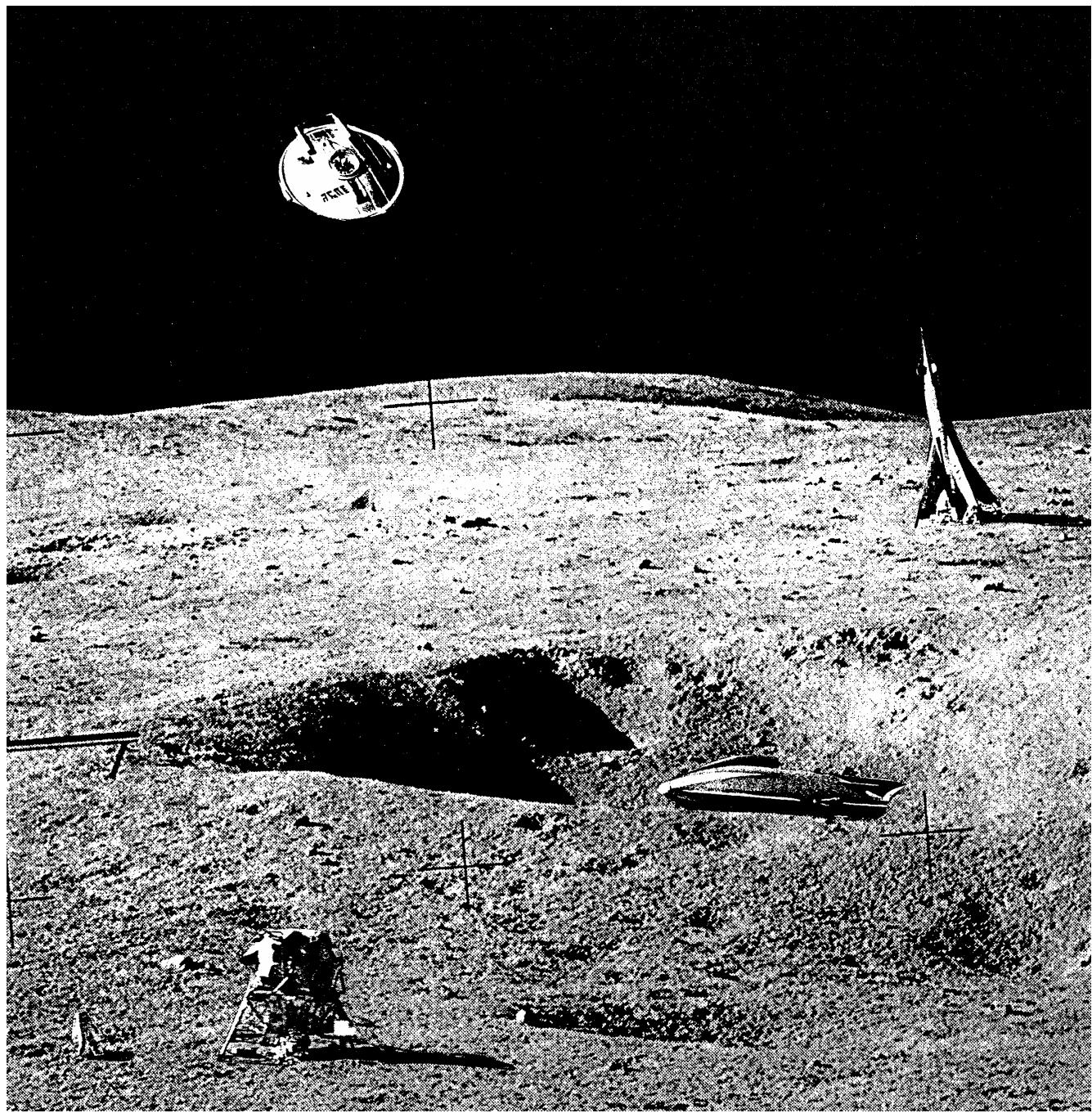


SPACE CADET

#13

(OR: THE AGING OLD FHART NOSTALGIC TIME WASTER GAZETTE)



THE APOLLO 13 LUNAR LANDING

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Note: All articles by R. Graeme Cameron unless otherwise credited.

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THE GHOD-EDITOR SPEAKS! (EDITORIAL)

I have decided to give up WCSFAzine. Issue #19 is the last. Fact is, I am no longer capable of writing to a monthly deadline. The newszine promotional aspect of WCSFAzine is cast aside. But the focus on Canadian fannish history will remain, albeit transferred to SPACE CADET which will reflect my interests and involve no obligations or time sensitive material. No more deadline pressure.

I envision myself working on SPACE CADET whenever I feel like it, slowly building an issue article by article, and pubbing it online whenever I figure there's enough content to make it worthwhile reading. This should result in shorter but more frequent issues, with a far more eclectic mix of content than was the case with WCSFAzine. I'm giving myself total freedom of pace and choice to ensure that SPACE CADET will be a true hobby for me, something I do for fun and relaxation.

Above all, I am going to resist thinking about when any given issue will be finished, when it should be finished. I am NOT going to say to myself "It's the weekend. If I work real hard I can get this and that article finished and have it ready to send off by Sunday evening." True, I would derive a sense of accomplishment from meeting the deadline, but it's a self-imposed deadline of no relevance to the real world. It's an artificial construct imposing stress. I don't need that. I will avoid all such.

Mind you, it's Sunday June 14th. I *might* have this issue ready to post tonight, but that's only because I figure I have nearly enough content. If I *do* post tonight it's because this issue is ready, not because I made any special effort to complete it.

Meanwhile, the one thing I *am* trying to get done is post all of the CanFancyclopedia entries I've completed to date at efanzines.com. Once I've accomplished that task I will work on additions and new topics at my leisure, literally whenever I feel like it. I don't plan to post the 'new' version till some time next year. Again, no specific deadline, no feeling of guilt because I haven't worked on it for a while. No pressure. No stress.



I do intend to write a con report on ConComCon 16 for the next issue, as well as a tribute to Garth Spencer's four-decade-long fannish career, but it'll be ready when it's ready. I'm not going to push myself.

I'm rather pleased I've narrowed my fanac focus to suit myself. If I keep within my fanenergy limitations I should be able to avoid gafiation more or less indefinitely and maintain my fanac as a low key albeit life long hobby. Tis the plan at least.

Cheers! The Graeme

June 2009

CONFessions OF AN SF ADDICT: RETURN OF THE MARCHING MORONS!

By The Graeme

The cover this issue – a cut & paste montage I cobbled together – first appeared when I was editor of the clubzine BCSFAZINE. I used it with issue #254, dated July 1994, to mark the 25th anniversary of the Apollo 11 lunar landing. I also wrote two articles on that theme, the first detailing my personal reminiscences of the birth of the space age, and the second as a rebuttal to some of the ludicrous NASA conspiracy theories of the time.

