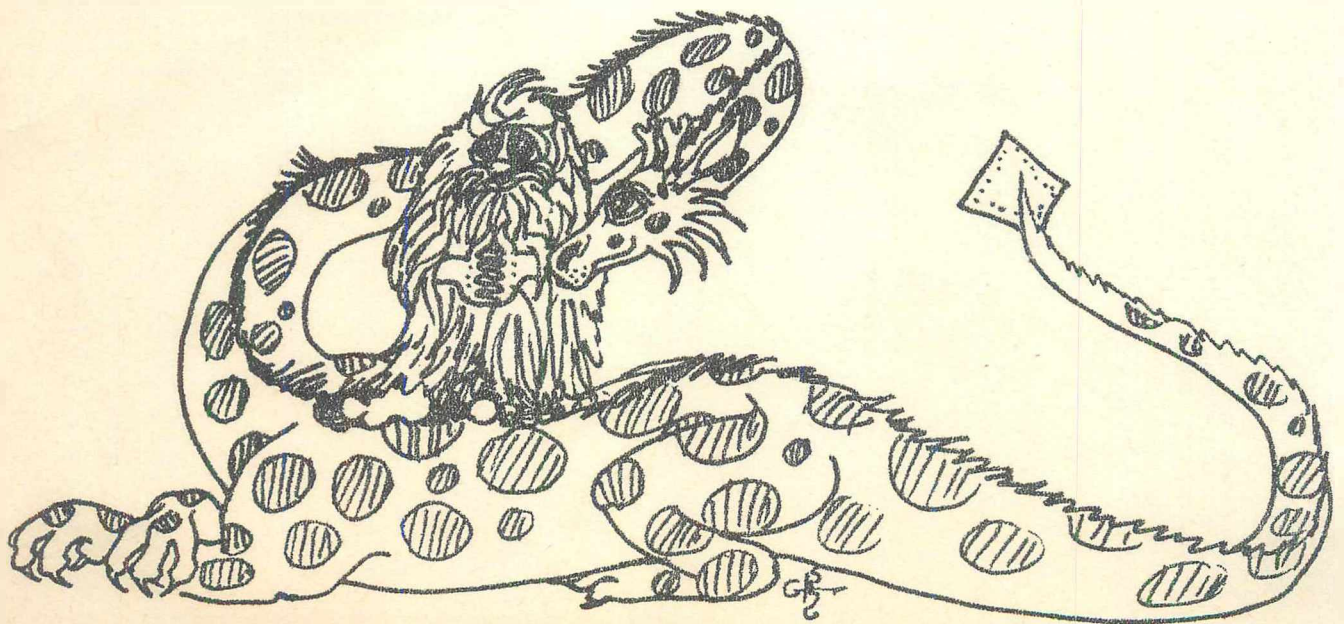


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*THE MENTOR* 33

OCTOBER 1981



THE MENTOR 33 OCTOBER 1891



# THE MENTOR

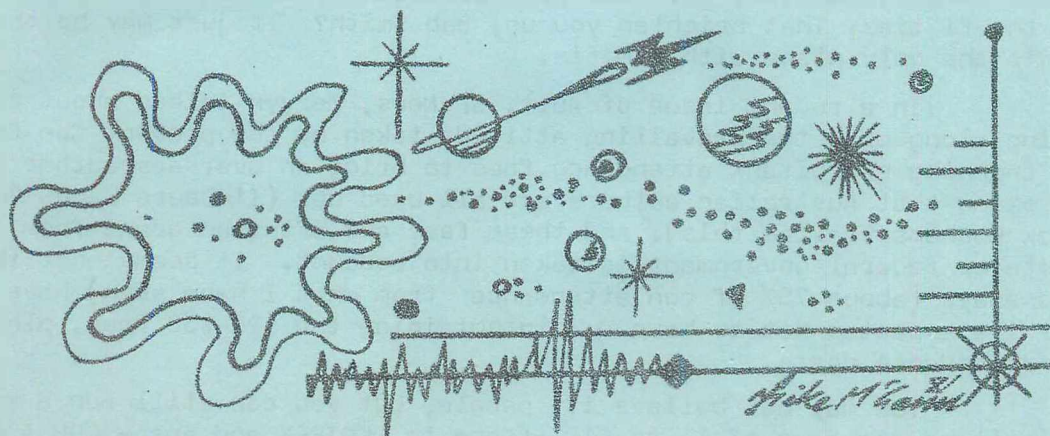
SCIENCE FICTION

October 1981

Number 33

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An R & S Publication.

# RON'S BOOST.

Rather than do my usual thing and just list the zines I've received and the books I've read these last two months, this time I'll give my thoughts about several things that came to my attention in the last two months. One of them was brought to mind by a query from Joseph Hanna-Rivero in the R & R DEPT. this issue, in which he asks to list the currently published fanzines in Australia. By now you have some idea from the 'zines received' I keep listing in these editorials.

Before proceeding to Advention '81 I voted for the DITMARs (the misnamed Australian SF Achievement Awards). What struck me at the time were not so much the zines listed as those left out. There were four fanzines listed: Q36, the South Australian fanzine put out by Mark Ortlieb, of which at least five were published equally throughout the previous year; Chunder, published by Victorian John Foyster, of which some 4 issues (two mailings) came out in the previous six months; Science Fiction Commentary, by Victorian Bruce Gillespie, of which two issues (one mailing) came out in the prior six months; and Australian Science Fiction News, by Mervyn Binns (published for the Australian Science Fiction Foundation...), which came out about every two months last year. Also a Victorian fanzine.

Judging by my records, at least half of all zines published in Aust. in the twelve months prior the con came out of West Australia. None of these zines were nominated (or were eliminated). Thus so for any NSW zines. (In case anyone thinks this is a case of sour grapes on my part - the circulation of this zine ensures TM will never win a fanzine Ditmar.)

From my hazy memory it seems to me that wherever a con takes place, and a zine is nominated in that state, that zine usually wins. An interesting fact: of the four zines nominated, three (the Victorians) were all pre-AussieCon fans, and two of them go back to the fifties. That brighten you up, Bob Smith? It just may be that Milford isn't the only place with a Mafia.

In a recent issue of Aust. SF News, Mervyn talked about some fans not going along with the prevailing attitude taken by the present Con Committees of charging exorbitant attendance fees to bring an overseas author to the Con. It seems that Australian authors are all used up. (I'm sure Wynne Whitford and Jack Wodhams realise this). And these fees are after a grant from the prevailing state or federal government is taken into account. It seems that the students these days (about 75% of con attendance from what I have seen) have no trouble (or are expected not to have) in obtaining the \$20-\$30 fees, plus any live-in attendance costs.

You may not believe it, people, but you can still run a successful con for attendance fees of \$5 to \$10. (Come to MEDTREK and see - GOH A B Chandler, Fan GOH Shayne McCormack).

It isn't that an overseas author visiting this country couldn't be taken advantage of by the con committee and 'rented out' for interviews and, say, (with their permission) an extended tour of universities and colleges lecturing - after a suitable rest from the con - to recoup whatever money it is feasible to.

- Ron L Clarke.

# THE DECADENT ANTIQUARIAN

BY PETER A. KELLS.

And so I came to the 'Medallion' antique shop where, some days previously, I had seen an exquisite Art Nouveau original. It was a delightful lamp by Emile Dufrene. However, as I reached the rather musty and decrepit establishment, I noticed an ominous blank space in the window where the lamp had been. Peering through the grimy glass, the sought after object was nowhere to be seen. I feared it had been sold, and such proved to be the case when I questioned the proprietor.

I had not met the man before, but as I was a collector, and he a dealer, we were soon immersed in a discussion of antique objects d'art and their availability - yet, for some reason, my interest was aroused more by the man's appearance and implicit attitudes, than by his conversation.

He was immaculately dressed in a white suit with a light-grey silk cravat. His face was almost abnormally pale, though finely, even delicately proportioned. His hair was thick, waving, and rather darker than his wisps of honey-blond moustache and exiguous goatee. His manner of speaking seemed deliberately artificial and full of curious affectation, yet sometimes stilted and dream-like. The massed effect of his appearance, demeanour, and speech patterns suggested that he could not possibly belong to such a brash, 'progressive' and coldly functional age as ours. And I deemed it grossly unusual that such a young man should possess such curious features of personality.

During our conversation, I had learned that he had in stock no more of the antiques I had been seeking. Then, as I was about to bid him good day, he invited me to luncheon in his private rooms above the shop. On the spur of the moment, I accepted the invitation. As it was midday, he went to the door, locked it, and placed in the window a sign on which was printed 'Open at One'.

His residence and place of business was in an old and decaying part of the city. But, as he led me out of the shop and down a dim hallway and up a flight of wooden stairs whose central concavities bespoke their age, I noticed many poignant traces of a gracious past. There were exquisitely intricate mouldings, ornate wall panels and rich pastel-hued tiles beneath our feet.

We entered his living room through a long, echoing hallway. In a far corner of that room was a wide archway of carved teakwood, through which could be seen an extensive library. I would dearly have liked to see his books, but instead he bade me be seated at a heavy circular table of polished and venerable cedarwood. Then he announced, "I have a bottle of a rare and delicate liqueur made from the fruit of the Oromel Tree of which there are only five lovingly tended by the monks who dwell in the abbey near the oasis of Frantu".

From a polished ebony cabinet inlaid with jade dragons he produced two intricately fluted crystal goblets and a strangely beautiful bottle. He proceeded to place one goblet before me, and one goblet before himself with what, in this age of debased, truncated and barbaric manners would be taken as an excess of ceremony.

He proceeded to unstopper the bottle, which, though sealed only by an absurdly disreputable and humble looking cork, was itself suggestive of the 'Arabian Nights' and, I deemed, like as not to contain a genie. I had never before seen such a bottle; refulgent aureoles and glories seemed to flash and sparkle in its interior, and its glass, like bubbled and translucent gold, held phosphorescent whorls and glimmering coruscations like unto those unseen planets, stars and galaxies which are said to spin and incandesce beyond the Blue Veil and the tenebrous Gulfs of Nib.

He removed the cork, and at once there billowed into the still air of the room a fragrance that was redolent of fantastic ante-diluvian gardens of sandalwood, myrrh and lavender. That otherworldly bottle, elegantly held in his alabaster-white and carefully manicured hand, he now inclined towards my crystal goblet. And it may be thought, by the insensitive to such matters, that the mere pouring of a liquid from a bottle to a vessel is a mundane and prosaic thing. Yet a curious peace, an hieratic majesty had stolen over the ostensibly ordinary events taking place within that antique room. I observed fascinated, and with an unwonted cognizance of minute detail, as a stream of shimmering, roseate fluid filled my glass. I contemplated the filled goblet; it stood with strange majesty on the table before me, and a transient fancy crossed my mind that that goblet, when filled with that liqueur, became a kind of scrying glass. Indeed, for a little while I gazed abstractedly into that liquid and imagined its roseate glamour to be the congealed and blended light of forgotten mornings in Atlantis, Ophir, Lyonesse, and Shambhala.

All this time, the bottle had been left uncorked, and I became aware of a subtle change in the aroma of the liqueur; no longer did it honestly allude to its origins in exotic ante-diluvian gardens, but rather the room seemed now to be filled with an opiate vapour suggestive of voluptuous, Byzantine sophistications.... And the noises of the street came in muffled and attenuated like sounds in a dream, and the venerable grandfather clock tocked on slowly, rheumily, and reluctantly... It was in this atmosphere that he began speaking and exhibiting that subtle change of personality and manner which I attribute to the exotic liqueur. He spoke, at first, quite calmly, although with an air of suppressed excitement as if the subject were very close to his heart; his eyeballs did not, at first, stare maniacally from their sockets, nor did his white, carefully manicured hands tremble, nor did he sprawl raving upon the richly upholstered sofa with its fantastic designs of Eastern palaces, seraglios, and fountained gardens; sprawl raving oblivious to the embarrassment and amazement of his guest. No, all these things took place a little later, for first he began to speak: "I'm sure you will appreciate, Mr. King, that there are few people in this benighted age of ours, least of all any devotee of futurism, modernity, or sterile functionalism, who could ever understand the Decadent's aesthetic craving for certain scenes and landscapes wherein the partial or total decay of architectural forms, or artifacts in general, may be observed."

To this I cordially agreed, informing him that I held roughly similar opinions. And I opined also that there is a Spirit - a Zeitgeist - abroad in our age. This Spirit seeks to minimize the importance of the individual and to corrode his sense of personal identity by such insidious devices as a dehumanized style of monolithic city architecture which is rigorously bereft of any

correspondence to the inner nature, or needs, of Man.

