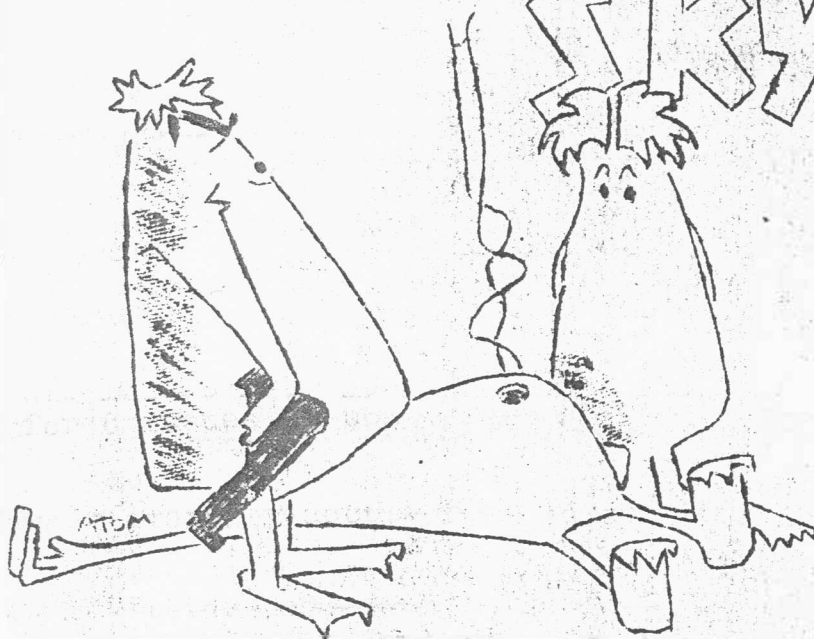


THE

SKYRACK

—NEWSLETTER—



"Take a note "Dear Skyrack....."

~~~~~  
A cross on back page -- your sub expired.

- @ This is SKYRACK Number 8,
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- @ Pavlat, 6001-43rd Ave, Md.,
- @ USA. News gratefully accep-
- @ ted. Cartoon: Arthur (Atom)
- @ Thomson. Contributors: Dick
- @ Schultz, Bob Pavlat, Norman
- @ Shorrook, Keith Freeman, Les
- @ Childs, Bjo, John Berry, Sid
- @ Birchby, Brian Burgess, Joe
- @ Patrizio and Eddie Jones.

## THE LONDON SYMPOSIUM

Harrogate fandom fought sickness in the form of a throat virus to travel down to London on Saturday 3rd October for the overnight convention and party, the Symposium, held at the Mayfair Restaurant, 65 South Audley Street, W.1. Attendees included Stateside Guests of Honour Belle and Frank Dietz and fans from London and all parts of the country in Mike Moorcock, Ted Tubb, Sandra Hall, Frank Arnold, Pamela and Ken ~~Baker~~, Ethel Lindsay, surprise visitor Walter Gillings, Joy and Vin/ Clarke, Harry Clements, Charlie Duncombe, Jim Groves, Pete Taylor, Derek Oldham, Mike Kilvert, Peter Tea Davies, Ken Cheslin, Ella Parker, George Locke, Bob Richardson, Alan Rispin, Eric Jones, Audrey Eversfield, Norman Shorrook, Brian Burgess, Les Childs, Archie Mercer, Peter West, Keith Freeman, Dagne and Ron Buckmaster, Sandy Sanderson, newly-weds Bobbie and Bill Gray, Tikwis Hall, and Tony Klein.

Frank Arnold and Ted Tubb greeted the gathering with introductory speeches and Wally Gillings compared the Symposium with the first British convention held in Leeds in 1937. Films brought from the USA and made by Belle and Frank Dietz, covering the London, South Gate and Detroit Worldcons were shown (each with an excellent covering commentary). Belle's were Alan E. Nourse's film adaptation, "Born of Man and Woman" and the Los Angeles film, "The Genie." "Brag and pontoon" were played. Excursions were made into the night for cups of coffee. An auction was held. A fanzine editors' panel was announced but didn't take place. An announced critics panel on the film "World, Flesh and the Devil" also did not take place. Ella Parker and Vin/ Clarke resigned from the London Circle Committee.