These days I see the crank-lit shelves take more space in book stores than ever before, up to and including a book blowing the lid off the dire secrets hidden in the writings of Jules Verne! Enough already!

As a kind of public service I chose to reprint my anti-conspiracy-theory article, if only to expose the cheap and cheesy technique all such employ. Note that author Don Wilson first of all relies on the ignorance of the public re: geology, space flight, and above all, NASA procedure, in order to confuse the reader, then asks ‘provocative’ questions to convince the reader a ‘cover-up’ is being exposed, wonderful secrets of alien contact being revealed, etc. Questions, incidentally, which even a barebones knowledge of the matters at hand renders absurd.

Mind you, this may be a public disservice, in that once you discover how easy it is to put together a book like Wilson’s, you may promptly trot out one of your own to cash in. Well, fine, so long as it’s a hoot to read. For instance, how about proving Edgar Rice Burroughs and Carl Sagan were one and the same individual, namely a long-lived Martian spy covering up the truth about Mars by implanting false impressions of what Mars is really like? (And how the movie MARS NEEDS WOMEN was an attempt to expose the truth, albeit disguised as fiction?) See how easily it can be done?

Just be aware, no matter how absurd your theory, no matter how obviously satirical in nature, a bunch of literal-minded cranks will believe every word and do their level best to convince the rest of the human race that you’re absolutely right. Mind you, that’s a great help in promoting sales.

And if you get invited onto a TV talk show to debate a tweed-infested academic, just be sure to shout the old twit down, scream at him for accepting bribes to hide the truth, and generally rattle and bully him into incoherence. Works like a charm every time.

But enough advice. Here is the article:

The Return of the Marching Morons (from BCSFAzine #254, July 1994)

Subject: (fwd) APOLLO MOON CONVERSATIONS SHOW NASA COVERUP Newsgroups:
alt.alien.visitors, alt.paranet.ufo, alt.conspiracy, sci.space.policy, sci.astro



"The following are excerpts of conversations from Apollo Astronauts on the Moon to Mission Control - which show that the Astronauts came across some strange and hard-to-explain structures and unusual sightings of unidentified craft - while on the surface of the Moon."

"These unusual conversations, when added together with the anomalies which Richard Hoagland has shown to exist on Apollo Moon photographs, provide compelling evidence for an ongoing NASA cover-up of what the Apollo Astronauts really discovered on the Moon from 1969 to 1972."

"The following Apollo Astronaut conversations were mostly taken from the out-of-print book "Our Mysterious Spaceship Moon" by Don Wilson (Dell, 1975):"

(**THE GRAEME NOTES:** in the interest of conserving space I have reduced the material to representative samples, then added my own comments.)

Apollo 16 Mission: April 16 - 27, 1972; Charles Duke, Thomas Mattingly, and John Young land in the Descartes highlands:

Duke: You got - YOWEE! Man - John, I tell you this is some sight here. Tony, the blocks in Buster are covered - the bottom is covered with blocks, five meters across. Besides the blocks seem to be in a preferred orientation, northeast to southwest. They go all the way up the wall on those two sides and on the other side you can only barely see the out-cropping at about 5 percent. Ninety percent of the bottom is covered with blocks that are 50 centimeters and larger.

DON WILSON SAYS: *"It is obvious that the astronauts are talking in code - meant to disguise what they are referring to. The big question is why the excited cries? Can this be *merely* due to the collecting of Moon rocks, as they would have us believe? Or did they find something much more substantial, which was not meant for public knowledge?"*

THE GRAEME REPLIES: Mr. Wilson, I took a few courses in geology at UBC. The astronauts are not talking about alien buildings as you imply, they're describing the floor and far wall of an unnamed crater (which for practical planning purposes had been assigned the temporary name 'Buster') as best they can (given that they're aviation engineers with just a smattering of training in geology) so that geologists back home can draw conclusions as to the crater's formation process. And may I remind you, whenever the astronauts piled out of the rover to take samples or examine geologic features, the TV camera on the rover, controlled by capcom back on Earth, followed their every move and frequently zoomed in for close-ups. I'm damn sure I was glued to my TV at the time and saw what they were talking about.

Apollo 17: Eugene Cernan, Ronald Evans, and Harrison Schmidt; Landed in the Taurus-Littrow Valley; Dec 7 - 19, 1972:

Evans: O.K., Robert, I guess the big thing I want to report from the back side is that I took another look at the - the - cloverleaf in Aitken with the binocs. And that southern dome (garble) to the east.

Mission Control: We copy that, Ron. Is there any difference in the color of the dome and the Mare Aitken there?

Evans: Yes there is... That Condor, Condorsey, or Condorecet or whatever you want to call it there. Condorecet Hotel is the one that has got the diamond-shaped fill down in the uh - floor.

DON WILSON SAYS: *"Again we have another example of code being used to disguise what has been found. For example, "Condorset Hotel". Why the codes, if there are no secrets being discussed. Why not explain to the American people openly what is going on? After all, they have paid for the mission."*

THE GRAEME REPLIES: Wilson! One of the most exciting geologic discoveries of the Apollo flights was the number of volcanic domes present. In other words, not every feature of the Moon was created by meteor bombardment. The colour question has to do with figuring out whether the outpouring of lava which created the nearby Mare Aitken was related to the volcanic event which uplifted the dome.... And code? "Cloverleaf"? "Condorcet Hotel"? Only the major Lunar features have been mapped and named. The astronauts selected temporary names to use as points of reference for particular unnamed features. For example, many craters examined during EVAs were assigned the names of the astronaut's wives & such (though hopefully 'Buster' was someone's dog....)

Another strange Apollo 16 "ground-to-air" conversation:

Young: That is affirm. We came upon - Barbara.

WILSON SAYS: *"Joseph H. Goodavage, whom included this conversation in a Saga magazine article, comments: "Barbara? That really needs some explanation, so I made an appointment with NASA geologist Farouk El Baz at National Aeronautics and Space Museum;"*

Saga: What do you suppose Young meant when he said they came upon "Barbara"?

El Baz: I can't really say. Code perhaps ...

Saga: But Barbara is an odd name for something on the Moon, isn't it?

El Baz: Yes, an enigma.

THE GRAEME REPLIES: Wilson! And you too, Goodavage! "Saga?" Sounds like one of those Men's Magazines. I'm impressed.... Yeah, right. Frankly, I doubt the veracity of this conversation, as El Baz comes across a bit dim. In any case "Barbara" is just another unnamed lunar feature temporarily assigned a name for practical reference purposes. I suppose you could call that a "code" if you wanted to make a dull planning practice seem like a sinister conspiracy....