This comment of mine seemed to encourage him, and it was then that his eyes grew wild and staring and he commenced to deliver a vehement, though still fairly controlled, tirade: "The truly sensitive decadent" -- he continued -- "will derive a special aesthetic stimulus from the contemplation of such scenes as deserted or abandoned graveyards, or grass and weeds growing profusely between the lines of discontinued, or at most, lightly travelled railway tracks, or fruit orchards grown wild and rank and fungous in the grounds of a deserted, but once gracious and stately house... or the delirious, winding, grimy, and warren-like streets and buildings past which one's train invariably seems to travel in heavily industrialized areas."

Here he paused, breathless, as if recovering from an excess of some emotion known only to himself and others sharing his delicate sensibilities. I could see his hands gripping the edge of the polished and venerable cedarwood table -- his knuckles stood out white.

I sat facing him, feeling uncomfortable, and trying to think of some reply or comment, but before I did so he resumed the outlining of his queer aesthetic principles -- though now with a definitely febrile intensity: "The opportunities for viewing these rare and ecstatic vistas have been considerably mitigated by the lamentable passing of the Great Age of Steam when the areas to which I allude were perpetually shrouded in the dark glamour of billowing smoke and the heavenly aroma of burning coal."

I ought to have left then and there, but it was actually because of what he did and said subsequently that caused me to suspect the manifestation of some definitely abnormal psychology -- for he then leant across the table towards me with his eyes darting crazily back and forth as if looking for eavesdroppers, and in a hoarse, whispering voice said, "Have you seen the old 'Shield' stove factory at Greendales?" Nervously, and a little bewildered, I replied, "Why, er... yes, it's a horrible old place -- an eyesore.. Oh! but surely you are not suggesting it has aesthetic value!? As a matter of fact I heard that the City Council was considering condemning the building as structurally unsound." That seemingly innocuous piece of news hit him like a thunderbolt. For he leapt to his feet, uttered an impassioned cry as if mortally wounded, and flung himself onto the sofa. "Philistines!... Vandals!", he shrieked. "What could their simpering bourgeois mentalities know of the Inner Glory of that symbol of Transcendent Decrepitude!" ... "Have they not seen those Great Cathedrals of ecstatically rusted and deliciously warped galvanized iron? ... Or the weeds and grasses that grow there in boisterous, unchecked, and exuberant luxury?.. God! the shivers of delight that have traversed my spine as I have viewed that Empyrean fane of the Elder Mysteries and mused upon the wonders and terrors which must lurk and obscenely gibber within it's shadowy and cavernous interior!! And more than once have I had to turn my eyes away when, in passing that holy place, I felt sure that I would be overcome by the opiate and Elysian radiance into which the solar illumination had been transmogrified by the gloriously distorted symmetries of that divine and frenzied architecture!!!"

And he veritably screamed and frothed these last few words, rather than articulated them.

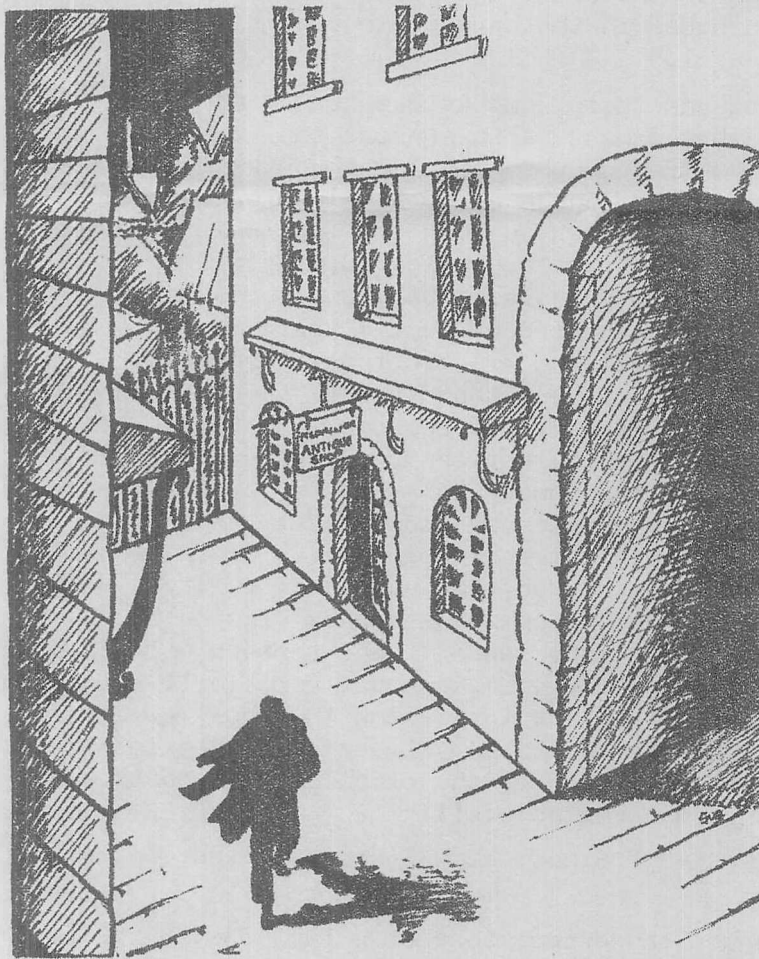
Suddenly came the prolonged thunderous roar of a large jet aircraft directly overhead. The sound seemed to cause him an unusual amount of pain, for his carefully manicured hands gripped the sofa's rich upholstery like talons... When the noise abated, he began speaking again -- and his voice was even lower, and his face even more reverent and serious, and then he confessed to me, in those hoarse and whispered tones, of how he once scaled the old wooden fence

around the factory. It was on a night of the full moon, yet he took the risk of being seen (because, he claimed, it would have been grossly inartistic to do what he did by any other light).

And he told me of how he had crept into the shadow of one of the rusted hulks, and adored at it's corroded walls - and he told me also of other things that he did on that night, in the shadows....

Then came the moment when I thought I might be in actual danger, for he leapt up from the sofa and threw himself at my feet. He whimpered and sobbed and said, "Come! adore with me at the Holy Shrine!" I was disgusted, and admonished: "God! man, control yourself!" Then I said, "While I may agree with some of your theories, I believe you have gone too far beyond the bounds of decency, sanity, and civilized conduct, Good day sir!"

I turned on my heel to leave, but he held fast to my boot (with his carefully manicured hands). He sobbed and whimpered and whimpered and sobbed. Then I had to strike him firmly and repeatedly with my cane, but he only laughed maniacally, hysterically, and pitifully. Eventually, by the judicious application of short, sharp raps of my cane over his (carefully manicured) hands, he was induced to let go and I was able to flee.



Seconds later, any passers-by in Sidonia Street would have heard someone making a rapid, clattering descent of the stairs within the 'Medallion' antique shop. And had they paused in bewilderment at that noise, they would have seen a fist, wrapped protectively in a handkerchief, smash one of the small panes of glass in the locked door, and open it.

Then they would have seen a figure with a gaunt, harassed face rush precipitately down Sidonia Street towards Malory Street.

- Peter A. Kells.

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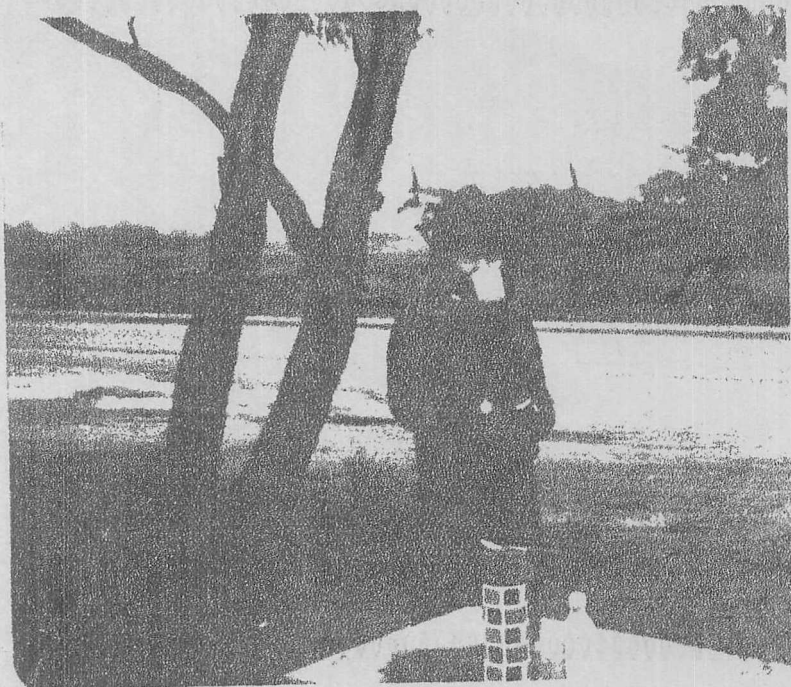
BY GAY WILLIAMS.



We travelled across New South Wales, across the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area, bound for Mildura on the Murray river where we would spend our first night. The plains surrounded us as we drove westward, getting flatter and flatter; boring, and more boring. A belligerent rain storm followed us the whole way, making life a little miserable, especially for Ron whose camera had to lie idle beside him for lack of light. There was a rainbow, though, bright and beautiful, bending to touch a solitary tree that stood lonely in the distance upon a small hill.

Next morning , we were on our way again, across Victoria, bound for the South Australian border. We kept passing the Murray, old, old river that it is, winding like some injured, mighty serpent of Aboriginal dreaming between the eroded banks of its wide valley.

-7-



missed it, anyway; the scintillating conversation, no doubt. Or do you think that a long day's driving may have had something to do with it?

Long day or not, one signpost lifted our spirits -- "To the Barossa Valley".

Having heard much about it, I was eager to see it, and was not disappointed. Like a piece of another world suddenly deposited within these hills, the Barossa opened up before us, presenting vista upon vista of green and yellow fields where grapevines clung to each other with gnarled old hands.

Of course, this valley has other attractions. We visited several of them, for free wine-tasting, and came away with an armful of bottles, and very giddy heads.

Next morning, Saturday, was convention day. After purchasing some odds and ends for our fail'ful conveyance, we arrived at the Oberoi hotel (without getting lost once, I may add). After unpacking the car, and settling into our room, we descended to the convention rooms, agog with expectation.

At first sight, I was very disappointed. Having become used to Star Trek Cons (yes, I ammit it, Star Trek was my gateway into science fiction) I expected a huckster's room -- do they call them that at straight science fiction cons, too, Ron? -- full of wonderful things to purchase, and take home as mementoes.

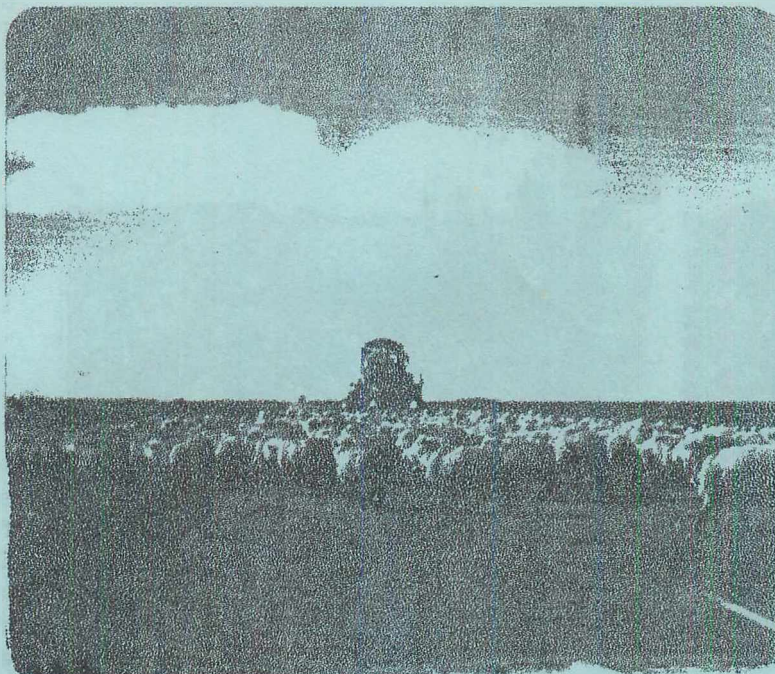
What did I find? Two tables of books, one displaying very proudly Frank Herbert's latest, and Mike McGann's tee-shirts, etc. A Star Trak table arrived later in the morning, which made me feel a little better. The art show, also, was kind of small, though there were some very good things there, especially some of a 3-dimensional quality, made in



polystyrene foam.

I found old friends, and some new ones. We talked, and talked, but my friends and I always do a lot of that.