DICK SCHULTZ sent word of the Detention: "Everyone said that this was the most wonderful fabulous totally disorganised convention ever. John Berry arrived in Detroit in Dick Eney's 'Cannonball Express.' Wally Weber-observed everything for the CRY's monster con issue; Toskey just had fun. Wally's beanie is now fannish history. Philadelphia produced the con's only newsheet. John W. Campbell Jr. spent two hours of heated debate defending psionics. A piece of lasting history was written on the Sunday night. What started out as a fanzine publishers' panel became three and a half hour long discussion of where is fandom headed. Harlan Ellison asked why isn't fandom helping SF any more. Ed Wood asked why isn't new blood coming in. The panel rallied and defended fandom and fanzines as they are now. Hans Santesson told us to support the prozines. Heated discussion flew over the room. Why don't we appreciate any professionals? Where are the Ray Bradburys of the future? Get SF out of the sex, psychology and psionics rut and back to science-fiction instead of extrapolations of the present." All fanzines now discuss is the last con or monster movies," said Ellison. Why are there no sercon discussions of SF or fandom? All this was fabulous. Every speaker that night held the stage and had the magnetism and vitality and audience communication of an Adolf Hitler or Trotsky in his prime. Not even the Detroit group's Beer Bust next door drew many away. We all just sat there and listened to fanaticism. / The masquerade ball was great, but the Karen Anderson bat costume didn't show up. A play, "Monday 7th" lampooned the prozines. / Ed Emshwiller showed his film, "Dance Chromatic." There are no words to describe this. Berry, Bloch and Freas have told me that they too believe that this film should be at least nominated for next year's Hugo. It really is great. / Roger Sims took Mabel Young, Virginia Schultheis and John Berry over to Canada on the Monday morning. We almost lost John to the Canadian customs. We had a breakfast-lunch/(brunch)/ of ale and chocolate bars...."

BOB PAVLAT reported on the fanzine panel as follows: "Sunday evening came with one of the most surprising things I've ever heard of at a convention. The fanzine editors' panel which had been delayed from the first day finally went on at 11:30p.m. At midnight or so I became entirely disgusted and walked out. Up until then such questions as "how did you come to choose the name of your fanzine" had been asked by the moderator of each one of the seven or so panel members -- talk about dull! Shortly after I left, Harlan Ellison took the floor and said some words -- about what I don't know since I wasn't there, and others followed. Dave Kyle talked for close to half an hour. Doc Barrett held forth for ten or twenty minutes. And there were others, on every topic under the sun (centred on sf and the fan's role in sf). This was the evening of the beer party and beer was brought in from the adjoining room to keep the panel and members on the floor in speaking trim. The session closed at 3:30 a.m., and from all reports was extremely enjoyable." Bob also mentioned that the figures in the 1960 consite vote were Philadelphia 13, Pittsburgh 134, Washington 71, and went on to say, "The programme was mostly interesting. The auction moved, and there were some good items available. The flim presented by Los Angeles was superb. And such few neos as there were turned out to be nice kids -- none of the running through the corridors or other antics that helped spoil the NewYorkon and were some slight bother in Cleveland. One of the best cons I've seen, probably only second to the Solacon in personal enjoyment and definitely better from a programme point of view. Berry somehow got off for Seattle OK. Left the con Sunday."

TRIODE 16(Eric Bentcliffe, 47 Alldis Street, Great Moor, Stockport, Cheshire & Terry Jeeves, 58 Sharrard Grove, Sheffield 12, Yorks. 1/6 per copy or 4 issues for 5/-. 38pp. USA 20¢ - 6 for \$1 to Dale R. Smith, 3001 Kyle Avenue, Minneapolis 22, Minnesota). This first issue of TRIODE to appear for an overlong period was delayed because of the editors' BSFA commitments. The duplicating uses a neat and well slip-sheeted blend of red and black inks on buff paper and the layout is worthy of note. Artwork is by Terry Jeeves, Bill Rotsler, Bill Pearson, Eddie Jones, Harry Turner and Arthur Thomson. There is here a first rate Harrison Adventure, proving that this deliberately stilted series has not yet palled. A good letter column includes a discussion on the filming of Lord of The Rings. I finally managed to find a kindly publisher for Part Ten of Colonial Excursion, and Terry Jeeves and Sid Birchby ramble on nicely. Definitely recommended without reservation.

TRIODE arrived the day the previous SKYRACK was published, as also did SKYHACK, a four page take off of this newsletter. The return address quoted is "Cecil Bennett, 7 Southway etc." but I wish to point out that this is not a double ploy and that I have myself been taken in by some fan I certainly hope was good enough to observe the copyright laws. Apart from one or two minor flaws(It's the Hotel St. George in Harrogate), the style of the imitation reads much as if it were indeed SKYRACK and the originators of SKYHACK are to be congratulated on an excellent parody. Archie Mercer is the leading suspect; although the magazine was posted in Bournemouth, the penned address on Norman Shorrock's copy has been compared with a postcard Archie sent him and.....bingo! About SKYHACK fans have said "What goes with this Skyhack business?"(Keith Freeman), "Many thanks for Skyhack"(Ethel Lindsay), "Thanks for Skyhack with all its fake-fan news. Like tee-hee."(Sid Birchby). Tee hee yourself. At least I'm pleased to find that someone does ~~consider~~ consider that it is a fake.

