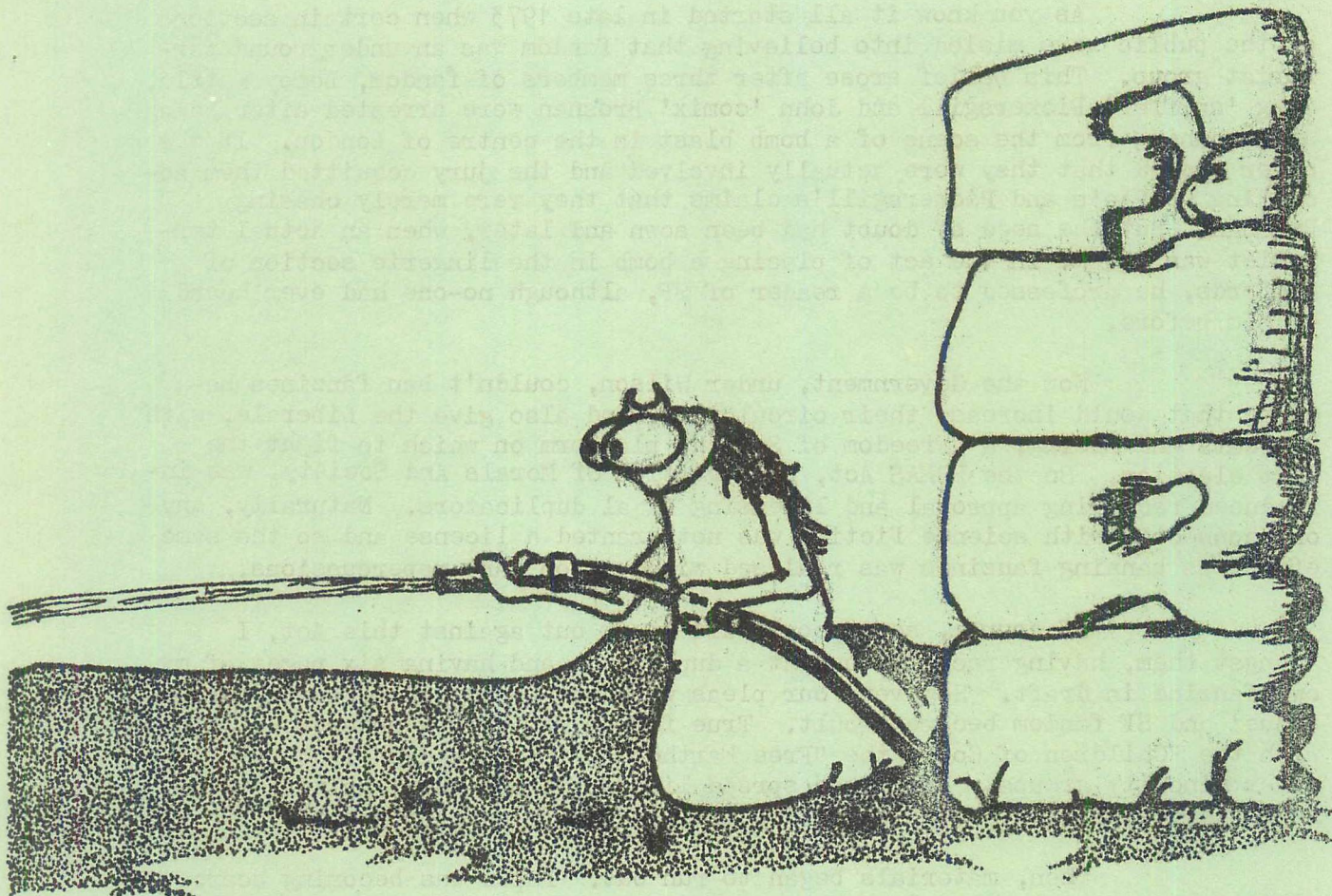
GRAHAM POOLE 23 Russet Road, Cheltenham, Gloucester, GL51 7LN.

Thanks for HELL 9....not a bad ish....moderate. One or two good pieces such as 'Corflu Sniffin' High' and the grenade article of Pete's ....and 'Chugga Chugga Puff Puff' was wanking good. The covers were terrific but why have them on such flimsy paper?

@@@When the Skelfather prints them for free one takes them as they come. All we specified, in our foolishness, was that he didn't do them on that thick, shiny, takes-six-months-to-dry type of paper. Not being too sure what we wanted he ran off two sets and told us to take our pick. Dave, the artist, said he preferred the flimsy white to the thicker off-white, so.....@@@

Well, that's it - maybe though I can pass on a letter which was passed to me by an anonymous SF fan. The note that came with it stated that he had been experimenting with a time machine and, having travelled 30 years into the future, had met a current member of the BSFA committee who had





fallen upon hard times. He explained the circumstances in the letter I enclose and I was astounded to see the article in HELL 9 on the very same subject and thought maybe you'd be interested.

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VOLBAN GRIDSTEAD (a pseudonym), Address not supplied.

After reading your article 'Corflu Sniffin' High' I feel I must set matters straight regarding the BSFA's role in the Prohibition Era of the late 1970's and early 1980's. The scandal has persisted for far too long and I must now break my silence.

I am one of the four BSFA committee members of the 1980's (which one I cannot reveal as I am still being hunted) and I here present the facts as I know them.



As you know it all started in late 1973 when certain sections of the public were misled into believing that fandom was an underground terrorist group. This belief arose after three members of fandom, Leroy Kettle, Greg 'sniffer' Pickersgill and John 'comix' Brosnan were arrested after being seen running from the scene of a bomb blast in the centre of London. It was never proved that they were actually involved and the jury acquitted them accepting Kettle's and Pickersgill's claims that they were merely chasing Brosnan. But the seed of doubt had been sown and later, when an actual terrorist was caught in the act of placing a bomb in the lingerie section of Halfords, he professed to be a reader of SF, although no-one had ever heard of him before.

Now the Government, under Wilson, couldn't ban fanzines because that would increase their circulation, and also give the Liberals, with 78 seats and rising, a "Freedom of Speech" platform on which to fight the next election. So the POMAS Act, Preservation Of Morals And Society, was introduced requiring approval and licensing of all duplicators. Naturally, anyone connected with science fiction was not granted a license and so the same effect as banning fanzines was realised without too many repercussions.

Of course, some people did speak out against this Act, I amongst them, having recently bought a duplicator and having six pages of my own fanzine in draft. However, our pleas were not heard. Bomb outrages continued and SF fandom became a cult. True fandom was driven underground along with the "Children of God", the "Free Earthers", the "Freedom Fighters", and other minority groups. But fanac spread like VD, flourished, multiplied and raged through society until over five million people were affected.

Then, materials began to run out. Paper was becoming scarce, duplicators were becoming obsolescent, in fact the oft predicted economic resources crisis was upon us. Friendly rivals became bitter adversaries as warehouses were raided, blaster battles shook the streets in the major cities and innocent postmen and civilians were killed and injured. Finally, on February the fourteenth, 1978 came the news that changed the nation. A group of mobsters calling themselves MAD burst in on a Globe meeting, raking it with their blasters.

A special meeting of the BSFA was called and it was resolved to approach the new Prime Minister, Enoch Powell, who had been elected on his science fiction campaign. We wanted a return to the pre-prohibition days when we had had the number of members we could handle....members who were true fans and readers and not just in it for the dope and the kicks. Dave Tillston, the membership secretary, had recently committed suicide after opening the two-millionth BSFA membership application. His body lay hidden under a mound of application forms for days before I stumbled across it. It was five months before I found his suicide note - just two words "Too much."