There were many interesting things on the programme, several of the panel discussions sounding very much so. There were a few of them with a theme of world-building (not surprising with Frank Herbert present, I suppose). The fan guests of honour were interesting, too - the American one at least. The English one, on the other hand...



At first glance, I was impressed by Mr Joseph Nicholas. He dressed well, his hair was a nice length, not bad looking. When he first opened his mouth I still thought that here was a man of culture. The accent was adorable, the voice melodious. However, when the man began to say something, my illusions quickly fled. Do you know the old saying to wash a mouth out with soap? In this man's

case, carbolic acid wouldn't be strong enough. If this is the way that a British fan talks to a room full of listeners, I think I shall stay in this country contentedly.

Needless to say, after one or two doses of him, I took care to miss any of his further contributions to the programme.

The male American, who gave his after-dinner speech after a rather badly organised "banquet", was a different kettle of fish. He was a public speaker, who, with his wit and humour, lightened up an otherwise rather dull evening.

Am I being a little





over-critical of the Oberoi hotel if I say that I don't think that a cold smorgasboard really constitutes a banquet?

Sunday night was costume night. Unfortunately, as happens at cons, things can get out of hand. The programme became a little tangled, and delays occurred, with the result that the costume parade did not take place until very late. There was no stage - which made the organiser's work a little difficult. The final arrangement of seating was such that the back seats had almost no chance of seeing the entrants at all. Not that there were many entrants. Such

as there were, were good, but surprisingly few of them. The photo-taking session afterward was fun. One particular lady in an eye-catching costume, complete with whip, drew a lot of attention - deservedly so. Ron was in his element, his movie lights illuminating the costumes and milling crowd. We did some more picture-taking in the room later with some Trekkers from Melbourne.

Monday's highlight was a visit to a nearby coffee-shop by a bunch of media fans, where we invented Devonshire coffee, much to the distress of the waitress. In the evening, we went our separate ways, saying goodbye to old friends and new ones.

We stayed overnight in a town called Elizabeth just outside Adelaide.

Leaving from there next morning, we decided that we had to say goodbye to the Barossa Valley, and since we were there... You guessed it, a little more wine-tasting and a few more bottles. This time we also took a tour of the winery, seeing the wine in the making. The most impressive thing we saw was an old grape vine which was as old as the winery, and grew untouched in the middle of the winery. There's something venerable about a



living thing so old, and yet so beautiful.

We arrived home very late on Wednesday night, having detoured through Griffith and via McWilliam's. (Well, we had to compare the two wine growing districts, didn't we?).

Thus ended a five-day expedition into the realms of straight (or hard-core) science fiction. On the whole it was enjoyable, and enlightening.

-- Gay Williams.

-----ooOoo-----

## A DREAMER'S QUEST...

While 'neath a gnarled mountain pine he did rest,  
He mused long on the hardness of his Quest  
To discover that lost Faerie Portal  
Which is the border of things Immortal,  
(He would live in a land where Time is not  
And where exotic pleasures are one's lot)  
So musing thus, and weary of his Quest,  
He slept while the Sun sank far down the West...  
All the day had he to slumber succumbed  
Until below the hills the Sun had plumbed,  
Then he woke in a crimson afterglow  
And felt the first cooling night breezes blow,  
Whence he rose in his tattered cloak bedight --  
And 'twas then he saw an uncommon sight,  
And his heart thrilled to the spectacle rare  
Of Faerie's saltant forms dancing on air...  
From flower stalk to leafy bough they flew  
On gossamer wings of roseate hue  
In a mystic rite of their unknown race  
Invisible to Man, outside of Space --  
They danced around an ancient standing stone  
Which stood in a field sequestered, alone --  
They leaped to flutes from no visible source;  
Flutes compelling him with magical force  
To join in that otherworldly pavane,  
Though he ever lost to the world of Man...  
Reason departed, no longer he cared  
That enchantment enthralled him, magic snared --  
Now a Faerie Queen binds him with a spell  
And in an underground palace they dwell  
(Lo! when they counted but one fleeting year,  
We counted more than half a hundred here!)

: Peter A. Kells

# ROLL THE OLD CHARIOT ALONG...

BY JOHN J. ALDERSON

"Here Ethymology was found,  
Who scorned surrounding fruits,  
But ever dug in deeper ground  
For old and mouldy roots."

Bert Chandler, as usual, is perfectly right about the antiquity of the word "car". It's probably older than even he ~~is~~ realises.

Some years ago, when I was interested in such things, I visited the Australian Institute of Archaeology in Melbourne, and in the course of conversation, asked the Assyrian word for "chariot." I was told it was rho-car (I spell it phonetically so as not to confound Assyriologists amongst the readers of THE MENTOR). And it means, "a seat on wheels". This too, is the meaning of "chariot", and if you look carefully at the latter word it breaks into three, cha (seat), ri (wheel), and it, a diminutive similar to the French "ette" and probably both ultimately derived from the Gaulish, if not earlier. "Chariot" is then, the Assyrian word "rho-car", reversed and with a diminutive added.

However, the Assyrians did not invent the chariot and they probably took some strange mangling of its name when they acquired it. Indeed, if Velikovsky's rearranging of ancient history is correct the word dates from Greek times and almost certainly contains the Greek "rho" sound. The Homeric heroes however called their chariots "harma". It is unlikely they got their chariot from the Greeks, or for that matter the word, though the way the Greeks mangled foreign words the Greeks could easily have got the word from them.

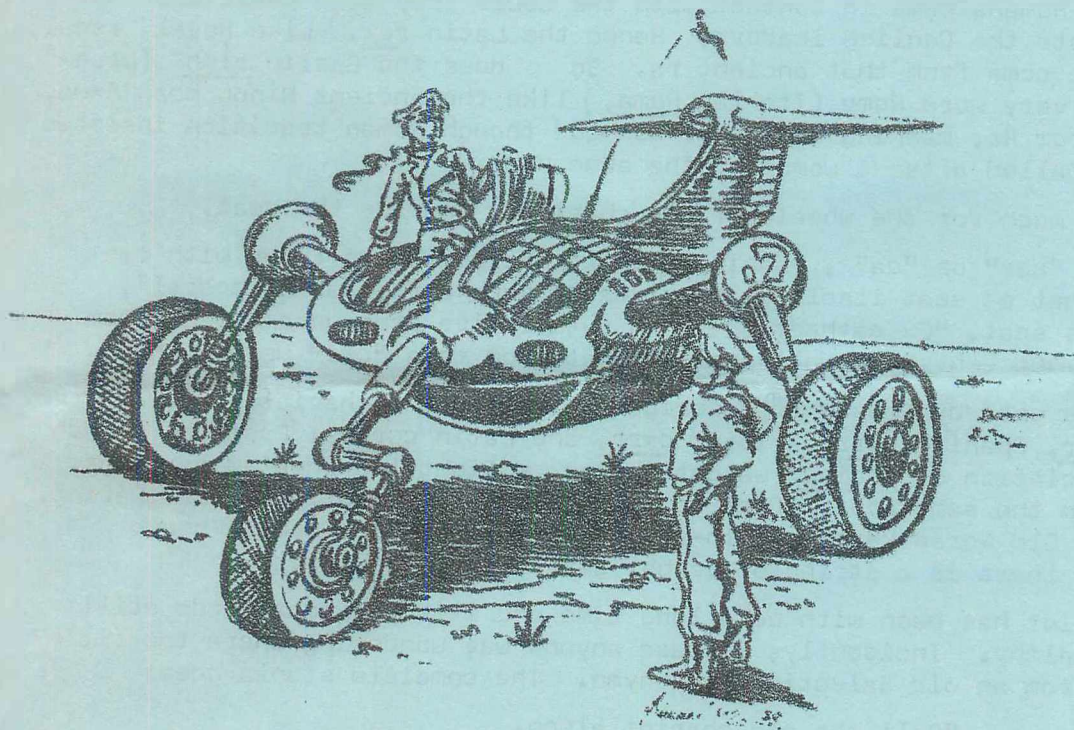
The earliest mention of chariots occurs in Exodus. But a land of river flats could never have produced a chariot for two reasons. (a) They would be useless. (b) They would not have the raw materials. I believe the present idea on the subject is that the Hittites invented them, the Hittites being the iron-producing peoples of what is variously called Palestine and/or Syria. Iron and timber were essential for the making of chariots, though probably the first chariots were almost entirely of wood. However, it is also possible that the Chalybes, who were regarded by the Greeks as the first iron-workers, were the inventors of the chariot, and very early in the piece mountaineers from this area swept down onto the plains. The Celts claim to come from this area.

However, at present I am more interested in the word than the history. (Sorry about that, you history freaks).

The word "Car" or "ca" means seat. The Egyptian hieroglyph which (I admit some scepticism here) was the origin of our "c" was a seat or stool, sometimes called "The Throne". It was also the origin (???) too, of the letter "g". The origins of the alphabet is shrouded in mystery, not the least caused by

the gravest doubts now, as to the validity of conventional dating. However, the word "car" for seat is known in some form or other in many if not most of the languages of Europe, that is, it is one of the fundamental root words of the Indo-European languages.

The word "rho" or "ra" is also widely dispersed. Ra was the name of the Egyptian sun-god, a deity which Heyerdahl has traced two thirds the way around the world to the central Pacific. The sign for the god Ra was a circle with a serpent around it. However, I doubt if we got our "r" from Egypt. But the root word, "ra" originally meant either a circle, gold, or the sun, and soon meant all three. Thus we have a whole series of words in many languages derived from "ra" meaning to circle or rotate, yellow or gold, and to glow or radiate. But Ra was the king of gods, and "ra" gave us a whole series of words meaning kingship or royalty.



Some of these words are somewhat disguised now. Take the word "circle" ... it has an "ir" (remember vowels change at the drop of a hat in words, not only to indicate tense etc., eg swim, swam, swum, but to also indicate intensives, crick, crack, crush). "Circle" is variously derived from Anglo-saxon circl, French cercle, Latin circulus

a diminutive of circus. They are probably congate terms. Allied words are Greek kirkos a circle, Anglo-saxon hring a ring, German kreis a circle, Gaelic cusirt, a circle or ring. Naturally when faced with such a whelter of cognate terms, often of ancient standing, the derivation of words from languages other than immediate parent languages is risky. What I mean is, a word like circle probably has been derived from the most ancient roots existing in the language, and vaguely standardised.

Obviously such words as rotate, revolution, rotor, or orbit, hardly need mention. The use of "ra" (back again) as in "regain", "remake" and so on are interesting but derived (there's another!) from the long descended root word, "ra", for sun or wheel or circle.

The word "or" will be familiar to all students of heraldry... notice the ra in that word for a herald was originally someone sent by the king. Or means

gold, reputedly derived from Latin aurum. But it is more likely derived from the Celtic. The Old Irish is or and is not likely to have been derived from aurum. Take another common word, "orange". Derived from the Persian naranj the "n" being dropped. The Italian is arancic, Spanish naranja, Portuguese laranja, Arab naranj, Hindu nārangi, Sanskrit nāraṅga. The loss of the "n" and the "i" is due to the confusion with the indefinite article.

It is probable that such words as oral, orifice, etc, derived from oris a mouth also comes from ra. The Egyptian glyph for "r" being a pair of lips.

The Egyptians did not distinguish between the "r" and the "l" just as in some southern English words, eg almond, alms and so forth. So "glow" probably was derived from "ra" meaning to radiate. In such case we have such diverse words as "glimmer", "gloss" and "glory". So we get "red" and from it "raw" and "scarlet". "Scar" was originally a red wound made by burning. Notice the word burn.

When the Romans came in contact with the Gauls they took their word for king, "rix" to denote the Gaulish leaders. Hence the Latin rex. Like Royal, regal, and reign, they all come from that ancient ra. So does the Gaelic rioh (pronounced ree.) The very word Rome (Italian Roma,) like the ancient Hindu hero Rama, are both derived from Ra, meaning a king or sun-god though Roman tradition insisted that the city was called after a woman of the same name.

Well, so much for the wheels of the chariot. Now for the seat.

The word "car" or "ca", meaning a seat, has come down to us with two major meanings. That of seat itself which gives us such words as "cathedral", which is a bishop's seat. "Ex cathedra" is an authoritative pronouncement as from a seat of dignity. Of course you all realise that from this "car" we get chair.

"Car" was used by Caesar to describe the Celtic war-chariots. So we get the French char, Spanish carro, Irish carr, and Latin currus. From the French (Parisian) pronunciation of chaire we get chaise, a light two wheeled carriage. Carriage comes from the same root. Cart is to my thinking a shortening of chariot. Cognate terms are Old Norse kartr, Anglo-saxon cræt and Old Norman French carste. Of course there is a string of verbs, carry, carriage, cart.