Apollo 16: Another strange conversation:

WILSON ASKS: *"While on the Moon, did any of our astronauts see any indication of alien handiwork, such as strange constructions, disturbances or the like?"*

Orion: I'm looking out here at Stone Mountain and it's got - it looks like somebody has been out there plowing across the side of it. The beaches - the benches - look like one sort of terrace after another, right up the side. They sort of follow the contour of it right around.

Casper: (Mattingly in lunar orbit overhead): Another crater here looks as though it's flooded except that this same material seems to run up on the outside. You can see a definite patch of this stuff that's run down inside. And that material lays or has been structured on top of it, but it lays on top of things that are outside and higher. It's a very strange operation.



WILSON SAYS: *"And we might add that this is a very strange conversation. What are the real meanings of such terms used here as structure, blocked field, beaches, benches, terraces and the like? NASA claims that they are just metaphoric terms to describe unusual natural formations."*

THE GRAEME REPLIES: My dear Wilson! As an investigative journalist you're about on par with that chap who noticed that a map of the USA reveals small towns with names like "Sparta" and "Rome", and went on to write a book saying he had "proof!" that America was actually founded by the Greeks and Romans. Just a slight logic flaw.... Yes! They ARE generalist geologic terms! The guy in the lander is trying to describe the convoluted structure of Stone Mountain as best he can, while Mattingly in the orbiter is trying to make sense of a complicated layering of lava flows and crater ejecta blanketing an older crater.

Strange Apollo 17 conversation:

LMP: Was there any indication on the seismometers on the impact (of the discarded lunar lander) about the time I saw a bright flash on the surface?

Capcom: Stand by. We'll check on that, Jack.

LMP: A UFO perhaps, don't worry about it. I thought somebody was looking at it. It could have been one of the other flashes of light.

Capcom: O.K., I copy on that, Jack. And as long as we're talking about Grimaldi we'd like to have you brief Ron exactly on the location of that flashing light you saw ...

WILSON SAYS: *"This last conversation makes it obvious that both our astronauts and NASA do not take these sightings of light or UFOs lightly."*

THE GRAEME REPLIES: Wilson, you literal-minded researcher, you! You don't credit the astronauts with a sense of humour? That was just the LM pilot's way of dismissing a minor matter not worth further consideration. As for "flashing lights", they've been observed on the Moon for centuries by astronomers (not all that often, mind you). ALL the Apollo astronauts were asked to keep their eyes open for such. The phenomena was considered to represent volcanic action, i.e. gas venting (the expanding cloud catching the sun light). Any proof that the moon was still geologically active would be most exciting. Indeed, one of the cancelled Apollo missions had been intended to land in the crater where this phenomena has most often been observed. As it is, they did map a large number of apparently "fresh" volcanic cones from lunar orbit.....

Apollo 15: David Scott, Alfred Worden, James Irwin; went to the Apennine Mountains of the Moon, July 26 - Aug. 7, 1971. Conversation about discovering strange "tracks":

Irwin: Tracks here as we go down slope.

MC: Just follow the tracks, huh?

Irwin: I can't get over those lineations, that layering on Mt. Hadley.

Scott: Talk about organization!

Irwin: That's the most *organized structure I've ever seen*!

Scott: It's (garble) so uniform in width.

Irwin: Nothing we've seen before this has shown such uniform thickness from the top of the tracks to the bottom.

WILSON ASKS: *"What are these tracks? Who made them? Where did they come from? Does NASA have an answer for the people?"*

THE GRAEME REPLIES: Wilson, Wilson, Wilson.... Sigh. The tracks were made by boulders rolling down the mountainside. The Moon has a negligible atmosphere. Every celestial body that drops by, be it speck of dust or flying mountain, impacts on the surface. The large impacts cause "Moonquakes". Every few million years or so, some ejecta boulder from a previous impact gets shaken loose from a slope and begins to roll. One or two wound up rolling into craters, as their tracks clearly indicated. It was one of the Apollo astronauts' niftier discoveries.... The "organized structure" they keep exclaiming over is the horizontal bedrock layering apparent in the slopes of the mountains. I say "apparent", because after much study of the photos brought back by the astronauts, the scientists were

unsure whether the "lineations" were genuine or a trick of the lighting conditions. Genuine bedrock layering was observed inside Hadley Rill, however.

Apollo 11: "I say that there were other spaceships!"

ACCORDING TO DON WILSON: *"The following astonishing conversation was picked up by ham radio operators that had their own VHF receiving facilities that bypassed NASA's broadcasting outlets. At this time, the live television broadcast was interrupted for two minutes due to a supposed "overheated camera", but the transmission below was received loud and clear by hundreds of ham radio operators":*

"According to Otto Binder, who was a member of the NASA space team, Armstrong clutched Aldrin's arm excitedly and exclaimed":

Armstrong: What was it? What the hell was it?
That's all I want to know!"

Mission Control: What's there?... malfunction
(garble) ... Mission Control calling Apollo 11 ...

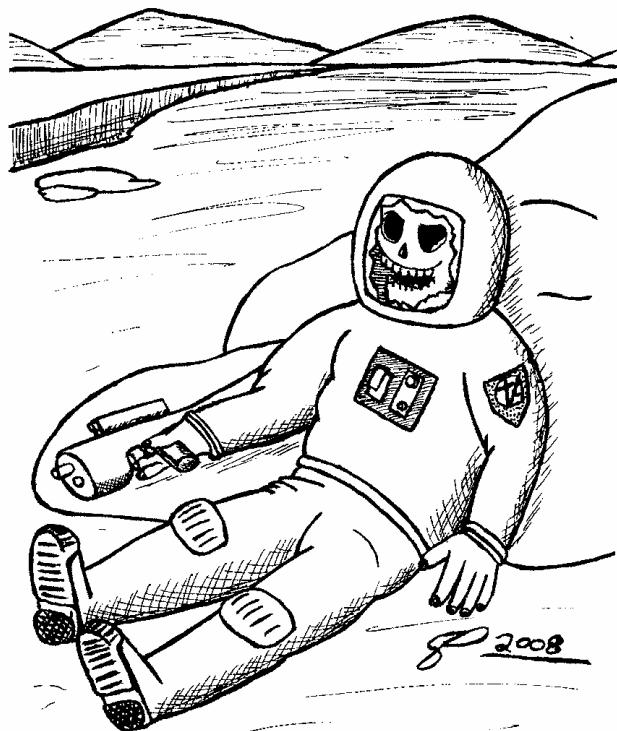
Apollo 11: These babies were huge, sir!...
Enormous!... Oh, God! You wouldn't believe it! ...
I'm telling you there are other space-craft out
there ... lined up on the far side of the crater
edge! ... They're on the Moon watching us! ...