The committee, including myself, met Powell and submitted our case - repeal the duplicator laws and the hoodigan element would leave SF for some other illegal activity. He refused, had us arrested under the "SF Terrorists Act" (which was later ratified by Parliament) and then he took over the BSFA, secretly, infiltrating it with his own men.



It wasn't until two years later that we were released from prison and found out what had happened. The Corflu Tax had been imposed by the Powel-lite BSFA, run as a front for his activities of oppression against the SF addicts. Arrests were made, "accidents" happened, people disappeared and when a couple of reporters mentioned that most of the deaths appeared to be of coloured immigrants they "accidentally" fell to their deaths from a fifth-floor window during a police raid.

Powell was finally overthrown in 1984, assassinated by his own cabinet at 10 Downing street on March the 14th. Weston, a powerful millionaire who'd made his fortune on an illegal fanzine called SPECULATION (twelve million copies weekly) was elected P.M. The duplicator laws were repealed, the taxes abolished and Weston and his cabinet became billionaires overnight selling duplicators. Fandom had become addictive and there were now sixteen million addicts.

So you see, the BSFA committee was framed. I could not speak up earlier for fear of my life. As you know, the other three committee members were blasted into unrecognisable bits that first night after we had been released from prison. I still don't know whether an SF cell or the Government were responsible. If I hadn't had a call of nature at the vital moment, I too would have been killed, the truth dying with me.

Ever since then I've been in hiding for there are still some SF phreaks who blame us for the anti-SF laws. Which one of the four I am I must keep secret to minimise the possibility of detection. Believe me, I am not a crank or hoaxer.

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MIKE GLICKSOHN 141 High Park Avenue, Toronto, Ontario; M6P 2S3.

Skel's fears to the contrary, I not only read through the entirety of HELL 9 last night but did so in a single reading. And thoroughly enjoyed it too. Visually, it is one of the best looking English fanzines I've seen, the only weakness being the show-through caused by the thinness of the paper. But reproduction is good to excellent (MAYA tops you for overall crispness, I think) and the design is easily the most imaginative I've seen from an English fanzine lately. Your two-colour work is well worth the effort. It's one of the best uses of two-colour mimeography (as opposed to printing a coloured illo just for the sake of colour) that I've run across in any fanzine anywhere. Even the simple use of the asterisk to incorporate design elements into several of your pages is attractive and shows good graphic sense. If earlier issues of HELL have shown this much care and innovation, I'm sorry to have missed the first eight.

@@@They didn't, so don't be! The only reason we can afford to experiment with layout is that we use dirt-cheap paper - £0.39 per ream - so



it costs us next to nothing to spread thirty-two pages of cramped material over forty pages or so. We sell out our principles and eat. @@@

In terms of artwork, you fair less well, but this is something over which you have no control. I know that the state of English fanart is a topic of heated discussion in many of your fanzines, but it's unfortunately true that English fandom has very few fanartists to call upon. Without Harry Bell, even this issue would be artistically impoverished.

Monty Python's First Farewell Tour played to jam-packed houses here in Toronto and Susan and I were among the first night audience. From the number of knotted handkerchiefs worn, it was obvious that the audience was not just a group of casual droppers-in. Thunderous applause greeted each well-known sequence (the most popular by far being the lumberjack song). When Monty Python first played on Canadian TV, it immediately created a small but intense following, mostly among college students and what one might call the intelligentsia. When it was rather quickly cancelled, telegrams and protests poured in from a variety of unlikely sources and eventually it was brought back. It doesn't surprise me to hear the other English-descended staff members discussing the skits the next day over coffee, but bunches of Poles and Ukrainians with names I can't even pronounce shouting "Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition!" freaks me out a bit.

It is a testament to the overall quality and good vibes of HELL that I actually read the fiction, something I rarely do. And I'm very glad I did for this was easily one of the funniest pieces of fan fiction I've read.

The phrase "Klaatu Borada Nikto" appears in the film "The Day The Earth Stood Still" and is used to prevent the robot Gort from destroying the planet. Whether the Bushyager's cat is named for it, I don't know.

Maule's story reminds me of a similar incident involving obsequious sales personel told by Bjo Trimble. It seems a Los Angeles fan went into a gas station on December 25th and received the most incredible service. He was immediately given thousands of extra blue stamps. The two attendants kept coming over and asking him if he'd had his stamps yet and thrusting thousands more onto him. They cleaned the windshield and gave him more stamps...then polished the mirrors for a few more pages of stamps. When his tank had been filled with many dollars-worth of gas, one of the inept men turned off the pump without looking at the amount involved so they charged him only a couple of dollars. Then they remembered to give him his blue stamps. It might have been some distant cousin of Maule's bookstore clerk, but as the fan was leaving he heard one man say to the other, "I bet this is the last time we have to work on Christmas day!" The fan promptly phoned up every fan he knew with a car and told them the address of the gas station.

The reprints from the 'Family Botanic Guide' make for one of the best articles I've read in a fanzine. Without knowing more about the man Thomson, it's hard to know just how persecuted he may have been, but his 'cure' for masturbation doesn't create too much sympathy in me for him. With your permission I'd like to quote a sentence from that piece as an interlineation in one of my own fanzine someday. Prose like that deserves a wide



audience! Excellent material, congratulations on using it.

@@@Be our guest, Mike.....@@@

Good for Brian! Rotsler is the most brilliant humourist in fandom bar none and he is one of the most talented cartoonists as well. He is also incredibly prolific and equally generous so a lot of his lesser pieces see print. But the best of Rotsler is the best we have, my friends.

Publishing something is a joy; publishing something you're pleased with is a great pleasure; publishing something that you like and other people like is insidiously habit forming. ENERGIUMEN, which distributed about 240 copies, received an average of about 65 letters per issue. My new fanzine is to be much smaller and far less response oriented. It remains to be seen whether people will comment on it and whether or not my enjoyment of it will decrease if they don't. But I'm very pleased with most of the first issue and want to continue with it for my own amusement.

I distributed some sixty copies of the double issue of NERG at a regional con a couple of years ago and the hassles involved, both in getting them across the border and lugging them around the con convinced me never to try it again. With a hucksters table at TORCON, though I'll be distributing Xenium 2.1 since the problems have all been eliminated. I do not, however, recommend bidding for and winning a worldcon just to save postage on your fanzine.



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ANDREW DUNLOP Flat 3, 6 Grosvenor Road, Whalley Range, Manchester.

Being on the edge of fandom (sitting opposite Skel for 18 months, working with Roy 'JOY' Sharpe and talking with B-ro on the phone in Skel's absence, must be on the edge of fandom) I think it time I wrote a LOC or whatever. Being half pissed on vino helps and the fact that I won't have to pay any postage.

I have read most issues of HELL and think it far too long. Number nine, for instance, contains a load of uninteresting twaddle about medical books which I cannot see relevant to a fanzine. It was nearly as boring as the 'Story Of The Jazz Guitar' which went on, and on, and on towards infinity. By cutting out these articles, which must only be fillers, your zine would become more interesting. Pete Presford's article was well written but I think being an accountant is more interesting (even if Monty Python's mob think it's boring).



Yes Brian, I know what you mean about the skelkids...don't they wake up early. Can be most embarrassing when they come asking for their breakfast right in the middle of...whatever. I'm glad Cas enjoyed the con but I'm afraid it might be the last time we could sit on the kids whilst you attend. The wife keeps making strange mutterings, like "Where is Newcastle?"