The chariot has been with us a long time and it's two root words still seem strong and healthy. Incidentally, in case anyone was wondering where the title comes from, it's from an old Salvation Army hymn. The complete stanza goes:

"Roll the old chariot along,  
Roll the old chariot along,  
If the devil's in the road we'll roll it over him,  
And don't hang on behind."

It's not sung so much now, with the mounting road-toll.

- John J Alderson.

—oooo00ooo—

# THE WAIT

A sea of stars, ten oceans deep  
A realm for the most mighty kings.  
Remember the swift fleet of arks...  
How fast across the seas they'd leap ---  
What riches, what wondrous things  
Did such arks bring  
From lands afar, from stars so strange  
From depths ten oceans deep..

But there is no life among the stars  
No longer are there battle cries  
Nor songs nor sounds of laughter  
The starry sea's in tranquil sleep.  
There are no arks.

The stars shine as bright as life  
In velvet oceans dark and deep

But there's no whisper 'tween the stars  
There is no murmur to disturb the peace;  
Only a speckled silence, where fire jewels gleam.

The stars are blinking.  
There is no message, there is no thought,  
Only a tranquil majesty, a frozen beauty.

The stars wait.  
They wait, patiently and without feeling  
In the timeless deep.  
Wait for life to fill the empty space  
Once again; for shining arks to cruise with grace  
From star to star, to lands afar,  
To watch the beauty  
And be pleased.

It will be a long wait.

- Lilianne Forbin.

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# GRIMESISH GRUMBERLINGS,

A COLUMN BY A. BERTRAM CHANDLER.

## PIG ISLAND REVISITED.

The recent Norcon, held in Auckland, was my first visit to New Zealand since I was there, in late 1974, as Master of Abel Tasman. I was running to and around EnZed, off and on, from 1937 to 1974. I was always meaning to visit the famous thermal showplace, Rotorua. Somehow, I just never got around to it.

Among the brochures on display at the reception desk of the New Station Hotel - the Norcon convention hotel - was one advertising Mini-Tours. There was a one day tour from Auckland to Rotorua advertised. I decided on taking it. Booking could be made by telephone and the mini-bus would pick up from the hotel and deliver one back at the end of the day. So I booked for the Tuesday tour, the Norcon having finished on Monday.

The mini-bus arrived exactly at the agreed upon time and then cruised the city, picking up other passengers from their hotels. At the finish there were five North Americans, one South American (from Buenos Aires), a Japanese couple, a young man from Germany and myself. As usually is the case on such expeditions the driver/guide lost no time in finding out the nationalities of his charges. And then as we were bowling along between low, green hills on our way inland, he just had to say, "In case any Australians are wondering what that funny green stuff is along the sides of the road, it's grass."

Ha, ha. Very funny.

I got my own back, of course. I had learned, during conversations, that the Americans had spent time in Australia before coming to EnZed and that whilst in our country had done quite a lot of sightseeing, including a tour of Canberra. Well, after a somewhat hurried lunch at Rotorua we were chivvied along between the hot water springs and the obscenely bubbling mud pools so as to be at the right place at the right time, to witness the blowing-off of one of the famous geysers. We waited and waited but the mini-eruption just wasn't happening. I said, "In Canberra, on Lake Burley Griffin, the Captain Cook Memorial Jet always blows on time..." At this point there was a far from spectacular issuance of evil-smelling steam and water from a hole in the ground. "And," I continued, "it's much higher..."

The Americans were amused. The guide wasn't.

All in all, I found Rotorua rather disappointing. Just Beppu with Maoris and Pakehas instead of Japanese. The all-pervading stink was the same.

On the way back to Auckland a stop was made at the Agrodome. Despite the name it is neither a dome nor a venue for aggro. The "Agro" comes from agronomy. It is a large building, built of wood with aluminium cladding. In appearance it's as though two of the "sails" of the Sydney Opera House had been sat upon by something huge and heavy and flattened out. It is remarkable inasmuch as there are no pillars at all inside the huge hall. There are rows of seats, like church pews. There is a platform with two step-pyramids in, as it were, silhouette, the one at the back taller than the one in front. Each of the small platforms/steps has a label - Merino, Southdown, Romney, Suffolk Punch &c. On two sides of the hall are pens, with the sheep of the various breeds confined in them in the right order.

We were treated to a lecture on the New Zealand wool and mutton industry. And then, as the lecturer said his piece about the Merino, his young lady assistant pushed a button and the Merino was released, trotting up to his place at the apex of the rear, higher pyramid. There was some element of bribery; there was a food bowl containing something obviously very tasty on top of the pillar to which he was secured with collar and chain as soon as in place. Nevertheless it was quite fantastic how every animal, when released, went directly to his appointed place.

There was an exhibition of shearing. Then, as it had started to rain, the sheepdog demonstration was held inside the dome. The lecturer, using whistle signals, told the dog which of the sheep to stand on.

All right, all right, dogs - sheepdogs especially - are intelligent. But sheep aren't notorious for their brainpower. I'd like to know how those sheep were trained....

The next day I entrained for Wellington. I had learned that a "rail car" makes the daylight trip. Boarding the thing I was pleased to find that it is more of a train - although with only two coaches - than a rail car. It could be described as a poor man's Bullet Train, although the locomotive was a very ordinary Diesel-electric engine and not something out of a science fiction illustration. Unfortunately the day was mainly overcast, with frequent rain; nonetheless the scenery was spectacular. Until I made the trip I had no idea that the North Island of New Zealand is so mountainous.

Although the Silver Fern broke no speed records it made good time and would have arrived in Wellington exactly as advertised had it not been for one of those annoying, unscheduled and unexplained stops just outside the station.

But I was supposed to be going to New Zealand to attend a convention, not to go gallivanting about the countryside.

Norcon was, in fact, quite enjoyable and had its amusing moments. At the opening ceremony I was supposed to cut a red silk ribbon. I thought of something really humorous to say, and said it. It went over like the proverbial lead balloon.

"In Australia," I said, "we do things differently. Just as the VIP has his scissors poised some clot in a comic opera uniform, mounted on a horse and waving a sword, gallops up and slashes the tape..."

And then, of course, I had to explain everything.

Don't they teach history in New Zealand schools?

And then there were the plastic Tiki awards, similar to the Norwescon's TackY awards. (Last year I qualified for the Guinness Book of Records. I must be the only Australian who has returned to his native land with a souvenir boomerang, plastic, Made in California.) It is the Dunedin mob that awards the plastic Tikis - small, selling retail at 10¢ at the outside - at New Zealand SF conventions. They were determined that one of the four Australians present should receive a plastic Tiki for the most grossly ocker remark made during the Con. I was so honoured.

It was because of something I said when answering questions after my GoH speech. I'd finished the talk by speaking about the work currently in progress, KELLY COUNTRY, which is, essentially, a history of the Australian War of Independence. An earnest young lady asked, "And what part does New Zealand play in all this?" I replied, "New Zealand remains loyal to the British Crown." There were howls of protest. I said, "But it has to be so. Otherwise my plot is mucked up."

Apart from plot requirements I really think that, during the 1880s, New Zealand would have remained loyal to the British Crown, no matter what was happening in Australia. And, in both Australia and New Zealand today, there are many, many people who would remain loyal to the British Crown no matter what was happening. Let's face it; whether we like it or whether we don't (or even if we could hardly care less) the nuptials of Charlie-boy and Lady Di are NEWS in this part of the world.

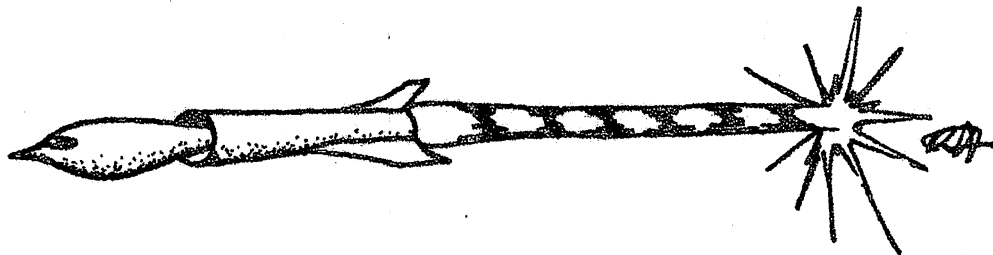
There was one last amusing episode, when I passed through Emigration at Christchurch Airport. I handed my form to the Customs officer. He looked at it and then at me and exclaimed, "I know you!" Fellow intending passengers stared, expecting (possibly) to see a notorious drug smuggler arrested. They must have been disappointed when the officer and myself warmly shook hands. He had been one of the Customs staff on the Lyttleton wharves when, years ago, I was running to that port as Master of Karamu.

And that, I think, will have been my only overseas travel this year. Shortly after my return from New Zealand I received a surface mail letter from the U.S.A., dated February 25, inviting me to be Guest of Honour at URCON III, in Rochester, New York, in late September this year. I fear that my letter of acceptance, even though it was sent EXPRESS AIR MAIL, will arrive too late. An alternative GoH must have seen signed up weeks ago.

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# S. F. A. - THE ALTERNATIVE.

This section of The Mentor could reasonably fit into the editorial space, but since it is mostly an Information section, I thought it better to keep it separate. An alternative title is "TM's Info Page" - again dredged from previous issues of TM, lo these many years gone.

I hope you find something of interest in the following pages - let me know if you want this feature to continue, and if so, if you can think of anything else you may want included.

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## CURRENTLY PUBLISHED (1981) AUSTRALIAN ZINES

### FANZINES:

1. Interceptor - Geoff Allshorn, 17 McAuley Dr., Rosanna, Vic 3084 (UFO TV).
2. Aust. S F News - Mervyn Binns, 305-307 Swanson St., Melbourne, Vic 3001 (newzine).
3. The Mentor - Ron L Clarke, 6 Bellevue Rd., Faulconbridge, NSW 2776 (genzine).
4. Beyond Antares & Data - Susan Clarke, address as in (3). (trekzines).
5. The Ravin' - Stephen Dedman, PO Box 311, Nedlands, W.A. 6007 (fannish).
6. The Phantom Zine - Larry Dunning, 46 Holmesdale Rd., West Midland, W.A. 6056 (fannish)
7. Ornithopter - Leigh Edmonds, PO Box 433, Civic Square, Canberra, ACT 2608 (fannish).
8. Chunder - John Foyster, 21 Shakespeare Grove, St Kilda, Vic 3182 (genzine).
9. Rhubarb - John & Diane Fox, PO Box 129, Lakembla, NSW 2195 (genzine).
10. S F Commentary - Bruce Gillespie, GPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne, Vic 3001 (Critical).
11. WAHF-Full - Jack Herman, 1/67 Fletcher St., Bondi, NSW 2026 (fannish).
12. Sikander - Irwin Hirsh, 279 Domain Rd., South Yarra, Vic 3141 (fannish).
13. Thyme - as above (newzine).
14. Gegenschein - Eric Lindsay, 6 Hillcrest Ave., Faulconbridge, NSW 2776 (genzine).
15. Blatherstone & Ankh - Seth Lockwood, 19 Coleby St., Balcatta, W.A. 6021 (genzine).
16. Forerunner - Shayne McCormack, PO Box A491, Sydney South, NSW 2000 (clubzine).
17. Forbidden Worlds - R Mapson, 40 Second Ave., Kelmscott, W.A. 6111 (fannish)
18. Ultimus - c/- Mike O'Brien, 158 Liverpool St., Hobart, Tas 7000 (clubzine).
19. Q series - Mark Ortlieb, Flat 1, 2 Water St., Kensington Park, S.A. 5068 (genzine).
22. Crabapple - Ken Ozanne, 42 Meeks Cres., Faulconbridge, NSW 2776 (genzine - editor is overseas for rest of 1981).

20. Positron + - Gary Rawlings, PO Box 145, Mt. Druit, NSW 2770 (genzine)
21. Griffin - Mike Schaper, 211 Preston Pt. Rd., Bicton, W.A. 6157 (fannish).
22. Space Wastrel - Mr Warner, Flat 9, Cara Maria, Shenton St., Geraldton, W.A. 6530 (fannish).
23. Weber Woman's Wrevenge - Jean Weber, 13 Myall St., O'Connor, ACT 2601. (genzine)

#### PRO-ZINES:

1. Cygnus Chronicler - Neville Angove, PO Box 770, Canberra City, ACT 2601.
2. Futuristic Tales - PO Box 19, Spit Junction, NSW 2088.
3. Crux - c/- Mike Hailstone, PO Box 6, Cooma, NSW 2630.
4. Science Fiction - c/- Van Ikin, Dept. English, Uni of W.A., Nedlands, W.A. 6009.

