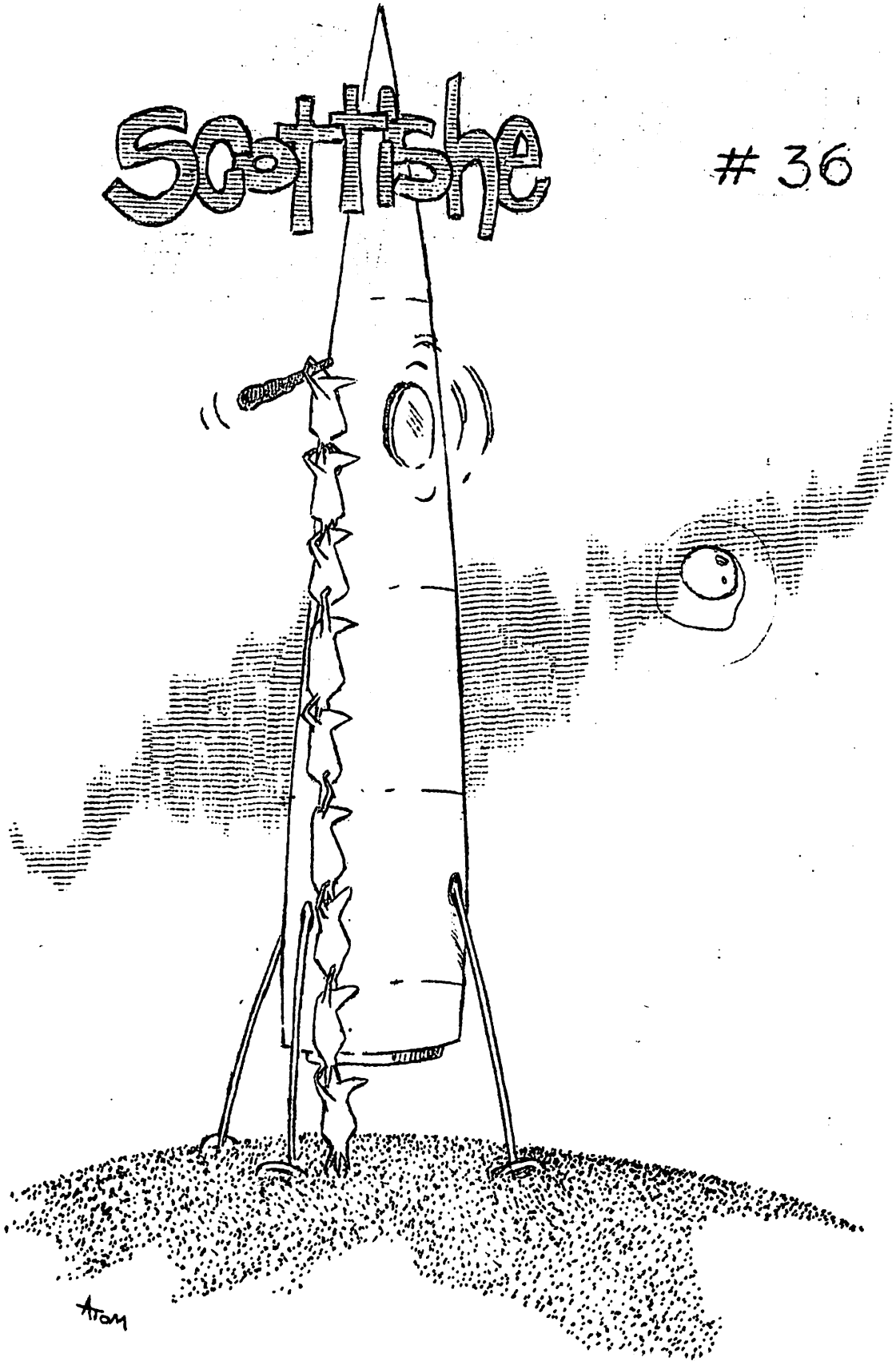


Scottish

36



SCOTTISH

Contents

It's All In The Game.....by Brian Varley
Warblings.....by Walter A.Willis
Letters.....by The Readers
Matterings.....by Ethel Lindsay
All Artwork and Headings.....by ATOM

SCOTTISHE is published by Ethel Lindsay, Courage House, 6 Langley Avenue,
Surbiton, Surrey, Gt. Britain

Price: Single issues 1/9d or 1 quarter.

5 issues for 7/- or 1 dollar

American Agent: Redd Boggs, PO Box 57242, Los Angeles, California 90057, USA

Published Quarterly.

This issue is dedicated to Ted Forsyth without whose bullying it
might never have appeared.



It's All in "The Game"

When TAFF representative Wally Weber visited the SFCoL he was initiated into the mysteries of The Game. This is a singular honour for it is generally accepted practise of the Club to only admit as **players** those who have demonstrated beyond all possible doubt their intelligence, native cunning and quickness of wit. Normally new members of the club are requested to leave the room whilst The Game is in progress. The reason for this is that absolute silence is mandatory by all players except the two Captains. Plaintive cries of "But why'd he do that?" from some dull onlooker would only tend to upset player's concentration. The prime rule of **The Game** is that the rules may not be explained but must be assimil-

ated using intuition and intelligence in interpreting the natural rhythm set up by the practised participants. In inviting Wally to take part it would seem that we made our first, sad error of judgement. Wally never seemed to grasp the elementary features of The Game (the finer nuances of course, take time, thought, and above all, patience). This may be due, of course, to the different money standards. The Game is, naturally, based on our own duodecimal system rather than the more plebian American or Continental system.

It has been decided, after long debate, to release the basic elements of The Game to fandom at large. This not lightly reached decision was made because we of the SFCol sincerely believe that an alternative to such unintellectual activities as Ghoddinto, Goofball and Scrabble would be welcomed by the elite of fandom. We cannot, however, publish an itemised list of rules binding and confining The Game as inextricably as say, Monopoly or Blow-Foorball. Again, for The Game not to deteriorate into a run-of-the-mill pastime some of the mystique must be preserved.

Two Captains are appointed initially and thereafter a process of right-ful succession will provide. The Captains choose teams, leaving a senior retired Captain to act as adjudicator. Odd-balanced sides are quite often selected as a small integrated group can provide sufficiently to defeat, a numerically strong but amorphous opposition. To exemplify if The Game were played in Parliament it is possible that the Liberal Party could defeat, even overwhelm the combined Tory and Labour Parties. In fact it is extremely likely that this would happen. Any players not selected shall sit besides the adjudicator and be known as The Game Reserve.

The two sides face each other, seated, across a suitably large room. In the centre is placed a disc 96 millimetres in diameter (this allows the placing of 3 pennies lengthways plus a duodecahedral threepenny piece on edge). The basic unit of The Game is $1\frac{1}{2}d$ and only the precise multiples or simple fractions of this sum may be used. The basic unit itself is, however, never used and should one side be forced into nominating the basic unit then a vulnerable player is lost. The common units of halfpenny, penny, threepenny piece (but not silver or "threepenny wheeler"), sixpenny piece, shilling and florin. A half-crown is naturally unacceptable as would be a crown or sovereign although a nomismatist member once single-handedly vanquished four opponents by the use of an old four-shilling piece.