This LoC is sent in the hope that other faneds will take pity and send me their zines for ~~edit/revise~~ criticism.

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RUTH DUNLOP Flat 3, 6 Grosvenor Road, Whalley Range, Manchester.

Being the wife of an accountant is not as boring as it may seem. Just because I have to work out how much I spend down to the last <sup>1p</sup> (woe betide me if I lose that last <sup>1p</sup>) and just because he spends half a day working out how much I'm earning does not mean to say that being the wife of an accountant is boring.

I've just re-typed his LoC for him. He is drunk at the moment, he must be because he's just bought two bottles of vino and he is actually sharing (ie. half for me and half for him). I'll have to go now, Drew is singing which means he is pleasantly drunk enough for me to be able to convince him that toilet paper is not a luxury.

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ALAN BURNS Goldspink House, Goldspink Lane, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

I definitely must brush the dust off my duper and run out a series of standard LoCs for magazines such as HELL. I have heard HELL praised, and that highly, and all I can think is that those praised read it not in a state of sobriety or soundness of mind but either drunk or nuts - because frankly I think it's only fit for....it's a bit stiff papered for that, but goodness, the paper wasn't half so stiff as the effort of reading it. Also, there were pages missing from my copy, thank God!

@@@Yeah, yeah, but did you like it??????????@@@

Cas's column was eminently readable and amusing (I ask myself how it is that when a woman writes a column on her own it is inevitably witty amusing and readable, but when they get together to produce a zine like FEMIZINE...Yeuk!)

Seale's 'Puff Puff' - I believe that homosexuals should be publicly deprived of their genitals in the best Mike Moorcock Dr. Jest manner.



@@@You don't seem to take the more fashionable 'poor-sick-souls' attitude to homosexuals, but I'm not so sure that your apparent 'scrunch-em-they're ecchy-roaches' line has much to recommend it. What particularly makes me want to puke though, is the word 'publicly'. This implies, to me at any rate, that you'd think this a fine spectacle. That would be an even more perverted way of getting ones jollies than homosexuality itself. I can't see much harm in the latter (can't see any point in it either) but what you advocate, degrading humiliation (and agony too, I'll bet) as a form of public entertainment.....oooooh, that is sick, man, SICK!@@@

Kevin Hall has read and copied Robert E. Howard's "But the Hills were ancient then". Plagiarism is illegal, Kevin! Corflu sniffing - doesn't anyone have any original material in New Wave zines?

That's the LoC, thank God! What a tedious load of rubbish. See me at the Tynecon and I'll tell you how to produce a zine -- or read ERG.

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FRANK DENTON 14654 - 8th Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98166, USA.

I just arrived home from a five week visit to England and what do I find in the stack of fanzines which have piled up in my absence? Why, HELL 9, of course.. Finally, two weeks later, I have had a chance to sit down and read it cover to cover. One never realises how much he is involved in fandom, especially fanzine fandom, until he goes away for a space of time and returns home to find an almost insurmountable stack of reading to do.

I enjoyed HELL greatly, even though I don't know most of the people writing or written about. I'm sure that I'll learn to know them as time and issues go by. I'm not generally taken by a fanzine which strives so consistently for the humorous approach, but I've got to admit that I enjoyed yours. It takes a certain amount of flair to write humorously about broken glasses, the price of beer and the upheavals of job and apartment. The other piece that delighted me most was Pete Presford's 'pineapple' story..... and Cas. I realise that this was written when she was under the weather, but pressure her a bit. She's utterly charming - longer column please Cas.

@@@ Cas's column seems to be just about the only thing which pleases everyone. How the hell am I supposed to keep her in her place now that all this success has gone to her head? Get back in your corner, you! Where did I put that whip? That's better. I'd hate to seem so



fugg-headed as to claim some sort of inner purpose to fan-pubbing, but it seems to me that getting to know people from all over the place whom it is unlikely one could get to meet in person is one of the things that it's all about. If you didn't get to know us a bit after a few issues I'd feel we'd failed somehow.. @@@

I could ramble on here for a couple of pages about the five weeks Anna Jo (wife-type) and I spent in your fair land. We are confirmed Anglophiles, I fear, and are already saving for the next trip. Two highlights of fannish interest - We drove up to Henley after five days in London and spent a fantastic seven hours with Keith Roberts. He was the absolute soul of hospitality to us and we appreciated it ever so much. Needless to say, I'm more of a Keith Roberts fan than I was before, and that was quite a bit. Even though his latest book, 'The Boat Of Fate', is not SF, everybody run out and buy it anyway. And watch out for 'The Chalk Giants', out soon.

The other fannish highlight was dropping in on Beryl and Archie Mercer. You should understand first that I had never had any contact with these folks whatsoever, but I had been aware of them for about five years. Picture a middle-aged American standing on the doorstep and when a great bearded face thrust its way through the opened door, the American opens with something inane like, "You don't know me, or anything about me, but...." Well, the welcome was staggering. They invited us in, brewed coffee for us, and were generally just totally charming to us for the next 2½ hours. We felt ever so grateful.

@@@Roberts comes into my 'Like-what- I've-read-but-wouldn't-go-looking-for-his-stuff' category of authors. Now if you'd dropped in on John Brunner.....@@@

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KEN BULMER 19 Orchard Way, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 8LA.

The first thought I have is - who the hell are all you fannish people? You seem to attend conventions I've attended and yet I don't know you or of you. This is my fault, I know; but it makes reading the zine a little like Stanleying and Livingstoning. I take it that Cas is Mrs. Skelton - but is that her name? (Your piece was very nice luv). Also, to me, all this arty-crafty layout is very nice but there is a hell of a lot of wasted paper that could be filled with imperishable prose. Trouble is, most of the material is very far from imperishable. I applaud wholeheartedly your apparent aim of producing a fannish zine. Now I don't claim to be a great fan-writer, unlike some of my mates (I mean, they don't claim, they are - or were) but the trick of truefan writing is to make so much more of the original incident that you do aspire to something that is, if not imperishable,



not immediately forgotten. The first crop of pieces here seem to me merely to detail what happened. The price of beer, breaking glasses, they haven't received the magical alchemy of a trufan breathing life and fantasy into them. Yes, now I look thru again, it does seem to be merely a recounting of what happened to the writer. I suppose this must be the new fannish trend. If so I miss the old sparkle and magic. Still, I welcome your efforts and I do wish you every success with the zine. The last piece CSH was a brave attempt at fan-fiction, and if one overlooks the switches from dialect to dull exposition and back (always a tricky business), and the feeble ending - this could have been the best thing in the ish. You have what appears to be a gang of actifen up there and names to toss around and people prepared to write, so get some more of this fan fiction-fan feuding going (that should be FUED). I wasn't aware that the BSFA resented the fanning and socialising side of fandom; it's how the BSFA was born. As for reducing status, if you have to start thinking about status then you have none. As far as the BSFA wanting to 'run' fandom (an idiot's concept) I gather they'd be happy if you'd take a hand. I dunno. It's all tied up with this business of me never seeing you people at conventions. If you don't want old fogeys in the all night room parties, that is understandable, and I can only LoC a zine these days instead of doing something proper for it. More's the pity. Anyway, get some content in HELL, stir up a few feuds and write magical and fantstic accounts of them and generally get with it.

@@@Her name? Well, really it's Carol but only strangers and enemies use it. She's answered to Cas ever since she was knee high to a behemoth. Possibly the BSFA don't resent the fanning and socialising side of Fandom, it's just an impression I seem to have picked up over a couple of years of fanzine reading. It could be way off base: probably, knowing me. @@@

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JOHN PIGGOTT 17 Monmouth Road, Oxford, OX1 4TD.

