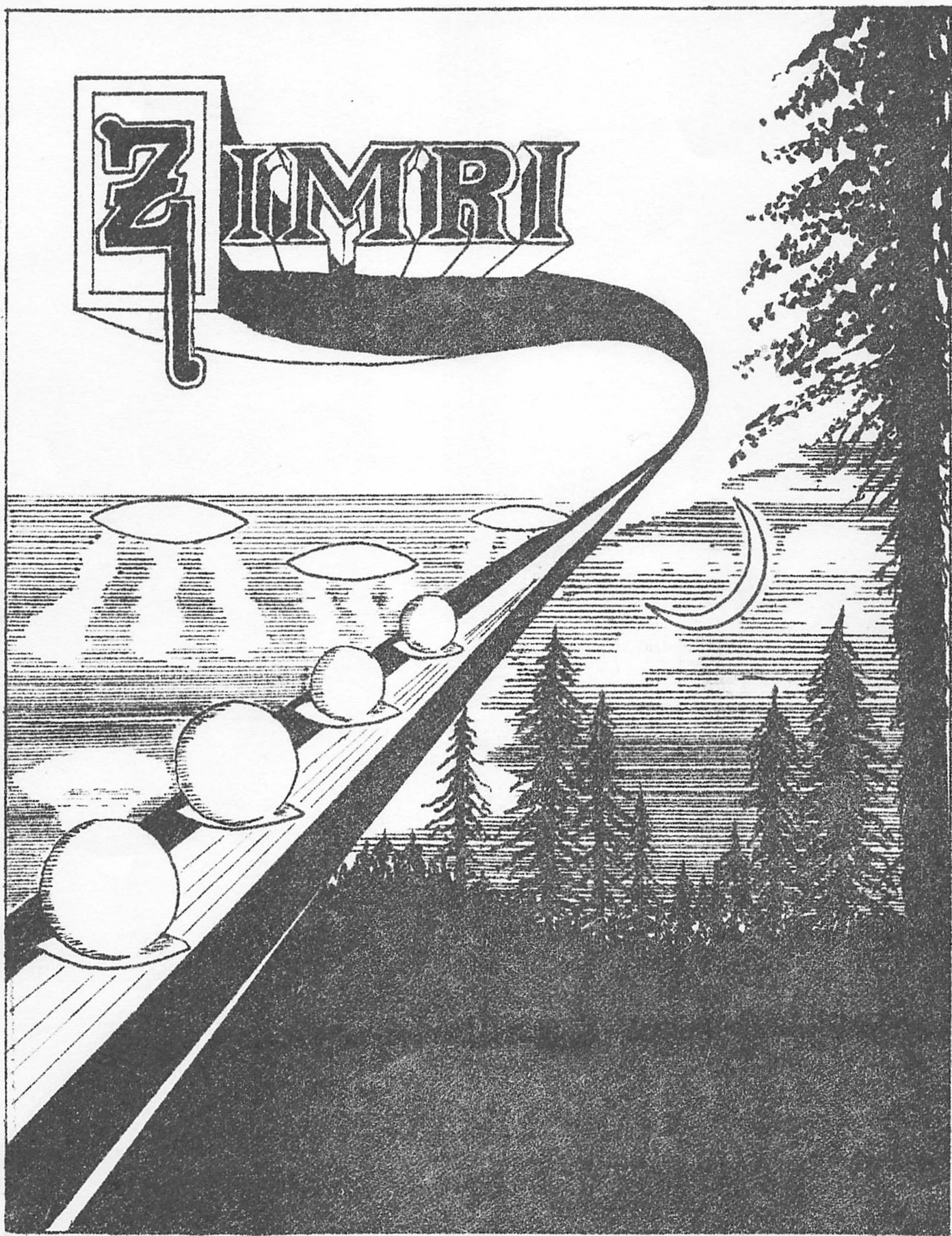


ZIMIRI



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ZIMRI NUMBER ONE JULY 1971

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• ILLUSTRATIONS

Front Cover	George White.
Back Cover	Lisa Conesa.
Shirley Glynn	8, 41.
George White	5, 13
Lisa Conesa	2,4,11,15,21 22, 25,30,33, 34,38,44.

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EDITOR

I read somewhere, that first issues are a statement of existence. Well, consider it said, WE EXIST.

Having read other fanzines, where the editorial proved to be the brilliant nadir from which the fanzine could descend no further, I approached the task of writing an editorial with trepidation. However, you can imagine my relief, when my gallant co-editor Lisa, blithely said that she would do the editorial! With a smile, that, in retrospect, I'm sure must have resembled that of the moustachioed villains of the early silents, I graciously agreed that the fair lady should write the editorial.

So, how is it that I am writing the editorial now? You might well ask as I am still trying to figure it out myself. Having sat back with a self-satisfied smile, content to enjoy the shade, I now find myself booted upstairs again, so to speak. Female finangling - you have missed an experience if you have never met it! Suffice it to say, don't blame me for inflicting myself upon you!!

I have often wondered as to the point of an editorial. Is it to give the editor his ha'p'th of ego-boo, or for the world to speculate how deep the editor's thoughts are? Well, I could write an essay on the finer points of two-fingered typing. Or, even better, a discussion of the Hugo or Nebula nominations. Or, my nominations for the Hugo or Nebula; or, what was wrong with what won the Hugo or Much as I loved SF Review, every other of Dick Geis' editorials seemed to be considering what to pick for the current year's awards. Or what was wrong with last-year's awards.

Alternatively, the editor gives a modest (hah!) smile, and proudly proclaims the riches he has in store for you. Have you ever noticed that the riches often

tend to be for coming attractions ? After stencilling 40 quarto stencils, the editor tends to look on even the greatest epic with a slightly jaundiced eye.

In the process of proclaiming the first issue, hyperbole is taken up like a swathing battleaxe. How many times have first issue editorials entered with truly magnificent fanfare of verbosity, only to sink into an only issue ? There is said to be a graveyard where elephants go to die, the graveyard of most fanzines, has been their first editorial!

So, I make no rash promises. No statements newly rushed from the fannish Sinai. No barbed needles, to get frantic fans and panting pros, rushing to dip their pens in vitriol. And believe it or not, no mention of my personal choice for the Hugos. I would like to bitch at the cost of the supporting membership for the worldcon, but that is another matter!

On thinking of editing a fanzine, the problem emerges - Nay, it jumps up and bites one - how to make that fanzine just that little bit different. Well, seeking the holy grail of true sf, one could of course, copy the various sf magazines.

Have you noticed that Worlds of Tomorrow was becoming the avant-garde magazine of the GALAXY group ? Or, in more basic English, the logo 'for the adult reader' means 'We publish salacious, sex oriented sf.' Well, how about applying that formula to a fanzine! The NEW SEX FANZINE, find out what orgies there were at the Eastercon fancy dress; HOW SF CAN IMPROVE YOUR SEX LIFE..... etc etc. The idea is not appealing, to me at least!

Or ANALOG, 'Science fact - Science fiction'. The main sf content these days, being in John Campbell's editorials, or perhaps fantasy would be more appropriate. So. if I retitled this editorial, 'Message from Olympus' and proved that telepathy does work ???? No, it has been done before

But fanzines are for fun. A simple statement that, but one that seems to have been forgotten in some fanzines. When a voluntary hobby no longer is fun, then there is little point in doing it. Fortunately though, we both have had a lot of fun out of the first issue of ZIMRI, and we will probably get much more. Although, on having got to my twentieth typing mistake on the last stencil, I began to wonder if we were not both masochists!

So, ZIMRI is for fun. The emphasis is and always will be, on sf. Because this is the form of writing that we both most enjoy. But you will find many things here. In fact, mostly anything that we find interesting and well written. (Apart from the editorial of course!) Moreover, we very much hope that we will see you here. A Letter of Comment, whether you were bored, loved or hated it, any reaction would be much appreciated. We know what we think about this, but telepathy and necromancy notwithstanding, we will not know what you think unless you tell us!

Fandom has been called many things, from an esoteric ego-tripping group, to the most rewarding thing in a person's life. Well, ZIMRI, is now part of it. We've launched the boat, and welcome you for a long trip in future issues.

You will be hearing from us

Phil Muldowney.

CO-ED REPORTING FOR HURRAHS !

Mustering every word in my vocabulary, I'll be very brief. Following the old tradition (this is after all, what attracted me to Fandom), I'd like to say a few hurrahs for the names you may or may not have heard of before.

A standing ovation please, for Beryl Mercer, who needs no introduction to fandom, likewise, Archie, Beryl's spouse, who isn't here in person, so to speak, but he does pop into Beryl's ~~article~~ article from time to time. Archie may even drop in ~~in~~ himself one of these days. who knows

Ian Williams, the ruler of MAYA, another Fan renowned, does a fair job of introducing himself and his gang - one of whom makes a personal appearance here, in my favourite TV. act, MAGIC ROUNABOUT. This modest young PENMAN promises to blind us with his brilliance once again some time.

Making their debut, are, Graham Peale in an Eastercon report. Regretably a somewhat shortened version, but variety was our aim this time. John Alan Glynn deserves a special hand from me, not only for his article, but also for much help and advice (a brave deed indeed..), which I for one was much in need of. John's very talented sister Shirley, is a dab hand with a pencil. Some of Shirli's drawings speak for themselves here, others have flown to weirder zinos.

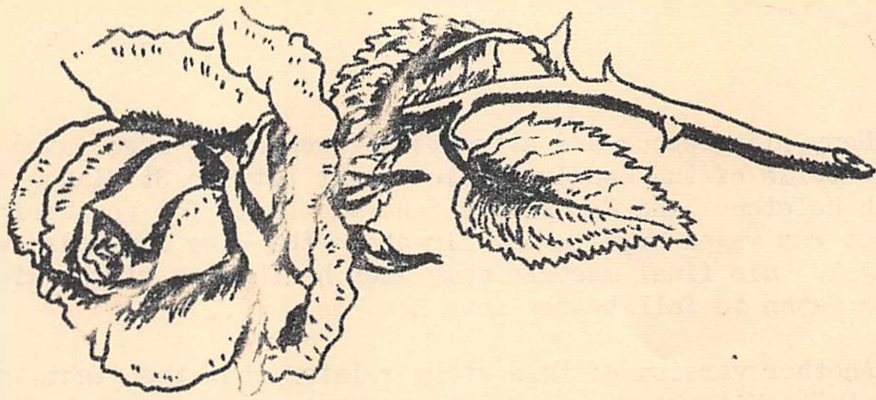
The superb cover, not to mention many of the interior illoes, are by another name unknown to fandom: George White. George has some superb ideas for cartoons , next issue will be full of them, hurrah!

We intend to have at least one short story per issue, this first one here is yet another debut. Jo Withis one welcomes all criticisms, suggestionsetc.

One article alone may need some qualification for being here at all, HOMAGE TO STRAVINSKY. Igor Stravinsky and Cordwainer Smith are the two artists who I have fanatical feelings about - love 'em both. I just couldn't miss the opportunity of paying homage to one whose death came at the time of planning ZIMRI. That I could restrain myself from going on about Cordwainer Smith in this issue, is a miracle in it's own right.

So what I am really trying to say is: Three cheers for fandom and all that it entails, thank you one and all. I've had my fun in the writing, hope you have your share reading.....





A Flower from Beryl.

THE HELSTON FURRY DANCE.

BERYL MERCER

You probably know it (unless you are Cornish) as the "Floral Dance," in " a quaint old Cornish town." The real, ancient name is as above, from the Latin feria (a fair) or the Cornish fer, a festival.

" The transliteration of the name 'furry' into 'Flora', reminiscent of Classical mythology, is no more than a piece of 18th century special pleading, given colour no doubt, by the fact that the Roman Floralia was held at a proximate date, the fourth of the May Calends. However this may be, May 8th in Helston is a day of flowers; everyone who is to dance, and almost everyone else besides, wears a button-hole of lilies-of-the-valley, while houses, shops and schools are garlanded with bluebells, furze and rhododendrons to compete for the best-decorated building." (1)

The dance itself is pre-Christian, and its origins are unknown, though of course a number of theories have been advanced by researchers. Most agree that it is essentially a spring festival, celebrating the triumph of life (spring) over death (winter). For many hundreds of years it has taken place on May 8th, except when this date falls on a Sunday or a Monday, the latter being Helstons market day. In either of these cases, the dance takes place on the preceding Saturday, as it will do next year when the 8th falls on a Monday.

It is likely that the dance was at one time a May Day celebration; even now there is a 'walking rehearsal' around the town on the evening of May 1st.