WILSON REPORTS: that Binder figured the astronauts were then ordered *"to 'forget' what they saw and carry on casually and calmly as if nothing had happened. After all, an estimated 600 million people around the world were hanging on every word spoken by the first two men to leave footprints on the Moon."*

THE GRAEME REPLIES: Wilson! You take us for morons? Every old fart fan like myself knows Otto and Earl Binder were brothers who wrote the "ADAM LINK" robot stories under the pseudonym "Eando Binder." Bit of a giveaway that.

Giant spacecraft lined up on the far side of (what must be) a truly humongous crater? Trouble is, The Sea of Tranquility was chosen for its bland (and therefore safe) terrain. The "Eagle" sat on a featureless, undulating plain pocked by myriad SMALL craters averaging 20 to 30 feet in width. The largest crater for miles around was only 100 feet wide and 15 feet deep. A fleet of spacecraft lining "the far side" would have to be, what, about the size of 2 litre pop bottles?

In any case, Armstrong walked the 200 feet from the landing site to the crater's edge to snap its picture. You can find it in the December 1969 issue of National Geographic magazine.



The book "Celestial Raise" by Richard Watson, 1987; adds other details to the above remarkable dialogue of Apollo 11, such as:

Armstrong & Aldrin: We saw some visitors. They were here for a while, observing the instruments.

(and): Armstrong & Aldrin: God, if these damned cameras have picked up anything - what then?

Houston: Have you picked up anything?

Armstrong & Aldrin: I didn't have any film at hand. Three shots of the saucers or whatever they were that were ruining the film....

THE GRAEME COMMENTS: Watson, you're just like Wilson! Why would the astronaut say "observing the instruments"? Were the aliens ignoring the lander and the astronauts? They just slithered up to the deployed instrument package and stared at it with multi-faceted eyes? Sounds like the kind of made-up techno babble detail that bad writers think sounds convincing.... "saucers or whatever they were that were ruining the film.." Oh, come on now. How the hell would the astronauts know? You can't tell a film is ruined until you take it out of the camera and try to develop it. What kind of morons do you take us for?

The kind of morons who buy this sort of book by the million, obviously.

In 1951 GALAXY SCIENCE FICTION published THE MARCHING MORONS by C. M. Kornbluth, in which a man awakens from a state of suspended animation and discovers, to his horror, that the human race, for whatever reason, has bred intelligence down to an average IQ of 45. How he survives in a world where "reasonable" intelligence is regarded with dark suspicion and contempt makes for interesting reading.

It's books like the subject of this article that makes me think Kornbluth was more of a Futurist than any one dared believe..... Sigh.... except the Marching Morons have shown up earlier than anticipated.....

SPACE MODELS: FEWER THAN I THOUGHT

By The Graeme

Hah. Models! My childhood was filled with models... I think. Let me research the dusty archives of my memory...

My dad made the occasional plastic model as a carefully planned and logically organized relaxation project (he was a military pilot/engineer who loved to play with slide rules – no further explanation required). I was allowed to sit nearby and watch, if I kept quiet. He meticulously (and probably perfectly) assembled the Aurora Stutz Bearcat and the Aurora Avro Arrow. Possibly other models I no longer remember.

My brother, seven years older than I, also let me watch him build models. The Aurora Gotha bomber and the Aurora Sopwith Camel, both from WW1, are two that I recall. Also some sort of

hotrod car, Fulton's revolutionary steam-powered ship, and an early Spanish War era American battleship, from model companies other than Aurora.

The main difference between the two sets of models is that I would sneak into my brother's room and play with his models, something I didn't dare do with my Dad's.

The first three models I owned were given to me premade by either my dad or my brother. They were the Lindberg Flying Saucer (the very first plastic Sci-Fi kit and the very same used in the movie PLAN NINE FROM OUTER SPACE. It fit nicely into my kid-sized hand. I flung it about like a prehistoric Frisbee, worked quite well), the Monogram Space Taxi (which saw much use landing astronauts in my sandbox), and the Aurora Viking ship complete with crew. I loved, absolutely loved the Viking ship. Used to sink it in the concrete wash basin in the basement over and over. As my Grandfather was wont to say, "What's wrong with this boy?"



When I was finally allowed to collect and build models on my own, I acquired quite an eclectic mix. For some reason I was never much interested in Aircraft, though I did get the Airfix Wellington bomber (which my dad flew in World War II), the Airfix Lancaster bomber, and the Aurora Sikorsky S-55 helicopter (also useful for landing people in the sandbox).

I really went to town on the 1/48 scale Aurora Tank offerings: the M109 Howitzer, Centurion, Patton, Panther, Stalin, Tiger, Japanese Medium, Churchill, Sherman & Swedish S tanks all performing magnificently in my sandbox in the backyard.

In my later teenage years, when I no longer had a sandbox and had to use a kitchen table or my bedroom floor instead, I acquired all manner of 1/72 Airfix tanks and associated toy soldier sets, playing numerous wargames with the rules laid out in such books as INTRODUCTION TO BATTLE GAMING (1969) by Terence Wise, & BATTLE! PRACTICAL WARGAMING (1970) by Charles Grant. I was into tabletop miniature wargaming in a big way (albeit by myself, none of my friends were interested), which is why I loved, and still love, the first three Combat Mission computer games to come out. They were the first 3-d war games and... I could go on, but they're not the subject of this article. Anyway, I still play them once and a while to relax.

Let's see, in terms of ships I had the Aurora battleships Bismarck, Yamato, the King George V, and some sort of atomic submarine possibly by Revell. Not too many.

But the Aurora monster line were my favourites, bar none. I collected every one I could find, eventually winding up with Frankenstein, Dracula, Wolfman, Creature, Phantom of the Opera, Mummy, Hunchback, Godzilla and King Kong all lined up neatly on a shelf next to my bed. Oh, and the Aurora Gigantic Frankenstein or 'Big Frankie' which stood at the foot of my bed.

No doubt there were others I've since forgotten. All eventually tossed into the garbage during various moves. I'm happy to say I now possess reissues of the Lindberg Flying Saucer, Monogram Space Taxi & Aurora Viking Ship, as well as the Aurora Monster line and some models I lusted after when first issued but never got, like the Revell Rat Fink. And then there's the 100 plus aircraft models

underneath my den table awaiting my retirement hobby days (assuming plastic cement is still manufactured in the near future – the model hobby seems to be dying). So models are still a part of my life.

Hmm, all of the above was meant to be an introduction to the true topic of this article, Space Models, and by Space I mean actual spaceships & such, a trip down memory lane inspired by my reprint of the conspiracy article. Got carried away running down the lane. Well, I've backtracked and am now back on topic.