The object, as discerning readers will by now have appreciated, is to compel the opposition to complete a non-common unit on the Board. The upright threepenny piece being considered "wild" as defined in poker. The number of units per side is governed by the number playing, the basic being that a team of five is limited to eight shillings (i.e. four florins or equivalent). The Captain needs to know how his resources are slit up between his team-members at all times. The loss of a "vulnerable" player means the loss of his units to the side. Thus a heavily endowed "vulnerable" must be protected, even by sacrifice.

Play is alternate (except in such cases as a sacrifice etc) and the Captain indicates the vulnerable player as the vulnerable side allowing his opposite number on the team to make a move. It should be added here that occasionally, in an exceptionally well-integrated team, the Captain manages to convey his appreciation of the tactical situation to his team by a form of tic-tac inherent in his indication.

The only explanation now required is the vulnerability of a side (based on the Captain's left and right). This is, as I hope you will have gathered, dependant on the balance of the disc. Thus when the left of the Captain A is vulnerable it is axiomatic that the right of Captain B is also vulnerable. The balance will naturally move as each Captain endeavours to swing the vulnerability to his opponents weakest side whilst protecting his own. It is here that the Captain's judgement of the relative vulnerability of the opposing players - combined with an appreciation of the edowment of the individual opposition players - is all-important. Bad judgement by the Captain leads to certain losses and although a re-appreciation may immediately take place advantage has been lost in players, units, and morale.

Finally the adjudicator, who must like Caesar's wife be above suspicion, whose word is accepted as law by all the participants. In a well-run Game the adjudicator should be, ideally, a mere spectator only imbuing the players with a feeling of confidence. He or she can be called upon by the Captains to assess the balance of The Game when tightly played or where dispute over the degree of vulnerability arises.

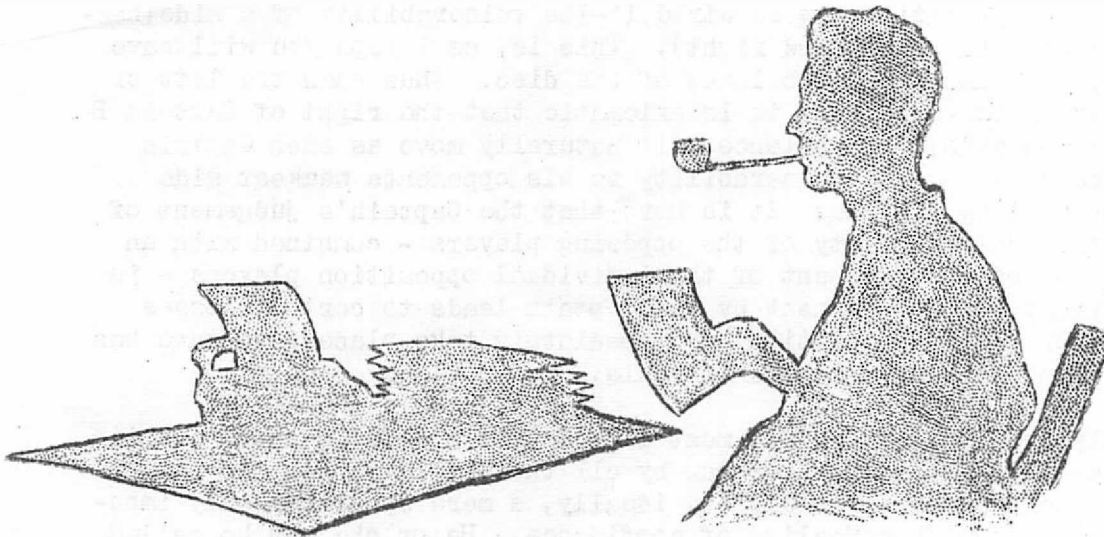
As a sort of postscript I might add that we have had to exclude the coaching of neo-players by a Captain as this can lead to an unbalanced team where the Captain becomes subject to succession.

If, as we hope, The Game catches the imagination of other clubs we are hopeful that in time, a League might be formed with contests between London, Liverpool, Birmingham and other centres. We might even start a sup series culminating in a final at the convention. It is not impossible that in the not-too-distant-future we shall see international matches at World Cons with England v America or maybe Ireland v Germany!

Brian Varley

warblings

by
walt
willis



I REMEMBER ME.....

It has been pointed out by one of our perceptive new fans that I took up a lot of space in the last instalment of this column with previously circulated material. I'm truly sorry about this, but I seem to have this strange difficulty with memoirs....everything I remember seems to have already happened. My only consolation is that my critic's complaint is not that he or anyone else has actually seen the material before; just that it may have made the writing of that instalment too easy for me. In an effort to make this instalment more readable I am accordingly typing it in the dark wearing boxing gloves. I shall also try to make better speed in disposing of all this dull old stuff from dull old fans so that we can get on to really interesting people like Charles Platt.

So into the wastebasket with:

Postcard, 20th June, 1952, from Peter Graham. "Dear Mr Willis, I wish to offer my sincere apologies for the card about your death I sent out. It was a stupid asinine thing to do, and I realise this fully. I am truly very sorry." That is the only document in that Affair that hasn't been previously circulated, and I thought it should be recorded.

Letter, 8th February, 1963 from Eric Frank Russell.

"I think you're going to find several after-effects, as we did. For one, the Belfast-Liverpool boat will now seem like a piddling ferryboat, as the Isle of Man boat does to us. And N.Y.C. is no longer thought of as someplace on Mars, but rather as the other terminus of a local boat. The American Way of Life has some big attractions we'n never been told about- chocolate malts, for instance. And some repulsive aspects we didn't know

Warblings 2

about either until we got there. (I think that general blatant dishonesty took me aback more than anything. Not being stuck by money restrictions as you were, and being well heeled, I could bribe anybody to get anything or do anything no matter how illegal. Any cop would direct me to a brothel for a couple of bucks). Within three days of getting to N.Y. I knew where I could obtain filthy pictures, morphia, marijuana cigarettes or a whore or even a professional pansy. Yes, me - but E and I both concluded that while the inhabitants of U.S.A. are greatly to be envied in some respects, in many others they can have their way of life and welcome."

Postcard, 17th February 1953 from Arthur C. Clarke. "Congrats on a brilliant travelogue. Even friends of mine who don't know a thing about fandom enjoyed it. I'm off at the end of March--will be driving up from Atlanta to the Indian Lake Con., then going to Florida for a trip in a cabin cruiser along the Keys. Hope to do quite a bit of underwater photography which may be the end of me if I run into anything with better false teeth than mine..."

Letter, 7th January 1953 from Poul Anderson.

Dear Walt,

A thousand thanks for the Songs of Ireland, which came just the other day...Have been reading a good deal of late, inter alia Costain's two volumes on English history--which would have no surprises for you, but plenty for me; and the man's non-fiction story is far superior to his novels. Have also been playing around with communications theory, whose basic concepts seem to have some startlingly broad applications--biology, sociology, the arts, etc. It does seem to me that a genuine methodology is beginning to emerge for psychology and sociology; so far it's been mostly huge accumulations of uninteresting and largely irrelevant data, but some possibilities exist for the foundation of a true theory in the next few decades. Funny how the really important advances are made so obscurely, almost unnoticed at the time. The work on stearin synthesis was buried in the back pages of the newspapers a couple of years ago, over here at least. I haven't received "Slant" for quite a while, and imagine my subscription has run out. If you'll drop me a line as to how to re-subscribe, I certainly want to do so. "Slant" along with "Rhodomagnetic Digest" and maybe a couple of others, is that very rare bird, a genuinely readable and interesting fanzine. In fact, it would be more accurate to call it a little magazine or something of that sort. An amateur publication, in the old sense of "amateur", one who works for the love of it."