" The origin of the tune, ... is not known. There are no words set to the music, nor is a written score used by the Helston Town Band. The parts are passed on by Helston Bandmasters to their successors through the years, and they are jealous of its tradition and its rendering." (2)

" Many picturesque and attractive legends are associated with the custom. ... One tells of the deadly battle fought between St Michael" (the patron saint of both Helston and Cornwall) "and the Devil for possession of Helston. The conflict was waged high in the air above the town and ended victoriously for the Archangel. His final mastery came when he threw a mighty stone at his adversary, causing Satan to fall beaten into Loe Pool. ...

" Another version of this story relates that the fight took place in France, and that St. Michael was forced to retreat from his Mount on that side of the Channel to his Cornish Mount. The devil, afraid of crossing the water, and ebraged at the Archangel's escape, licted off the lid of Hell and hurled it at his foe." (2)

It is said that this stone - now believed to have been a meteorite -v was eventually retrieved from Loe Pool, broken up for building material, and that a part of it is incorporated in the wall of the Old Angel Hotel in Coingehall Street.

" Another version" (of the legend) "told of the visitation of a devastating plague, which drove the people from their homes to seek refuge in the neighbouring woods. When the plague subsided, they returned to the town, waving branches of trees and spring flowers, and danmed through the streets and houses in their relief and happiness." (2)

* * * * *

May 8th 1971 dawned cloudy and cool, but dry. Archie usually has to work on Saturday mornings, but at the last minute his firm decided to let its Culdrose based workers join in the fun of Flora Day. So we were in the town when the first dance began promptly at 7.am., starting off from the Guildhall at the junction of Meneage, Coinagehall and Wendron Streets. With leisurely tread, the band advanced up Meneage street towards the hospital, followed by 68 couples of mainly young people. To me, these youngsters were a true representation of the over-worked phrase, "the Beautiful People." They were life and colour and joie-de-vivre as they moved along, two by two, hand in hand, performing a simple slip-step for the first phrase of the tune, and a sort of cross-over, swing-your-partner polka for the second phrase.

Incidentally, the tune is not that of the song, "The Floral Dance." It is much shorter and simpler, and although Archie was of the opinion that "a clot of people were going to be very sick of that tune before the day was out," I don't think it was so.

The procession passed the hospital, turned, came back; danced into the hospital grounds, round them, and out again. Back down Meneage Street, turn right up Wendron Street, back down into Church Street ... down, down the narrow streets to the winding lanes at the bottom of the town, anf finally back up Coinagehall Street - Helston's only wide street. Every so often the band would stop and wait while the couples danced into a shop by one entrance and out through another, ducking under the floral decorations that adorned every door and window in sight. Tree-branches, bluebells, furze, occasionally rhododendrons ... people had taken a lot of time and trouble.

And overhead the flags and bunting fluttered in the chilly breeze, and above them the gulls wheeled and soared, their mournful cries for once drowned by the ancient music of the Furry Dance.

* * * * *

The Hal-an-Tow, at 8.30. a.m., is something quite different from the dance, and may possibly predate it, although the traditional song accompanying it is probably Elizabethan.

" Early in the morning, youths go out into the neighbouring woods and gather branches of sycamore. They return at 8.30 and, waving the branches above their heads, perambulate the town, stopping at places of vantage to sing the Hal-an-Tow song. Some of the youths dress in costume to represent the characters in the song." (2)

I don't know when the above was written, but this year, at least, girls as well as lads took part, and nearly all in costume. "St. Michael" was there, opposed by a "Dragon", and there was a girl dressed in white, wearing flowers in her hair - probably a representation of Spring.

By this time the crowds were thickening fast, and, being only five feet tall, I was unable to see much more of the Hal-an-Tow than the heads of the performers and the waving sycamore branches. The only musical accompaniment to the song appeared to be the tambourines.

Robin Hood and Little John,
They both are gone to Fair, O,
And we will to the merry green wood
To see what they do there, O,
And for to chase, O,
To chase the buck and doe.

(Chorus):
Hal-an-Tow, Jolly rumble O,
For we are up as soon as any day O
And for to fetch the Summer home,
The Summer and the May O
For summer is a come, O,
And Winter is a gone, O.

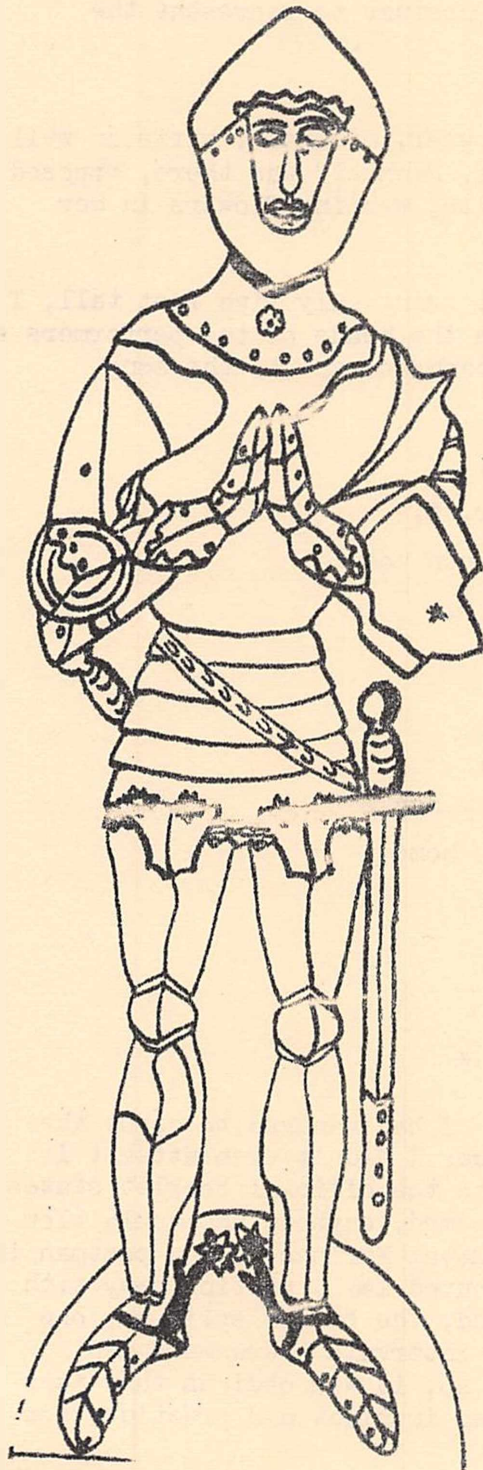
* * * * *

At 10.15 began the very popular children's dance. I had managed to count the number of those taking part in the 7 -o'clock dance; I didn't even attempt it with the children, since there were around 800 (so the official booklet states) taking part! The band was augmented - by, it seemed, anybody who could blow an instrument; Archie swears he saw a member of the Royal Marines, and a postman in uniform, while I was enchanted to see a young coloured lad , puffing away with all his might, at a cornet. Its ranks thus swelled, the band split up, one half leading, the other bringing up the rear. At intervals there were men carrying portable loudspeakers of some kind; even so, it was obvious that many of the children were carrying the rhythm from sheer instinct and practice, for

they couldn't possibly have been able to hear the music.

" Many people like this dance on account of its spontaneous gaiety; and any fine day if you watch a school playground during 'break' you will see how easily Helston children slip into a dancing step" (1)

All the children are dressed in white, and wear the inevitable spray of lilies-of-the-valley. Each year the procession is led by a different school, and for this dance, as for all the others, the first two couples must be Helston-born. Each school is distinguished by the colour of the flower-chaplets worn by the little girls, some of whose dresses gave evidence of hours of loving and careful mother-work.



As is usual where children are concerned, there was some laughter to leaven the emotionalism induced by such an occasion; now and again a small boy would drop out to have a shoe-lace tied, and one little girl was busily thumping the girl in front for some misdeancur, while maintaining her dancing-step. All school ages were represented, from lovable dots of five, to graceful, breath-taking young creatures of fifteen and sixteen.

* * * *

Where are those Spaniards,
That make so great a boast, O ?
For they shall eat the grey goose feather,
And we will eat the roast, O.
In every land, O,
The land where'er we go.
Hal-an-Tow, Jolly rumble O ...

And so to the noon dance, and the streets so choked with spectators that at times it was difficult to keep one's balance. Again I didn't see much as I would have liked of the dance, and the police had to clear a path for them. The first dance was youthful beauty and simplicity; the second was childish gaiety and gravity combined; this noon dance was mature dignity and colourful formality. All the gentlemen

wore morning suits and grey toppers; the ladies wore long gowns, elbow-length gloves, and picture hats. And what hats some of them were! I have never been to Ascot on Ladies' Day, but I'm sure the display there could never out-rival this.

By now the sun was out, but the breeze was still sharp; probably some of the older ladies were glad of their long gowns. I managed to get a camera-shot of one delightful senior citizen in a blue gown, with a lovely cartwheel-type hat trimmed with blue feathers. Although her face was lined and wrinkled, and her hair was white, there was memory of her youth in the spring of her step and the eager reach of her hands to her swinging-partner.

As for the Good Knight, St. George,
St. George he was a Knight, O.
Of all the Knights in Christendom
St. George he is the right, O.
In every land, O,
The land where'er we go.

(Chorus): Hal-an-Tow, Jolly rumble O

* * * * *

There was, of course, a fair, and the Big Wheel could be seen from the vantage point of the Public Library, set high on the hill above the centre of the town. But we didn't visit the fair; for one thing, we'd probably have spent more than we could afford if we'd gone, but mainly, I think, because the essential tawdriness of a twentieth century fair would have clashed, somehow, with the atmosphere engendered by the age-old ritual of the dance.

Stalls had been set up all down one side of Coinage Hall Street, and in at least one of them a transistor was pumping out raucous pop rubbish. Maybe I'm being over harsh, and I do genuinely like some of today's pop music, but Flora Day in Helston was neither the time nor the place for it. It should never be allowed !

* * * * *

But to a greater than St. George,
Our Helston has a right, O,
St. Michael with his wings outspread
The Archangel so bright, O,
Who fought the fiend, O,
Of all mankind the foe.

(Chorus); Hal-an-Tow, Jolly rumble O

* * * * *

After the midday dancers had disappeared from our sight, I took my film to be developed, and we made our way home, collecting our usual Saturday pasties on the way. We had half planned to return for the final, 5.p.m. dance, but by the time we got home my feet were, as the saying goes, killing me. So we didn't go - but I understand that this final dance is performed by the early -morning group - the Beautiful Young People - and that any spectators may tack on to the back of the procession if they wish.

Reverting to these young people for a moment: I have said that I was enchanted to see a coloured lad in the band. I was equally enchanted to see, near the end of the 7 a.m. procession, two very pretty girls, one hand in hand with a bespectacled Chinese boy, the other partnered by a dark-skinned, beaming youth who looked like a Polynesian. I assume that they were students at Camborne Technical College. I wonder what rituals in their own countries parallel this ancient Celtic rite in which they were participating with every sign of enjoyment?

* * * * *

God bless Aunt Mary Moses
And all her power and might, O,
And send us peace in Merry England
Both day and night, O,
Both now and evermore, O,

(Chorus): Hal-an-Tow, Jolly rumble O ...

Aunt Mary Moses? Again, theories differ:

"The last verse introduces the colourful name of Aunt Mary Moses, whose origin has led to much speculation by scholars. It has been suggested with great probability that this name has at some time been substituted for that of the monarch of the realm; probably during the Commonwealth period, but left unaltered at the Restoration." (2)

"They pause at several points along the route to sing and cheer, the boys dressed in green and representing 'Robin Hood' and 'St. George.' Formerly there was a 'male-ass' too, as at Padstow, disguised as an old woman in an out-dated finery and called 'Aunt Mary Moses' - the 'Aunt Molly' of the Mummers' play." (1)

Probably we shall never know for certain the true origins of this lady, or indeed of any of the celebrations. I don't think it really matters; for hundreds of years, Helston has maintained the continuity of a rite of Spring as old as Man himself, and I defy anyone not to be stirred by its symbolism, gait and beauty.

Sources:

- (1) "The living Stones," by Ithell Colquhoun. Pub. Peter Owen Ltd., London 1957.
- (2) "The Helston Furry Dance," by Edward M. Cunnack. Pub. The Flora Day Asscn. & The Stewards of the Helston Furry Dance., Helston 1971.



john alan glynn

ON

THINGS UNDER THE INITIALS S.F.

Whilst wondering what to say I
find my attention wandering to
some pictures upon the wall.

Gazing at these I find I can draw parallels between writer and artist. One picture, a country scene with a brook running off the canvas, is to me a reasonable example of imagination, observation and orderly creation. The trees are almost real, if I put my hand to the brook I may get it wet, so great is the power of this artist to convey reality.

Another picture holds my attention, but not for long, it is a daub an accident with a palette perhaps? Spilt paint? I find myself wondering if someone actually set out to create this thing. But the evidence is there, the canvas has been cut rectangular it is enclosed by a frame, indeed the frame wins more of my attention than its contents.