After all, I'm a Sputnik baby, i.e. I was a young kid when Sputnik orbited in October 57 I think it was. Saw it too, a faint white dot drifting slowly across the night sky, as did every other person in Elmvale Acres subdivision in Ottawa. Believe me, Sputnik had a HUGE impact on people, including my dad. He promptly created another of his 'relaxation' projects, carving a model of Sputnik out of soapstone and inserting trailing antennae of copper wire. Quite neat actually.

But what did I do? I was certainly keen on the space race. Am still keen on probes to the planets & moons of our solar system. No doubt I purchased tons of space models? Can't seem to recall any...

I turn to the 'bible' of space model collectors, namely CREATING SPACE, THE STORY OF THE SPACE AGE TOLD THROUGH MODELS (2002) by Mat Irvine. It's a very cool book. It even has a photo of a model of the Atomic Powered Lunar Lander proposed by the British Interplanetary society in 1947 scratch built by the author, as well as all the hypothetical spaceships put out by Monogram and Strombecker designed by Willy Ley & von Braun & such. I've purchased a few of those in reissue form.

Apparently there were myriad rocket & missile models when I was a kid, including an Aurora Bomarc missile! This is of significance to Canadians. We threw away the Avro Arrow, a Mach 2+ Canadian designed and built fighter intended to intercept Soviet bombers over the North pole and replaced it with US made Bomarc missiles with a range of a mere 200 miles. Duh! Maybe that's why we DIDN'T have a Bomarc missile model in the house. Hmm. In any event, didn't buy any missile kits at all. Not one. Didn't interest me for some reason.

In fact, looking at all the photos of various space age models, there are only three I can dredge up from my memory as something I bought and built.

- 1) I had a large model of the Gemini capsule, probably the Revell 1/24 kit issued in 1965. Quite detailed as I recall.
- 2) Also a model of the Lunar Lander by itself, without base or astronaut figures, which I suspect was the 1/48 scale Revell model issued in 1969.
- 3) And last but not least, the complete Saturn five Moon launcher. Not, I'm sorry to say, the 1/96 scale four-foot-tall version sold by Revell, but the smaller 1/144 scale Airfix version issued in 1969.

And that's it. Nothing else. Fact is, the real space age didn't activate my sensa-wonda anywhere near as well as the 1950s space-age-to-come concepts did. So even though I was a child of the space age, and followed each mission avidly (at least till the Space Shuttle made space travel 'routine'), I never got into collecting and building space models as obsessively as I did, say, the Aurora Monster line.

Hmm, not much of an excuse for an article. But I had fun thinking back to my childhood. Your homework assignment is to contrast and compare with your own experience. I'd be interested to learn what models you were into collecting.

FILTHY PRODOM STUFF

FIRST ISSUES: DAYNAMIC SCIENCE STORIES

by Terry Jeeves



February 1939 saw the arrival of a companion magazine to MARVEL SCIENCE STORIES. Edited by Robert O. Erisman and priced at 15 cents for around 120 pages, the new venture was short-lived, only seeing two issues. Don't confuse it with DYNAMIC SCIENCE FICTION which managed six. The cover by Paul, showed two of his typical spacecraft, somewhere off Jupiter. According to the Contents page, this illustrated the lead novel, 'Lord of Tranerica' – but actually, it showed a scene from 'Mutineers of Space', which was set around the giant planet. Paul did however, supply two excellent interiors, other passable art being by Binder and Wesso, plus a rather static illo by Marchioni.

LORD OF TRANERICA by Stanton A. Coblenz told of the Tyngall, Hannibal Spratt, Dictator of the 25th century Americas. He accidentally hauled Harry and Celia from the past, became enamoured by Celia, whilst Harry faced death. However Harry stirs up a revolt, before winding up the new Tyngall – and getting the girl.

THE MERCURIAN MENACE by Nelson S. Bond tells how 'Buzz' Carson, a surveyor on Mercury who avoids the evil dark side – until glamorous Jeryl Morrow jets off there and has to be rescued with the aid of the football-like 'Rollies' – Buzz also gets his girl.

MUTINEERS OF SPACE by Lloyd Arthur Eshbach described how men, falsely condemned to a short life in the Jovian sulphur pits, escaped, stole a spaceship, gained revenge on the villain and became space rovers. No girls this time.

THE MESSAGE FROM THE VOID by 'Hubert Mativity' (Nelson S. Bond again) had alien and earthly scientists trying to contact other intelligences – but neither understands the other's methods, so both decide to abandon the vain idea.

THE QUEST OF ZIPANTORIC by Robert Moore Williams was a typical ‘lost race’ yarn wherein explorer Dick Markle encountered a Mayan Princess in a South American jungle. Captured and faced with death, he escaped – along with the girl.

For your 15 cents, you also got ‘The Test Tube’, a ten-question quiz and ‘Through The Telescope’, seven columns of answers to scientific questions sent in to the sister magazine, MARVEL SCIENCE STORIES. A rather crafty way of coaxing readers to buy both magazines. DYNAMIC SCIENCE STORIES saw only two issues, but a revival in 1973, titled DYNAMIC SF managed a dozen or so.

CORRUSCATING CONUNDRUMS!



ASK MR. SCIENCE!

(As submitted by Al Betz, Corresponding Secretary for Mr. Science.)

Ms. BO, of Vancouver, B.C., asks:

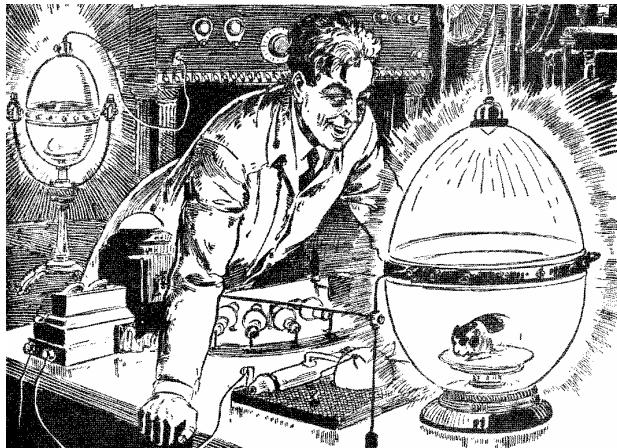
CAN I BECOME ILL BY TALKING WITH A SICK PERSON ON THE TELEPHONE?

MR. SCIENCE: You cannot catch bacterial diseases in this manner. Viruses, however, are small enough to pass through the interstices in the telephone wire. They will be driven along by the undulating electric current at about half the speed of sound. This means that you are safe for about ten seconds for every mile between you and the infected person with whom you are speaking.

Mr. DF, of New Westminster, B.C., asks:

WHY DO I GET A SHOCK AFTER WALKING ACROSS A RUG ON A DRY DAY?