Letter, 10th March 1953 from Robert Bloch.

"Seriously, Walt, it may well be that the release of your intended memoir marks the passing of an era in sf-fanhistory. There are signs and portents which I interpret to indicate that your good friends and mine are gradually withdrawing from activity. Lee, Max, Shelby and a number of others have not shown their wonted industry of late..methinks it's the beginning of the end. But they have left their mark on fandom with their greasy little paws; and God bless their greasy little hearts, they've done a lot which we can all be grateful for, whatever their activity in the future. I may be wrong..this may only be the lull before the storm..but something tells me that the Ides of March

have come. You will remain as the Living Memorial of Sixth Fandom. Dunno what to predict of the new group. I have a horrid fear that fandom may one day be dominated again by a Serious Element. There may be Committees and Plans and Purposes and Crusades and Positive, Right-Thinking Constructive Attitudes. If that comes to pass, I'll be down in the bar with Tucker, crying in my beer of the good old days and wishing it wasn't a bar but a pub and not beer but Black Ben. There is, fortunately, a heartening note. If HYPHEN and SLANT are any indication, and if Harris, Clarke, Shaw and others are representative, a new Sixth Fandom is arising mightily in the Isles. From Bangor to Donagh-ee, from Carrick-fergus and across the Strangford Lough comes the clarion call, "Pyromaniacs of the World, Ignite!" Yes, I have high hopes for you in this endless struggle against the Decent Element, this battle against the Better Things."

Hm, I've just noticed that the pros seem to be taking over this column. The obvious anti dote is a letter from Chuck Harris from this huge file I have here, but this rich lode is curiously difficult to work. The humour is so thoroughly embedded in the text that short quotations are difficult to extract. Madeleine tried it once for an article for FEMIZINE, she was writing about Chuck and failed, so that the article was never finished. Here's what there was, and I assure you it has not been previously circulated....

I REMEMBER HARRIS by Madeleine Willis
incorporating
CHUCK HARRIS, FRIEND OF FISH by Walt Willis.

The next time we met was at the '54 Convention in Manchester. He didn't seem so shy this time. I had gone into the Mackenzie's room to say hello to Stu when Chuck, seeing me from the passage, dashed into the room so boisterously that he felled me to the door. He led me away, meaning softly, and added insult to injury by explaining: "I knew Walter was downstairs so I thought I had better look after you. I don't trust Mackenzie with women" Mackenzie hadn't attempted anything, not even knocking me down with a door, but I appreciated the kind thought. I think Chuck was worried over my welfare, though the compliments he paid me were such that only a fan would appreciate. He constantly offered Walt his complete file of Galaxy in exchange for me, and after staying at Oblique House and sampling my cooking he offered to throw in his Vargo Statten No.3. He even sent me all his cheques for his pro writing (uncashed) to provide wallpaper for the fan attic, and only the unappreciative stupidity of pro editors prevented our being unable to cover the remaining 99.9999% of the wall with the same contemporary design. I commiserated with Walt that he wouldn't be able to point out to visitors that the wallpaper had an interesting check pattern but he said he would just say the rest hadn't come yet. Walls, he said it was generally known, had arrears. Talking of Walt, he has asked if he can use this space, which is lying vacant while I make his supper, to present what he claims is a little known facet of Harris, that of the Sportsman..I hope Ethel won't regard this as a sneaky attempt to crash the purdah of Femizine.

Walt speaking. Thank you ladies. I'm sure you'll appreciate that to get a properly rounded picture of Chuck Harris, you need also to see him as a Man's

Man. It is true that one does not think immediately of Harris as a huntin', shootin, and fishin' type, in spite of his familiarity with Prince Philip. His nickname is not an abbreviation of Chukka, although it is true that his path and that of the Duke of Edinburgh crossed during their service careers, as described by Chuck himself in Orion some years ago. Prince Philip may have forgotten this memorable encounter, but Chuck Harris does not forget his old comrades though he has attained a prestige in fandom far greater than the Duke's.

I used to wonder why such a multi-talented person exhibited no talent for field sports...with one exception of course...until one summer day in County Donegal. It was a reason that did him credit. Simple that he is too fond of dumb animals.

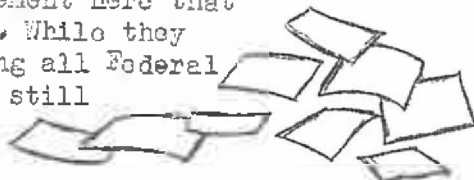
My daughter Carol is crazy about sea creatures and spends most of her holidays dabbling about among rock pools with a fishing net. Naturally the fish she catches by this means are no Moby Dicks, and one evening she was complaining about this. I looked helpless, because at the time I knew absolutely nothing about fishing except that the sea seemed a pretty good place for it, but Chuck stepped competently into the breach. "I will show you how to fish tomorrow" he said. Next morning we went to Dunfanaghy village, and he bought a sort of square wooden frame with a lot of green cord wrapped round it, a contraption which I'd always thought was for flying kites, and we tripped along to the end of the pier wall, where Chuck unrolled about 100 feet of the green line, revealing a vicious hook and a piece of lead. On the former he impaled a bit of cold fried bacon he had saved from his breakfast, at great personal deprivation. I had never myself heard of any fish that subsisted on cold fried bacon, but I kept silent, realising I was in the presence of an expert at whose knees Walton himself might have knelt...especially if he was whizzing around his head a length of cord with a hook on the end.

Having baited the hook, Harris took the line in his less severely wounded hand and, standing up, whirled the end round and round at ever increasing speed. Then, when the noise of its passage had risen from a hum to a scream, he released it. The coils of line on the pier began to disappear like smoke in a high wind. The lead weight was flying out over the sea in the direction of Newfoundland, closely followed by the hook, the piece of cold bacon, the green cord and the wooden frame. The surface of the pier suddenly looked very empty. Chuck looked at it completely without expression. Carol looked at him with an expression changing slowly from admiration to puzzlement. "How are we going to pull the fish in?" she asked. I was at a loss. How to explain to this unsophisticated child, I wondered, that at that last vital moment, the moment of truth, the Great Sportsman had been replaced by an even greater facet of Harris, that of the great humanitarian, the St Francis of the fishy world?.

Walter A. Willis.



Rick Sneary: "Fine batch of letters this time. Quite a collection of professional grumps too. Raeburn doesn't like taxes, Aldiss doesn't like Baxter; Peters doesn't like America; and Warner doesn't like politics. I'm just as glad you didn't bother to answer Boyd about graduated income tax. But I'd be interested to know what other system he/they propose. As you may know there is a fringe-element here that wants to do away with the personal income tax. While they would save a lot of government money by stopping all Federal aid to everything (but their own interest), I've still never heard any explanation where they expect



Letters 2

the government to get the money for the war effort. (And if they were in power, you can bet we would have a War Effort..) I've always found people like Ian Peters pretty incredible. How can anyone not find things to admire in any country? I can find more to admire about the USSR and Red China than he does about this country. And how about this.. "of course the people you met were nice, but the rest.." Do you know any country where all the people are likeable and think the way you do? Certainly there are things wrong with this country, and many of them seem to be getting worse. But there are people who are trying to buck the tide. Some things are going to Hell in every country, and others are trying to fight the trend."