I adamantly set my attention to deciphering the contents. What did the artist (writer) have in mind? Ah, yes, I see it now! It's a sunset observed through a welding shield! No...no it's not, that's just my imagination trying to make sense out of the chaos. It's like the Rorschach Test, there's nothing there just ink.

The 'artist' (I use the term loosely . If a chimpanzee squashed his banana into a sheet of paper and then walked over it, could he be called an artist? Dear cusin.) who 'done' this, created nothing, used no imagination, observation is out of the question.

Under the cover of unorthodoxy for the sake of it, this 'artist' is making his living doing nothing, like certain tailors to a certain king.

Under the initials SF there appears to be a growing tendency towards this 'artistry'. The field is no doubt respected for its capacity for new form, presentation and experiment.

Is describing the natural functions of the body - I don't mean breathing, belching or blinking, or any of the more complicated actions that are carried on within the organism, but the processes involved in disposing waste matter...going to the toilet in fact! It seems to be thought that characters become more convincing if they perform these tasks - considered to be experiment, new form?

But of course it depends what we mean by SF. I always thought it meant Science Fiction, but the following, it will be observed, also qualify for the initials:-

Social Functions
Speculative Fiction
Snow Flakes
Sexual Functions
Sun Flower
Susan Fairnshaw
Stupid Fiction
Sodium Floride
Siamese Feline
Soft Foundations
Shaving Foam
So Forth

This list has served two purposes. It has helped to fill the page and to illustrate my point. I'm not intent on a 'clean up SF' campaign but if it's going to lend itself to every possible mental mutation ever created or become a breeding ground for pornography, it will lose some of its genuine followers.

.....

.....



HOMAGE TO STRAVINSKY.

The Miracle of Creation:

He was known as the man who daily accomplished the Miracle of Creation. In his white house in the Hills of Hollywood he rose every morning at 8.00am with pedagogic punctuality. Having washed, and made movements resembling those of gymnastics, he would go to his study. A music laboratory cut off from the rest of the world by sound-proof walls. Here no one else was ever allowed to enter; here he spent hours drawing notes or words with red, blue, green or black ink, which stood in meticulously arranged bottles on a table near by.

There from nine till two, the 'mirracle of creation' was realised. Then lunch, a game of chess with his wife, listening to some records, sometimes correcting manuscripts...

Igor Stravinsky died of a heart attack, on Tuesday the 6th of April in his New York apartment. Later, according to his wishes, his body was taken to Venice-San Michele Cemetry and laid next to his friend Sergei Diaghileff.

It was for Diaghileff's ballets that Stravinsky wrote some of his most famous music. It was Diaghileff who having heard Stravinsky's music in St Petesburg, remembered the name, and later suggested that Stravinsky composed for his ballet company: Nijinsky and Pavlova, Fokine and Balachine, succesively: The Firebird, Petrushka and the magnificent RITE OF SPRING.

RITE OF SPRING! That famous premiere in Paris Champs-Elysees. The premiere that brought together 'all Paris', Saint-Seans, Debussy, Ravel, Jean Cocteau, Erica Satie. One which became at once a revolution and a scandal. It was a perversion - in rythm, instrumentation, harmony. It was a liberation of sound from the rules which restricted it at the time. But not all present at the premiere were as impressed with the Rite of Spring as we are today.

It was some time before the world acknowledged it as the work of genius and saw it's beauty, strength and dynamism.

Stravinsky lived in an altogether different world of sound. In a spellbinding, modern way his music transformed the eras of Pergoles, Rossini, Tchaikovsky, even... jazz.

He wrote literally everything, and everything with the same degree of equilibrium, seriousness and solidity. One day opening new horizons for contemporary music with his ascetic Symphony of Psalms, the next, composing some requested tango for piano, or a polka for elephants. It was only films that hadn't received one note from him. "The best way to escape Hollywood, is to live there," he said.

He moved easily in all spheres of music, constantly creating - against much opposition, there were those who called him a conformist or an electromusician - his own unrepeatable style. The general line, not disregarding anything which calls itself music, led Stravinsky not with but above all new currents and modes...

When it looked as though he would end his pastiche wanderings with an old-classical styled ballet Orpheus or a little later an opera The Rake's Progress, Stravinsky the 70 year old genius surprised everyone with experiments in the techniques of dodecaphony, for which he showed marked contempt for many years. He composed, using this technique, at least one masterpiece; the ballet AGON - for 12 dancers and 12 tones.

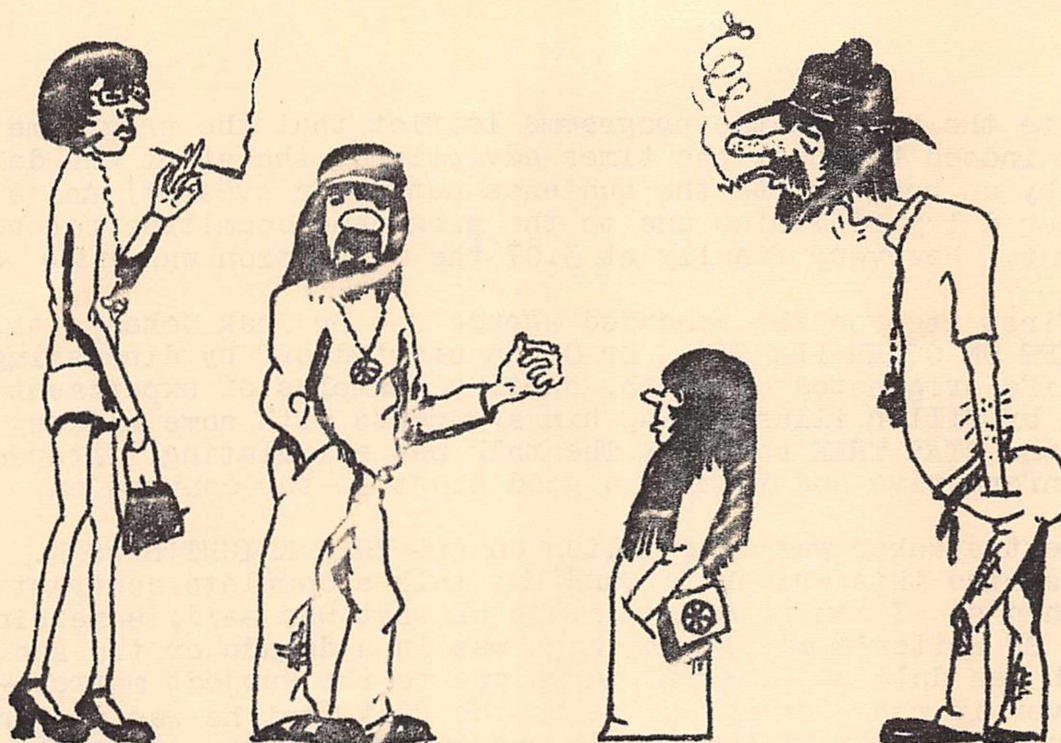
He kept on composing, and conducting his own music to the last, together with his biographer and close friend Robert Craft, he visited many countries. Stravinsky was a legend during his own lifetime. He was a strange man, a hypochondriac, who looked after his own health with almost panic like care. Although a Slavonian he was not known to show affection to anyone, but himself.

There are many stories about this genius of music, the authenticity of which may be doubtful to-day. It was said that he was arrested at the London Airport for not possessing a work permit; that in 1954 he was refused entrance into a premiere spectacle in Rome, because he wasn't wearing an evening suit. Or that he stopped going to church, because once after hearing his confession, a priest asked him for his autograph!

HE WAS A GENIUS. His music is the music of our day. As Picasso in plastic arts, so was Stravinsky in music, an inspiration for many generations, a man who went forward always surching for something new. It was this quality in him that was invaluable and most worthy of admiration.

Asked once, what he thought of contemporary music,

- I can't endure it! - he said.
- What? And you Sir? -
- I, have never written, and don't write contemporary music. I write music.-



CONVENTION TREK

by Graham Poole.

Full of apprehension but keeping my fingers crossed wondering whether the go-slow would affect the trains scheduled for Worcester, I arrived at the Convention Hotel a little early; wandered around the town admiring the contrast between the old and the new. I never knew Worcester had Tudor? But there I was confronted by magnificent white and black timber houses, now mainly converted into antique shops, public houses and the like, snuggling in the back streets.

After paying my registration fee at the Giffard Hotel I got a shock when I realised that the film programme went on till the early hours of the morning, as I had intended to travel to Worcester daily, returning to Cheltenham each evening. I started to look for a place to stay, and I finally got a room at the Imperial, laughingly called a hotel but more of a boarding house cum pub really. The landlord was very friendly and showed me up to my room which I had to share with someone else.

I returned to the hotel (Giffard) for lunch to make up for my scanty breakfast, but first I enquired at the desk about my tape-cum-pen pal's arrival, no sign of her yet! I entered the dining room to be met by a barrage of waiters who escorted me to a table, lavishing every courtesy upon me they served up my meal.

Despite the note in the programme leaflet that the programme items would indeed begin at the times advertised, the start was delayed by an hour due to the audience not being present! And a further delay of 7 mins due to the programme committee not being present. However, finally at 3.07 the Convention was on the way.

The first item on the ammended agenda was Dr Jack Cohen's talk on LIFE ON OTHER PLANETS. Dr Cohen started off by discussing how life originated on earth, quoting examples of experimentation by Miller, illustrating his arguments with some slides from the STAR TREK series etc. The talk was stimulating, interesting and informative and I think a good start to the convention.

The next speaker was James Blish on ALL IN A KNIGHT'S WORK. Much as I admire this writer I found his talk a complete contrast to Dr Cohen's. I can remember little of what was said; something about SF writer's circle which he was in a decade or two ago. The speech was dull and dreary, maybe due to the subject matter - whatever it was - or maybe due to the fact that he was reading the speech from a set of notes. It was uninfromative and unstimulating or distimulating or whatever...

After the talk was over we dissembled, whatever that means, and I wandered along in a mass of bodies wondering what to do with myself. Suddenly the stairs to the book and art room reared into view and on an impulse I dived down the steps one at a time. Above the drone of voices I heard a voice calling...I faltered, could it be her? My heart pounding I turned and ran up the steps two at a time and emerged into the EASTERCON reception area. I followed the owner of the voice (Jill Adams'), knowing that she would lead me to the one I sought. And lo, a wondrous star in the East appeared and the shephards followed it to meet the king and saviour. I saw Jill talk to someone and thought, that can't be her..... But nevertheless I approached wondering what to say - something elaborate like: Lisa Conesa I presume, or: Allow me to introduce myself, giving a little bow, or: You don't know who I am do you? But I know who you are...

I approached and asked: Are you Lisa?
After delightful salutations and greetings we strolled to the lounge to further our conversation, and I started to lose my feeling of inferiority. After all I now knew at least three others at the convention.

After dinner (which we all missed for one reason or another) we attended MEET THE CELEBRITIES part of the programme. I never met any (at that point I didn't know what any of the celebrities looked like, but by Easter Monday I knew them all) but Lisa and I had them pointed out to us by Phil Muldowney.

The film programme came after that. Starting with an out of date something on APOLLO 8. This was followed by the DELTA GROUP Manchester Movies, produced by amateurs which was all too evident and some of the gags were bad too. However, the magnanimity of some of them was really quite excellent especially one about a crooked

gambler who brakes the bank at the casino and flies to another planet where the money is needed.

TENTH VICTIM was on next which I rather enjoyed; then DESTINATION MOON which I had been longing to see. Apologies, I am wrong next was FLASH GORDON. It was so awful that STAR TREK is a T.V. epic masterpiece in comparison. Most of it was unintentionally hilarious, no doubt in 20 years time we shall look back on Star Trek and similar SF television serials just as we do on Flash Gordon now.

DESTINATION MOON, an old movie epic which, like Flash Gordon, was funny in places, due to its ludicrousness. I think the object of the film was to let the general public know what space flight was, what to expect and what the advantages would be. At the same time putting in 'the littel plug' by saying what a tremendous boost to American technology and industry this would be. The film showed a hurridly built and launched rocket, astronauts who had not been trained at all, managed to get the rocket off the ground and land it on the moon, where an astronomer on earth, no less, manages to spot their exact landing site and can actually see the rocket! No doubt if they waved to him, he would have waved back.

At this point I had to leave, it was 2 o'clock. It would have been interesting to see what the 1950's thought of space travel but I had to get back to the pub cum hotel. Fortunately the landlord was up and I settled down for the night.