\* \* \* \*

#### FANZINES RECEIVED:

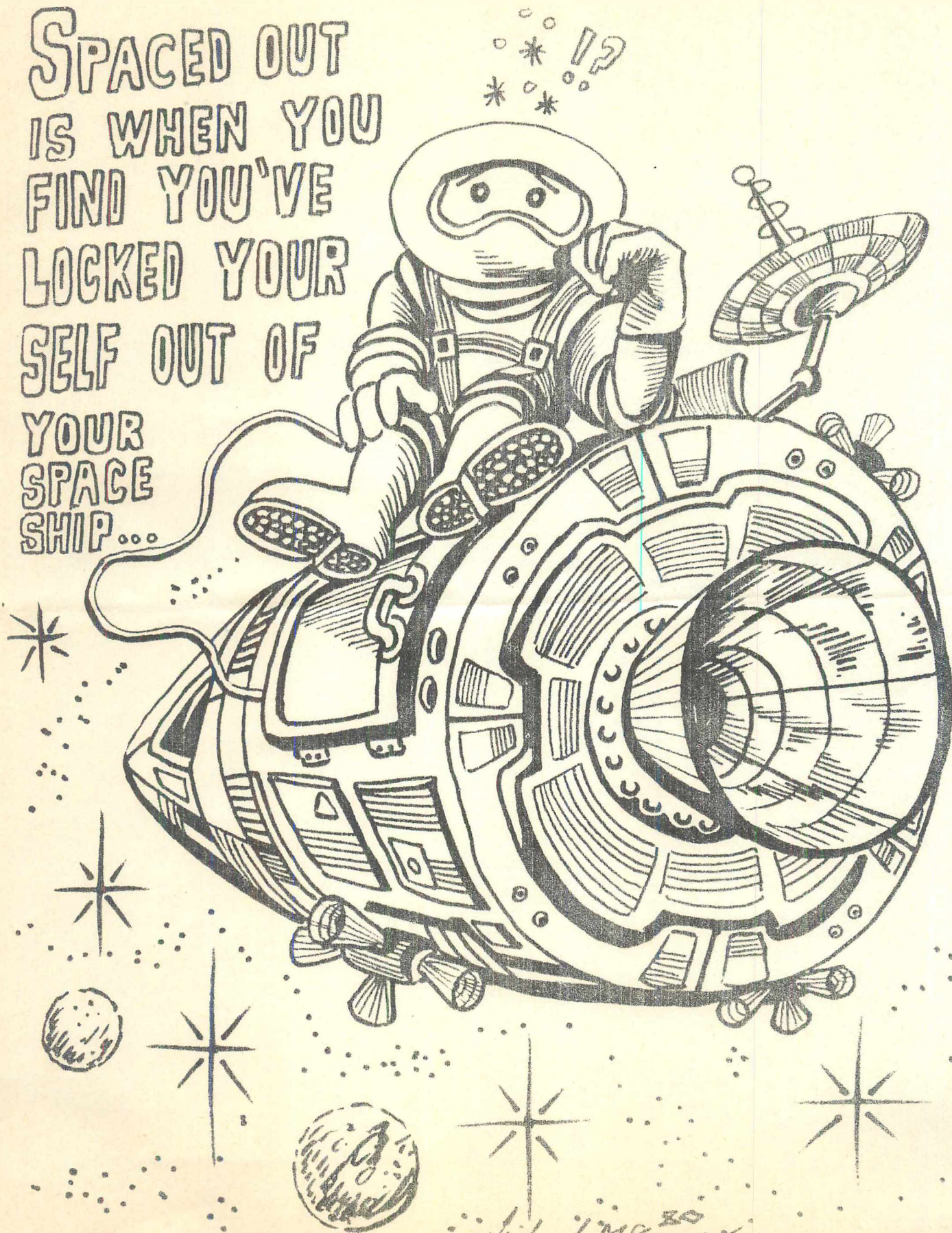
Overseas: Ludds Mill, nos 16/7 - Andrew Darlington (UK).  
 Napalm In the Morning 4 - Joseph Nicholas (UK).  
 Scottishe 81 - Ethel Lindsay (Scot).  
 Foreign Fahzine 3 - Roelof Goudriaan (Neth).  
 S F Review 39 - Dick Geis - (USA).  
 Arial 3 - Graham Ferners (NZ).

Australian: Forerunner V4 nos 1,2 - Shayne McCormack (NSW).  
 Forbidden Worlds 6 - Robert Mapson (WA).  
 Weber Woman's Wrevenge V2 no2 - Jean Weber (ACT).  
 Crux 4 - Michael Hailstone (NSW).  
 The Ravin' V2 no3 - Steven Dedman (WA).  
 Gegenschein 40,41 - Eric Lindsay (NSW).  
 Patched Up Dreams - SASF Society (SA).  
 Q36F - Mark Ortlieb (SA).  
 Blatherstone 4 - Seth Lockwood (WA).  
 Sikander 5 - Irwin Hirsh (Vic).  
 Science Fiction 8 - Van Ikin (WA).  
 The Cygnus Chronicles 9 - Neville Angove (ACT).  
 Thyme 1,2 - Irwin Hirsh (Vic).  
 Noumenon 41 - Brian Thurogood (NZ).  
 A Mortal's Glimpse of Heaven Pt2 - Edwina Harvey (NSW).  
 Tales of Terra Nova 1 - Gay Williams (NSW).  
 S F Commentary 62/66 - Bruce Gillespie (Vic).

\* \* \* \*

And that about covers the info page for this issue, except for the cross-word following. Two things to remember: Jan Howard Finder's Guide to Australterrestrials, is still available from him for A\$6 at PO Box 428, Latham, New York 12110, USA - the second thing is: AUSTRALIA IN '83!

SPACED OUT  
IS WHEN YOU  
FIND YOU'VE  
LOCKED YOUR  
SELF OUT OF  
YOUR  
SPACE  
SHIP...

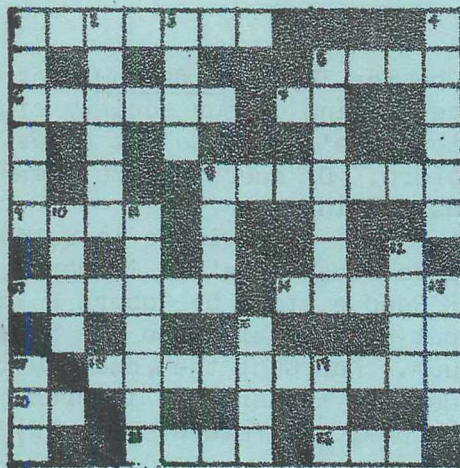


Michael McNamee

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# *1-F Words*

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## A C R O S S

- SOLUTION : PAGE 38 -

1. American author: Roger .....(7)
5. Dr Who is a .... Lord (4)
6. Interplanetary hero Buck ..... (6)
7. 007 film Dr .. (2)
8. Hal Clement's world in Mission of Gravity (7)
9. TV series. The Twilight .... (4)
13. Popular American sf-fact magazine (6)
14. Novel by Jack Vance: The ..... (5)
18. Former name of 13 across (10)
20. Novel by Nevil Shute .. the Beach (2)
21. Italian sf magazine. Title means 'new'. (4)
22. Collection of Aust. SF. The Altered ... (3)

## D O W N

1. British 1973 film directed by J. Boorman (6)
2. Renowned authoress. Ursula K ..... (6)
3. Film. .... Population Growth (4)
4. Author of Dhalgren. Samuel R ..... (6)
5. Author of The Hobbit. J.R.R. .... (7)
8. Inventor of synthesiser for spacey music (4)
10. America's magazine of the future! (4)
11. Published Dangerous Visions in 1967. Harlan ..... (7)
12. Film about supernatural evil. The .... (4)
15. Space artist of the space age. David .... (4)
16. Latin for moon. (4)
17. Edgar Allen ... (30)
19. Novel by 1 across. To ... in Italbar. (3)

# The R. E. R. Dept.

Raymond L Clancy  
494 Midland Ave.,  
Staten Island  
New York 10306  
USA.

Thank you for TM 29. Life Row interested me. Our own computers are messing up our society right now. They hate us so that they can't wait to get at us when the Martian colonists return. Of course, some human being programs the hate into the machines.

Business is better here, and the better it gets the louder the propagantists scream that it is worse, and the more desperate their measures to make it worse. Read a story by Robert F Young - "Starscape With Frieze of Dreams". It's about space whales who are able to plunge below the surface of the space-time continuum. Men hunt them, destroy their brains, and convert them into space ships. One man restores an injured brain so that he can travel with the whale into the past and future. The symbiosis should be very fruitful for more short stories.

We're having our harvest of warmer weather murders and other crime just now. It happens every year with the blossoms and flowers. Gypsy moth caterpillars are very numerous for miles around this city and within its borders. Opposition to spraying won out this year, thank God. It doesn't bother the caterpillars very much, but it makes life hellish for many human beings, when the helicopters mist an already poisoned air.

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Peter A. Kells  
PO Box 1670  
Southport  
Qld. 4215.

I noticed you in the list of science fiction and fantasy associations in the Lost Colonies section of April's Futuristic Tales. I was pleased to see the many and varied groups and I hope that their existence and mutual interection with be a stimulus to developing writers of imaginative fiction. Personally, I have experienced a distinct lack of such stimulus - yet have still made my isolated and to date, desultory, attempts at fantastic prose and weird poetry. But this artistically uncongenial state of affairs has perhaps been exacerbated by my life-long residence in that Citadel of Unchecked Philistinism Babylon-by-the-Sea, and noxious upwelling of fungous billboards and garish neons and obscene skyscrapers - sometimes known as the Gold Coast, but more accurately described as a seaside monument to the greater glory of Mammon.

My present aim is to establish letter correspondence between other literary aspirants and myself, and thus to compare and exchange ideas in fantastic fiction, poetry, philosophy, art etc. I would fain answer any letters that come my way.

Let me state my opinion of the present state of science fiction writing - basically I cannot understand why certain writers bother to call thier work 'science fiction' at all. They seem to believe that the mere gratuitous mention of a space ship, or the fact that the story takes place in space, qualifies their story as science fiction. Their tales are full of boresome and gratuitous pseudo-technical descriptions of banks of flashing lights and silly dials. It is not an exaggeration to say that many so-called 'science fiction' tales are simply re-hashed westerns or crime stories, with the heroes riding in scout ships and shooting lasers and phasers - instead of palaminoes,

buntline specials and Colt 45's. I suppose it has ever been thus, even in that golden age of the pulps before WW2 - but where is the HPL, CAS, or REH of the 1980's? WHERE IS taste, discrimination, and sensitivity to the truly cosmic; to universality of theme? Do not think that I object to the science fiction story as such, or that I am a total enemy of technology - but what I insist upon is that any story purporting to be science fiction, and wishing to qualify as a genuine literary attempt, must at least try to transcend that meaningless emphasis on technological mumbo-jumbo and 'hardware'.

I have said that I am not an enemy of technology -- but neither am I one of its 'gee-whiz' enthusiasts. Actually, I can only wonder at the extraordinary persistence of faith in the 'Great God Science'. Incredibly, it savours of a kind of early Wellsian naivete - more in keeping with those innocent days of our century's infancy (when people's faith in the institutions and sacred cows of civilization was relatively unshaken) than with the fabulous year 1981 into which humanity has amazingly survived after running the gauntlet of mustard gas, cyclon-B, 245-D, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, H bomb, neutron bomb (if ever a weapon symbolized an age of shameless ugly materialism, it's this one - it destroys the people/leaves the buildings intact), ozone layer depletion, incipient atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> imbalance, atomic testing induced earthquakes, strontium 90, caesium 137, thalidomide, cyclamates, water fluoridation, atmospheric oxygen depletion through forest destruction and marine algae attrition - and so on and so on unto gibbering infinity.

It is appropriate here to quote H.P. Lovecraft: "Science, already oppressive with its shocking revelations, will perhaps be the ultimate exterminator of our human species... for its reserve of unguessed horrors could never be borne by mortal brains if loosed upon the world". And perhaps it is worth mentioning, too, a news item I saw on television not long ago: one of the physicists who helped develop the American nuclear bomb in 1945 has, apparently out of remorse and nervous disorder, renounced his former irresponsibility (or naivete) and now builds church organs in Gloucester, Massachusetts (where, incidentally, Lovecraft situated his fictional 'Strange High House in the Mist').

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Diane Southgate-Fox  
PO Box 129  
Lakembla  
NSW 2195.

I like the "colour-reverse" effect of recent Mentors - blue paper and white cover. Incidentally, I very much like Mike McGann's cover on no.30. A most delightful puppeteer, very clearly printed too.