Ian Peters: "I am surprised and perhaps a little hurt, to be labelled "anti-American." This is blatantly unfair since you know perfectly well I was taking an extreme viewpoint to counter your own naive and apparently blinkered worship(?) of America. While I stand by everything I said, I could produce similar comment on Britain or even Scotland, for that matter; and this in spite of the deep respect I have for the British way of life. I too, had a similar period of "Americaphilia" during my late teens. Now I prefer to see things in perspective, to accept the healthy viable aspects of American life while looking below the glamour to the rotten things below, and most important of all, attempting to evaluate the motives behind America's actions.... One little word to Colin Freeman who is always quick to jump on me: buy a dictionary (I find mine invaluable) and the first thing he should look up is "socialism". Any reference I made to this, was to the political creed, not to any philosophy of the brotherhood of man. Socialism and Americanism are by definition mutually incompatible."
+++ I've looked up my dictionary: a creed is "a set of beliefs"... a philosopher is "one who meets difficulties with rational calmness." +++

Desmond Squires: "If you're interested, the ratio of female to male fans, according to Ron Bennett's Fan Directory is 1 in 8.5."

Lloyd Biggle: "The continued muttering about Heinlein's "philosophy" prompts me to mention the symposium currently running in the fanzine DOUBLE-BILL. One of the questions there asks to what extent it is possible to detect a writer's "philosophy" from works of fiction. It is, of course, the sort of question to which there is no universal answer, but the symposium discussion of it at least brings out the dimensions of the problem. I'm having a novel published in England. My title, ALL THE COLORS OF DARKNESS, thus becomes ALL THE COLOURS OF DARKNESS, and this naturally makes me wonder what other changes the publisher will see fit to make. It recalls the statement by Oscar Wilde, "We have really everything in common with America nowadays, except, of course, language."

Ron Bennett: "The highlight of the issue to me was Walt's column, for this sort of thing I dig, but yeah, yeah, yeah, (God! don't quote me!) The whole idea of sending plugging postcards to a fanzine really tickled me and the cards themselves were terrific. I don't wholly agree with you about the worth of fannish history though, for what does it really matter whether or not we look at the past, particularly with something like fandom?"
+++ I quote it again.. "You must know the past to understand the present, and unless you understand the present, how can you guess the future?" +++

Wim Struyck:" I see you asking: "why so few women in sf?". I don't know. True, a lot of stories are directed at male interests. But the ideas behind sf are not especially male. There's a lot that should appeal to girls too. That's what I thought. My wife is an avid reader of nearly everything, but no sf. I tried it on her several times. In Dutch and in English. The serious kind, the funny kind, the adventures and the fantasy..no go."

Grania Davidson:"..I guess the main point of interest was all of those people who don't like the good ol' USA..for shame..as a not particularly patriotic, and not even residing Yanque, I feel I must say a word or two. In the first place, I would like to mention American plumbing..a delight to the human body. "Even the plumber" indeed, madam the plumber is one of the most valuable members of American society, and deserves his shiny car more than most. Secondly I might mention the American sandwich. The art of sandwich making has risen to new heights in the US. Finally I would like to rebut those letters which mentioned the notion that class distinctions arise in the US through money and status differences by pointing out that the Kujawas what have an airplane(absolutely it in status symbols these days)can be friends with the Davidsons what don't even have indoor plumbing! And no strain upon either party!"

Betty Peters:" I fear you are labouring under a severe misaprehension and I feel I should enlighten you. I can assure you Ian's ideas far from being fixed have changed markedly in the years I have known him. For instance when we met his political views were extremely right wing where-as now he is so left wing at times it shocks a true blue Tory like myself. Doesn't believe in hereditary wealth or private ownership of land! And you can tell Colin Freeman that the only cause Ian has is a profound hatred of cruelty or intolerance to all forms of life, whether human or animal." +++Poor Colin, everyone is telling him off this time.+++

John McCallum:"Your fanac is so heavy that I expect you have not time for frivolous pastimez like puzzles. Should I be wrong in that here is an alphametic puzzle that may amuse you--

NURSE

ETHEL So wot's Scots?

Scots is 90469. Other letters N=1,E=7,U=3,HR=58. Unfortunately, while it is unique in SCOTS, it is not unique in ETHEL as HR can be interchanged." +++What is unique about ETHEL is she can't count to ten hardly without using her fingers.+++

Peter White:"In his most interesting article,Brian Varley complains that the USA's insistance that she undertakes her overseas aid out of charity is dishonest. Brian also seems to feel that the lack of charity, so long as it is honestly acknowledged, is not in itself a bad thing. Perhaps I am a cranky socialist, but I feel that world peace can only be achieved when all nations deal with each other in charity. America's actions abroad are usually undertaken out of genuine charitable feeling, even if she is sadly mistaken in thinking that it is charitable to crush communism and preserve Syngman Rhee-type despotism in underdeveloped countries. Like Mike Moorcock my attitude to the US remains essentially ambivalent."

Letters 4

Harry Warner: "Brian Varley says some sensible things about the US. But I wonder if he really believes that the "days of empire and glory" are something whose loss should be regretted? The intelligent and high-minded people of the 19th century must have thought about the empire-building as we in the US think about the slave economy that used to support the southern states. I can sympathise with the person who feels angry with the US for its meddling in the nations where such meddling isn't wanted but not with the individual who feels angry simply because Britain no longer can do the same thing. There is also the point that Brian fails to admit regarding this country's role in the two world wars. There was considerable debate in the early 1910's about which side the US would take, Germany's or Britain's. In the late 1930's, there was not the slightest question about which side the US would take, merely the question of whether the nation would enter the war. It sounds like progress of a sort, from Britain's standpoint. To your notes on why fandom doesn't restrict itself to science fiction, I can only add one thing. This is the utter horror that engulfs me whenever I think of a fandom that did restrict itself to science fiction, and the resulting contents of the fanzines. Can't you imagine a hundred or so currently active fanzines filled with detailed reviews of the same issue of the same prozine, biographies of H. Beam Piper, and articles on why there should be more science in science fiction? Ted Tubb generalizes too much about things on which he doesn't seem to be entirely in error. A few sensational cases do get tried in the newspapers before they reach the courts, possibly one per month per city. There is no reasonable alternative to this difficulty, for the proposal to keep matters out of print until the courts have acted would lead to every sort of abuse wherever the police or the law was tainted by the faintest bit of corruption and pull. Appointment to judicial posts is not universal in this country. Locally, the trial magistrates are political appointments, but the circuit court-judges--the next higher authorities--are elected by the voters. There is something to be said for even political appointments in a democracy, as long as long as the appointments are made by elective officials...I know of no instance in Hagerstown where someone has died because he didn't have enough money to pay a hospital or doctor's bill, and my job would have put me wise if something of this sort occurred. (If the hospital emergency room lets an injured or sick person suffer more than ten minutes while trying to find a physician on a busy night, the telephone here starts ringing from every member of the family) I happen to have the current welfare department figures handy; 637 persons in this county were certified in January for medical assistance without charge, an imposing figure when you consider that the county contains only 90,000 persons, quite a few of whom are neither sick nor poor. I feel that we need socialized medicine in this country, but its failure to materialize so far doesn't mean that people fail to get care when they can't pay. And blood is not sold by the pint."++++To now fans I would add that Harry is a newspaper editor..and to Harry I would add..if I read Dickini rightly..blood must be bought in Virginia.++++