Saturday morning started off with bacon and eggs. A man and presumably his wife were also breakfasting at the far end of a long table. At the convention itself John Brunner kicked off Saturday morning's proceedings with a talk on writing science fiction in theory and practice, which I found very illuminating. He described three types of writer ie Mr Wrapper, Mr Ringer and Mr Knocker, but I couldn't remember each of their characters.

Pamela Bulmer took the chair next to discuss CRITICISING S.F. IN THEORY AND PRACTICE. Although being less interesting it was a good talk, of interest to all those budding fanzine contributors in the audience who often criticise SF amongst other ~~xxx~~ material they publish.

Fanzine fiends were further gratified with the next item on the agenda, a discussion on Fanzines past and present between Ethel Lindsay (Fan guest of honour) Graham Boak, Peter Roberts and Malcolm Edwards. At this point I had never stumbled across a fanzine in my life, so much of this discussion went above my head, unfortunately. If I had been better acquainted with Fanzines the discussion would have been much more meaningfull. It's like talking about a TV programme you watch regularly. You are that much more interested in any discussion on it, than a programme you have never seen in your life. This was my predicament, both here and in the Philip K Dick debate in the afternoon.

I went back to the hotel that afternoon wanting to miss the Dick debate, and had a snack of 'hot' cross buns, one of many which I

had brought along with me for the trip.

The afternoon session went somewhat haywire. When I entered the Convention Hall, the SCIENCE FICTION IN THE CINEMA item was on earlier than programmed; Philip Strick was leading the discussion in between films like THE DAY THE EARTH COUGHT FIRE and others.

The next whole film that was shown was GLASS HAND, this too I enjoyed. Then a Hungarian film called PREDICTIONS, the one Pete Weston loves. Little puppet figures from an alien planet come to investigate earth. Their leader saying that we would soon kill each other and destroy the human race. However the aliens are so small that when they land on a dining room table, they think the crumbs are rocks; fish bones, human bones; glasses of wine, energy collectors, and a cup, an unfinished spacecraft similar to the aliens own. As they prepare to leave, a waiter comes along and picks up their space ship, thinking a woman guest had left her compact behind. The aliens see a huge face looking in on them, turn engines on full blast and scoot for home, radioing that all humans are dead and the Gods have taken over, the God of course being the waiter. A very amusing, certainly a very colourful short piece of film which I highly enjoyed. For an amateur production it was superb.

The last film was entitled LES JOUX DE ANGLES - Games the Angles Play. Philip Strick described it as a very sexual pornographic film. I found it too baffling for words.

In the evening I returned to my pub for a couple of Rum & Blacks (they were 6d cheaper than at the con hotel) and also for a quick 10 minutes meditation, which was very relaxing.

I arrived back in the convention hall half way through the fancy-dress parade. I'd heard that the audience could go in, but not the contestants, and so, because I was an audience I went in. The ghouls, space pirates, demons, knights and fair damsels paraded in one after the other, usually to be met with a barrage of flashing photography. Pete Weston looked quite at home with an evening suit and war paint on his face. Memorable entrants included Pete's wife, a space viking (which I thought to be the best of the lot) and a devil tanned brown all over. Pete's wife got a prize and so did all the children, I think, including Anne McCaffery's daughter, Gi-Gi, dressed up as one of the characters from her mother's novels.

After the fancy-dress parade I spotted Lisa with Bob Shaw and his wife (I didn't know then how famous he was) and Roger Gilbert (I didn't know then how infamous he was), I joined them. Jack Cohen brought his millipede across (an African variety), one or two of us allowed it to trundle across our hands, excluding me, keeping well into the background - I'll stick go rabbits and guinea pigs, thank you. Jack also had a fox cub with him, which was very nice, he'd brought it along hoping some one would give it a good home, wonder if he ever found one?

We all went to see what was going on in the Hall then, and saw part of the special Star Trek slides plus sound track. Gerald Bishop and Gerald Taylor were handling the tapes and slides, and David Gerrold - the American with round specs which are so much in the fashion with Americans these days - was doing the comentary. The end resault was quite funny in places, however I missed some of the plot being at the back of the hall - or maybe that was the point, there wasn't any and the whole thing was ene big spoof of Star Trek.

And so to the St.Fanthony ceremony, which was performed by peculiar men in red and green who came amongst us and conscripted Bob Shaw and James White into their ranks. The initiation was sealed by a drink, which looked like a glass of red wine, though it could have been dragon's blood. They were now Knights of St Fanthony, ready to do battle for freedom and Science Fiction. Phil Rogers commanded the ceremony along with Keith Freeman, who was to be appointed BSFA chairman the next day. The gallant knights of this Saintly Order held an open party in the Giffard Suite on the 6th floor, which we all duly attended. Before doing so however, Roger, Lisa, Phil M and I looked in on a room party. It was varrrry crowded. I spotted Rob Holdstock in there and knew he had something to do with the BSFA and later discovered that he is the chap who runs the ORBITER. After 15 minutes or so we left them to it and went on to the Giffard Suite, there we found oxygen again.

I went over to James White to congratulate him and had a look at his little statuate of a knight on horseback with a lance in his right hand, Jim remarked jokingly that its OK 'xcept that he is left handed. I asked someone nearby what all the ST FANTASY business was about. I discovered I was addressing the retireing BSFA chairman Michael Roseblum, Mike explained how it all came about, originating with members of the Cheltenham SF circle.

Then I got drawn into an argument between Ken Eadie and Thom Penman, which started over an article in TRUMPET about the intelligence of apes. During the argument which drew in John Brunner for a short while, Mike Roseblum told me to get some punch, which I wasn't too keen on, and later Mike brought me and the others some green stuff called verguzz and told us to drink it down in one, which I did! I was sitting on the window-sill as I knocked back all 250% proof of it, in one...Pow!!! Suddenly everything exploded all the way from my gullet to my stomach and my head started to leave by body. I didn't dare step down for 5 minutes fearing I might collapse in a heap on the floor. Mike showed us an empty bottle with German label and a green frog with six legs, telling us that it took six frogs legs to make the stuff! I was afraid of being locked out, so at 2.30am I left the party, reluctantly. Later Roger Gilbert told me that he left it at 3.45, and wandered around with Pete Weston looking in the rooms to see if everything was OK. At least, that's his story.

Sunday the 11th started with the AGM of the BSFA Limited. Matters had to be handled in a business like way, or at least appear to be handled! We started off by considering the accounts, and

asking meaningful (?) questions. Afterwards we considered the report of the council, most of which was taken up with VECTOR and it's many misfortunes. Promises were made etc., Some new members were elected, old one re-instated.

The next item on the programme was a discussion on future Conventions, which baffled me, untill the system of world cons was explained to us. There was some talk of a world Con bid for England in 1975 or '76, but Pete Weston refused to be chairman for it. (Poor chap, one convention was enough for him; he was all for it before hand).

In the afternoon I chatted to Ailsa Kelly and Margret Evans. I think it was Ailsa who said she regularly goes to the GLOBE meetings in London, on the first Thursday of every month. She said that when she first went, she expected every one there to be youngsters. She was surprised to find people of all ages and from all walks of life. I missed most of Anne McCaffrey's quest of honour speech, though not the Blish talk on BOUNDRIES OF SF, which was very interesting and after another 10pence (new pence, mind!) coffee break and a showing of CHARLY. I'd read the short story FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON; to me it wasn't a true SF film, but I'm sure if someone had the foresight to produce a science fantasy film along Mike Moorcock lines, others would equally argue it wasn't a true SF film, one man's meat..... I prefer science fantasy to Charly type story which I would class as being on the edge of SF (bearing in mind James Blish's talk).

Back in the lounge again I looked through some fanzines with one or two others, chatted to Ken Cheslin, the OMPA editor, one of the readers was mystified as to the function of OPMA, Ken tried to explain. I got Ken and his wife to sign one of the fanzines I bought which he produced. I would have liked to have stayed chatting to them all, but had to dash to get a train home; remember I had come intending to return each night.

I did return on Monday morning and met Roger Gilbert in the lounge, we set off for the boat trip. There were so many of us it had to be done in two trips. I went on the first, and after braving 10 minutes out in the breeze on deck, I went below for a glass of cider, which lasted the whole trip (it was a big glass!) I asked Bob Shaw for an autograph, also a person whom I took to be James Blish, but he signed Eric Bentcliffe! After the trip was over, I asked David Gerrold for his autograph, which he duly gave and I staggered (it must have been a stagger because I came very close to ending up in the water! - Surely one cider couldn't have affected me like that - blame it on the motion of the boat..) to continue, I staggered over to Anne McCaffery to ask her for her autograph, whilst admitting I've never read any of her stories! I had to redeem myself somehow and fortunately I knew my father had read DRAGONRIDER and enjoyed it very much, and I told her so.

Back at the hotel I got into conversation with Todd McCaffery and then I sat in the hall so I could see everyone who passed. John Stewart passed by and noticed that I had a Ken Bulmer book, with

a picture of Ken taken about ten years ago, he looked completely different. He borrowed it for a short while and returned it after having asked Ken to autograph it for me. Next Roger Peynton asked me to look after his luggage while he and his wife got their car. I noticed, he had several copies of INCROYABLE CINEMA, I glanced through one of them. When Roger returned I asked him whether it was for sale, he told me to write to him to get a copy, which I shall do. I also chatted to George Hay about what was best for me, a newcomer to SF, to get acquainted more thoroughly with science fiction. We agreed that fanzines were one of the more important aspects to further SF, at least, some of the better ones.

Then who should I spot, but John Brunner, I rushed over and asked him to sign my convention book. He looked tired and bored, as he said:

"Page twelve."

Poor fellow, I thought, he must be fed up meeting people like me. I looked up, mystified, as he repeated:

"Page twelve."

So I quickly found page twelve and he signed it. It wasn't until later I discovered that he had a poem (pretty crappy too) on page twelve. I thought he just said the first number that had come into his head! Gee! What an experience to remember. I wonder whether I'll ever ask for an autograph again, perhaps I should be more subtle and flatter THEM first? But with Mr Brunner it was hard, because I'd never read any of his books. I really must do something about this. I cannot go around asking for people's autographs, when I haven't even read any of their books, it doesn't seem right.

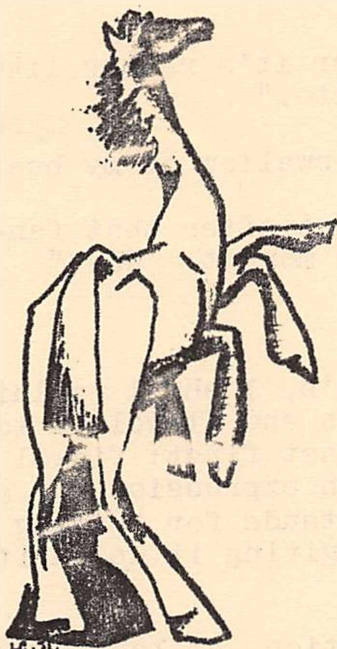
So, at last the whole thing was over and the fond memories of a lovely time and a great deal of experience were beginning.

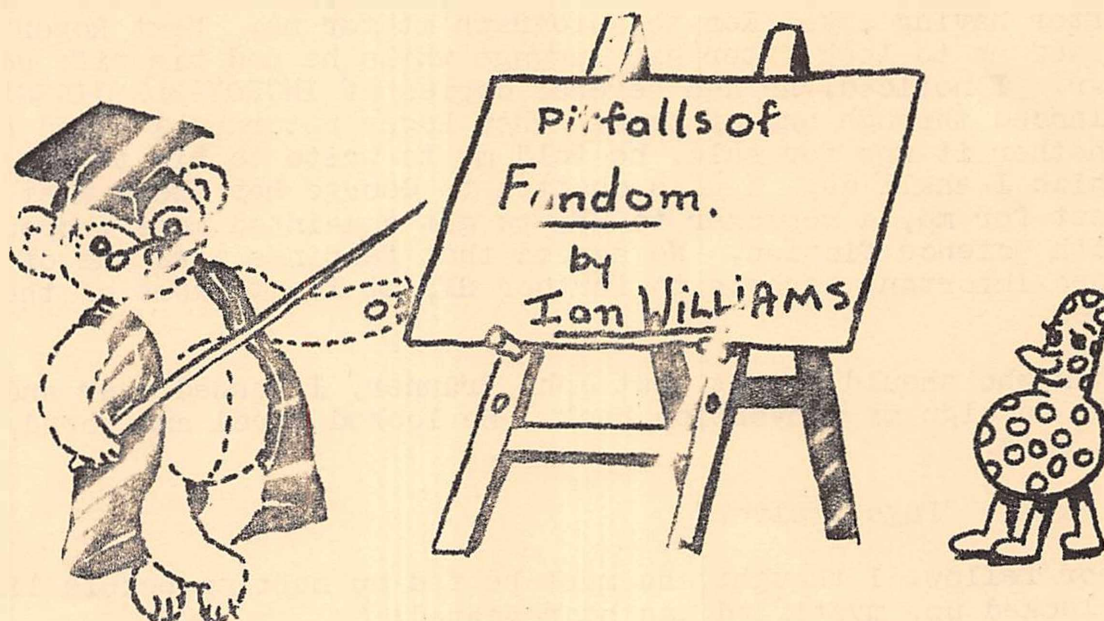
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DEFINITION:

Culture? That which remains, when all else is forgotten.