I'm now sitting at home doing sweet f-a for four weeks whilst the powers that be decide what I'm going to study next year. Can't even go and get a holiday job cos it's likely that I'll be called back to Cambridge for a four week course in my chosen discipline. You will note the fiendish cunning of the university authorities who cleverly put the long vac. term in the middle of the long vac., instead of sensibly having it at one end or the other. It effectively stops me earning a fortune this summer at my regular job - I may even be forced to sink to writing science fiction in an effort to earn some bread (and that's some terrible way of getting it.....). And meanwhile I'm getting showered with zines of all descriptions: Harry Bell's thing comes and taps me on the head, the Pardoes thinzine nudges me in the ribs, Yandro gives me a sharp kick in the testicles, and you lot send me to hell.



And really at the moment I can't be bothered to write to any of 'em, least of all you cretins, if you'll pardon the expression. I'm getting insulting again .....that's what comes of living in a vacuum. So, y'see, you're not getting a LoC from me this time. You remain unconvinced? Sad..... Anyway, I did read it all, and will even do the crossword at some time in the future if I feel in the mood (and I haven't peeked at the answers!) I am also gratified to see that you've still got that piece I hacked out at the con. Must've been mad..... Still, Cas for editor.

((Nice of you not to write us a LoC. Could you really spare the time? If we send a copy of HELL 10 will you have time to read it, as you did with the last? Ye Ghods!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!))

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ALAN HUNTER

4 Cranleigh Gardens, Douthbourne, Bournemouth, BH6 5LE.

When the anniversary issue of HELL dropped heavily through my letterbox and I opened it to gaze on that excellent front cover I thought.... "Here is a fanzine that is new to me, one I haven't seen before, and it seems a thing of merit - a publication that obviously carries weight." On the whole the contents lived up to my expectations. There was a good serious article, 'The Book', and artwork that was quaint, amusing, interesting. Even the fannish ramblings seemed to have more humour and direction than in many fanzines I have read. I was approaching the point of deciding to submit some artwork for the next issue when my wife picked up the issue and curiously thumbed through it. Now why is it that some elements in fandom seem so intent on self destruction? why do they seek to perpetuate the myth that fans are decadent layabouts with manners and morals to match? There is less of this in HELL than in others I could name, but my wife's eagle eye spotted the four-letter words and the very strange (I feel tempted to label it "a little queer" but have resisted) story. She exclaimed, "You don't want to be associated with this. Whatever you do don't send them any of your drawings." When my shows a strong reaction I take notice and follow her advice. Up to now I have never had occasion to regret doing this. So, right or wrong, I shall not be sending any of my artwork for you to see, and you know the reason why. Perhaps you are thankful. But I do wish fans would be a little more discriminating. Writing that fits neatly into a blank space on a lavatory wall does not look equally at home in a fanzine.....Yours regretfully.....

((The reason you've not so far had a reply to this letter of July 26th. is that I simply couldn't believe that I had actually read such a load of drivel. Not that I'm complaining about the nice things you say to begin, but the rest just left me slightly bemused. For one, if what you say your wife said is in fact correct, then I wouldn't call it 'advice'. It



sounds like a direct order to me, and my god is that marriage?? And I simply can't understand her attitude to four-letter words. Tell me, does she impose a ban on your watching BBC 1 because Peregrine Worsthorpe said "Fuck" on 'Nationwide'? Or ITV because Clive James dropped the occasional "Piss" on 'Cinema'? Or BBC 2 where just about everyone has, at some time or other, used about every word that they perhaps shouldn't? Okay, so that's a little ridiculous but it surely makes my point that this sort of attitude is just bloody silly. There's no use in your wife and yourself sticking your heads in the sand and refusing to admit the existence of 'nasty' words. Christ man, there're hundreds of things I can't stand but cutting myself off from the world won't send them away will it? Still, if you're not going to send us any artwork, ever, then I suppose there's little point in sending you any HELLS after this'n unless you want to have them. But dare you defy your wife in this? See next issue for another exciting installment, folks!!!!!!!!!!!!!!)))

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ALAN B. STEWART 6 Frankfurt am Main 1, Eschenheimer Anlage 2, W. Germany.

Congratulations to you and Cas on the forthcoming happy event, even though it seems to be making her sick just now, or is it not morning-type sickness? I've just asked Elke how long the preppers-sickness lasts and she tells me it varies from woman to woman. Hope Cas isn't poorly-sick for six months. Tell her I'm asking for her (no, not like that - on second thoughts, maybe yes, like that).

((((If Skel had got this one he'd not have used that bit but I can never resist a chance to sling one or two insults Cas's way. No, Alan, you don't mean "yes, like that." Cas is a sweet and crazy person but she's hardly looking her best right now. And before you all rush to her defence I must admit that few women look their best seven months gone.....)))

The reason I waited before sending part two of the column was that I wasn't very sure what your reaction to the first 'i(r)onic' would be. I didn't know whether that or the almost-fanzine, FAR, was to blame, but there was an awful silence from Stockport. By the way, isn't that 'Greater Manchester' now? I suppose it's like 'Greater London', though you still



have to address letters to 'Middlesex' although Middlesex hasn't been since 1965.

((Ah now, I don't know what people down there would say about that, but as for Stockport, no it's not part of Greater Manchester and, for heavens sake, we don't want 'em in here. I suppose you could say that we Mancunians 'tolerate' Stockport as a hick town that we may weary of, but what the hell, let 'em live there. Which just shows why I used your letter, Alan - to get a dig in at Skelton and Presford who seem to think that Stockport is the centre of the universe, or something equally loopy. Damned fools, eh????????????????))

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ROB HOLDSTOCK 11 Milton Avenue, Highgate, London N. 6. (Note new address).

HELL 9 is staring at me, doxed and revolting having been read on a windswept beach yesterday, while I was trying to eat a choc-ice. The beach was at Dover and has to be the shittiest beach in.....well, Dover anyway. Crammed with Sharks (the local name for a local is a Shark. Groovy, eh? My favourite band is Sharks - could this be psychological..that I feel happier in Dover than anywhere else, I mean?) all sort of nauseating brown. It always amuses me the way white people strive to become as much like a Pakistani as possible whilst hating the pakistanis to high heaven. In Dover everyone hates pakistanis. I should point out that 'Pakistani' is the local name for anyone born outside Dover. My superior white body is fighting off the sun and I was reading HELL. I found it very amusing in part, and godawful in other parts. Other parts again left me sort of indifferent and during those moments of indifference I let my eyes wander to the thirteen year old boys, looking for my brother. I noticed one or two brownish women with much flesh and great possibilities for the entrecote steak market, and I decided to lust after them at four-fifteen precisely. Unfortunately reading HELL took longer than I thought and they were gone when I made my preparations for lust. HELL is the only magazine I have ever put before lust; it is also the only magazine I have ever read on a beach, and covered with choc-ice, and used as a blanket when the sea breeze began to prick me short 'n curlies (I just had a crew-cut, you understand). This should be praise indeed.

((Hmmm. A crew-cut there??? Sweet, man, just sweet!!! I'm glad to see that we may have saved your marriage - it'll balance the.....er .....strain I might have placed on Alan Hunter's, a page back.....))