Peter A. White: "Really, my statements are not a bit flatter than yours. 'Junk like pop art'--well, perhaps that is a bit flat, but I just don't believe that any other sincere view is possible. You write me a sincere eulogy on pop art and I'll write you an argued explosion of it..." "Negros are not genuine Americans"--now this I am prepared to argue. Negros did not come to the "home of the free" of their own free will--they came to it because they were forced to by the slavers. They remained in spirit Africans. After the Civil War they still regarded themselves as Africans; if you want proof, it is surely undeniable from contemporary records and pictures that they regarded White Southerners, not unnaturally, as their enemies, white Northerners as their friends and allies but not as their brothers. They kept their African ways, ways peculiar to Africa, ways which a non-African simply could not grasp. Why did the New Orleans White Jazz wave break? Because Whites aren't Africans.... My quarrel is not with the American people individually, many of the more cultured of whom (in which category I include the vast majority of fans), I have no doubt are very decent people--their accent prejudices me from the start, I must own, but there again, the better-educated Americans do not seem to have such marked accents, and some areas have more easy-on-the-ears accents than others. My quarrel is with the American people collectively, or the American State... It is a personal characteristic of mine that I defend my opinions as firmly as if they were facts. This does not mean that I think they are facts, not that you would find it extraordinarily hard to sway me. But while I hold an opinion I hold it very fervently".

Colin Freeman: "Of course, our definition of Socialism is an ideal and because of human nature an impractical utopia. But it is a goal that we should be aiming for nevertheless, and every little bit nearer we get is a help. Most of my discontent with the Socialist party is that they too often tend to forget the basic aims of Socialism.

Bob Lichtman: "I have some comments to make, mostly to your letter-writers. EC. Tubb: Maybe you have been conditioned by television, because the trial-by-newspaper procedure you describe is not more prevalent here than it is in some of the more sensational British papers I've seen. England has its News of the World, America has its Hearst papers. I never, on the other hand, see public trial by opinion in The Guardian, nor in the New York Times. Dog-catchers are not elected here. Judges are, and so are other state officials. Minor government workers are, almost entirely, civil servants.. Your main point seems to be that elections encourage ass-kissing on the part of the people elected. I think this is a good thing; it keeps your public servants from going too far out in any direction, left or right for very long..." Terry Bull: You certainly are a man of chauvinistic tastes. "Most of what is new in art is rubbish anyway" is a pretty open statement from an sf fan. Where are those broad mental horizons?... I think there are some great things being done in art, and that America is very much in the forefront of this, along with France. Does England have anyone writing today to compare with William Burroughs, Robert Gower, Sam Beckett, and Jean Genet? Peter White: Dictators remain in power by giving people what they want". Now there is a really blind statement, reflective either of an ignorance of history (to throw back your cliché at you) or a naive nihilistic ignoring of history. Take your pick. The truth of the matter is that most dictators remain in power by exercising a strong sup-

Letters 6

pression over contrary points of view, over would-be revolutionaries, over their own people. No one can say without his tongue firmly in his cheek, that Stalin gave the Russian people what they wanted. Ten million of them did not want to be killed. Similarly, I'm pretty sure that before Hitler came along, the German people were not more anti-Semitic than the Irish. As for your Castro, it is not the case that he had a "working majority" in his take over. It is possible to say this only by twisting the facts--in that the Cuban people were ready for something else because Battista was such a terrible dictator. If Castro had a working majority, how come I see so many Cuban refugees here in Los Angeles?..I would like to add that I am not now, but have been, a socialist. I am not any longer a socialist because my chief concern is with personal freedom for individuals...I am not a socialist because I don't believe that men can any longer really grow to love and find meaning in their work, since the nature of present day industrial and mass-office society is such that men grow alienated from their work...I think that modern society is not moving towards the 19th century ideal--remember, Marx lived a long time ago and was much influenced by his times as Ruskin and your other Victorians --of work being a Good Thing (and a Necessary Thing). Rather, I believe that we are moving in the opposite direction. I believe that we are moving in the direction of Not Working. This is the ultimate goal, of the present drive to automate, though it is NOT, repeat, NOT, the thing that the automators (who are Bosses and Efficiency Experts) have in mind. I believe we are moving towards a day when no one will ever have to work, unless he elects to, and that this day will be at once the ultimate socialism and the ultimate freedom. Freed from the need to work to feed his face and his family, men will be able to move on to other things. I am not saying that this is right around the corner, but I think it is imminent in the next couple hundred years, and I wish I could be living then to take it all in." ++Me too...++

Ken Cheslin: "I was going to say something about the pro-and anti-American letters, but the ground seems to be fairly well covered. The summing up seems to be something like, you are pro- or anti-American according to how your prejudices allow you to interpret what you have heard about America. On the other hand there seems to be a nucleus of a discussion on the various forms of government, and the types or extent of freedom one can have under each kind. And that grand old saw about how do you interpret freedom has reared its head again. Get freedom out of the way quick. Simply freedom is one of those things that is something different for every individual. Freedom is subjective...It seems to me that freedom and the form of government have something in common..in that, theoretically a good form of government ensures individual freedom. Ah, but then, what is "good" government?. Once again we are in the realm of opinion. I would offer a definition that a good government is one which tries to ensure the health and happiness of its subjects to nth generation. That is, it would make sure that the people were materially cared for, and make sure that the land was passed on to the next generation in at least a prosperous condition as the last generation had. But that's not freedom of course. For to take care of the country and the people to regulate trade, production etc., the government has but has to have complete control over all resources. This is Socialism or Communism carried to its logical conclusion.

However, the alternative, also carried to extremes is rampant capitalism. Its all very well to say there should be equal opportunity for all..but suppose there were. Everyone got exactly the same schooling and could choose and pursue the career of his choice. Well, who's going to empty the dustbins? Lots of people who..say..decide to become chemists..will just not be able to grasp the subject..or say a bloke wants to be an engine driver..and his reflexes are as soggy as yesterdays' sago? Equal opportunity then would have to be scrapped, and some people forced to do a menial job. The only difference would be they would not be able to blame lack of opportunity. So it seems to me both extremes are not very useful. I think one can say, as a general rule, any form of government is a good one provided the administrators are good men i.e. honest and competent. Do you know of any politician you would care to swear was good in that way? I don't think you could, not if you were really put to it." +++In that future society that Bob Lichtman envisions your question "Who will empty the dustbins?" would sound very silly. Dustbins! nasty smelly things--any civilised country would be without them and have instead a disposal unit in every house. You ask if I know an honest and competent politician..so I will not quote you any world figure with whom you would only argue; instead I'll quote Councillor Greenwood of Surbiton. I know him well and he is both honest and competent. I could also firmly vouch for Harold Wilson under both those adjectives..but that would be another matter of opinion, wouldn't it?+++

Betty Kujawa: "As you damn well knew, I bet, this issue was most interesting to me. And the way you set it up put the icing on the cake...starting off with Brian and ending the England America topic with Colin...klever kid aintcha?" +++Ahem..well ..its all a matter of opinion isn't it? +++