(Édouard Herriot)





Ritchie Smith craggily ambled into a meeting of Gannetfandom and sat down. And said nothing. It was the second Tuesday after the Con.

"Hi kid," I said. "Where's your alter ego, Thom Penman?"

Ritchie swallowed, his vocal chords began to twitch, shortly followed by the opening of his mouth. He spoke:

"Er, well man, er I mean to say that er it's rather like this, Thom and me, well we're going to gafiate."

A stunned silence descended. I took a deep swallow of my beer.

"Gafiate," I finally said at last. "But after that fantastic Con! Hell, for me it's fiawol at the moment. Why?"

Why, indeed?

But before I go into the why's and wherefore's, I shall explain the two important terms used above -- gafiate and fiawol -- to those neofans in the audience. Taking the last first: fiawol stands for Fandom Is A Way Of Life, and is an expression for a near-total dedication to fandom; gafia(te) stands for Getting Away From It All, a renunciation of fandom, giving it up in its entirety.

Basically, I hope to explain (to my satisfaction, at least) why fiawol can lead to gafia.

Just about every fan gets gradually involved with fandom, some quicker than others. It probably starts by receiving a couple of fanzines, you send in a letter of comment, perhaps a contribution. You may be lucky enough to discover some fans in the area, who have already got a group going. Or you may be unlucky, as some are who only meet other fen at conventions and there are those who don't go to the annual con and never meet another fan face to face. (I'll come back to this point later.)

After a time, months maybe a year, you'll have a good picture of what fandom is. You'll be sending locs, writing to various people, sending in articles, poems or fan fiction. And you've found out that fandom is basically a social organisation, self-perpetuating with a variety of traditions and its own jargon. Some of those traditions such as fannish 'h' in bheer, may be annoying or you may just go along with them. (I, personally, drink beer without the 'h'.)

What you get out of fandom, you'll find depends on how much you put into it. Nobody is interested in a passive fan who just subscribes to fanzines and never sends in any form of comment. Nobody wants passive fans! If you don't indulge in any kind of fan activity and find fandom rather dull, it's your fault! And fan-activity doesn't mean turning up at conventions to listen to James Blish and get pissed.

But I'm being unkind to you. I'll assume that you do intend to indulge in fanactivity. I'll stop dealing with the vague 'you' for now and concentrate on some real fans to illustrate the points that I will eventually get round to making.

Fandom Is A Way O Life for me, at the present time. I edit the fanzine MAYA, write to a number of people, send letters of comment to various fanzines (not as much as I'd like), write articles and poems for other fanzines on top of writing a sizeable proportion of MAYA, and, last year, started a fangroup in the North East. It meets every Tuesday evening in the Sunderland pub known as the Gannet (hence Gannetfandom) which is still going the (the group, not the pub) albeit in a state of flux due to the events told in the opening of this article.

Mary Legg is in a similar position. She and her husband Churl (also a fan) live in Oxford. Mary edits CRABAPPLE, although is frustrated, at the moment, because of lack of duplicating facilities for the zine. On the other hand, because of the area where they live, they tend to see a great deal of other fen -- the South Midlands being a good area for social contact between Fans. Mary and Churl have been in fandom a long time, they do have interests outside fandom, particularly Churl, but their social lives centre around meeting other fen.

I only entered fandom a year and a half ago, after spending 3½ years at a teacher training college in Lancashire, failing the course in the process. So off I went to London, started going to the monthly meetings at the Globe and ended up at Sci-con 70 (which some fen might prefer to call Disastercon). Then for

financial reasons, I ended back up in Sunderland, started the group, started work as a library assistant, and next January will begin a twoyear course in Librarianship.

And now fiawolis for me. Yet Thom and Ritchie are gafiating.

They got into fandom through the Gannet group. I suggested a few fanzines and within four months were sending letters and contributions all over the place, apart from the stuff they produced for MAYA. They showed all the signs of being potential good fans, intelligent, productive, and creative. Most of their time was spent in fanac. Work on their A level courses suffered, they didn't go out very much.

"And you know," said Ritchie, "suddenly me and Thom seemed to come to the same conclusion. We looked at these faaanzines and thought. Christ what a lot of irrelevant mediocrity they all were. They just seemed so pointless. We were stopping in, writing night after night. Well, it's alright seeing something you've written in print, but it's not, well it's not exactly the real world is it?"

That, more or less, is the point. You may find your whole life revolving round your typewriter and the clash of the letterbox in the morning. This happened to Harry Bell, a member of Gannetfandom, who, about two years ago, woke up and found himself the only fan in the area and yet he had little else but fandom. So he gafiated. Now he is slowly coming back into fandom but this time keeping a sense of proportion about it. And it's the sense of proportion that is important. Fiawol is fine for people like Mary Legg, Gray Boak, myself and many others, but only if you can keep a sense of objectivity about it or if you can combine it and your social life, or have outside interests -- Gray has his folk club and modelling (aircraft), with me it's fellwalking and the knowledge that I'll have to semi-gafiate at the end of this year because of college work. As Gray Boak says, the accent is that Fandom Is A Way Of Life, not the only one.

Fandom can be great fun, but it's best to be sure it isn't the only kind you have.

end.

.....

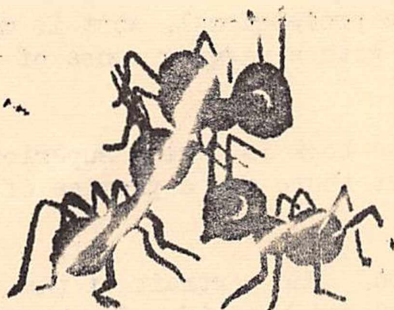
I hold cups in my hands
for your tears
They are coffee cups
Not very big
quite small
Tiny.
Why the hell can't you fill them?

* *

A. Truman.

* *

I, but with pleasure fall
sinking slowly
with you all
Down shall I ride full tilt
Galloping and crying
Churning your silt.



BOOK

REVIEWS

OF

SORTS

ONE MILLION TOMORROWS.

BOB SHAW.

Ace Special/Gollancz.

The more Bob Shaw novels that I read, the more I am convinced that he is potentially one of the finest sf writers around. But he still has his problems, mainly with plot.

ONE MILLION TOMORROWS starts off as a fascinating glimpse of what immortality might mean to society, and to two particular people in a rare 'one to one' relationship. It changes course after the first forty pages, into a fine and exciting sf adventure novel, with some truly imaginative scenes. A very good and controlled book - yet I found myself regretting, that perhaps a really brilliant and memorable one had been missed.

In the 22nd century immortality is a reality, and barring fatal accidents, a man is faced with the prospect of a lifetime of forever. The single drawback is, that the injection of drugs sends a man's sex drive, while enhancing a woman's. Will Carewe is married in a 'one to one' partnership, to a beautiful and fiery woman, who will eventually leave him when he 'ties off' and becomes impotent.

A let out to his problems comes when his employers tell him that they have come across a new drug, that will produce immortality without the side effects. Carewe is offered the chance to be the first guinea pig, but because it is so hush-hush, he must not tell his wife. He takes the drugs, and suddenly his whole world blows up in his face. Because he is forced to silence about the new drug, his marriage inevitably cracks like a frail shell.

In despair and hopelessness, he enters the Beau Geste syndrome and takes a dangerous job in Africa. The pace changes to a thoroughly enjoyable adventure novel. Several attempts are made on his life, and primed with revenge and curiosity he returns to America to seek answers. His wife is kidnapped, and his employers are not quite the magnanimous benefactors they seem. From here the plot proceeds along clear cut lines, and our hero wins through.

Bob Shaw is a fine stylist with a very professional control of language. His prose is like a thoroughbred horse, with very few spare ounces of flesh. It is,

swift, direct, and easily readable. He is a true professional, what is more, a very talented professional. So why was I left with a nagging sense of regret, on having finished ONE MILLION TOMMOROWS????

Maybe because of that very professionalism. The book is a very superior example indeed, of the sf adventure thriller. Yet there was a promise of much more, of a really great, classic sf book.

Bob Shaw has a brilliant feel for characterisation. The portrait of the strained and complex relationships between Carewe and his wife, is the finest thing in the book. The way they interact, the petty snappings and irritations, the deeper and more fascinating attractions to each other - all provide a slowly growing picture of a deeply interesting and fascinating relationship. Then kapow! And the wife exits offstage, to leave hero Carewe as a half completed figure, whose characterisation has partly stopped.

With the tempestuous relationship that the two have had, the ending - while very well done - strikes a trite note, like the film happy ending. We all stroll into the sunset together, violins playing..... It is all wrapped up just a little too well, the happy saccharine ending has palled on me maybe.

In the days of Essex House and free and smelling porno sf, Bob Shaw is curiously coy about the sex aspects. You may breathe a sigh of relief that, at least here, there are few heaving orgasms and impossibly virile men. But that is not the point. The whole 'tying off' process, and subsequent loss of virility is the whole crux of the book. Yet in portraying exactly how men lose their desire for sex, he is as coy as a Victorian Maiden Aunt. Does a man become totally impotent? Well, even this would not destroy male/female sex relationships so totally as between male and female immortals. Does a man completely lose desire? Even so, love is far more than just sex, and does even that explain the total breakdown between immortals? At one point it is implied that the non-immortal is having a homosexual relationship with another immortal. For heaven sakes how???? A major and annoying inconsistency.

If you want an entertaining and occasionally moving read, then rush and buy this one. It is well worth anyone's time and attention. Look for Bob Shaw's next book. One day Bob will overcome the straitjacket of the routine sf plot, and find a theme to match his undeniable talent and skill. Now that will be a book worth waiting for.....

Phil Muldowney.

THE YEAR'S BEST SF. No.4. Edited HARRY HARRISON & BRIAN ALDISS.

Sphere. 30p

Sf spawns anthologies like a frog spawns tadpoles. In droves. The best way of finding stories that you have not read, is to pick up one of the annual 'Best sf' anthologies, which purport to be the best sf stories published in the previous year. Or whether they are those the editors have

read, and have been able to get the reprint rights to, would be more to the point.

To the present anthology. Brian Aldiss and Harry Harrison are old hands at the anthology editing game, and I was pleased to see, when I picked up the anthology, that I had read none of the stories therein. The editors have culled from wide around the literary world, and for the first time, this series of anthologies contains a minority of stories from the sf magazines. So I came expecting good things, and went disappointed. A large number of the stories in this anthology are like the sugar-icing on a cake. The writing is good, literary and competent, but when you bite into the main cake, the stories are wraith-like, or somewhat stale.

It opens with GONE FISHIN, by Robin Scott Wilson, a man who has taught a course on sf. He has learnt his craft well. The story shows that level of literary quality that is the hallmark of F&SF, from which it comes. Yet beneath the patina of clear and empathetic writing, the plot is as old hat as a last century's stetson. A young telepath who has been used by the American government, is to be transported to the States, from Germany. In the process he helps overcome hijacks, bomb attacks, and even missile salvos. It is all too familiar. Although the gimmick of the boy telepath and his escort being negro, is a novelty, even that is short-lived and soon palls. It sets the tone for the whole anthology.

Humour is evident in several of the stories, sf has at last lost some of its more pedantic tone. Slawomir Mrozek - a Polish writer - is here with THE UGUPU BIRD. This is a very funny ecological -cum inter-dependency story that is one of the funniest sf short stories that I have read in some time. GORMAN by Jerry Farber is imported from the academic area, and I wonder why. Academic in-fighting with real guns. It reads more like a college in joke, and should have stayed at that.

Black humour is a very difficult thing to do effectively. All too often it is laid on a little too thick, until one cannot see the meat for the margarine. This is the case in William Earls' TRAFFIC PROBLEM. Present day traffic and road policies extended to the reduction of absurdity, which just fails to come off.

Robert Coover, another stranger to sf pages, is here with A PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENT. A man is run over by a truck, and the weird and assorted characters that congregate around the dying man. At first it is amusing, but it fast becomes boring. Obviously there are more things here that I missed - woe on me - but the whole became so stagnant that it was a major labour to finish the story. Similarly from the great outside world beyond the sf ghetto is Alvin Greenberg with FRANZ KAFKA BY JORGE LUIS BORGES. An unusual method, where Borges appears as a character within the story, of a language and symbolism that Borges supposedly used in one of his stories. The style is literary magazine reporting, but the whole comes off quite chillingly.