LES SPINGE 1(Ken Cheslin, 18 New Farm Road, Stourbridge, Worcs. & Peter Davies, 12 Shepherds Brook Road, Lye, Stourbridge, Worcs. No price quoted for this initial issue. 24pp.). This is the long promised fanzine from the newly formed Stourbridge & District SF Circle(The SADO) and while it is nowhere up to the standard of other fairly recent first issues (Perihelion or Smoke) it does have its good points and shows promise. Apart from a good report of the club's trip to London, a letter from Bob Tucker and a readable parody of fiction, the material is below average. Still, the material is neither better nor worse than the earliest ORBITs(the Leeds club magazine) and I thought the world of those.

ORION 23(Ella A. Parker, 151 Canterbury Road, West Kilburn, London N.W.6. 1/- per copy. 46pp). ORION is becoming almost as regular as it was in the days of Paul Enever. The first use of Ella's bargain duplicator leaves much to be desired. Luckily the material makes up for this. Sid Birchby has a wonderful little piece about an Extraordinarily Summoned Meeting of the Levenshulme Lo-Fi Group. Sandra Hall and Bobbie Wild contribute yet another report of the London trip to Cheltenham at Whitsun. Ken Bulmer has an excellent chapter of his TAFF TALES, his experiences with the Barrett family. George Locke is present with a story about a parallel fandom. By far the best thing in the issue is Atom's fan bems. Letters too. Recommended.

DEPARTMENT OF BROADCASTING FANS: Keith Freeman first gave me the tip to listen to the BBC Midland Home Service at 6.35p.m. Wednesday, 16th September. This I did, to the accompaniment of wheezes and groans from a set whose reception is limited to Northern Home Service. Some voice said something about having contacts the world over and that these were regarded as friends. Keith Freeman reported that the broadcast had been part of a coverage on the Cheltenham Hobbies Exhibition at which the Cheltenham Circle had a stand. Keith said: "The official exhibition was open from 2.10 on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, 14th -16th. A lot of work was put into the preparations. Everybody helped, with Eric Jones working hardest of all. Thanks to Ted Carnell there were 300 specimen copies of New Worlds to give away to our 'customers,' and Ted also lent a lot of Nova front cover originals for display. Our stand was one of the most colourful and also successful stands. The Science Fiction Book Club also helped by sending a load of their leaflets and a dozen of their books for display. On Monday a film unit came round and all they took of our stand (much to our disgust) was a model(?) flying saucer. Also Bill Gray was interviewed for/by the BBC. This interview was later edited by the BBC, I believe. (At the Symposium, Bill told me that he was not pleased with the way the interview had been cut. Evidently, the best bits had been chopped out) On the Tuesday evening Doc Weir came over and gave his talk "Atlantis, a New Theory" - the same one, more or less, as at the Brumcon. Summing up, I think it was quite a successful exhibition as far as the CSFC was concerned. About a dozen forms were filled up on the stand itself by people who were interested in the circle and others said they were going to post later." Les Childs also reported the Exhibition, mentioning also that it was a great success as far as the CSFC was concerned. On Saturday, 26th September, the BBC Light Programme's "Saturday Club," featured the Merseysippi Jazz Band. Norman Shorrocks had warned me to listen as this is the programme on which players are interviewed, but the programme turned out to be a disappointment. Clinton Ford the jazz singer who started with the Band and is now being groomed for stardom was featured and the Band presented as little more than background, though they did play one or two numbers like Hiawatha and Jersey Lightning. I wonder if the BBC will ever realise what a personality they have on their doorstep in Pete Daniels.

ROBERTA WILD AND BILL GRAY were married in London on Saturday 26th September. The Best Man was Les Childs. Following the reception at the home of Sandra Hall -- Ella Parker writes of Bobbie in radiant terms -- the happy couple honeymooned in Glastonbury, Somerset and returned to London for the Symposium the following weekend. Congratulations, Bobbie and Bill and every good wish for your future happiness. (And thank you very much indeed for the lovely cake).

BJO WELLS tells me that the Christmas issue of SHANRI-L'AFFAIRES will be a bumper "Christmas card" issue and that she is hoping that all fan artists will contribute artwork. "The theme is thrown open," Bjo writes "to interpretation of a sci-fi, fantasy or fannish Xmas, religious, cartoon or whatever the artist wishes. It would help if the artist would put his own work on a Gestetner stencil and send it to us quickly, but of course I can put it on stencil if I have to. I'm trying to contact all artists but might miss one that might like to join us. It will be an attractive issue." Artists....?

JOHN BERRY, who has now returned home from his Stateside trip, wishes to proffer profound and sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to the Berry Fund, to everyone in America who provided food, transport and other necessities, to everyone who provided comfort, both physical and mental and to, weeeelll, EVERYONE.