The story Out of the Greenhouse by Mike Hailstone was superb. This is the second of his stories I've read, and it very much held my attention. The basic idea was good too. It was downbeat, but not totally so (most last-survivor stories are either too dreary for words, or unrealistically solved by a last-minute happy ending. This story had a good gritty conclusion.)

I apologise to Roger Waddington for my over-thorough review of Sword and Satchell - it really is a good book despite the somewhat typical plot, and will keep an eye out for more by this author. A quote from my desk calendar I must remember in future when writing reviews: 'The secret of being a bore is to tell everything' - Voltaire.

Fine article on What Energy Crisis? by John Alderson. So many of our social problems are caused by "inventive ego gratification", ie inventing a complicated and expensive way of doing things that can be done cheaply and simply, because there is more prestige and impressiveness in the more complex/expensive method.

Captain Chandler's comment on the hypocrisy of Daw Books was most apt. I really think that the Gor books are soft-core porn - for people who dislike the personal and physical sides of sex. They are curiously puritanical, and somehow depressing and <sup>the</sup> at times humblish real world is absent. It isn't really the fantasy element that makes this effect - in fact one gets the odd impression that John Norman would like to think Gor was real, or even does think it real. (Incidentally, he probably identifies with the female viewpoint rather than the male - this is the great secret of the Gor books that never seems to get mentioned). They are designed to appeal to masochism as much as sadism. Erotic realism would be a total turn-off for the audience of these books - a "down-to-earth"

book like Matilda's Stepchildren would confront them with reality and hence offend. I suspect Daw are guilty of typical capitalist thinking: "We mustn't offend the mass-market", or in other words, the lowest (in all senses) common denominator.

On to more pleasant matters - enjoyed the description of the doings on Granite Bay Beach. Amusing story of the discomforted Peeping Tom. Much of the fun of being a Peeping Tom would come from the sense of power - seeing without being seen. To have someone look at him would ruin the sense of furtiveness and "forbiddenness" and be truly a cold shower situation.



John Playford  
16 Ellerslie St  
Kensington Gardens  
S.A. 5068.

From what I read  
of Michael Black I  
gather he is a supporter  
of Mr V. Personally I  
find Mr V rather s\*i\*l\*l\*y

indeed, but we all need a good laugh sometimes. (That is a bit unfair, but I don't want to give a 'reasonable' three-page argument.). However, blaming everything on the "C.I.A." is another little s\*i\*l\*l\*y thing. If you were living in Chile it might be different... but I doubt very much if the C.I.A. (or the K.G.B. for that matter) care two hoots whether Mr V is right or wrong - no more than "men in black suits" go armed "silencing" those with evidence for UFOs. This is not to say that I don't appreciate the influence and effects of the military-industrial complex etc etc.

Bob Smith: I apologise for hinting you time-warped from 1957. You are to be congratulated in overcoming the socio-economic-cultural atmosphere in which you were born to the extent you have. And also the fact that you were a Sergeant.

Nice to see some poetry again, Ron. I'm not much of a poetry person, but I liked the imagery. The cover was nice, though the interior illustrations weren't so good.

Leigh Edmonds  
PO Box 433  
Civic Square  
ACT 2608.

The matters which interested me most in the 32nd issue of THE MENTOR were the letter from Bob Smith and the comments which Marc Ortlieb made on previous comments by Bob...

I wonder what all those 18 year old National Service men thought about Sergeant Smith?

I'm not sure why Bob was chilled by F-14's shooting at Zero's, I certainly wasn't - I was annoyed. The sequence where the two types of aircraft met was a good chance to show off both the aeroplanes and to a large extent it was misused by the directors who used lots of short clips of the aircraft in order to give some sort of impression of speed and agility. I would rather have had a series of longer shots to give me a better view of the aircraft. Anyhow, my annoyance really began when the F-14 were given permission to attack the A6M's and they swept back their wings, probably to indicate to the audience that they meant business. You only sweep your wings back if you want to go fast, but if you were an F-14 pilot wanting to come up behind something as slow as an A6M you'd want to be going as slow as possible to give you time for a good shot... meaning wings forward, speed brakes out, flaps down and probably even undercarriage down too. If memory serves me correctly the first A6M was shot down by a Sidewinder missile, which is a heat seeking missile. I am not really convinced that the engine of an A6M would be putting out enough heat to allow a Sidewinder to lock on - this is a debatable point, and I wouldn't mind a bit of clarification. However most annoying was the A6M which got about a one second burst from a Vulcan cannon which, according to my rough calculations means that it would have collected about thirty 20mm cannon shells. Given the lack of protection that the A6M had in 1941 the only thing that it could have done was explode all over the place. Instead all that happened was that the engine was hit. Since the F-14 was firing from a six-o'clock position this was simply impossible.

Oh well, who ever said that we should expect scientific, or any other sort of accuracy, in our films.

Being a bit more friendly, I was a little amazed to read that Marc Ortlieb has never seen any ATOM art work. Surely he's seen copies of SCOTTISHE which is the only place where his work has been appearing to any extent of late. One of the things which seems to me to be an unfortunate spinoff of the resurgence of British fandom in the '70's was that ATOM had very little place in it. For my money he is a better artist than Rotsler - who doesn't seem to have that much work around either these days, that I see anyhow.

Roger Waddington  
4 Commercial St.,  
Norton, Malton,  
North Yorkshire,  
YO17 9ES UK

Mike Hailstone is a writer to watch; I was flicking idly through 30 before settling down to enjoy and LoC, reading Ron's Roost turning the page and finding thoughts on a hot day and city weekends - I could maybe retaliate with memories of the long afternoons in the country that I've had to put behind me - and it wasn't till later that I began to fill in the little details, the 'onslaught of ice and blizzard', the 'vast majority of the human race'; and especially that little detail of the title at the top, with another name thereon! And it all seemed so reasonable, so fannish, and quite believable....

Your recent reading list intrigues, as I've seen quite a few of those titles among the remainder piles at our local branch of Woolworths, and have some of them on my own shelves; are you like me, devoted to the cheap and cheerful in sf; that is, when the latest and best Simak or Silverberg doesn't prove too tempting! And even then they're the USA editions, as are the remainders; there's

a timelag in the British publishing industry that I'm sure must be the despair of any fan made aware by Locus, SF Review and the like of what's just come out in the US of A.

Well, I suppose I could be considered a frings fan, marooned out here in this neck of the woods;; but the simple answer to Bob Smith and "where are the fen of yesteryear?" is that science fiction has become a respectable entity, with sf writers being seriously interviewed about the future, Arthur C. Clarke taking us round his Mysterious World, Ray Bradbury and Isaac Asimov in the pages of Saturday Review, and as I write, God-Emperor of Dune in the general best-seller lists. In short everyone and their neighbour can recognise sf now, and take it seriously, no longer the preserve of a few wide-eyed people who your mother warned you about. And no longer do those few people need the symbols of beanies and quote cards, the mention of staple wars, of Foo and Chu, signs and symbols enough to make the local Masonic lodge weep with admiration. The fen of today see sf in the cinema, in grand profusion on the bookshelves, in courses in the colleges, and can't even realise that there was a time when it wasn't so; I mean, there are even chartered accountants and such like at large in the BSFA, which shows how far sf has progressed! Personally, I have mixed feelings. Though this boom in sf has made much more available, I still wish for the days when it was a proud and lonely thing to be a fan. There's too damn many of us!

Mention of A. Bertram Chandler and naked ladies (and can the two ever be separated?) brings to my mind how the publishing industry has changed. For, once upon a time, it was the covers of the magazines you had to tear off before bringing them home, for the number of naked women displayed (well, almost naked: if only those wisps of clouds and metal bras didn't get in the way!) and the paperbacks that were pristine. But now it's the paperbacks with imitations of Boris or Frazetta nudes that you have to hide from the kids, and I haven't seen a sexist cover on a magazine in years!

---

Harry Andruschak  
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California 91011  
USA.

I'm sorry you had to delay several columns due to Out Of The Greenhouse. I'd have preferred the articles. The story is bad.

The basis of all SF is "willing suspension of disbelief". In other words, the author writes well enough to hoodwink your judgement for the duration of the story. Michael Hailstone fails badly.

For seven years, so it goes, this cloud is coming in and that fact is kept a secret. Aside from the fact that all this is very much like The Black Cloud by Fred Hoyle, how the hell was the secret kept under wraps for seven years. As Fred did point out, sooner or later somebody would have noticed... especially something coming in on the ecliptic. I mean - have you any idea of the number of Amateur Astronomers searching the sky for new comets, new asteroids, old comets, old asteroids, variable stars, the planets (they are in the ecliptic) and so on and so forth.

No way could that cloud be a secret... no way. And my willing suspension of disbelief crashed into the ground. And once you realize that the basic premise sucks green donkey shit, the rest of the story fails to grab. End of reader's enjoyment.

...I received The Mentor 31 today and must say this was one of the best fanzines I have received to date. Of course, the main reason for this assessment was the writings of A. Bertram Chandler and Vol Molesworth. This sort of

fanwriting just makes me envious. As an editor, I mean.

We can thus focus on John Alderson and his article. As always, articles about "Alternative Energy Sources" make nice reading... if you live in the country, or in a part of Suburbia where you can spread panels out, erect windmills, creat alcohol and methane, and so on. This still leaves the problem of the overwhelming majority who just cannot do any of this. I mean the population of the big cities. Well, John does notice this towards the end.

Truth to tell, the so-called "Energy Crisis" is just another facet of a deeper crises - overpopulation. More and more people and less and less raw materials. How will it end? Famine, plague or war? Hopefully not war, since eventually it will escalate into all-out nuclear exchange, and so goodbye human race. This leaves famine or plague. We already have lots of the first on this planet, and also lots of the second. Of course, both are so common they don't make newspaper headlines, or even the inside pages. But since most of this occurs in Asia and Africa, I guess the average Australian (and USA and UK and European, and etc etc) won't think much of it until it hits home.

Richard Faulder

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Like the cover illo on TM 31. It had a nice whimsical quality.

While I admit that you can have the problem of the stencil riding up on the backing sheet, I find the prospect of having to cut sheets of tracing paper every so often rather off-putting, when one compares it to the life of the plastic backing sheet. The backing sheet I use comes from Fordigraph, and has a frosted, less slippery surface than, say, the slick one from Gestetner. Being lazy, and probably less careful than I should be with my money, I use Mortype 3300 typing stencils, which have the protective sheet built onto the front of the stencil. It undoubtedly costs a bit more (although I haven't checked) but I feel the effort saved justifies the extra cost.

I'll have to revise my figures upwards, I think. The plastic tracing sheet - which you don't have to cut (it comes in US 4to size) comes already cut in pads. It's the front sheet you have to cut. Roneo stencils cost about \$13.60 for a box of 50 stencils (ex tax). Riso cost \$8.07 a box of 50 - and they cut better. Being a miser, I would rather save the \$5 odd per box (I would say the Mortype would cost more than the Roneo). I'll stick to the Riso, Richard. - Ron.

I rather suspect that John Alderson was having his leg pulled by that French farmer who claimed that every French farm was independent for fuel, especially in 1953. In any event, the use of wheat as a feed-stock for ethanol production strikes me, and others more eminent as well, as an unwise use of resources. The diversion of food resources to energy production is a misuse of farming land. It makes far more sense to use plants such as the jojoba bush, or the latex-producing Queensland vine, as energy sources, since these grow under conditions which are unsuitable for the growth of food crops. This means a more efficient use of the total available land by increasing the potential yield from land previously of low productivity, and at the same time avoids conflict in land use.

The self-contained, recycling economy that John mentions is quite a good idea for increasing the efficiency of output and its long-term duration from a given area of land. However, the thing to remember is that for this system to be fully effective, there must be no net export of nutrients

from the parcel of land. This imposes a limit on the system, and restricts it to semi-subsistence. Now, a subsistence style of economy's ok, but it carries with it the need for aspiring to lower standards of luxuries in life. Also inherent in the adoption of such a system is the eventual return to a much simpler system all round.. With an internally cycling, subsistence alcohol economy, there isn't enough food and energy being produced to support the people in heavy industry to build your alcohol-burning automobiles and vegetable oil-burning tractors. Pretty soon you don't have either any more, because you've run out of spares, there's nobody to make any more, and so you're back to the horse - with all that alcohol-producing gear so much junk - unless everybody intends to spend their life in a permanent alcoholic daze. Why not just go straight back to the horse? Neither can such an economy support a complex medical technology, so pretty soon you're back in the good ol' days when life was short and brutish. And so it goes. Let's hear it for feudalism.