I am late answering HELL 9 because some turd called the editor sent the magazine to the wrong address, and anyway, when it did come to the



right address (which I realise I hadn't informed you of) I had only just come back from honeymoon. A honeymoon is like a honeymoon but with the rolls reversed. That'll be five cents please and keep Ken Dodd away from my original material. We were living in a new flat and were in considerable panic over who would sleep where. It took us two weeks to realise that we could legitimately sleep together. There were about five thousand books to move into the place, shelve and recatalogue; boxes and boxes of stories, articles and letters found themselves in places of great confusion and it took a lot of drinking and swearing to get at least an element of order into the shambles. Since then I've been reading and writing on fanzines and books, because reading and writing may well be my bread and butter before too long, and when you're Robert P. Holdstock and you're six foot two of shoulder padding and the only person you can beat up is John Brosnan at conventions and he enjoys it anyway and John Hall hates you with all his beer gut and you buy a new pair of flashy jeans and then find out that the only people who wear jeans like that are queers, well, you've GOT to read, haven't you?

((Someone pass me a hankie - he had me on the verge of tears there, for a moment.....)))

What was excellent in HELL 9? 'Chugga Chugga' by the brilliant David Stuart Seale who is a great fan fiction writer, and Hi there Dave, and ARE YOU? If not I'd like to meet you sometime, to put it there. Hands, that is, hands. Also brilliant was 'Corflu Sniffin' High' by that sonovabitch editor @@@\*B\*L\*U\*S\*H\*@@@. Jesus, how I hate people who make me laugh over the sort of thing I strive to do (like looking backward from the year 2000etc) and only do passably. You will notice that both items of excellence are fiction - this is not unnatural considering my bias. I can't see why you bothered to run The Book. An occasional snicker is all that was worth. And I'm afraid Ian Maule's column was a cop out. Humour is a very hit and miss medium for even the best humour writers. It's a difficult thing to write a genuinely funny story about people or situations that have no relevance to fandom. I certainly never try it; Fandom is a rich source of humorous ideas, and a bit of overwriting, a touch of exaggeration, a few choice superlatives, a dash of shit-stirring, and a couple of bollock punches add up to a passably funny article. It's stock, ain't it? Ian, never the most productive and, regrettably, not the greatest humourist in fandom, in this article tried the very difficult and failed. Shame. Illustrations also very poor, cover especially. I remember a couple of classy covers on HELL issues. Artwork is important to me. I like artwork, though I feel that a fanzine should either run top class art or none at all. That's why I think Jim Goddard should drop art from CYPHER, and why HELL irritates me so much when I had come to think of it as a zine with 'progressively better' artwork and kazzowee, suddenly th this shit.

((I'm coming round to your way of thinking as regards 'The Book' - it'd have carried more punch had it been shorter. Trouble was that the book was so full of quotable passages it wasn't easy getting the right amount out of it. Artwork is getting more and more difficult to get hold of. Mine is not suited to fanzines, Harry Bell cried off an article, Alan Hunter



told us to get stuffed and Paul has less time than before, the poor idiot, going to night-school three evenings a week. Though I think we may be better off this issue, just to please you, robert p. holdstock.....)))))

KEVIN HALL 12 Lound Street, Kendal, Westmorland, LA9 7EA.

Presford has a knack of taking a semi-normal situation and turning it into something outlandish and invariably funny. Needless to say he has done it yet again with his piece in HELL 9. On a side-track.....I often find myself wondering just how much truth there is in some of these articles of his. We-eeelllll, these outlandish escapades with grenades and burst water pipes in Davebrittonhouses, not to mention the affair at the broken down crematorium, a tale still, as far as I know, to be related. Just how often do these sort of things happen to you? Oh, I admit there are occasions when Chuck can be found in Manchester's heart with no pants on, but that is inside fandom. Pete's adventures take place in the normal world. Such events might involve me maybe once a year, if that. HADDOCKSMELL!!!

That is not the real point....I now realise that Brian has either had this same talent all along, or is just beginning to develop it in the written form. I thought this editorial a masterpiece although I do feel that some mention ought to have been made of the night when the Three Musketeers (B-ro, Skel and scarfe), armed only with a pair of powerful binox, spent the best part of an evening in the skeltoflat, scouting out the occupants of the surrounding blocks. Isn't it funny how a relevant vocabulary is swiftly built up? :- "Hey! Try the pink window, top right." "What's housewife in the yellow window doing now?" "Has that woman taken her clothes off yet?"....Isn't life dull.

@@@I think Presford takes fandom with him when he goes out on these jobs. Let's face it, how could Pete ever be said to lead a 'normal' or mundane life??@

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DAVID STUART SEALE 13 Rylands Street, Abbey Hey, Gorton, Manchester.

I read with interest the editorial on the Monty Python affair. I missed the concert, but read the critics in the Manchester Evening News. The Python lot caused tears to run down my legs after reading about their Canadian tour. According to Cleese, when they arrived at Toronto airport four hundred Python fans were there to meet them, all dressed in smart suits with brollies and bowlers. Later in the hotel, at dinner, some smartie had had special menus printed with Spam Soup, Spam Fritters, Sliced Spam with Spam sauce, etc., etc.

@@@Surely ink would have been less messy????@@@



The cast were riding in an open-top bus along the Freeway when they were stopped by a motorcycle cop for speeding. The officer was talking to the driver when John Cleese appeared, head first, suspended by his ankles from the top deck, calmly asking....."What seems to be the trouble, officer?"

Talking about Dr. Thomson's book, I did one minute of research on Spermatorroea (((sic))) with the following result.....one of the symptoms is Dyspepsia. Now one of your earlier editions of HELL stated that the magazine was "Dyspepsia in print" which can only go to prove that HELL is produced by a right load of wankers!! Ladies excluded. Incidentally, did Julie Andrews live happily ever after? You never said.

((What else do you think Paul's doing with Cas in her present state? Taking cold baths twice a day? Dave, ol' son, you're obviously so far sunk in depravity I feel we've lost you forever - anyone who can harbour feelings such as yours for Julie Andrews just has to be sick. Instant orgasm during her TV show, a fourhundredth visit to the flics to see 'Sound Of Music' for a bit of right hand exercise in the back row - spare yourself the pain matey, ~~have~~ ~~it~~ ~~off~~ have it amputated.....)))

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MARY LEGG

20 Woodstock Close, Oxford.

I can't believe it's really time for an annish already! I wonder what changes will have occurred, what minicons held, what fanzines published by the time the next annish arrives? We do at least know of one forthcoming event, on which heartiest congratulations to you both.

@@@Well, if response doesn't buck up we are not going to make the next two years which we'd require for the next annish. All together..Aw@@@

I wish Brian had said more about his visit to Monty Python's First Farewell Tour, because I should have liked to compare notes on it. Needless to say we were paralytic by the time the closing slide was projected. It was funnier than the TV series, I thought, even those sketches and the few cartoons which we'd seen before were still funny. In fact, for some of the sketches - where we knew what was coming next (the superb "Norwegian Blue", which is one of my favourites) - we were still helpless. Incidentally, did John Cleese wander on to the stage at one point with an empty parrot cage in his hand, look about, and wander off? Ah, there were many things to tell our grandchildren about - the 'idiot' song (actually extremely clever and perceptive), the sketch about the budgies, the 'nudge-nudge' one, the one about how poor everyone was in their youth, the one-man wrestling, the llamas lecture



(the first item, and I noticed that John Cleese got the biggest applause when he appeared. I think he's certainly one of the anchor men), the 'silly walks' and the 'argument' sketch (nowadays we can't argue much at home because the other person invariably enquires if it will be a five minute one or not!), the superb toons, the quiz game with the famous hammer, and the amazing 'What's wrong with tours abroad by package deal?' and Mr. Gumby doing flower arranging.....I noticed that a number of folk in the audience had Gumby-hankies on their heads, before the show began with that marvelous tune which blasted us out of our seats from about twelve amplifiers. And if you were reminded of Lisa, Brian, did you notice T. Gilliams had a sort of Churlish haircut, or at least how Churl's hair is supposed to look, but these days never does?