MR. SCIENCE – The currently popular TV commercial showing the destruction of a rug by “carpet critters” forms the basis of the explanation of this common phenomenon. One of the large variety of “carpet critters” is a close relative of the electric eel, which, preferring a great deal of moisture, understandably becomes annoyed on dry days. You, disturbing it even further by walking across the rug, become the target of its electric anger.



ASK MR. GUESS-IT-ALL!

(As submitted by R. Graeme Cameron, official spin-doctor for Mr. Guess-It-All)

Mr. PQ of Coquitlam, B.C., asks:

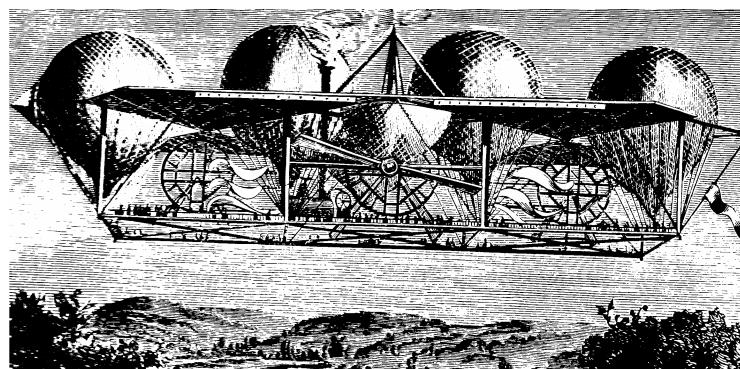
DOES THE METHANE RECENTLY FOUND IN THE MARTIAN ATMOSPHERE PROVE THERE'S LIFE ON MARS?

MR. GUESS-IT-ALL: Scientists claim the methane is a product of either bacteria deep beneath the Martian surface or of volcanic activity at roughly the same depth. This very convenient theorizing on the part of said scientists will require decades of government grants and increasingly sophisticated space probes to prove or disprove, thus providing employment for generations of scientists. However, the origin of the methane has nothing to do with whatever is or is not happening beneath the Martian surface. The methane in question originates on Earth. Specifically, our Canadian muskeg is now defrosting because of global warming, and as a result is releasing methane in prodigious quantity in the form of supersonic jets ejecting the methane so far beyond the pull of Earth's gravity that the gravity of Mars sucks it down into the Martian atmosphere. If we could but harness these jets we could safely travel to Mars by balloon. This requires, of course, divers government grants to determine the level of feasibility. I have already sent in my application.

Ms. BB, formally of Bellingham, WA, asks:

ARE THERE ANY ADVANTAGES TO THE PHENOMENON OF GLOBAL WARMING?

MR. GUESS-IT-ALL: Absolutely! The Canadian methane we are currently saturating the Martian atmosphere with is wiping out all the squelchy squiddy horrors resident on the surface and is in fact sterilizing the entire planet, rendering it perfectly safe for our use once global warming has wiped out all life on Earth. The trick is to migrate before we die. Timing is critical.



MEDIA MAELSTROM

RETRO FILM REVIEW: WILD WOMEN (1951)

By The Graeme

No doubt you are shouting with glee, thinking that I have finally got around to reviewing WILD WOMEN OF WONGA.... Sorry to disappoint you, but I am in fact reviewing WILD WOMEN, an even more obscure lost civilization film which was made in 1951 with the aid of considerable stock footage.

In fact the film begins with hand cranked silent era footage of what appears to be New Guinea tribesmen paddling enormous canoes with ornate prows. After much spear waving, they come ashore and attack a typical New Guinea village. This is all rather odd, since the film is supposed to be taking place in Africa.

Scenes intercut with this footage depict Kirby and Count Sparafucile watching from nearby.

"Looks like a big affair," says the Count.

Replies Kirby morosely, "You want to go big game hunting or watch a bunch of natives?"

But the Count remains curious. "What do you think it's all about?" he asks.

"Ah," responds Kirby, "those natives get excited about anything."

Personally, I think having one's village attacked by hostile warriors, your hut burned to the ground, your family put in danger of being speared, etc., is more than enough reason to get excited, but maybe Kirby is a particularly stolid type. Frequent shots of Orangutans in the trees bother him not a whit, even though they are found only in South East Asia and certain islands. A man of stone, this man Kirby.

After ignoring footage of a white girl in a fur bikini walking hand-in-hand with a man-in-a-suit gorilla, our intrepid heroes make camp. In stumbles Trent, who gasps "The Ulama! The white sirens of Africa!" and promptly falls asleep.

Next morning, after two (2) shots of a Rocky Mountain marmot surveying the camp, Trent wakes up and tells the others his life story. "Years ago, my father took me to Africa."

Cut to shots of a white kid dressed like Tom Sawyer, a youthful Stepin Fetchit imitator, and a white jungle girl standing by a grass hut. Where did they get this footage?

"We lived surrounded by wild animals, and scarcely less wild natives. The unexpected was always happening, and it was often dangerous."

I'll say! We see footage of a leopard being shoved into the hut, the trainer's arm clearly visible. Also a snake being forced to drop from the ceiling, and another leopard being forced to jump on to the hut. Sheer excitement, at least if you're a member of the S.P.C.A.

"When the danger was over... My pet rabbit. I was anxious to see if it was safe. The little creature was perfectly all right."

I spent the rest of the movie worrying about the little bunny rabbit. Its ultimate fate was never disclosed.

Oh yes, the kid's father gets beaned by a stone flung by a Ulama! The boy doesn't care, he found her a vision of "womanly loveliness." As opposed to manly loveliness? The natives spot her. Crowds of excited warriors come running out of huts.

"The whole village was AROUSED!" declares Trent, which I thought rather a strong sexual statement for a '50's film. "The head medicine man immediately began one of his weird tribal ceremonies to propitiate the tribal Gods."

Cut to footage of a roasting pig. By God they have to work their stock footage in somehow!

What happens next? Nothing, for about twenty years. Then Trent comes back to Africa, his natives run away, he sees another Ulama, he runs away, he nearly starves, he meets Kirby and the Count, and now....OFFERS TO LEAD THEM TO THE ULAMA!

Kirby's response?

"I'll go on one condition. I get all the blonds and brunettes, you get the redheads, and Sparafucile gets all the rest! Har har!" Kirby is not only a man of stone, his brain is made of stone.

Trent guides Kirby and Sparafucile to the cliffs at the base of the hidden plateau and proudly declares, "There it is, quite vast I'd say, and plenty high."

Whereupon a puzzled Kirby asks, "Where exactly is this plateau?"

Understandably annoyed, Trent gestures at the cliffs, "Up there!"

"Oh," says Kirby, "Straight ahead, eh?" Would you want this man on your expedition? I wouldn't.

Naturally, they climb the cliff and are captured by the Ulama. The Queen of the Ulama says to Sparafucile, "You white man. You no good. We dance for the fire God. Fire God want weak man. We burn you. You burn nice." Straight and to the point, I must say.