Magnanimously (phew) I'll simply say to Bob Smith (and yes, I am familiar with Atom's artwork) that times change and society changes, as much as within fandom as without it (I remember Australian fandom before it discovered S\*E\*X).

[Yes, and I remember NSW fandom before it discovered A\*L\*C\*O\*H\*O\*L - or rather before it was imported from Victorian fandom. That was while Shayne McCormack was running a group of young fans calling themselves DUSK. - Ron.]

By-all means remember the past with joy, but at the same time accept the present for what it has to offer, and salute its successes.

My mind boggled at the idea of that crusty old sea captain and creator of Grimes desporting himself in his birthday suit upon some Queensland beach.

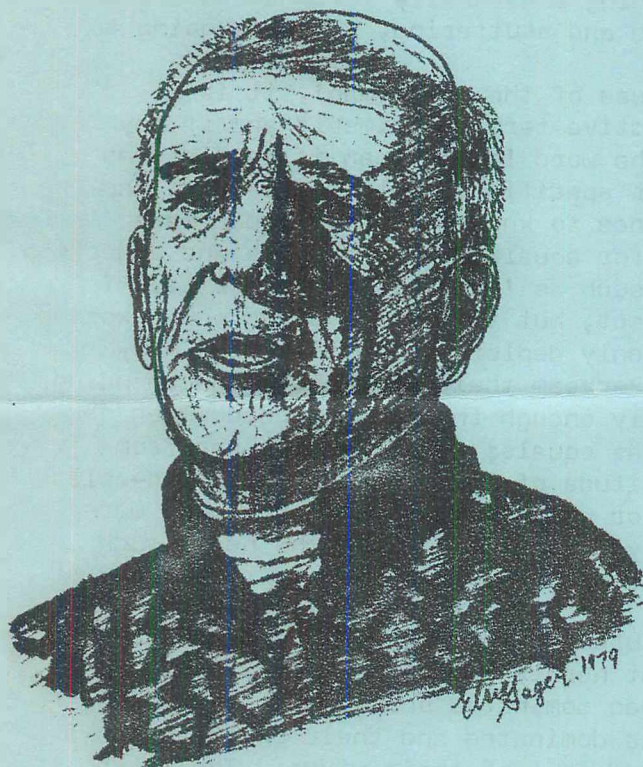
Unlike a lot of the fanfic going in rounds in this country today, John K Playford's trilogy (although this is an obvious misnomer, since any theme connecting them is tenuous to say the least) work. He has achieved the difficult feat of taking a small idea, and, by the economical use of language, making his characters act within the brief framework of that idea in such a way as to enable the reader to empathise with them.

Within the context of the special case he is discussing, I cannot see any logical fault in John Alderson's reasoning. (There may be anthropological faults, but I'm not an anthropologist.) However, I'm not sure that I can see the relevance of Aboriginal neolithic myths, which are much more alive to them, to our own culture, wherein the myths have been much more clouded.

Actually, in a sense I did find Diane Southgate's autobiography surprising. While I did find it in many ways typical of male fans, I had tended to think of female fans as having different backgrounds. On reflection, I can see where the problem may have arisen. Most of the women now in fandom have entered our little community since Aussiecon. They tend to be younger, much more a product of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Fans such as Diane, yourself, and myself, though of different ages, are generally older than these newer fans, and we are more the product of the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Certainly I can see strong similarities between myself and Diane in our psychological history. Unfortunately the personalities of myself and my sister were sufficiently disparate to preclude the camaraderie Diane reports between herself and her sister. (An irony, since she had been produced to provide a companion for me, to replace my identical twin after he died.) Like her I had thoroughly unpleasant school days, without the egoboo of being able to achieve outstanding success. (I went to an allegedly selective high school,

which of course reduced my chances of shining.) On the other hand, by the end of my first year of high school I had my mind firmly fixed on a career in entomology, and my obsessive desire to make this come true helped to sustain me through the next fifteen years until my heart's desire could be satisfied. Again, like Diane, I spent my youth (including my university career) with my parents, which was decidedly not conducive to my social growth, and helped to ingrain social and psychological habits which are decidedly unhealthy. Unfortunately, I did not have the wit to do as Diane, and have a psychologist declare me unfit for teaching. (Something I am sure could have been achieved with consummate ease.) Still, like Diane's string of unhappy jobs, those four ghastly years of teaching enabled me to really appreciate the job for which I had yearned for so long when it finally came my way.



The fact of Diane's autobiography confirms an opinion I have previously held. I know her, and the autobiography has helped me to understand her better. Yet, other than this, I am no better off for having read the article. Had the situation been otherwise, and throughout my life this was my only contact with Diane, I would have been no richer. Certainly I could point to similarities in our life histories. However, we Ugly Ducklings are introspective critters, and no new insights for me were forthcoming from my recognition of these similarities. Similarly, the points at which our lives differed, because they did, also held no revelations for me.

Judith  
Hanna is right - solar batteries are now practical. Unfortunately they are not yet economic. However, making solar cells isn't a cottage industry, so that for their production we require city workers dependent on the agricultural produce of the country. Subsistence living means no electricity.

Most of Judith's comments on Agricultural practice I agree with. (Except to point out that these days those jobs in the city are more hoped for than actual.) However, she apparently has a different perspective on rural and urban life than I (This probably reflects personality differences also.) The negative social aspects she ascribes to the city are certainly there, but she neglects to mention the positive aspects. In a community as large as a city there is sufficient diversity for almost every type of person to find others with similar interests. Certainly the sheer size of the city does confer isolation on a person, but there are times when anonymity is a blessing rather than a curse, when one wants to cut oneself off from the attentions of those around you. In the country this is not possible, and is not helped by the fact that the limited human resources of the country town and its environs enforce a conformity which can be as suffocating as any found in the city. Nor is it so easy as

she implies to leave such towns. Having spent one's formative years in such an environment, many people will remain there, even though they recognise their situation as less than satisfactory, because they are afraid to venture into the unknown world outside the closed community.

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John J Alderson            As I publically stated that I hold that facts cannot  
Havlock,                be truly proved, that equality does not even exist in mathem-  
Vic 3465.                atics, and that the 'scientific method' is a lazy short cut,  
                         then obviously Mark Ortlieb cannot be refuted (TM32). So  
there are no FACTS, but yet there are facts and 'facts'. But Mark puts his  
foot in it by seeking then to refute me by quoting facts or 'facts'.

Well, there  
may well be some correlation between teaching a naturally left-handed child  
(if there are any) to use their right hand and stuttering, but it's going to  
be bloody hard to prove, mate.

As for the use of the term 'man', it is a  
generic term. The male man has no distinctive term for himself and if any  
protest is to be levelled at the use of the word 'man', then it should come  
from us males, because we are the ones not specified. But it does not, and  
for the reason that we have the intelligence to know we are included in a  
generic term. So anyone in their demand for equality of the sexes and objecting  
to a term applying equally to both sexes such as 'man', is a hypocrite. I  
know there are many 'feminists' who so object, but their aims stand self exposed  
as being anti-male, not feminist. I can only deplore the attitude of many  
such women as they belittle their sex and scream their inequality in demanding  
to "enter the man's world". It says loudly enough that they regard women as  
inferior and that we men must treat them as equals; that's a far cry from  
being equal. Nor do I appreciate the attitude of Mark and many other so-called  
males who hasten to the defence of the poor weak females as though they were  
inferiors who needed protecting. I have yet to meet a woman who needs such  
help, or wants it and the insult that goes with it.

As for Richard Faulder  
and his "given the prejudices of the cultures which gave rise to the English  
language", - it is a piece of braying that hardly warrants examination. How-  
ever, the Britons were either non- or woman dominated societies. The Saxons  
were woman-dominated. The Norse were male dominated and their children spoke  
a gibberish of both their own languages and that of their wives. The Welsh  
were non-dominated, and so were the Scots. The Normans were male dominated  
and they took the language of the country whose women they married: in Provence,  
Provincial; in France, French; in England, English; in Wales, Welsh; in  
Ireland, Gaelic. It is utter stupidity to carry into the past the present  
day politics as so many do, particularly as history must be distorted to do  
so. It is abominable that Faulder should speak of the 'lesser gender'; the  
idea is unknown to those cultures and I defy anyone to find any statement to  
that effect. Functional males are also thinking creatures and their logic  
would preclude them from thinking their mothers were inferior because it would  
mean that they were inferior. Pedigrees usually stressed the nobility of the  
mothers. After all, as the Normans discovered to their profit, it was the  
women who owned the land and they won most of their battles in bed. Women  
are not inferior or lesser creatures despite what Ortlieb and Faulder may say  
and believe.

Kim Huettmystifies me. My article on the energy crisis (that  
isn't) suggests the production of power alcohol and methane as by-products of

a piggery, to my knowledge, for the first time. The CSIRO, damning methane and power alcohol production with faint praise, carefully keeps the two separate and reverses the economic roles, neglecting to adequately cost the pigs produced. Now if Huett is right, then produce some references to prove the point...but I find that people who talk about such articles as mine as 'rehashing' usually have never had an original thought in their heads. It is thus a relief that someone like Judith Hanna understands what I am talking about.

For one who talks about 'facts', Neville J. Angove really pulls a boner. The farmer pays the freight to the sea-board of every grain of wheat grown in the country, regardless of where it is used. Hence a baker in the heart of the wheat-belt has to pay the same for the wheat which never goes near the railway, as a Melbourne or Sydney baker, and the freight thus paid goes to subsidize the city suburban railways. The country baker is forbidden by law to sell bread to the cities, but if he tries to sell biscuits etc, he has to pay yet another lot of freight to the city on top of that already paid. It's good for city people, they live in a sea of subsidies. At the present time, almost every country baker in Victoria has to pay freight on his flour from Melbourne as there are virtually no country flour mills operating. The local one was bought by a city company a couple of years ago, and closed. Nor did I suggest wheat-farmers were going broke (they are part of the 15% of farmers who make a decent living), nor is the fact that they may leave their harvesters out in the rain relevant to energy useage. Obviously if the local bakers use electricity or gas to cook, their costs are going to be actually higher than city costs. However, to suggest that it is more economical to have centralised processing, is to go counter to one of the most fundamental rules of economics, that is, industries should be sited by the raw materials.

That Angove finds my ideas of transporting the people back to the sources of food "mystifying", is probably because he hasn't even begun to know what I am talking about.

The CSIRO reports of the overuse by farmers of fertilisers ignores the fact that the super is needed to promote the growth of the sub-clover which is the only plant most wheat land will grow as a rotation crop. The advised sowing rate for such crops as beans and peas is four hundredweight of super per acre, approximately five times that normally sown with wheat, and in line with what the English farmers actually sow with their wheat. Actually, our efficiency of the use of super is probably the greatest in the world.

I did not say much about the use of solar energy as sun-collecting. Costs examined by The National Farmer recently showed that it was more than feasible. It was cheaper to install than either a diesel generator or connecting with the grid, and running costs/tariff were less - the connection to the grid being by far the highest. The drawbacks are that the electricity is DC. I confess some mystification here. I think five dollars worth of time would enable me to design a machine to turn it into AC. In the system I advocated, sun-use was unneeded as the methane was sufficient to drive a generator to provide all electricity. As the scheme uses a fair-sized steam plant, water-gas, (made by blowing steam through white hot coals), could suppliment it. I merely put forward one scheme, there are many. In fact, in my district, with plenty of splendid wood for fuel, water-gas would be an alternative. So would the destructive distillation of wood. All use re-newable sources of energy, which is what I am talking about. As for what Angove is talking about, I doubt if he knows himself.

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I'd like to comment on Michael Hailstone's story, Out of the Greenhouse. I felt there were several major fallacies in the story.

1. Ice in Sydney Harbour. This is a nice image, but in a general world freeze, the sea level would drop quite a bit and the harbour would probably be dry except perhaps in deep parts which would remain as pools and ice over.

2. Oceans freezing. Unlikely. The Arctic gets a layer of ice because it's almost a closed sea - but under the surface it's still liquid. The open oceans (even with reduced sea level) might get ice floes but wave action would make a general ice sheet unlikely. In addition, volcanic action on both land and sea would contribute local heat, keep stirring up the atmosphere and the sea, and add oxygen to the atmosphere.

3. To a human observer, a several-thousand-year Ice Age would be 'forever', but not in terms of geological history. It might doom our technological culture, but humans would probably survive. It is appropriate and understandable that Michael's character might feel humanity is doomed, but I doubt it actually would be. The people who would survive would probably be those living relatively primitively to begin with; they would not need to adapt so much to loss of technology. But neither would they have means of contacting someone by radio!.