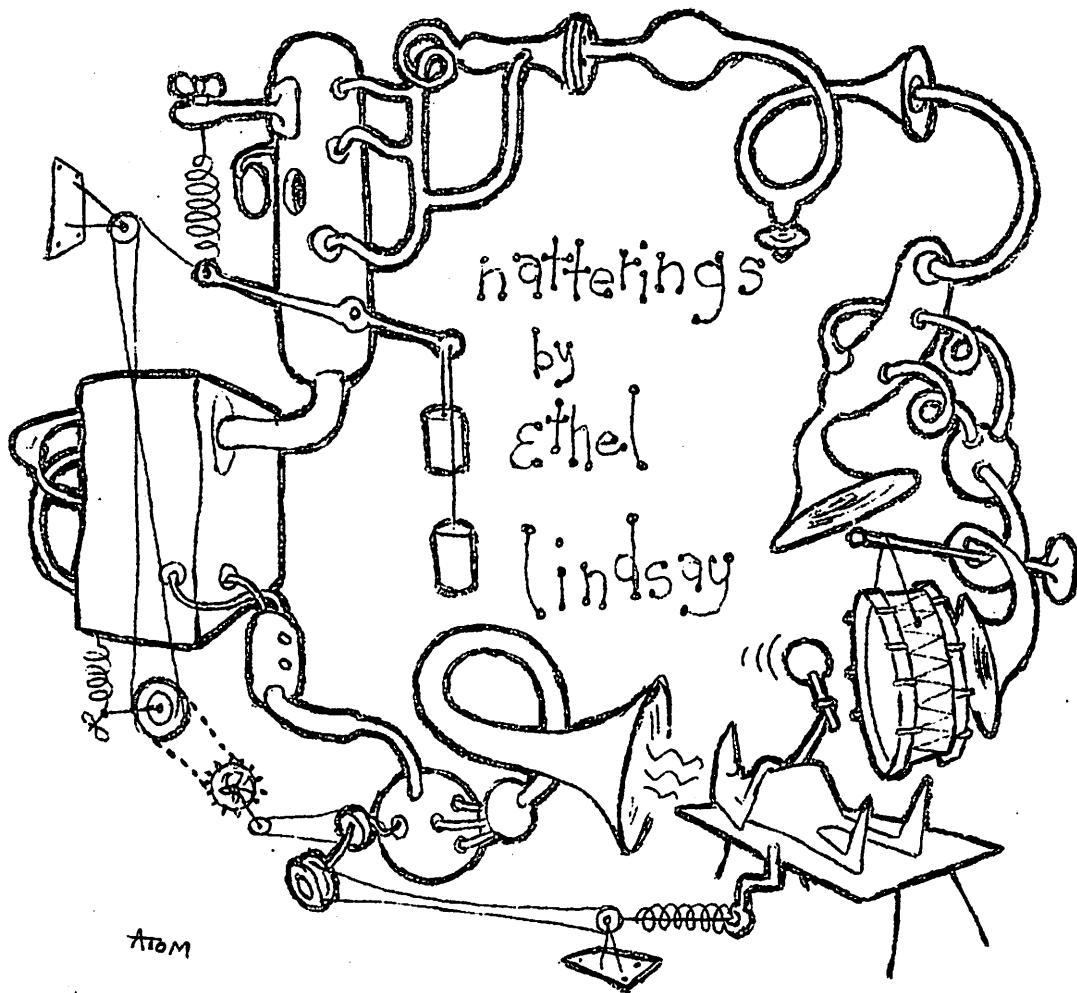
I have tried to edit the many fine letters that came in to a reasonable length..and to give a good sampling of the opinions expressed. However I do owe Stan Woolston a big apology for the way I edited his letter a couple of issues back. When he recounted the tale of the school-teacher who asked her bright pupils to share their marks with the duller ones..Stan was not using this as an example to put down the idea of communism..Many of you took this meaning from it. What Stan intended to get at..as did the teacher..was conformity in schooling..the emphasis on being part of a group rather than an individual. He had no thought of political meaning..but was instead thinking of the American system of schooling.

All your letters now go on to the contributors.... Ethel.

STILL AVAILABLE

Copies of THE LINDSAY REPORT... 7/6d or \$1...All proceeds to TAFF.

"For abundance is also a burden, however much that may contradict all our conventional beliefs. It is a burden because it releases moral and spiritual yearning from the yoke of daily necessity" The Unfinished Society by
Herbert von Borch.



Natterings.....

On the "New Wave" in Science Fiction...

Recently we had shown on our tv screens an adaption by Terry Nation from Asimov's THE CAVES OF STEEL. I rather trembled at the idea of this as it is one of my favourites. In preparation and to refresh my memory I reread this book for what must be the umpteenth time. I read with relish for this is what I look for in sf: a grand sweep of imagination that can give you the picture of a whole society; an explanation of how it came to be that way and of where it may go; individual characters with whom you can identify; and even a plot that works out neatly. They just don't make stories like this anymore! I was pleasantly surprised at the tv show as it adhered very faithfully to the book. A lot of the dialogue was retained and what simplifying done was probably essential to the time limit. All in all, a good experience and one I'd never hoped to live to see.

Yes - they don't make stories like this anymore..but there is a new type of sf coming out that rather intrigues me. If you define sf as -"an author sits down and thinks..I wonder what would happen if????" -then these authors who are putting their stories in the near future can come under the umbrella of sf. I

couldn't, with authority, say who started the trend - the first that came to my attention was **ADVISE AND CONSENT** by Allen Drury. By placing his story in the very near future, Drury went out on a limb about what might happen. He made a brave try, yet he had quite a few misses in his attempt to guess the future. It is so easy to think that things will go on in the same way for a long time and to miscalculate how quickly the social climate may change. Drury did not foresee that there would be as much change in Soviet-American relations as would lead to the Test-Ban Treaty and this rather spoils a part of his plot. Similarly, he did not foresee how quickly the Civil Rights Bill would be passed, and so his second book **A STATE OF DIFFERENCE**, is again behind actual events.

There have been others of course - **SEVEN DAYS IN MAY** and **FAIL SAFE** come first to mind - but they are mostly tied to the political scene and very much taken up with something going wrong. Another I've read recently is **IN HIGH PLACES** by Arthur Hailey which is centred chiefly in Canada and deals with the assumption that there will be an atomic war and that politicians must plan on this basis..the US and Canada unite in this one.

I have found, however, one which combines both some out on a limb guessing about the near future with an authentic sf background. It is called **THE PILGRIM PROJECT** by Hank Searles and was run as a serial in **THE SATURDAY EVENING POST**. In the near future of this story the Russians are well on the way to placing a man on the moon; and the American project is being hurried up in an attempt to get there first. The story is told on two levels. First of the astronaut who is chosen to go from America. The plan is to send a "space shelter" ahead on which he can live for a year. The astronaut will then be launched and if he sees that the "space shelter" is alright he will land; if not he is to "abort" - that is..return to Earth. He has been warned not to take an unnecessary risk and has promised his wife not to do so. Yet he knows that his superior is afraid that he may panic and "abort" anyway.

The other level is the political scene. Here we are introduced to an oldish President who is being urged by his young Vice-President to allow the space project to go ahead. The President sounds a lot like LBJ - he has promised in his campaign speeches "war on poverty..civil rights..to put an American on the moon first". He is wily and experienced. His Vice-President is young, has been a lawyer, needs "lessons in the complexities of the Presidency" and has yet to learn that there are "greys among the blacks and whites". The VP is unpopular in some sections of the press but is also thought of as a potentially great President.

So - you can enjoy this story on these two levels - that of the suspense (which is well kept up) of the astronauts attempt on the moon; and the other on whether the political guesses are right or merely wishful thinking. One thing: the answer to the political story will come soon, but I wonder how near we are to the sf part coming true? It may be nearer than we think.

On Going Home To Scotland...