There follows a musical number. The Ulama play the bongos while one gal sings, and I quote the lyrics exactly, "EEEM BOMBA EEEM BOMBA / MAYA NIGA MALA MOLAY / HUMBA HUMBA CHANGA / BOYA BOYA HUMBA." Regrettably this song is repeated later in the film.



We then observe the girls at play swimming about in a rock pool. Cut to a shot of a moose at the edge of a lake looking up in stupefied astonishment. You would too if you suddenly found yourself teleported to Africa. Like the infamous bunny rabbit, the puzzled moose never reappears.

Next Trent and Kirby are flung into a cave where, oddly, they cast double shadows. They are fed watermelon. "Hey, what if this is poisoned?" says Kirby. They eat it all the same. Trent spits out the seeds.

"Stop it, you're embarrassing me," protests Kirby. Strangely fussy for a man of stone.

The Queen shows them some other male captives. "Me Queen."

"We know," says Kirby, but the Queen continues anyway. "Husband try to run away, get big spear in back, fall down. No more husband."

"Gee, that's too bad."

Finally, Trent and Kirby have to fight various Ulama to see if they should be taken on as the Queen's consorts or fed to the fire God. Kirby is first. He tears off his shirt, strides boldly forward and promptly gets pounded into unconsciousness. Trent runs up, gets punched in the face, knocked down, kicked about, yet somehow wins.

"You strong man!" says the Queen. "You husband of Queen!"

But Trent is a little slow, "I don't know what this proves, but I guess we can be friends till we leave."

This makes the Queen mad. "No! Weak man given to fire God! Queen promise!"

Concerned for the fate of his buddies, Trent threatens the Queen, "If I have to, I'll stop you by force!" The Queen punches him in the stomach, chops him in the throat, then grabs his face and shoves him to the ground. So much for the gentle art of diplomacy.

This is followed by more bongo drums, more music, and dancing. I've seen better dancing by the Glamorous Ladies of Wrestling. Still, the Queen seems to like the dancing. I guess there's something about watching her female warriors writhe and twist which puts her in the mood for love.

But Oohna is in love. Who is Oohna? Why, a Ulama warrior who decides to betray her tribe on the spur of the moment, probably because the Queen has been keeping all the men for herself and Oohna hasn't been getting any. She gives Trent his gun back. This does wonders for his masculinity. Even more important, she points him toward the back of the cave. Seems he'd never thought to look there. If he had, he would have escaped much earlier.

Suffice to say, the film ends with Trent, Oohna, Count Sparafucile and Kirby walking arm-in-arm into the sunset singing a little ditty from the opera "Rigoletto." (SP mine. I don't know the correct spelling.)

That the song is from that opera, and that Count Sparafucile is a character from that opera are facts I owe to Ed Hutchings, one of the many people at a long ago BCSFA general meeting who were forced to watch WILD WOMEN.

"You bought it?" muttered Steve Forty over and over. "You BOUGHT it?"

Of course, it's a classic. Don't you agree?

GENRE FILM CHECKLIST:

The surge of interest in 'cult' films seems to have waxed and waned more than a decade ago. There don't seem to be any Genre Film Encyclopedias available these days, and most of the magazines dedicated to same have folded or gone online. It occurs to me many modern film fans don't have a clear picture of what to look for when checking out 'video' stores (I won't even mention the prediction that soon the ONLY source of films will be downloads). So what follows is my attempt, utilizing many sources including my own viewing experience, to provide brief capsule descriptions of SF, Horror & Fantasy films starting with the year 1930, the year that 'talkies' stopped being experimental and became the accepted norm. I will then proceed year by year (salivating at the prospect of describing the 1950s, my favourite decade) for as long as SPACE CADET lasts, or the end of the world, whichever comes first.

GENRE FILMS OF THE YEAR 1930

ALRUNE AKA DAUGHTER OF EVIL – German film about a woman born of artificial insemination. Stars Brigitte Helm of METROPOLIS fame. She played Alrune in the 3rd, silent version which is considered a sensual masterpiece, but in this 4th version dialogue conquers all, including plot and atmosphere, rendering the film pedestrian and boring. A common feature of early talkies.

THE BAT WHISPERS – The Bat is a sort of criminal mastermind who flits about a lot, evidently having invented bungee cords and such. Based on a Broadway play, the plot is fairly ordinary and predictable, but the direction and camera work are superb, at times surreal, even hallucinatory. Considered the best horror/mystery/spoof ever filmed. A classic in other words.

THE CAT CREEPS -- Remake of the 1927 silent THE CAT AND THE CANARY about a family threatened by a maniac who thinks he's a cat stalking prey. This sound version is hampered by a thick burden of unnecessary dialogue which eradicates all suspense. The villain looks rather idiotic as well, what with eyes bugging out and cheap fangs, but the camera work is fairly imaginative.

THE GORILLA – Another Broadway horror spoof turned into film, this 2nd version being the first with sound. Ye typical binge of secret panels and detectives feeding each other jokes as old as the hills. Nothing special, even when first released. But probably worth watching as a curiosity, given that Walter Pigeon (of FORBIDDEN PLANET fame) plays the hero! The gorilla suit is about average.

JUST IMAGINE – Wildly bizarre big budget musical extravaganza about the near future (1980) and a trip to Mars. The humour consists of already obsolete boffo yuks , and the songs, especially the one about the sex life of flies, are mindboggling. Many great sets though, and once on Mars, utterly wacky costumes. In the right frame of mind, you may find this a highly entertaining film. It's terrible!

MADAM SATAN – is the persona of a bored housewife trying to reawaken her husband's interest by staging a decadent costume ball aboard a gigantic dirigible. Wonderfully loony, silly, frothy nonsense designed to make people forget the great depression outside the theatre, full of idiotic costumes and ungainly musical numbers, culminating in a quite merry catastrophe not at all like the Hindenburg.

THE UNHOLY THREE – Lon Chaney Sr.'s only sound film, a remake of his earlier silent version. Given that Chaney plays a ventriloquist, a sound version makes a lot more sense. Though not considered as good as the 1925 film, Chaney in drag as the evil granny pushing a carriage with 'baby' (a midget even more evil than 'she') is still pretty darn creepy second time around. Worth watching.

FANATICAL FANDOM FABLES

CLIPPINGS FROM CANADA

By Leslie A. Croutch

In several issues of Rosenblum's FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST from the 1940s posted online by UK fan Rob Hansen, Canada's own Leslie A. Croutch (Publisher and editor of LIGHT) contributes a column of which I quote the following sample:

From Futurian War Digest #12, September 1941

Canada has just got her second weird magazine! Rumoured printed by one of the country's largest publishers, EERIE will appear this month (July). Was supposed to be out about June 15th but no sign yet. New Canadian magazines are usually slow in appearing, though. I haven't any details at time of writing except that Leslie A. Croutch sold his fifth story "A Dictator Dies" to it for the first issue. You're right - that nasty man gets killed!