EREM by Gerb Anfilov is a Russian story, though why it is included, I just do not know. A robot story, in which the brave robot sadly perishes. There is nothing new, or even really stylish about it, and I wonder why the editors bothered. OIL MAD BUG EYED MONSTERS by Hayden Howard is another slight story about BEMs actually boring oil, and stopping pollution on Earth - for

their own reasons. The irony is almost painfully obvious, and I thought the story itself could have been better handled.

The good stories stick out like sore thumbs. THE LOST FACE by the Czech writer Josef Nevadba is worth the price of admission in itself. Pre-war Czechoslovakia, and a plastic surgeon who has developed a process of completely transferring a person's face, to another body. He transfers a crook's face, and this proves the start of a long series of mishaps which finally brings him to face the final question. What type of man is he? It is a truly fascinating story, which produces riches on many levels. On fundamental statements on the nature of man; on a twisting and fascinating plot, and on oblique comments on modern day Czechoslovakia. A superb story, this is what writing is about.

No other story quite matches up to Nevadba's. Tom Disch is here though, with an engrossing story that positively drips the full and rich atmosphere of Istanbul, in THE ASIAN SHORE. The plot does not get very far, an author losing himself in the atmosphere of Turkey. Slowly and weirdly transferring into another identity, until he is finally lost.. Disch however, writes with such an unerring black-and-white film quality, of atmosphere and tension, that it is fascinating.

Robert Silverberg is up to his usual high standard in BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL. In a future America, the blacks have taken over the great cities of America, becoming apartheid in reverse. A teenager, afire with the negro revolution, sets out to get a white visitor to the city. In the course of the story however, he is taught something of the true nature of revolution, and the compromises that have to be made. A convincing and well executed extrapolation, that at times however, seems just a little too pat.

PACEM EST, by Kris Neville and K.M. O'Donnell is a war story, until the final sentences. Haunting, and very effective. CAR SINISTER by Gene Wolfe is an amusing little fantasy about cars, which would be fine in an ordinary issue of an sf magazine, but in BEST SF is out of place. Finally there is MARY AND JOE, a modern variation on the Virgin mother theme that is moderately well done, and showing my ignorance did not dawn on me till the final paragraph.

So, a very mixed anthology. There are some very good gems, but the dross is spread too thick. Brian Aldiss is as fascinating as ever in his Afterword, in which he states that the sf world is expanding. It certainly is, and the mediocre stories are expanding as well. I was disappointed by this anthology, somehow I expected more.

L.S.Melchett.

A WIZARD OF EARTHSEA.

URSULA LEGUIN.

Puffin

Penguin have published WIZARD OF EARTHSEA in their specifically children's imprint, Puffin books. Which is a pity, for it is a book for all ages, and all people. In U.S.A., it was published as an ACE SPECIAL, as a major adult fantasy.

It is set in the fantasy world of Earthsea, a land of magic and magicians, of Dragons and strange spells. On one of the islands in an archipelago

surrounded by endless oceans, Ged, a young boy, displays his developing powers of magic. Young and headstrong Ged soon leaves his quiet island, and his savant wizard, to the school of wizards on Roke. He develops fast, but in a moment of pubescent pride, he conjures up one of the terrifying and dangerous 'Powers of unlife' that he cannot control. Ged is attacked, and is only saved by the intervention of the school's Archmage, who is mortally wounded in the process. The evil 'shadow' escapes to the outside world, there to await Ged until he leaves the protection of Roke.

Ged changes both physically and mentally from his terrifying experience. His apprenticeship is very hard, because he has lost his self-confidence, and the 'shadow' has taken part of himself with it. At 18 he leaves Roke, and travels among the islands of Earthsea. He has a series of adventures with his 'shadow' which nearly succeeds in possessing him. At the same time the author paints some fascinating portraits of what magic can mean in such a world.

Finally, sick of running, Ged comes across an old friend - Ogion. Ged persuaded by Ogion realises that the only course open to him is to become the hunter. Ged and Ogion set to sea in a magicked boat. Finally, at the end of the world, having undergone many trials, Ged faces his shadow, and the climax comes.

It is a pleasant surprise that there is no simple good versus evil ending. The motives that run throughout the book, coalesce, and give an ending that is satisfactorily consistent with the whole.

As a book for children, it is easy and engrossing to read. Yet it is far more than just a children's book. Ursula Leguin writes with a style and fluency that is right for any age. She does not 'write down', or take the simple way out. Ged is no angel-faced wonder boy of other sf juveniles, but a fascinating and fully fleshed human being. He has come to terms with himself, his character and his own power. He has to work out his life for himself, a youth turning into a man, undergoing all the pains and sorrows of living, that are in perfect unity with the plot.

The author's skill is much more than just writing effectively, and developing a good lead character. As with usual in her books, the whole society and people in it are fully fleshed. You can almost reach out and feel Earthsea in your imagination. Again the minor characters emerge as fully realised humans, all expertly envisaged with a minimum of explanatory background. The incorporation of magic into the story and society, is done so skilfully, that before long you are believing that such a world is possible. It is real, firm and solid in your mind's eye.

This book will probably win few awards. The death wish label of 'children's book' has seen to that. But it deserves to be on anybody's bookshelf. If talent is measured by good writing then this is a book for every age, and everyone who enjoys a superb and convincing fantasy. It is a book I know that I will return to again with pleasure, I hope you will too.



Rope.

by Jo Withisone

It didn't really make any difference to me, nor was I especially inconvenienced, when one day (and it happened some time ago, I don't remember the exact date, even though I usually have a good head for dates) I realised that round my neck I had something resembling a necklace of rope. The rope was attractively twisted with many coloured threads, not rough, but smooth to the touch, shining like hair.

Why shouldn't I wear it for a little while - I thought - Perhaps its a talisman of some sort (I don't really believe in such superstitions, but sometimes in respect or wonder, of such objects and the power they hold over some people, I too succumb to their influence). It might bring me luck. I could wear it for a short while, its attractive and it wouldn't do me any harm.

In time the rope took on a great significance for me. I was wearing it constantly, wondering at it's colours, admiring the smoothness of it's twist. It had a soothing effect on me and was a comfort in times of stress.

Meanwhile I noticed that the rope too was getting more and more attracted to me. Encircling my neck twice, and then three times, and there was more of it too. This didn't seem to surprise me at all (sometimes it happens that the banal appears unusual and extraordinary; whereas the magnificent and rare can go by unnoticed) so I wasn't surprised, and as I have said, I was attracted to the rope. More than this, it seemed that it was indeed bringing me luck, I was decidedly more happy under its influence.

One night (again I don't quite remember when, but it was definitely

after that other incident) I woke up feeling constricted. I switched on the light. The rope twisted itself around my left arm, so that in fact I could only move my hand.

Its nothing - I thought - a piece of the rope had simply slipped down my arm and was only slightly restricting my movements. Nothing to worry about - I thought calmly. I switched off the light and went back to sleep again. In the morning both my arms were bound tightly to my body preventing me from using even my hands.

It was somewhat annoying. I had no idea now, how to approach the whole situation. On the one hand the rope was limiting my movements and was becoming something of a nuisance. But it couldn't be denied that it was very attractive, and was bringing me luck. Because lately I was doing very well indeed. My every wish was granted, everything I thought of I had; in fact I was almost afraid to think of anything now.

It isn't really all that bad - I decided in the end. It could always be worse (of course, they are wrong, those who think that it could always be worse, I imagine that this is true only sometimes).

I got used to the situation quite quickly, and without much effort really. Getting dressed presented most problems, but the need provided me with some ideas (which in any other, less concrete situation, I would have considered not bad at all). Soon the rope stopped being in the way, in that my way of life wasn't affected.

A few days ago, at night (on my birthday, as it so happens, which I usually enjoyed celebrating - especially blowing out the candles on my birthday cake, every year one more to blow out) as I was saying, I woke up nervous and frightened. I couldn't move at all. I couldn't think why. At last dawn came.

I was bound tightly from head to foot by my beautiful rope. It was such a delicate rope, that I didn't feel it's pressure or even touch. I simply could not move.

This was the worst moment of all. For a long time I considered the alternatives; for and against. I was completely helpless. I could see, but only my four walls, furniture, and myself lying on the bed like a helpless child. I could scream, but to no avail. I could cry.

Mustering every ounce of strength in my body, I managed to slip from the bed, then crawl towards the corner of the wall. For a long time all my efforts were in vain. And at last with peculiar movements I started to rub the rope against the roughness of the corner wall.

Only a few threads still remain. Just a little longer....

thoth penman

" I CALL IT 'ARTHUR'":

The Coming Second
American Civil War,
Considered As The
Magic Roundabout.

" The negroes are rioting in their ghettos," Said Florence.

"Yes, they are," said Dougal.

And Dougal continued looking for his flag.

" Perhaps we should do something about it," said Florence.

" They've been rioting before," said Dougle, finding his flag.

" I shouldn't worry about it, if I were you," he said, airily.

Just then Brian the Civil Rights Worker came by.

"What's up?" said Brian the Civil Rights Worker.

" The negroes are rioting in their ghettos," Florence told Brian.

"Oh, that..." said Brian.

"Yes, that..." said Dougle, carrying his flag up and down the garden and waving it.

"What's our hairy friend got there then?" asked Brian.

" A thing that kills over-inquisitive civil-rights workers, Snail," said Dougel, brandishing it.

"Nyeer," jeered Brian, "you look even more stupid than usual carrying it. You can't get me," said Brian the Civil Rights Worker, retreating into his shell.

"Typical, typical," said Dougle.

So they went to see Mr Trusty.

"Hello, what's happening here?" said Mr Trusty, benignly. But Mr Trusty seemed to be always benign.

So Florence told him the negroes were rioting in their ghettos.

"Yes, the-negroes-are revolting in thir ghettos," Mr Trusty agreed. "But don't you worry. I'm sure they're being taken care of," said Mr Trusty the polititian, benignly. And Mr Trusty was the man who turned the handle that made all the wheelhorses that

carried the silent majority round and round on the political roundabout. But somehow the silent majority couldn't be so major as it was silent, for always someone decided to ride to Mr Trusty's tune.

Florence thanked him, and she and Dougel went off to the garden. Mr Trusty took off his hat and scratched his head, then went off to look for Captain McHenry.

Florence and Dougel found Dougel asleep under a tree. "Look at him, just look at him," said Dougel. "Typical. No moral fibre in him. I blame all these long-ears for the state the garden's in today."

Dylan woke up.

"What? Where-- oh, like hi there man. I was just like-- composing."

"Thinking up some new songs, Dylan?" asked Florence.

"Working again?" said Dougel, sarcastically.

"Arf. Arf," he laughed.

"Work..???" said Dylan.

And Dylan said, "Hey, man, the negroes are rioting in their ghettos again." "Humph!" said Dougel, "another one!" And Dougel went off to wave his flag.

"Hey, like, what's up with him, man? I just composed a song for him. It ain't got a tune, but I call it, 'When Dogs Run Free'." Dylan was about to strum a few bars when they heard in the distance Captain McHenry's police-siren.

"Listen man, it's the fuzz. I bet they're picking up some brown cow," said Dylan.

Then Florence said, "Dougel doesn't think the rioting will come to much, Dylan,"

Dylan spread his arms wide.

"Man, don't he see all those angry black faces,"

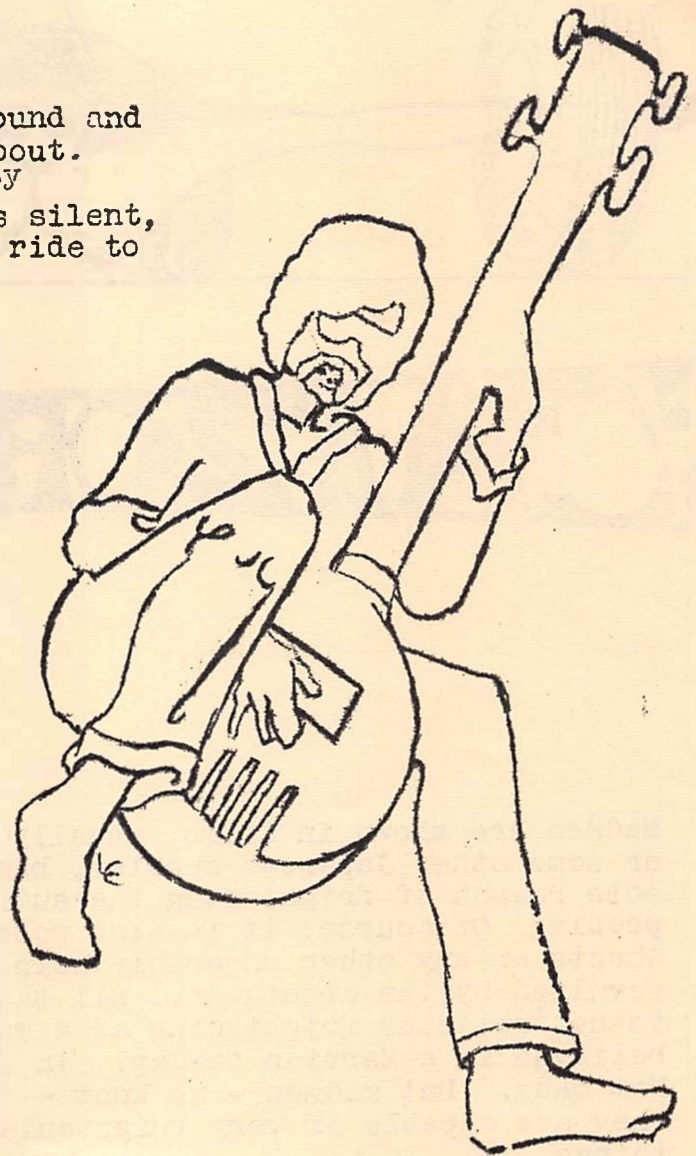
Dougel came back then, still waving his flag.