And apparently John Cleese gave a lecture on 'The Psychology Of Humour' here once.....I wish I'd known.

@@@I think that John Cleese is the funniest man around today and I've held that opinion ever since I saw him on 'That Was The Week That Was' with Ronnie Barker and Ronnie Corbett (did you see the two Ronnies' "Show of The Week" where Ronnie Barker did the fake news flash about the two five-ton hippopotamii who mated for the first time in captivity.....and for the second time outside the ruins of their cage....and for the third and fourth time, in the middle of the High Street..?) The 'Norwegian Blue' sketch is my favourite Monty Python sketch, I think, followed closely by 'Crunchy Frog', 'Me Doctor' and John Cleese's brilliant piss-take of the avante garde movie critic, and 'Flying Sheep', and so many others it's unbelievable.....@@@

'I(r)onic' - £8.00 per week in 1964...let's see. By 1964 I was probably up to £8.00 or so, but I can't remember now. This in fact ties up with later comments about fen being a bit wealthier today. Although the wage was low, and it meant some sacrifices to go to cons, I still went and thought it good value. In the early days of my con-going (the early 60's) I seemed to manage to get on quite well for about £10.00 plus travelling ex's. The £10.00 covered living at the con hotel, meals and a bit left over for books. Averaging out the thing now, suppose we say that the same thing occurs today, that is - to stay in a con hotel would cost you, for the weekend, twice your weekly wage, just for arguments sake (I'm not sure that it would, probably be a bit less), but suppose it does. Do we consider it a bad bargain, if there be such a thing, because it has gone up so much, even considering ten years have actually elapsed (I can't believe it has really) or is it that ten years ago we still lived at home and had no idea of how things were, price-wise, or what?

@@@Personally I think a con does cost two week's wages, after tax that is, but we do it in style now - bacardi & cokes & swish meals out etc.@@@



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otherwise titled....

Robinson bows out, rather  
less than gracefully.

It has been so long since I did any work on HELL I'm beginning to think I have nothing to do with it, a feeling that would no doubt be heartily endorsed by Paul who has been badgering me to do some work for weeks, since the day he threw all the material at me, on the one visit I had made chez Skel in the umpteen weeks after their move. I'll admit he has cause for complaint; as things stand he has stencilled all but about seven pages, and run off most of them, whilst I have lounged on my arse, doing bugger-all for months. In fact, it's been so long since I looked through the files, I was quite surprised to see some of the material therein, thinking it long-consigned to the depths of oblivion. I had an occasional chuckle at seeing the incongruities, like Cas being seven months pregnant, which was eons ago, and SuperPrizeIdiot Burns telling us to see him at Tynecon, as though we should stoop so low. But as far as I am concerned, these can stay - Paul may remove them if he wishes.

What I really wanted to mention here was one of the main underlying reasons for HELL folding after this issue. Paul has well intimated in INFERNO that HELL was originally based to a large extent on a certain amount of interaction between the two of us, and that this particular rapport no longer exists to any extent. Without wishing to be uncharitable to Paul or Cas, I mark the point of departure as their wedding in 72. I guess I never really expected Paul to give up utter fannishness for a mere woman (could one ever conceive of Cas as being 'mere'?) (sorry Cas), and during their 1971/2 co-habitation there was always the million to one chance that he would burst out with "No, Cas, dearly as I love you, Fandom must come first!!!" But it was not to be, and their marriage spelled the beginning of the end for HELL. Paul is not irrevocably tied up with things like houses and nappies and babies and electric bills and the next installment on whatever they pay by installments, and other off-putting things of that ilk. True, he has started INFERNO for OMPA, but 20 copies of an 8 x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$  20 page zine is hardly going to set the publishing world on fire. But he likes it which is, I guess, the point of it all.

For myself, I wanted out of INFERNO almost as soon as it was started, due to a total lack of belief in the future of OMPA: nor was there any desire to change from OMPA to ROMPA, which is perhaps as well when one considers what the first mailing of this latter was like. Anyway, Skel wanted to do his own



thing, and we divided the zines between us as from this issue. Which in effect means that HELL dies, here. I have neither the time nor energy to continue on my own, not to mention the lack of a typer and difficulties in getting at the duper. So after three years, it ends.

The future? For over a year an idea has been sneaking into my mind in moments of weakness, that someone should produce a zine devoted totally to art and artists. There are artists around whose work doesn't get the airing it rightly deserves, and those whose work doesn't get any. Were all this to be put together, with that which is more easily obtained, it might alleviate the complaints of artists who feel, quite rightly, that their work is largely ignored in fanzines. Perhaps I should qualify that by saying that I feel there are only a handful of artists around whose work is worth commenting on anyway. And let me squash that person in the bottom left corner who's muttering about art zines robbing other zines of what little art they have. Not so - the 'artists' who produce the crap that is generally disseminated would hardly get into an art zine, their work being to art what Burns is to editing.

Am I thinking of seriously starting such a venture? Not at this stage, but the idea remains. The main prohibition is, of course, money. At an estimated printing cost of £100 per issue it ain't on for this person. Anyone got a second hand printing machine? Apart from John Muir, whose 'device!', which I would not touch with a disinfected Rotring.

As an off-shoot to this yak, I notice that Skel raised himself in the Checkpoint poll this year. Nice for the lad. But what really pisses me off more than somewhat is to see Dave Britton ranked equal eighth with someone like Eddie Jones. How Dave gets dragged down to the level of such a hack-book-cover-factory is something that really escapes me, though a glance at the names of those who voted might give some indication. Apart from that, since when has Eddie Jones been a fan artist?? The guy is so professional he gets paid twice for the same piece, by publishers and by silly fans.

Perhaps the idea of an art zine is, after all, silly: maybe fandom doesn't deserve one, when it (or at least the eighteen who voted in the poll apart from myself)(and I take violent exception to the credentials of at least one of them) votes Britton, Cawthorn and Cullen, all of whom I respect, into lower levels than such as Harry Turner (whose work makes me wonder what he's spent the last twenty years doing), Dave Rowe (of whom I've seen only two pieces I rate above mediocrity), and the MoneyConsciousButSodArt Eddie Jones. "What's Wrong With S F Art?" was the title of a discussion at Tynecon. Maybe someone should have stood up and told them.

Which is where it has to finish, once and for all. In time honoured manner I would like to thank all those who contributed to HELL over the last three years, those who never failed to write letters long and short, those who somehow always managed to read HELL, despite not liking it all that much, and all the kind souls who, over the past year, have kept asking when this issue was coming out. And if things didn't go exactly as we planned three years ago, I think we both have learned something. My ghod, I hope so.



I(R)ONIC strikes again. Alan Stewart takes the lid off the continental dustbin and comes up with:-

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or Where Does He Get Those Terrible Titles From?

Hi there! HELL's Oberbefehlshaber (that's German for Commander-in-Chief) has instructed me to write something on the subject of 'Life In Germany' just because I said I would at the end of my last HELLish column, and he says, "You can feel free to take up to four pages." Four pages! A whole four pages in which to regale OMPans and humans alike with tales of buses and trams (sic) that bend in the middle, of machines masquerading as people who don't bend in the middle or anywhere else for that matter. I can only express myself adequately in another tongue when I say, "Gosh wow!"