4. I felt he missed the most obvious place that high-technology humans might survive - areas around hot springs, especially if developed for thermal power. Examples are Northern California and the North Island of New Zealand. I shudder to think what might happen as the California hordes attempted to crowd into thermal areas, but NZ might have a chance.

Turning now to TM 32, John Playford's trilogy was an interesting combination of two very well-written pieces and one (the last) which just

didn't make it at all. I think because the first two were vignettes, in an interesting style, and conveyed a feeling of identification with the main character; in the third, we were merely observers.

John Alderson's piece on Magic was quite interesting; I know little about Aboriginal culture. John elaborates on some of his points in an article he sent to me for Weberwoman's Wrevenge 3. It seems a good example of drawing conclusions from study of one culture (or cultural group, in Europe) which may not fit quite different cultures elsewhere in the world (Central America, Africa, Australia); this comment refers to Buck Coulson's letter which prompted John's.

Diane Southgate-Fox's personal reminiscences were superb and I admire her for the great amount of self-analysis she has allowed us to share. I predict that she will go from



strength to strength. Certainly from what I've seen of her in the last year or so, I would never have guessed she had so little self-confidence in her past.

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Grant L Stone                      I want to comment on The Mentor 32 and Advention '81.  
Murdoch Uni.,                      Advention '81 joins the long list of Cons I wanted to attend  
PO Box 14,                           but for various reasons was unable. Make an interesting  
Willetton,                           article: "The Cons I haven't been to and the things I didn't  
W.A. 6155.                           do there". In the case of Advention I was keen on the attend-  
ing - I mean they were doing Robert's Dune Show and I have  
a voice in it's history - but an oncoming child (my wife, Sheryl, is four  
months pregnant) and financial gloom (as always) meant I stayed behind and  
lectured the local annual meet of the Science Teachers' Association on the role  
of SF in Teaching Secondary School Science, which I really enjoyed. I trust  
you stayed off the sardines this trip!

[Actually the trip went really well.  
Apart from raining 90% of the time on the way down and my (mis) calculations  
of the petrol consumption. (I worked out I was getting 33 mpg, when I was  
actually getting 37 mpg - wrong factor. I had worked the costs of the trip on  
38 mpg, which works out quite a lot of \$\$ over 2,000 miles. - Ron.]

On 'Mentor':  
32's contributors:- John Alderson I found as fascinating as ever. Quite  
true about the book prices, John, especially with antiquarian or just plain  
secondhand, Aboriginal material - it's worth a fortune (rather along the lines  
of First Edition hardcover SF?)

~~Language is something that amuses me endlessly~~  
as it obviously does A Bertram Chandler. Mr Chandler has only to come West to  
hear again some of the expressions he finds have dropped from the Australian  
language. (But I too have never heard NZ called pig island.)

On this subject  
of rich and colourful Australian expressions I note a real difference in  
quantity and quality between the Eastern and Western part of our sub-continent.  
I find (in a very limited sample) that the Eastern states are far more slang-  
orientated and rich in expressions. My sister-in-law is currently going with  
a guy from Sydney way who uses the expression "up at sparrow fart" for away  
early in the morning. I myself have used for many years "sparrow's kneecaps"  
as an expression of size. Mr Chandler will be surprised to learn that "Bondi  
trams" creep into the slang of the West, although most people have probably  
never seen or even less ridden in one. However, one of my favourite expressions  
was passed into my vocab. by my mother - "Do a Shirley Strickland to..." I  
continue to use this phrase for speed, dating me older than I am and getting  
very queer looks from young kids.

My thanks to Diane Fox for the cathartic  
life history. I read it all and viewed it as an alien landscape, one I was  
privileged to have seen. Your experience and life to date are quite different  
from mine, but I don't have your talent to create through words the empathy  
I felt reading your surprisingly titled "unsurprising autobiography."

On Centi-  
pedes... we once had a missionary from Bolivia come to give a description of  
her work amongst the desperately poor rural population to our essentially  
middleclass country congregation (I was about 14). She impressed me with the  
tale of the sleeping arrangements in the country huts. All the people slept  
in hammocks inside the huts which were roofed with tin. Conditions are such  
in South America that they have a large cockroach population, preying upon

which are very large (up to 12 inches) centipedes. These centipedes may be heard at night scampering across the roof, on the inside, making a metallic clicking sound. From time to time they lose their 'footing' and fall into (possibly) a hammock, where a bite not quickly attended to can kill a person and certainly a child. This phobia of centipedes was never exposed (to my knowledge) in the SF giant movies of the 50's.

I continue to enjoy Mike McGann's artwork. I look forward to future issues.

---

Kim Huett  
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The point was that it was possible to find these local books in bookstores at least some of the time. It is true that their distribution is not as good as the British imprints, but then it is improving. I have found that distribution of the paperback edition of Distant Worlds and the new edition of The Rooms of Paradise have been quite good.

Again a well done, if not really original, story from Playford, or is it stories? It's a wonder to me that Playford hasn't tried selling to the pro market. At the very least his stuff is better than the fiction that has already appeared in Futuristic Tales. While on fiction I made several valiant attempts to read Michael Black's reply to those who were not satisfied with his story. All I can say is that compared to it, his story was simple and straightforward. To put it simply, Black's letter was the biggest heap of crap that it has ever been my misfortune to come across.

On the plus side of things was the autobiography of Diane Southgate-Fox. I myself lived most of my life just outside of Taree, which is about twelve miles away from Wingham.

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Joseph Hanna-Rivero  
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Forestville,  
S.A. 5035.

I received issue number 32 of The Mentor and found it very interesting and enjoyable. Being the first fanzine I've ever read, I found it quite different from my usual intake of American S.F. (Analog, Questor). The truth is, I haven't read much Australian science fiction because, until very recently, I haven't heard of any Australian SF magazines and fanzines. My first step toward bridging this gap will be to start buying some of the back-issues of The Mentor I've missed out on.

With any luck, Joseph, any fanzine editors who see your letter here (and cross-word) will send you off sample copies of their zines. - Ron.

From what I saw in TM 32 you have produced a very fine fanzine. I think the artwork is excellent and does good to break up the text. I enjoyed reading the column about Australian S.F. Fans as well as the short stories and other articles throughout the zine.

I don't know if you've done this before, but if possible could you devote one of your pages to listing other fanzines and local SF publishers?

Depending on space and energy, I may do that this issue. I'm thinking of reviving the "S.F.A." section from previous Mentors. - Ron.

Lan Laskowski  
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Michigan 48013,  
USA.

Alderson's article on the "energy crisis" was extremely interesting. The idea of an almost self-sufficient farm is intriguing, and something that I would not mind having myself. I teach during the year, a job which sometimes keeps me busy up to 14 hours a day (usually less); during the summer I change that around and become a gardener. This

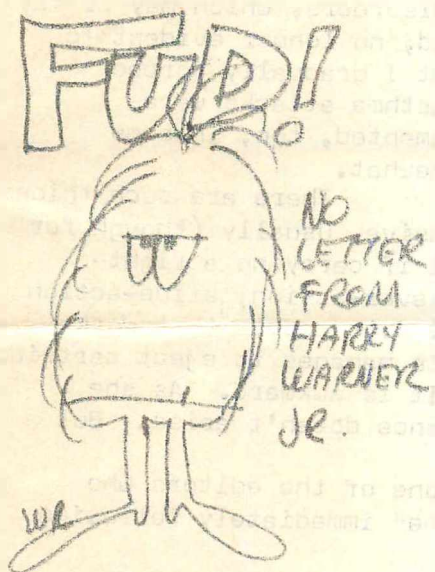
year I have the largest garden I've ever had, and am still expanding at this late date. I have tried, with some of my vegetables, to make it a self-perpetuating cycle - that is, take the seeds from one crop and use them for the next one. I've only been successful with the garlic on this. Of course I don't have the full knowledge on going about doing this, but if it became a dire necessity, I could learn awfully fast. Meanwhile I am stocking up enough vegetables to keep me and a couple of other people well supplied through the coming year. In planning out my garden, I plant things that I like, and stuff that I need for the pickling I do - that is, I plant dill, onions, garlic, cucumbers and peppers which I use

in the pickling process. Unfortunately I can't grow vinegar or mustard seed (celery seed I could, but that's an "iffy" crop - too much can go wrong with it too easily), so I have to buy those things from the store. I also freeze my own tomato sauce. My energy supply (aside from the electric stove and freezer) is personal muscle power. Almost every day I am out in my garden working. Aside from the drastic change-of-pace from the teaching I do the rest of the year, I find it therapeutic... I sometimes think of those students during the year who have given me trouble, or situations in which I would have liked to have gotten physical, and work the garden in earnest, hoeing, raking, weeding, etc.

This is on a small scale something of what would take a lot of planning to do on a larger scale as Alderson suggests. In all, I would like to try that sort of thing. Delicate planning would be imperative, as would judicious control over what happens to all waste products.

The State of Michigan, specifically the auto industry, has been in quite a bind economically. The dependence on the auto and other industrial companies has brought a real crisis here. Michigan has fertile farm land, but the economic base is industrial. In fact, in recent years, before the present recession, the housing industry expanded into the farmlands, and those who moved out in the outlying areas passed legislation which prevented the still-existing farmers from plying their trade. Machinery was too loud to operate in the early morning, so that was banned; farm odors wafted into their pristine houses, so the farmers had to dispense with animals. Damn city dwellers wanted the country life without taking into account all that goes with it. As a result, the farmer sold his land to other housing developers, and thus diminished the agricultural base even further. Fortunately, some farmers are now fighting back.

Bob Smith mentions Arthur Thompson as being the only true fannish cartoonist. I too am at a loss - maybe it's because I've only been a fan for 5½ years or so. I'd agree with Rotsler, or Grant Canfield, or a newer one, who has not done too much lately, Teddy Harvia, but I'd have to admit that there seems to be a lack of fannish artists who might stay around for years, and build up a good reputation that will



last. Come to think of it, English fan Terry Jeeves has been around for quite a while. Maybe he could qualify.

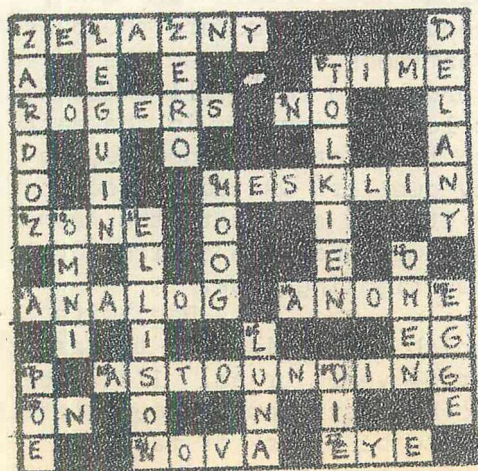
Buck Coulson  
Route 3,  
Hartford City,  
In 47348  
USA.

I'm sorry to see you leave out columns for the sake of any fiction, but at least if it was to be run I agree that it should have been all in one. Fanzine editors who try to make serials out of what are originally short stories generally destroy them. This one was reasonably good fan fiction, anyway.

On to letters. ... "a child trained to use the right hand will become right-handed, with no ill-effects." I don't know where Alderson got that idea - probably from an 1850s medical book - but the ill effects of forcibly changing an infant from left to right hand have been too thoroughly documented to be airily tossed aside now. (Of course, if the child was right-handed to begin with, then raising him as right-handed will, as John says, introduce no ill effects.) The most common ill effect of a forcible changeover is stammering; others include other forms of nervous disorders, which may or may not disappear by adulthood. My own stammer is, I'm told, no longer evident to anyone but me; it was noticeable when I was a child but I gradually forced myself to quit it. I personally doubt that my severe asthma attacks were caused by changing handedness -- though that's been documented, too, in some cases - though they might well have been aggravated somewhat.

There are such things as left-handed bolt-action rifles, John. They're expensive, usually (though for awhile Savage made a medium-priced one and may yet) but if carrying a right-handed one is all that much trouble... There are also lever-action, slide-action (I think; unless Remington dropped that model) and semi-auto models that work equally well with either hand. For that matter, Juanita manages to eject cartridges from a right-hand bolt without changing hands, though it is awkward. As she doesn't hunt, the problem of carrying the gun any distance doesn't arise. But surely if she can do it....

Incidentally, as Juanita was one of the editors who rejected that article as chauvinistic, John's use of "he" immediately following might be construed as... unconscious chauvinism?



Also heard from since last issue are Bruce Weston, Julie Vaux and Peter Simpson.

TO THE RIGHT is the solution to the crossword on page 23.

From this time Faulconbridge fandom is offering electro-stencilling service - \$1 per stencil (plus postage). Stencils are cut at 250 lines to the inch. All the stencils in this issue were cut on this machine except the one on p.37. Address enquiries to me, this address.