John states that the whole trip was like a dream. Everyone was kind and generous, and American fandom, when it gets into top gear, is a wonderful institution.

Altogether, says John, he travelled around 3,500 miles by car and about 8,500 miles by air, and God knows how many miles up and down by elevator.

He says he had heat exhaustion, fought a pitched battle with cockroaches, was presented with a typewriter, kissed Bloch's boots, chatted with Isaac Asimov and drank 3,500 gallons of home brew.

He adds that this isn't meant to be a blurb, but his adventure THE GOON GOES WEST are being published in CRY OF THE NAMELESS every month and there is a good possibility that a thick book will be out early next year.

He also says "thank you thank you thank you thank you thank you thank you thank you tha....."

MANY THANKS to the nice fans who sent me souvenir postcards. From Detroit came a card signed by the Youngs, Ellis Mills, Rick Sneary, John Magnus, Bob Pavlat, Bill Donaho, Jim Caughran, the Shaws, Dick Ellington, Fred Prophet and Karen Anderson. / Dick Eney, Jean and Andy Young sent a card from Dixie's roadside restaurant, McLean, Illinois, where Tucker met the Solacen motorcade. The inscription reads "We looked for elephant footprints but couldn't find any." / Card from the Liverpool group on the occasion of the Russians hitting the moon with Lunik II. "9.02pm. 63 minutes to go. Does the world end with a bang or a whimper?" "Not with a bang but a hic." "What, me worry," etc etc.

MOVEMENTS: Brian Jordan, 81 Crawford Road, Norton Lees, Sheffield 8 Yorkshire. / Ray Nelson, Makeveien 48, Ulvøya, Oslo, Norway.

COLONIAL EXCURSION can now be ordered. I'm this month beginning work on the report of my TAFF trip to the SolacCon, chapters of which have already appeared. All profits will go to TAFF. Advance orders paid to either myself or Bob Pavlat, 6001 -43rd Ave, Md., USA, will run to 7 shillings or one dollar. Advance orders can also be placed for the 1959 FAN DIRECTORY which will be ready in January. Pre-publication price of 1/6 or 20¢.

NEBULA 42 will not, after all, appear and because of the editor, Peter Hamilton's continued ill-health this light of British science fiction can be taken to have folded. A great pity. / Recently the death was announced of Tiffany Thayer, founder of the Fortean Society. The Society's future is now believed to be somewhat obscure. / On October 12th - that's next week! - Britain will have its own MAD Magazine. Strato publications are launching a BRE of the American MAD. What, I worry? / At the recent Edinburgh International Festival of Music and Drama, the Royal Swedish Opera Company presented "Aniara," an opera which gives its name to a space ship carrying 8,000 refugees to Mars. / In preparation are APORRHETA and the Autumn FEMIZINE.



THIS IS SKYRACK'S FIRST SIX PAGE ISSUE and accordingly I think I might be allowed to make the following comments:

- 1) Ordinarily I do not use USA news. FANAC can cover events like Djinn Faine's marriage (10th October) far better than can I. If such news is of major interest to British fans then, fine, I'll use it.
- 2) Ordinarily I am not interested in scooping the fan field. I was in a happy position with regards to the 1960 Worldcon siting and Hugo awards. To press forward this advantage all Stateside copies of SKYRACK were sent airmail. I am willing to send issues airmail if the recipient is willing to pay additional postage of 5/- per copy.
- 3) I will publish announcements or open letters if, like the Berry item this issue, they are regarded as news or items of interest.
- 4) Items of news which depend upon shaky facts and/or which cannot be checked will be published as rumours. It will be realised that at times of news are presented in good faith which might possibly clash with the wishes of interested parties. I am not interested in malicious gossip.
- 5) I am trying to present facts per se, without passing comment on said facts. This is not a fanzine of opinions, however strongly I might feel on any subject. Limited exceptions might be made in reviewing fanzines. The blatant insertion into the Schultz comments on the Detention is merely to show that I am familiar with the term and that I do not wish to receive letters quoting Somerset Maugham at me. Thank you, we went over all that in an early CAMBER.

Corrections: Frank Kelly Freas carried off the artist's Hugo for the fifth year in succession. Between 350 and 400 attended the Detention.

THE SWEDISH SF TIMES devoted an entire issue last month to reprinting news from SKYRACK.

THE BRITISH INTERPLANETARY SOCIETY is holding a film show at the Leeds City Museum, Sat. 17th October. The programme is High Altitude Research, Exploring Space, Atomic Energy and The German A-4 Rocket.

THE WILLIS PAPERS are due to appear shortly. Published by Ted Johnstone, they can be obtained in Briatin from Arthur Thomson, 17 Brockham House, Brockham Drive, London SW 2. Deluxe edition 7/-. Ordinary edition 5/-.

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