Twice a year I go home to visit my parents. This year, for once, I was lucky in having good weather; the sun shone and made Scotland look at its best. As the train went over the Tay Bridge which spans the River Tay I

saw Dundee (my birthplace) laid out before me. In the distance were the Ochil Hills to remind me that Angus is an agricultural county. Dundee, with its industry, hugs the side of the river. Its origin was a busy harbour from which set off the whaling ships. With the decline of the whaling industry the main trade became Jute and this flourished for many years. Many men went out from Dundee to India to start Jute Mills there near to the source of the jute and to take advantage of the cheap labour. In the end this cut Dundee's throat as the Indians themselves took over a lot of the trade. After many long years of black depression, Dundee no longer depends wholly upon jute. Light industry has been wooed; one firm that came was the American ~~TEX~~ at which my brother now works.

Looking towards the right Dundee is lovely - a green swathe next to the River Tay and behind this many rows of large and pleasant houses. Looking back towards the hills one can spot the rising ranks of modern flats. In the centre you can see the spires of the city churches and the huge chimney stacks that represent the mills. But to the left is the dark slums of Dundee; the "East End" as opposed to the "West End". My train now passes drab sights..the old tenements..the cobblestoned Wynds..I can almost smell the jute. I get glimpses of back areas the small patch of grass worn away by innumerable feet. I know what they are like inside: no bathrooms..sometimes two or more families sharing a single lavatory on the stairs. No hot water..a single sink for all purposes. They all ought to be knocked down with a bulldozer; work is started to be sure..but it seems to take so long.

The train moves on and leaves it all behind. The sun shining has made it look much nicer than usual. I remember another time when I crossed the bridge and watched two homeward bound soldiers leaning out the window to get their first glimpse of Dundee. One said to the other with deep satisfaction - "There she is! Smoking away like hell!"

I pass through about half a dozen small towns full of either Dundee commuters or agricultural workers mostly. Each has a beach and a golf course but I think the best are at my destination of Carnoustie. Carnoustie has a Jute Factory (from which my Father is now retired), a Chemical Factory, and an Engineering Firm all of modest size. It is surrounded on three sides by fields that stretch for miles. The fourth side faces the North Sea and its beach brings in a steady stream of holiday visitors all summer.

I find there that the main topic of conversation is indignation at the way the outbreak of Typhoid in Aberdeen has been blown up out of all proportion by tv and the newspapers. Carnoustie, without a single case, has had many holiday bookings cancelled..and the loss to Aberdeen is something everyone can sympathise with sincerely. Tales are told with anger of Aberdonians who have had their own holidays cancelled..of many insensitive acts by other Scots people. A Glasgow woman is reported to have phoned her Aberdonian sister telling her not to write for fear of infection. We discuss the phenomena of fear that arose over Aberdeen. Typhoid is no longer a killing disease, there is a specific antibiotic against it. The proportion of people in Aberdeen affected has been very small and tales of an epidemic have been exaggerated. For that matter, Typhoid in Britain is very rare and much less so than on the Continent where we hear Americans are going who have

cut Scotland out of their itinerary altogether. A learned Professor of Psychology discusses all this in an article in THE SCOTSMAN and comes to the conclusion that, thanks to the swiftness of our modern communication media, as a people we are much more vulnerable to mental than physical ill. Certainly, he says, much more prone to panic at the name of a disease than in the days when an epidemic was something to be dreaded.

I never travel back from Scotland without mulling over thoughts of it as I go. This time the sight of all those small greystoned towns drowsing in the sun as I am Londonwards bound, turns my thoughts to two strands which I try to untangle.

First a conversation with my brother and his wife about the social life of Carnoustie and then a letter that I have just read in THE SCOTSMAN by John Prebble the Canadian of Scots decent who wrote CULLODON and THE HIGHLAND CLEARANCES.

The conversation had started out by my brother remarking that his wife Ina was one of the few women in Carnoustie who is called by her married name -Mrs Lindsay. My Mother also gets this distinction. This, we figured out, was because both were born and brought up in Dundee and only came to live in Carnoustie after they were married. The majority of Carnoustie women are called by their single names. So much so that many people would be hard put to it to recall what a woman's married name was. I wonder if this happens in all small towns? From that point we wandered onto the subject of local politics. I remarked that at least nine tenths of Carnoustie people are working class yet with monotonous regularity they elect the small band of "West Enders" who, although not far up the social scale, could be called the local 'gentry'. No one but a Conservative MP has a hope of being elected for our county, whereas in Dundee the people are fiercely Labour. David said..that he finds Carnoustie people very ignorant on any abstract ideas; much less quick on the uptake as compared with his town workmates. They are, he said, conservative about everything, unwilling to change an idea or listen to logical argument. Ina pointed out that Carnoustie people have no faith in their own kind. She cited a case in point. One girl from a working class home became a teacher; but when she tried to give classes at the evening school could get no one to attend. The general opinion was - "What could she teach me?" Another girl..same training..but from the 'gentry'..had folks flocking to her evening classes. This story absolutely fascinated me; it showed so much of the hidebound "keep your place" attitude of the Scottish working class in country districts and goes a long way to explain why our Prime Minister can count on a solid vote in his district. My Mother, who had been listening, broke in.."It starts with jealousy" she said, "that someone else has got on more than themselves". I think she is probably right; though they then probably rationalise by keeping it personal..."What could she teach me? She's only Tam Soutar's dochter!".

The letter in THE SCOTSMAN by John Prebble was prompted by the visit of the Queen to Scotland to unveil a statue to Robert the Bruce at the site of the Battle of Bannockburn. For centuries Bannockburn was only an untended field but now it has a memorial. The Queen made a speech about freedom and said that

Bannockburn was a symbol of freedom to us all. John Prebble writes:-

"Am I being unreasonable in wanting to ask those whose pulse was quickened by the Bannockburn anniversary what it was that moved them? The memory of a famous victory, the military superiority of the Scots over the English? A few of them perhaps, though six and a half centuries are a long way back to look for this, and one wonders what would have happened had Edward brought his archers to the van that day and used them against the Scots schiltrons. No, it would seem, from what has been said and written, that a successful struggle for freedom and independence was being remembered. Thus I think it is fair to ask what happened to that freedom and independence, and who was responsible. A cursory reading of history shows that Bannockburn merely secured a brief armistice in Scotland's long and tragic civil war. Within one man's lifetime it was resumed, and it continued on and off with exhausting passion until Cullodan. Noble Scots betrayed their country and their countrymen to the English. To be on the English payroll of the English Government (particularly during Mary's reign) became an unashamed habit. This peculiar form of national suicide persisted until the Act of Union, an uneasy marriage which bred a race of Scottish leaders who seemed intent on becoming Englishmen themselves (only better). The people of Scotland, Highland and Lowland but especially Highland, were the victims of a betrayal that reached its climax with the Clearances, whereby Scotland rid itself of Highlanders whose ancestors had been largely responsible for the victory at Bannockburn. I have a great love and admiration for Scotland and the Scots which I hope I have demonstrated elsewhere. But I am distressed by the Scots' emotional preoccupation with past defeats or glories at the expense of present problems. Past glories are a poor prophylactic against future ills. If they are to inspire it should be to action not dreaming. That the field of Bannockburn and the memory of what it won should be preserved, I do not dispute, but what was won has been lost since, and what yet may be lost should arouse stronger emotions in Scotland than those apparently inspired by this 650th anniversary. My particular interest in Scotland is concerned with the Highlands and the history of its people. Lowlanders are in their debt, and owe them much for past crimes and past indifference. A few miles north of Bannockburn begins a beautiful wasteland, and if it is to become (as I suspect it may) nothing more than a national park empty of men, then the rest of Scotland will need more than the memory of Bannockburn to stiffen its pride. The past has strong voices calling to Scotland today, but I do not think they come from the throats of Bruce's spearmen."