"What, still at it?" he said, incredulously.

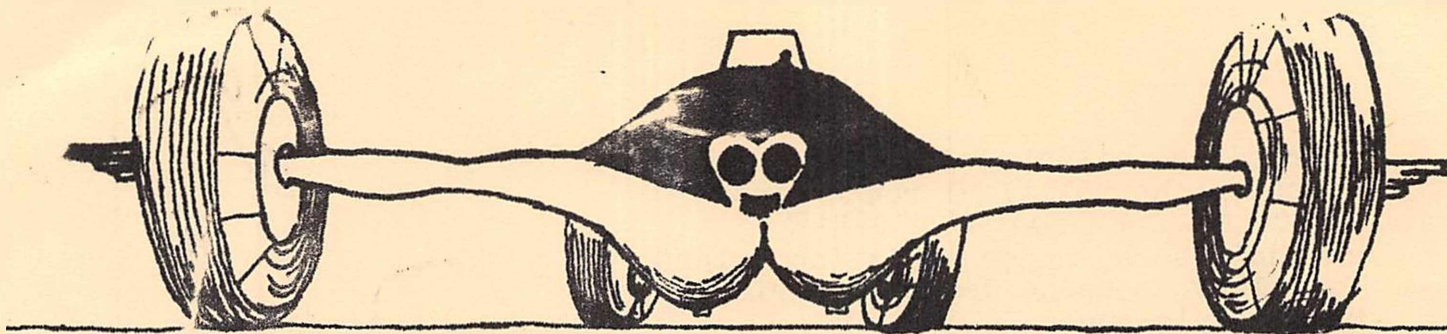
So Dylan strummed a few bars of 'Blue Moon' before getting out his tin of burnt cork, just in case.

And just then Zebedee appeared.

And Zebedee said, "It's time for civil war. Whitey."



THE END



SCHIZOPHRENIA

Madmen are shown in films, usually on the same basis as Godzilla, or some other Japanese monster, brought into the cinema for the sole reason of frightening the audience, in other words, normal people. Of course: it is also possible to frighten with Martians, Ghosts or any other unearthly beings, causing the audience be revolted by the creatures. All the same, a Martian or a Ghost, is not quite as frightening as a madman. Who, after all, really believes in a Martian to-day? In fact not one of us. A Ghost? Not many. But madmen - we know - they exist. We also know that they are capable of very frightening and sometimes dangerous things.

So, a flesh-crawling specialist such as Alfred Hitchcock, what does he frighten his audience with? Once he did it with birds. But only once. Mostly it is the madmen that make us sit on the edge of our seats, our flesh a-crawling...

A classic example of fear and threatening menace was Polanski's film AVE R S I O N Here, a disorientated, schizophrenic woman, who should have long since gone into a hospital for the mentally sick, goes about murdering men. One watches the film with suspense and a lot of satisfaction, because it's made with a great deal of courage and cool assurance.

But later, I felt somehow disturbed. Here we have a wretched human being - made wretched by and illness, utterly helpless, because the illness is psychological - treated like a thing, an instrument of fear, like a mad animal, a monster.

Yes. Horror films, or at least the best of them feed on insanity. And it's difficult to imagine what they would be like if there were no schizophrenia or any other anomalies in the world.

But now, from Italy comes the DIARY OF THE SCHIZOPHRENIC where the schizophrenic is treated, not like a monster but like a human being; not as the accumulator of terror, but as an accumulator of unhappiness, a patient. I thought that this would be a heavy, dull film to watch - as are most films with medical themes. But no, the film is passionate and fascinating; it would have been more so for me, were it not for the 'happy end' - a spoon-full of sugar fed to the public, who won't go to see the film anyway.

In the DIARY OF A SCHIZOPHRENIC, we see schizophrenia - in other words, something so alien as is impossible to imagine; something which can't enter ones head. For how can a normal person imagine madness? In this sense the film is shocking, soothing and refreshing.

When we leave the cinema, we are aware, as never before, of our own normality. Very useful in times when every other person feels (or say they feel..) as though madness were to come tomorrow; when so much is being said about various stresses, and when everyone has such strained nerves (or so they say...).

Yet before me the words of Mr Ballard. J.G.Ballard, young (relatively), good-looking (comparatively), intelligent (apparently), competent writer (most certainly) making himself into a schizo. Saying that schizophrenia is an illness of the modern man, who is losing the ability to distinguish the real, from the unreal - reality.

According to Mr Ballard, we are all schizos, who have never been able to find personal freedom, and do not know the meaning of truth; driving about in our 'darling' cars, alone, from here to there, day after tortuous day.

Before me too, the words of Mr Burroughs. Who cuts up life into erotic nausea, spangled with drug induced downfalls.

I am reminded of a beggar, who displays his maimed, festering stump, in order to get pity, and in this way have the passers-by pay for his unhappy state. A state which he would have us all fall into with him.

Now isn't this a sick kind of comedy?

DIARY OF THE SCHIZOPHRENIC is the best 'alien' film I've seen in a long time, and is well worth the time and money spent in seeing it, but you'll have to hurry, because the attendance is minimal.

.....LC.....

ABOUT SECRETS:

It isn't true, that a woman can't keep a secret. She simply feels that the whole thing would be kept far better with the help of other people.

FANZINE REVIEWS

A fanzine is what? There you have me, a fanzine is, or can be, almost anything. Perhaps to start with the basic simplification, that a fanzine is an amateur publication with a general slant towards the reading and discussion of SF. Under that umbrella hide many sinners, as the contents of a fanzine are as diversified as the people themselves..

A final short word. If you want a fanzine, then it is easy enough to send in a subscription, have it drop on your doorstep, and forget all about it. But if you want to participate in fandom, and make the most fun out of fanzines, then let the editor know what you think of his brainchild! Or even contribute some material. It is far more pleasing for an editor to get a definite response, than just an anonymous subscription. The foregoing being a not too subtle hint, to send a Letter of Comment to ZIMRI! To the fray.

MAYA 2 Ian Williams, 6,Greta Terracc, Chester Rd, Sunderland SR4 7RD, Co. Durham . 12½ p.

MAYA is a new fanzine which is a welcome addition to the genzine scene in Britain. It looks interesting, and promises a lot. Like all fanzine editors, Ian Williams has problems. The duplication of MAYA is a great pity, because the duplication throughout, is lousy. A rather nice front cover is partially ruined by poor duplication; other pages which are nearly illegible, others that are too heavily inked. Also, the absence of a back cover, serves to give the impression of a badly produced magazine. It is inclined to put one off from the start, which is a pity.

MAYA is a good, entertaining fanzine, well worth a read. Mary Legg is in very good form in 'Looking Back' a lovely, relaxed article, which is the definite highpoint of this issue. Mary must be one of the best fannish writers currently doing their thing in British fanzines. BLACK, BLACK SAILS, a mood prose poem by Tom Penman is another one which held my attention. Usually, fan poetry is either bad or bloody awful, but this one is very good. An interesting Gray Boak, in his own column; and a letter column, that although somewhat wordy, has some interesting things to say. The artwork is very good for a British fanzine. Ian Williams is to be lauded for dragging Harry Bell out of gafia, and the Harry Bell illoes are very good. Jim Marshall is also in good form, but again the duplication does tend to detract one from the quality of the artwork.

This MAYA does have a bit of an uneven quality though. A sercon piece, RACE DEATH IN SF, succeeded in boring me stiff. Ian Williams editorial is uneven,

and his fanzine reviews missed the boat for me somehow. If Ian can iron out his duplication, and retain the nucleus of fans around him, then this is going to be a good fanzine.

SCYTHROP 22. John Bangsund, Pergeron Books, G.P.O. Box 4946, Melbourne, 3001, Australia. (British agent: Ethel Lindsay, Courage House, 6 Langley Avenue, Surbiton, Surrey. Six issues £ 0.90.)

Every so often, there comes a fanzine through the letterbox, that is enough to make strong fanzine editors weep, and the majority, turn meadow-green with envy. Such a superior example of the fanzine art is SCYTHROP 22.

It is several years now since the gradual gaffiation of John's Australian Science Fiction Review, and indeed, 18 months since SCYTHROP 21. While John has been habiting quieter fanzine realms, he is now back with a herald. A balanced fanzine is a rare and talented thing, and John has obviously got the knack of producing one.

The serious side. Ursula K. Leguin, on why she writes sf. I'm not too sure if I understand too much of what she is saying (but then, I'm ignorant!) but as you would expect, she says it well, and is very interesting. Bertram Chandler on the growth of his character Captain Grimes in his work. This is a lovely piece, natural and free flowing, yet imparting a mine of information about the man and his work. Book and fanzine reviews by John himself, which though not earth shaking, are easy to read. George Turner on A CASE OF CONSCIENCE succeeds in sounding both interesting and relaxed.

The fannish and humour side. Two con reports, SYNCON 70 by John Foyster, a very personalised but highly enjoyable con report. Australian cons may be small, but they succeed in getting an awful lot in. Or maybe its just the heat.... pardo me, three con reports Q.CON 71 and MINI MELCON 71, by John Ryan and Paul Stevens respectively, while in any other company they would be good, when compared with John Foyster's they shine somewhat less.

The layout is good, and the interior artwork, while not reaching the brilliance of the leading American fanzines, is very acceptable. To put a rein on my enthusiasam. Well, for chrisakes I've got to salvage my ego somehow! The cover which is 'from an offset lithograph... by John Sandler' is a mistake. In that, by doing it via electrostencil it turns into a white and black mess which is difficult to make out, even when looking at it for some time. Things that did not quite come off for me were MARCH OF THE MIND, a humour piece by John Bangsund himself, which had me hanging from the tree branch. I just did not connect with it at all. An interview with Keith Antill by Julia Orange, also left me a bit none the wiser. An author I had never heard of, and from this interview at least, will not want to read.

In his editorial, John is in a somewhat sombre mood that belies the rest of SCYTHROP. Pondering on the communication with words, and his own tendency to retreat into a world of words, or rather where words fail to communicate. John's later ASFR'S were indeed elegant, and had this exact quality he pinpoints, a distance that made it difficult to form contact with. But with SCYTHROP 22 he emerges relaxed and alive. I urge you to get it, and I eagerly await more. How about it John?

QUICKSILVER 2. Malcolm Edwards, 2728 Kinch Grove, Wembley, Middx
HA9 9TF. 10p per copy, 50p for 6 issue sub.

If there was a prize for the best fanzine in Britain today (which is an idea I have developed elsewhere,) then my vote would go to QUICKSILVER. In appearance Q. is spartan. No interior illoes, but the headings are good, and duplication and typing are adequate. The whole gives the impression of, a nice, easy to read fanzine.