Seriously folks, and I do mean seriously, when one pauses to think that these words will be read by not only the finest fan minds of today but also by those poor suckers who buy up job lots of old ~~Apple~~ fanzines at SF conventions in the years to come, one can only come to the conclusion that writing for fanzines is mass-communication on a slow scale. Just think, maybe some museum curator will be foolish enough to preserve these words of mine for posterity in the mistaken belief that HELL has got something to do with the newly discovered art form called science fiction!

Yeah, okay, I'll get on with it. You wanna know something about Wonderful West Germany, do you? All right, I'll tell you what makes West Germany so attractive to so many (over 3 million foreigners in the country). Money. It is as simple as that. Here I earn over twice as much as I did in the UK and so does Elke.

Now that you know the secret let me tell you about catch number one. Things cost more over here. Wow! But, and it's a big but, you still have much more money left over here than you do in Britain. Elke and I have bought our own furniture whereas in London we could only afford a furnished flat.... and the typewriter on which I'm typing this is an IBM electric which we just wouldn't have dreamed of buying in England. No we didn't buy it simply for 'fan work'. We do translations on the side and we need a good machine for that.

So what's the disadvantage, you ask. Well, it depends on how you look at things, but the atmosphere in Germany compared to the English-speaking world is very heavy. Everything one can think of is covered by some law or other and there isn't the same sense of individual freedom that we're used to. Foreigners of course have even more forms to fill in than Germans. Before I was even allowed into the country to live I had to have a Residence Permit stamped



in my passport. At that time you had to already have a job before you could come to Germany (other than as a tourist, that is) but now that Britain is in the Common Market you can come to Germany first and then apply for your Residence Permit. Yes, Americans can do that too because Uncle Sam has a special agreement with West Germany to the effect that 'if you don't let our people come as tourists and then stay if they want to, we'll pull out all our troops and then the Russians will come and take over!'

Then there is also a Work Permit which we Common Marketeers no longer need, but the strangest thing to Anglo-Australo-Canado-Americans are the universal registration and the Identity Cards. Every time you move house you have to go along to the 'Inhabitants Registration Office' with a completed form of registration which is available at stationers'. This is one way to solve the unemployment problem, as they have these offices in any town of any size and quite a few staff are called for. If you think that sounds like Big Brother, what about the fact that all Germans are required to have either an Identity Card or a passport.

Some people carry their ID card with them all the time, and there is a tendency for the police to consider you some sort of shady character if you can't produce the card on demand. A friend of ours from London who also lives in Frankfurt had a radiator burst on her while her husband was away in Scotland on business. Her living-room carpet was steeped in oily water, but when the fire brigade arrived they were only interested at first in whether she could produce proof of identification before they would do anything. In more normal circumstances this would not have been too difficult to do, but her passport was in one of the pieces of furniture which had been hastily moved out of the living-room and couldn't be got at. Eventually, after much telephoning with the Registration Office, the firemen got on with the job, satisfied now that our friend had proved her identity! That's living in Germany too.

People will probably write LoCs to Skel and B-ro criticising those facets of life in Germany that I mention and asking why I didn't put in something else instead. That's always the way of it, isn't it? This subject is really about a million-and-a-half smaller topics. Well, if there's anything you want to know, just ask away.

Like for instance, you might want to know about the pubs. That's easily answered. There aren't any! All right, have you recovered from the bad turn you just had? It's true though, nearly all the drinking places are actually restaurants or cafes, but unlike in Britain, they don't throw you out if you don't want anything to eat. They tend to be all rustic and old-fashioned, which is not really to our taste (Elke's and mine, that is) but they do sell beer. Actually we do most of our drinking at home. I have the remnants of a mug of beer beside me right now. Ah, that's better. Connoisseurs of german beer say that the 'alt' or old beer of Dusseldorf is very good, but I find it rather bitter.

Being a Scot I am well aware that whisky costs less here than in Scotland (about £2.50 a bottle). For the first time in my life I've been able to



afford a bottle of malt whisky (Glen Grant), instead of having to be content with the blended stuff. Still on the subject of booze - we now drink wine with all our meals at the weekend, and I wonder how long it'll be before we have a bottle of wine with every meal! Well, it's so cheap here, Germany being a wine-producing country. We spent a week in Luxembourg in the summer and on the way back in the train we passed through the Mosel wine-growing area. All you can see on all the hillsides are vineyards for miles and miles. Lovely.

Now I'll put you in the know about culture over here. No, not all that poetry and other high-brow crap, I mean what's on the box and in the cinemas and in the record shops! First the TV or 'Fernsehen' as it's called in German, which means 'far see'. We have 3 channels, all in colour (most of the time) and if you live in an area of good reception you can get more as the 3rd channel is regional.

People (such as my boss) have told me that they wish they could stop sitting in front of the box all evening. I don't know how they can force themselves to do it. They deserve a gold medal for it! The programmes are not all that great, and there are times when Elke and I would like to curl up in front of the television and relax after our busy (well, she has a busy day) day, but owing to the fact that what is being shown is such 'Scheisse' we go and curl up somewhere else instead. Much better!

The Germans are good at producing television plays, particularly those with social comment themes, but bloody useless at everything else concerned with the small screen. The comedy programs are of the unsophisticated, broad humour type, where the fact that the people speak in a local dialect is supposed to be funny in itself. German light humour series a la 'Jason King' are completely unknown, and the current affairs and other 'serious' programs are spoilt by the German awe of experts, i.e. those who have a degree, or even better a doctorate, and contempt of non-experts.

The situation is, to a certain extent, saved by the fact that about half the air-time is taken up by non-German shows, such as 'The Marty Feldman Comedy Machine', 'Bonanza' repeats complete with Hoss and Adam, the old Warner Brothers' cartoons in the 'Schweinchen Dick' (Porky Pig) show, and the aforementioned 'Jason King' type shows. We also have the inevitable old American films, which are broadcast on the 3rd channel in the original English(?) language version as are 'The Andy Williams Show' and 'Sesame Street'. This last is a program for children of pre-school age which Elke and I never miss. All the other shows are dubbed into German.

Much the same situation prevails in the cinema, to which we rarely go. After all, we can watch old films at home, so why bother to go out. One exception was the James Bond film 'Live and Let Die' which we went to see in the late-night show in English. Elke prefers Roger Moore as Bond, but Sean Connery is a fellow Edinburgher, so I shall just add that I didn't find him at all the bad actor my wife makes him out to be.

Since we came to the 'Vaterland' our record collection has grown to quite



immense proportions, just like Topsy. Eh, by the way, who the hell was Topsy anyway? But few of the records we've acquired here are by Germans. Oh no, it's been Traffic and Led Zeppelin, Steeleye Span and Al Stewart (no relation unfortunately), Uriah Heep and the Sir Douglas Quintet. In the classical field too we now have 'The Golden Age Of English Music' and 'At the Court of Queen Elizabeth'.

As far as German pop music is concerned, it's all rumpy-tumpy Eurovision Song Contest type crap performed by solo singers and duos. Needless to say the German top 50 is dominated by Anglo-American groups of the T-Rex/Slade/Sweet variety. Hm, they're all British groups, aren't they?

The progressive/rock scene is likewise orient(at)ed to 'auslaendische gruppen', so much so that very many of the local bands sing in English too, not so much because they want to make it big in America, but just because they can't seem to find acceptance at home in Germany if they sing in their own language! My sister-in-law, Heidrun, who is 17, finds that English is the 'normal' language for modern pop-rock music. Imagine if all the groups in the English-speaking world sang in German. One result is of course that nobody can understand the words. This situation has also contributed to the rise of the progressive/experimental music known as the Cosmic Sound, which is more or less purely instrumental and is a sort of development from what Pink Floyd used to do.