From mulling over that it seemed to me that the clan system was at the root of many Scots ills..and still is to a great extent. This irrational dependance upon the Chief..this loyalty which often had a poor return..still lingers on in ways which are much distorted and hard to untangle. Yet there is a straight line which runs from the Highlanders blind devotion to his chief to the Lowlanders belief that one should "keep one's place". I know that this is not a characteristic of the Scots alone (I am currently reading THE PROPER BOSTONIANS), but rarely can it have done so much damage to its society as it did here in Scotland. To get on--to be taken at your own worth--a Scotsman's better to leave home.

On Those Who Organise...

In this life there are two kinds of people..those who like to organise and those who don't. There are also those who don't mind sitting back and enjoying the effects of someone else's organisation; and those who kick and scream at the very idea of organisation in any shape or form. They all have to live with one another.

I got hauled in early to the organising business. My parents seemed to be natural-type suckers for it. Never a church do but my Mother was involved in the work..they even made her a Treasurer once and she can't count any better than I can. Dad has been trying to get out of being an official for as long as I can remember..and getting elected again despite his protests. I was reminded of Dad recently when Phil Rogers told me of being involved in so many affairs that he often was out every night for a fortnight. That he had gone along to a meeting determined that he would resign from the Treasurership to find that not another could be got to take on the job.

Those of you who have never been involved might say: that's silly..just say you'll resign and that's that..never mind what happens..someone else will turn up..no one is indispensable..etc. But this does not take into consideration the temperament of the person involved. They wouldn't have been in office in the first place if they hadn't suffered from a sense of duty or obligation; and after they have worked hard at whatever the post is - it is pretty awful to just watch the whole thing drop away or land in a muddle. And so they go home from the meeting still lumbered with the job and their mind full of chores. They probably also waste time kicking themselves. There are a few happy ones, of course, who are full of bliss at the prospect, who glory in what they consider a little bit of glory. I suppose its their reward but I count them in the nutcase class. Someone who takes on a job because of a sense of duty or the feeling that "someone must", I can understand. Someone who schemes and plots to be President of some piddling little society I can only pity.

Once you do get involved in organising you certainly get a long clear look at human nature! I can well remember my first experience. This was in my hospital Training School. We had a Student Nurses Social club and I was on the committee. We would decide to have a social evening and a little band of workers would turn up ahead of time. They would work hard to get all ready..then the party would start..and refreshment time would arrive. We had some large teapots which were taken round to pour out tea. There was never a lack of eager volunteers to man these teapots, eager hands sprang out everywhere. Afterwards all these eager volunteers would melt away and the washing up would be done by the same old group. The donkey work that isn't seen rarely gets a large turnout.

Organising in fandom has some added hazards. Fans make a special thing of not wanting to be organised and tact has to be used in bucketfuls if anything is to be done. As femme fans are in short supply they soon get roped in. I think it is this short supply that accounts for the fact that most of them are involved somewhere in organising; that most of their homes are centres of fanactivity. Once again I was early caught.,I had read of

the Manchester Convention and wrote to Dave Cohen asking to join and also offering to help. I was just being polite there and much to my surprise Dave (who was of the happy type who loved organising for the sake of it) promptly wrote back making me his assistant secretary. I couldn't quite see how I could be useful there, but I soon found out that every proposed item on the programme required a slew of letters. In the course of arranging one speech by one author I wrote six letters.

After that I jogged along quietly minding my own business till I got down to London. The old London O had abjured any organisation on principle. About the only thing they ever did was have Charlie Duncombe as their Treasurer who collected from them when they were set on some specific object, like booze for their room party. They were all far too individualistic to take kindly to any organising efforts and any attempts in this direction brought huge upheavals. The last one, of course, broke the O up completely. Before this, however, they put on the 1957 Worldcon and once again I found myself on a committee. My main job, as far as I could see, was to prevent all the others from breaking into open warfare. Being a newcomer I was not too involved and could therefore often help to straighten out a situation so that no one 'lost face'.

Another time, another place, I may tell the whole of the fantastic events that ended in the O going up in smoke..but not today..I don't think that all the glow has gone out of the embers yet; after all it only happened six years ago.

From then on at nearly every con I have attended I have had some job or other, my favourite is the registration desk for then you get a chance to talk with everyone. Then came the 1963 Petercon. At the business meeting no one-but no one would volunteer to put on the 1964 con. We from London had decided that we should not, as we hoped to get the 1965 Worldcon and knew there would be enough work in planning for this. Our main concern was Ella Parker who, we felt, was liable to volunteer to work. We all kept an eye on her during the meeting but she managed to refrain. The meeting ended with still no con committee. Then it was announced that there would be a special meeting that night in the small lounge to discuss the situation. At the time the meeting started there was a film show on I wanted to see. About halfway through someone came up to me and told me the meeting was on, but I answered that I was not going. Later someone else came and asked me to come but I refused. A third time someone came for me and said "Ethel, they want you to come." So, reluctantly and with a last glance at the film, I came away.

When I got into the lounge I found it filled..with old and familiar faces .. all the workers from way back over the years..Ken Slater, the Shorrocks, Eddie Jones, Ron Bennett, Eric Jones, my own crowd, the old, the dear, the familiar faces..if they didn't come up with some idea then there would be no con in 64!

I gradually discovered what had happened so far - Ken Slater had offered to handle the hotel bookings, Eric Jones had offered to provide taped music, Ken Cheslin had offered to do any duplicating, George Locke had offered to handle the auction material. All that was needed was a Secretary, a Treasurer,

and someone to organise the programme. Tony Walsh was willing to do a bit of this, but not all. I asked him if he would take on the Sec/Treas post if someone else would take on the programme and with a gulp he said yes. I dared not look behind me to where Ella sat, I could feel waves of incredulity being directed at me from her. After all I had lectured her on taking on too much. From the side of my eyes I could see Jimmy Groves shaking his head slowly from side to side like a spectator at Wimbledon.

I looked again at the faces..they were all busy people I knew and most of them had done their fair share of work in the past. Indeed of all those who had already volunteered not one but had already done work of some kind before. Who was I to stand out? So I said I'd do the programme.

Yet that con saw the beginning of some new faces joining the workband..new young lads coming up to let us old 'uns have a rest..and I wish them all well. Just as soon as I've handed over TAFF, and finished my bit as editor to OMPA and lived through '65..I'm going to have a looong rest. But to the others who are just getting started let me say, before you all think that I am complaining..doing this sort of work is very rewarding. You make friends --good friends, you have accomplished something and that always feels good, and sometimes when you least expect it someone says their thank you in an especially nice way that makes the whole thing seem worthwhile.

Ethel Lindsay

A few back copies of SCOT 34 are for sale. Price 1/-
Also for sale HAVERINGS, a fanzine of comment on fanzines received. This is published six times yearly. 1/6 or 50¢ for two issues. Some copies still available of Nos 14 and 15
Still available: THE LINDSAY REPORT 7/6 or \$1. All proceeds from the sale of this goes to TAFF

Trade policy: SCOT is sent for trade plus Haver to editors who publish either frequently or largely. Otherwise only Haver is sent as a trade