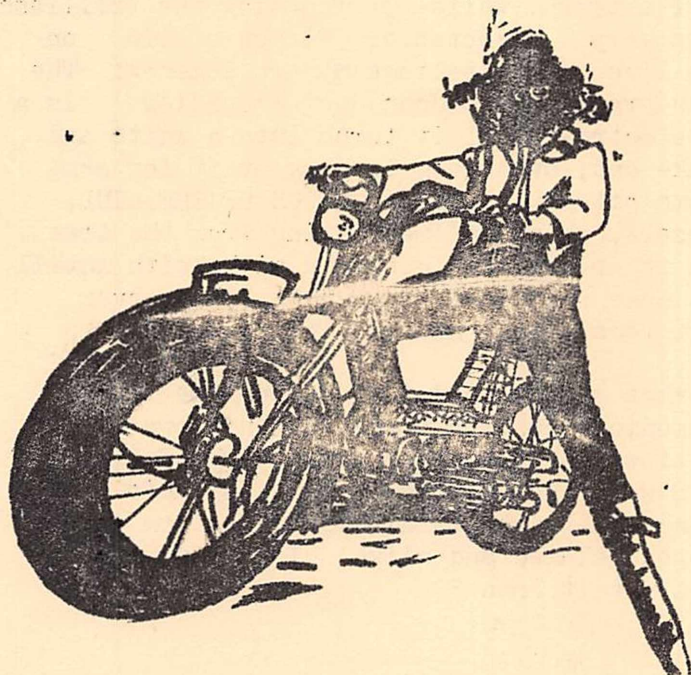
The material excells. Malcoom is fortunate enough to have recorded two talks given to the Cambridge University SF Society by Tom Disch and James Blish respectively. In, REPRESENTATION IN SF, Tom Disch discusses how SF deals with the four basic emotions - pain, anger, joy and fear. He finds SF's treatment extremely lacking. He sums up by saying that in the supreme peak of literature, where guilt and pain are explored, sf falls far short. SF does not believe in guilt, and it has a supremely simple ethical viewpoint. An interesting article, which provokes some afterthoughts.

James Blish on the SCIENCE IN SCIENCE FICTION. Starting off with some choice examples of the rather quaint conventions that early sf had, he goes on to examine the many strongly held paradgrims that science has. He finally wonders if the so-called 'impossible' aspects of sf - the telepathy, time travel and faster than light - and suggests that if someone has faith in these things, then perhaps they may be realised. An amusing an interesting piece.

Charles Platt has a piece on 'The faces'. I have no interest at all in the so-called super-group, but this was quite well written. Graham Charnock with THE MEDIA MAN, an interesting bit on music and other things. Fiction by Dick Harrington, THE LONELY OF MIND, surprisingly good for faaan fiction Reviews by Malcolm Edwards, Vic Hallett and Graham Charnock are informing but not boring. The editorial wraps it up with a discussion of the Nebulas and other things.

A good issue of a very good fanzine. Well worth getting.

Phil Muldowney.



BLACK KNIGHT ONE - Edited and produced by
PHIL SPENCER
65 Southdown Road
Portslade,
BRIGHTON BN4 2HL

Anyone who has read anything Phil has to say, knows exactly what to expect: ENTHUSIASM! Black Knight also contains poetry written by Sam Smith, Rosemary Pardoe and Phil himself. There's a very interesting article on COLOSSEUM (British Blues/Jazz Group) by John Hiseman, who writes with apparent authority, and obviously knows what he's talking about.

Rosemary and Phil review some L.P.'s by groups like: "Renaissance" and "Black Widow". Although I didn't know what they were talking about, it was an entertaining way to learn.

The entire fanzine has the personality of it's editor, who trips through the pages either with poetry, comment, or an odd joke or two, one of these really tickled me! BLACK KNIGHT is the first of it's kind I've heard of on the British scene, and I hope to see more issues of it. What made number one for me was the obvious enjoyment of it's editor. If you are interested in music and poetry, it's a must for you!

Copies of BLACK KNIGHT ONE can be obtained free and subsequent issues will be sent in return for Letters of Comment, Contributions, Trades or reviews.

CYNIC 2 - Edited by A. GRAHAM BOAK
3, Rydelands
Nuthurst
Cranleigh
Surrey

This is NOT a zine for the neo-fan, on the other hand if you want to meet Fandom face to face, this is a must for you, a bewildering must, but nevertheless a must. I'm sure that I missed many a nuance there in, simply because I am a neo, and as yet not familiar with all the names in Fandom or Cynic.

Ian Williams, whom I do know from MAYA, takes you to the Gannet, in a very funny article THE GANNET, THE HCND AND ME. Ian's style here is much less uncle-like (rare assurance that) you can almost taste the bheer -sorry, beer they are supping.

Gray goes on in his inimitable style, very entertainingly talking much, saying nothing in particular in his EGO CENTRE. These are the pages I enjoyed most in the zine.

But there is lots more, such as a very thorough review of some Fanzines, especially by Jhim Linwood and a good helping of Letters of Comment. Pete Weston's letter lead the column. I must say

the content of this one I found must surprising. Seemingly Pete does not regard layout of the least importance in the production of a zine. Funnily enough, it was just that which I found most pleasing about CYNIC 2, unlike most fanzines, C2 is thoughtfully laid out and a pleasure to read as well as look at. The illoes could be better - I understand Gray is planning to improve on those in his next issues. The Letters column on the whole is very lively with a definitive editorial presence.

FOULER SIX - Edited and Produced by Greg Pickersgill and Leroy Kettle. Available from: "The Pines",
Haylett Lane
Merlins Bridge
Haverforwest
Pembrookshire.

I've not been able to make up my mind about this 'zine, on the face of it its garish, crude etc, etc. It could be a parody I suppose or a paroxism, it's certainly peèle-mele with a big wooden spoon.

Whatever it is, it's full of the two editors' personalities. And I know I would not like to miss an issue of it, which means something I suppose, though what I dread to think... Greg and Leory offer much more than four letter words, but it seems that the snake is beginning to devour it's own tail. Letters of Comment could be largely to blame for this I think; they all (or nearly all) seem determined to outdo the editors in the battle of all fours.

Bryn Forty, in this particular issue, succeeds in confusing me even more (if that's possible) in a tale that supposed to be a Convention report. Entertaining as it was (the report) I would have prefaired a factual one, but it was a good, if slightly murky fun (the report and the convention).

Greg's Fanzine reviews are, as always, long and interesting, some of the best arround in fact. Certainly the best feature in this issue.

Chris Priest (author of INDOCTRINAIRE!) writes a LoC, scrambling onto the "I dont like Archie" wheel barrow. I think this is the most 'godawful' letter ever printed in FOULER - bar none. It's egocentric, petty, and has absolutely nothing to say!

Sad really, my demigods are turning out to be just people - and foolish little people at that. First John Brunner in SPECULATION, whining like a spoilt child, telling Auntie Fandom all about his knightly deed and the unjust reward he got for it: a bleeding leg yet....Ah the brave hero!

Chris Priest is just as ignoble, worse, Mr Priest is like a nasty small time bully, trying to get in on the act. I got the impression that not even the editors were overwhelmed by the wit of this letter. Which is exactly what I mean about FOWLER, it certainly is not what it seems at first glance...

Talking about personalities, Manchester has given birth to yet another Fanzine, by the name of HELL, a double barreled affair.

HELL ONE - Edited and produced by Brian Robinson and Paul Skelton, available from: 9, Linwood Grove Manchester M12 4QH.

This chatty duo, one of whom not only shoots guns, he's also known to aim a camera at some wierd and wonderfull targets, chatt-away past the reader at a breath taking pace. Then merge into one in the horizon.

My main, and perhaps the only, complaint ^{SA} is the merging. I wished they'd stop a-while for me to sepearate one ed from the other. Brian does stand alone, when talking about guns - his thing. The article seems comprehensive enough, though not having any knowledge of gums myself - 'xept to duck when I see one - it was of little or no interest to me personally.

There are some funny cartoons by Paul, and a serious article on space travel as well as advertisements from Venusian Slobs! -Quote unquote. The entire zine is beautifully produced especially the drawings which are drawn directly on the stencils - no mean feat this, speaking as one who's tried and failed...

In the editor's own words: "LoCs we're craving; contribs are always welcome, whether articles, reviews or artwork. And the price of the nextish? A stamp will secure. We can afford to produce HELL alright, but the postage!!! Turns ~~you~~ night off. Hope to hear from you." And I hope the-



M.A.D. or Manchester And District SF Group (OOZLOT).

by

PETER PRESFORD

Well folks, if you have struggled this far through ZIMRI: read no further; hang your copy in the loo by inserting a piece of string through the hole kindly provided in the top centre corner. Still here?

Ah well now, as you read this you might think that Lisa is standing behind me with a rolled up copy of Analog this is just not true (Ouch!!).

In an effort to drum up interest in the Manchester SF group, Pete Colley (a nice chap, untill he gets hold of Sirius swamp weed, then wooooo--) anyway, Pete and I went along one Friday night (21st of May) to see Harry Nadler & Co., at their DELTA THINGy film night in Salford. Unfortunately it was not SF film night; which alternates fortnightly, within the DELTA Film Society; the SF nights for those interested are on the first Saturday of each month.

To get there we piece of fic - of Manchester, with a good im-point A to B. we were ushered action packed Sixteen best cin-and shandy only, equipment, a set-type posters.

read a fantastic tion called the A-Z which enables poeple agination to get from On finally arriving, upstairs into THE most room ever: it was empty! ema seats, a bar (coke folks!), projection tee and lots of cinema

Harry and a fellow maniac, by the name of David, were awaiting the arrival of the Prestwich Cine Club. When everybody had been hauled in, and ready to start, Harry dropped a bomb shell: it was episode two of the year, yes, yes THE FLYING DISC MEN FROM MARS. This is that type of serial where the hero hasn't the slightest chance of appearing in the next episode, but does.

Harry, in passing, edits that great magazine: L'INCROYABLE CINEMA, the film thing about cinema, fantasy and imagination; anyone who is interested, should of course get in touch with

Harry at: 81 MARLEBROUGH ROAD, Salford, M8 7DT.

After the F.D.M.F.M., Pete suggested that if someone unlocked the door, we might be able to leave, and let the fanatics get on with it; which was kindly done, with a few hints that it is quite cheap to join the DELTA THINGy (and so it is).

Now then, starting time; SF groups in the main seem to be non-existent. W H Y? Manchester being only a Northern hick town has no need of a Science Fiction Group at all? - Two or more SF Fans is in my opinion a group. All we have to do is to pick a homely pub for the meeting and hey-presto! SF GROUP

This is exactly what we are doing, giving the starting dates etc: Our first is the first Wednesday in July, time 8.00pm, untill we get thrown out. We will be getting a few mini broadsheets scattered about, telling the world, this is SF night, come and join us! Or do the majority of Fans like the cloak and dagger stuff... well, you can bring those along too. Perhaps ~~we~~ 'they' are too shy to admit the liking for SF; most mainstream readers think OOZLOT are a bit odd, at least that's the impression one gets when the surface is scratched a little.

What's the average count of the BSFA? 250 or nearabouts, OK, so some people don't like joining things (in the flesh?), but I'm sure some would like to come allong to talk over a pint. After-all, as all SF readers know, to make progress, you must push forward and try.

Well folks, anybody interested in catching an alien virus with Lisa, Pete and myself in the Manchester area (or any odd visitors to M.A.D.. of course come to our gatherings or contact yours truly for further details, at: 061-480-1452, or write to:

10, DALKEITH ROAD
STH REDDISH
STOCKPORT
SK5 7EY

Oh, in passing, what's the view on those sexy ghals on the front covers of our SF paper-backs? Good, tone lowering or what?

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Note from ed L: The meeting Pete was going on about there, has in fact been held, and both your editors attended. We are pleased to report that it was a great success. A pub (homely Albert) has been chosen and new members enrolled. Looks like the North will have things happening here too - watch out London, Gannets & others flying visits are being planned.

John A Spinks 10 Whitehall Rd
Norwich NOR 99F
Norfolk.

Dear Eds.,

As I am determined to send in the first Loc for your new 'zine, I've decided not to wait to see it. Please delete as appropriate.

The first thing that struck me on receiving Zimri/Zombie/Whatever in May/June/July/Whatever, was the good/average/poor quality reproduction which made it so easy/difficult/impossible to read. It was a real pleasure/ordeal. The front cover illo., was beautiful/unusual/illegable/lousy, and I was glad/sorry to see that the artwork inside was/was not of the same high/low standard, especially the illo., by Bill/Jack/Fred/Jane/Carol/Whoever which I admired/de-tested. I was most/hardly by the length which was epic/average/abysmal.

The general standard of the contents I found to be high/average/low/suitable obscene comment, especially the article/review/story by Jim/Tom/Bob/Linda/Christine/Sonia/Whoever was accurate/inaccurate/fair/unfair/exciting/yawn-inspiring/another suitable obscene comment. I hope you include/don't include something else of his/hers in a future issue/s.

I was delighted/apalled to see so much/little space devoted to reviewing other fanzines as I consider that this, although a convenient space filler for the editor, is a boring waste of valuable space. The section on Eastercon was delightful/boring, and/but the comments on the functions and usefulness of the BSFA were useful/relevant/unhelpful/irrelevant.

I look forward to the next issue with enthusiasm/gloom, and hope to see the same/an improved high quality fanzine.

/xxx Now here is a an who obviously knows what he's talking about, thanx John. Enjoyed your highly perceptive/totally inane loc, loved/hated everything/nothing you left unsaid, and lookforward to never receiving lots more unlike this one...xxx/