And now for something completely different. I mentioned before that they still have trams in most German cities (not in West Berlin though) although they are in the process of getting rid of them. But not by changing over to buses like they did in the UK, no they're building (or should I say digging) underground railways. Subways, for our American friends. So far there has been one line in operation in Frankfurt since 1968. That was Germany's 3rd 'Ungerundbahn', the first two being Berlin (1902) and Hamburg (1912). Yeah, Berlin was only 39 years after London, but now they're building them like mad all over West Germany - in Munich, Stuttgart, Essen, Hanover and Nuremberg... and Britain still has only two, in London and Glasgow, where if a train breaks down they have to lift it off by crane! If you've read 'Beneath The City Streets' you'll know that London has H-bomb shelters below some of the tube lines and I sometimes wonder what they're building here, what with the time they take. Anyway, there're building-sites all over the place. You can't move for fear of falling into a hole. Who said, "Lovely"?

Well, I'm now nearing the end of my allotted four pages and I still haven't told you whether it's true that the Germans are so stiff and formal and correct (yes), that they're so hard working (no, they just work longer hours, about 40/42 a week), that they're still anti-semitic (yes and no), that Nazi-ism is on the way back (back? No, not really, although there are plenty of old Nazis still around).

In fact, I've probably got just enough space left to tell you what the Egon Ronay Guide has to say about the Royal Station Hotel in Newcastle. It calls it "a massive Victorian establishment with dowdy room furniture".  
'Bye.



THE SHAYNE McCORMACK INTERVIEW -- CONTINUED

They were walking back and had got past the New York/New Jersey line when this police car comes along in the opposite direction.

"Well, sir, we have this bus and it's broken down."

He stops at the line, tells them to get out, dusts the seat after they're out, closes the door and waits. A New York police car comes along, they get in and proceed to the bus. We're sitting around wondering what's happened when they pull in behind us. The policeman gets out, walks round, puts his head in the bus to have a look at us nefarious wierdo types. Meanwhile Alice decides to try the engine. It clicks and turns over. Gardner goes back to the policeman, talks to him, comes back and says, "That policeman told me we'd better get our arses off the Palisade!!"

Anyway, we pulled into a service station and five minutes later a police car pulls in. They sat talking to the manager for some minutes and we could hear "mumblemumble-long-haired-wierdos-mumblemumble-freaky-hippy-types-mumble mumble", ...you must understand that Gardner has long-blond hair and a beard and a T-shirt with 'GUILFORD GAFIA' on it, and Jay is skinny and tall with glasses and long hair and a 'Kools Beer' T-shirt.

"Hey man, yuh got any stuff??"



Gardner says, "Me sir? No, I'm sorry, not I."

The fellow looks disappointed and then says, "Hows about laying a joint on me?"

"Look, I'm sorry mate, but you've got the wrong bloke."

So the guy looks disappointed again, gets in his car, and drives off.

Gardner gets in the bus and tells Jay who promptly collapses on the spot. We drive out and \*WHOOOSH\*.....past us goes the same police car. We had visions of being stopped and the police bringing in their special detection dogs, leading them up to our special 'compartment', the dogs take one sniff and promptly die.

Skel: Do you not find differences in outlook between fen of different countries?

Shayne: Not greatly. Fans are fans - the reason they're fans is that they do have unusual outlooks. A fan is a certain type of person, or should I say that there is something in a person that makes him a fan, though there are far more knowledgeable people on this matter, I'm sure. This has been my first contact with overseas fans and it's difficult to say just what I've learned.

Skel: You've been going round on first impressions...?

Shayne: Yes, and first impressions are so often wrong. (whisper) Does this go to Arnie Katz?

Skel: (whisper) Yes, (normal) but nothing's come back from Arnie for a while.

Shayne: Well, Arnie and Joyce Katz were very kind to me when I was in New York. They put me up for the night on only two hours notice. I arrived about three in the afternoon, without a place to stay, asked Arnie...he rang Joyce...she said fine...and that was that. They are very unusual people and have a strange cat. It took an instant dislike to me and attacked me at every opportunity. I kid you not - it hissed and spat at me and clawed me every time I sat down. A really dislikeable cat.....if Arnie reads this, I'm sorry, but it really was a dislikeable cat. Did you know that Joyce Katz is a cherokee indian? Or part Cherokee, I'm not sure, but she seemed rather sensitive about it. Also, I was a little afraid that I was butting in by going there with no notice at all and I think she took some slight offence that I should be worried about it. They're wierd people.....very nice but strange. You know, New York fandom is a very strange fandom. It's so big, and divided into so many groups. The place is like a country in itself, almost as many people as Australia as a whole, in one city. About 12,000,000 or so. It's divided into so many groups - serconish, ultra-fannish, the Lunarians, thises 'n thats. American fans vary very much from city to city - to try and describe them in one sentence would be impossible. They're generous, intelligent to a degree, They're a new kind of American, I guess.

At which point we must leave miss McCormack and move on. If the rest of the Robinson Hieroglyphics are ever decyphered.....and if they prove of



sufficient interest, they will probably appear in INFERNO 5, due out on the first of January, 1975. So, fellow fan-eds, please send in your fanzines so that kindly uncle Skel will have something around which to hang that particular issue.

#### FOR AULD LANG ZINE

I've just been having a look through my back issues of HELL (how's that for a perversion) and I notice that HELL 1 was dated 1st. July, 1971. This issue is dated 1st. July 1974. So what? So that's exactly three years and an awful lot has happened in those three years.

Ten issues of HELL, that is an awful lot.

Why, in HELL 3 I went on at length over the troubles in Ireland. They were relatively new then, but now I can't imagine a world in which there are no troubles over there. Only the other day one of the hunger-strikers died. I find myself totally unmoved by all the furore about the possible death of the Price sisters though. I mean, they're not being forced not to eat, are they? The food is available, isn't it? If they choose to commit suicide then tough luck, but it is suicide. They are doing it to themselves. What is with all this IRA talk about 'murder'. Oh, I know what's with all that talk, but what's with the intelligence of the people at whom it is aimed?

Anyway, a lot can happen in three years. A lot has happened to me in that time. How much has happened to you? Let us take part in an experiment. Let us try to re-create the fen we were. What were you doing? Where were you living? What events had taken place 'recently' enough to still be colouring your outlook? Seriously, try and go back. Try and stand in those three year old socks. It's another world back there folks. I'm pretty sure that the world was still interested in 'space-travel' three years ago. Now even I've no idea whether or not there's anybody up there in Skylab at the moment.

#### TO THE DEVIL A DAUGHTER

Well, maybe not to the Devil, but certainly to Chuck and Lynda Partington. Miss Angela Partington was born around about eleven a.m. on the fourth of June. She weighed 7lbs 2ozs (inc. nose). Lynda only missed by 36 hours the fannish first of having her baby at a fan-meet. Maybe next time, Lynda, eh?

#### FIABWOLTGTNSTNAW

Two years ago I knuckled under to external pressure and started going to night school. It was never something I 'wanted' to do, just something I 'had' to do. The first year it was one-night-a-week and though a drag at times I have to admit that I enjoyed it to a degree. Last year however it was three-nights-a-week and it was sheer hell. That's only half the course though as I still have another year of the same to do. Only I don't. It finally got through to me that no way was I going back for another year of the same. Not