Donald Wolheim and Oliver E. Saari had stories in Canada's UNCANNY TALES, the June issue. Leslie A. Croutch's third sale "Dancing Partner" was also in the same issue.

Oliver Saari again - he has just sold a 5000 worder, "Ghost World", to Lowndes for either SF or SFQ. Also sold "Gold Mine" to Pohl of ASTONISHING. This is the story which Clifford D. Simak said would not succeed because the idea was too hard to put over successfully. Saari went ahead just the same. Saari has also had accepted "The Door" by ASF - a 1500 worder.

Watch for Basil Wells. He's an up and coming writer soon to appear in fantasy. He sold his "Factory In The Sky" to ASTONISHING, "The Giant" to COSMIC, & is rewriting a 5000 worder for PLANET. His "The Skull" appeared in UNCANNY TALES under his wife's name, Margaret Wells. This Wells is a very prolific writer, having written and submitted "Robot Casanova", "Pioneers of Space", "Slaves of Zutar"; "Land of the WEE", "Masters of Smallness", "Other Men", "Gray World", "Nitha of the Blue World", "Crusader", "Within the Bowl" and "The Doubles" to various stf and fantasy mags of late.

BENDING THE TRUTH WITH MIND ALONE

by Taral Wayne

(An essay first published in RAFFLES 7.5 in June 1983)

Not long ago – one or two numbered fandoms or so – it was a truism that the fine fannish mind had no room for mystic nonsense. For the sake of a story, a stfnist could fool around with a little ESP, postulate powers exceeding the limited mental horizons of ordinary Homo Sap, or even give homage to personified Destiny. The odd gnome or leprechaun has even been known to make an appearance, if given half a pretext. But more than that would be magical.

Ordinary, proper observance of the scientific method must be kept, and nothing that could not be measured with a slide rule was within the jurisdiction of science fiction as laid down by Hugo Gernsback. Spaceships – alright. Real rockets were being fired from White Sands, and staking out the moon was already a matter for international squabble. Death rays? Bell Labs had coaxed a thin red beam from a ruby in 1963, melting a hole in a steel plate. Time travel was almost a scientific fact, even if Einstein didn't say it would be easy. Science fiction was fiction with science. It was about the rational. The rest was fantasy, and ne'er the twain was meant to meet.

Unfortunately, the Elder Gods had it in for old Hugo.

Today, SF is a mass market miracle, with \$50,000, \$500,000, and \$2,000,000 advances. (1) Commercial success overshadows all thought of ideology, and there ain't nothing as commercial as centaurs, dragons, unicorns, and neo-medievalism. The mile-long starships have crashed, their Faster Than Light engines turned off by the power company for non-payment. Hard science readers have had to be content with some computer buzzwords and L-5 company towns in space. No sense in a successful, enterprising, young writer not writing a Titan or a Heritage of Hastur. The fans, after all, lap it up.

Not only has SF changed, but so has fandom, you see. It is common to discover that a fellow fan is into something psychic or neo-pagan. Among the most enlightened and faanish, tarot card reading is fashionable, while many unabashedly profess to Druidism, Bushido, Renaissance revival, or fundamentalist Christianity. To casting horoscopes, having empathic abilities, and suspecting illuminati conspiracies. To astrology, scientology, Wicca, general semantics, Libertarianism, Marxism, the Warrior Code, and other forms of paranormal belief. For the undecided fan, even the Dean Drive is back. It used to be that only the odd crackpot – unsung, or as fabled as Claude Degler – was into this sort of irrationality. But then, they knew their place, or were frequently put in it. It was a matter of eccentricity at best, not protected from criticism as it is now. Today, it is as politically incorrect to attack cranks as it would be to criticize race, colour, or creed.

Well, I still think it's crap. And the people gullible. Worse... it's mundane.

(1) It was in 1983, anyway, when a new Heinlein novel was headline news, Silverberg was bankable in Zurich, and Asimov had only just awakened from his 25 year snooze in the science column of Analog. I don't think anyone pays that kind of money for SF now, not even for the big names.

Some years ago, I worked as a billing typist for Steamship Forwarding. (2) I worked alongside a perfect specimen of the sort who had an implicit belief in the supernatural forces around him. He read a bit of “sci-fi” as he called it. Only a little, though, as a dietary supplement to a cuisine largely consisting of books about Mu, and the Nazca Plain, written by petty academics who had discovered mystic powers in Tibet, or had been carried off to Neptune by little men in silver lame suits with big heads. To the detriment of my peace of mind, we took the same bus on the way home after work, and he would talk to me.

The subject always came around to something over which we had unbridgeable differences of opinion. Because we had to work together the next day, I was inhibited from enlightening him with my *full* opinion. I had to restrain myself to doubting that rotted timbers on Mt. Ararat were the remains of Noah’s Ark, or that the pyramids could be decoded to foretell the history of the world, or that 9/10’s of the human brain is unused and must be the seat of extrasensory powers. (3) My opinions about *my workmate* I had to keep to myself.

If I couldn’t relieve my exasperation the obvious way, a devious means presented itself one time. I was already something of a “card” at the office. I.e.: an asshole who was funny as long as the joke was on someone else. I got laughs various ways. Once, I managed to find how to tie up all the lines of the dispatcher’s phone when he was out for a leak. (Draining the potatoes was the way he put it.) When he came back to the trailer we worked in, he found the phone with all half dozen lines ringing and blinking furiously.

Picking up line one, he answered the call from line two. Picking up line two, he answered the call on line three, and so on, until one by one he doused the lights for every incoming call, without once finding anyone on the other end. Fortunately, the dispatcher had a well developed sense of humour, and the florid stream of “shits” and “goddamns” were the way he responded to *any* situation. Gum on his shoes, or a half million dollar liability on a lost delivery, it was all the same.

I was that kind of an asshole.

One day I happened to notice the Believer was reading a book on his lunch break. The subject was ancient astronauts. As soon as lunch was over, I went back to work, but not before having a word with him. He had put the book away, but I made a safe guess and said “the stone blocks were floated down the Nile on rafts from Giza.”

“*How did you know what I was thinking!*” he exclaimed.

He didn’t have a clue. He couldn’t imagine anyone making an inference, from the lurid cover of a book, that he was thinking of gods building the pyramids with anti-gravity rays and laser tools.

(2) Which was a subsidiary of Canada Steamship Lines. CSL was then chaired by Paul Martin, who would later become owner, and at one time argue that the company should relocate its headquarters outside the country, to avoid paying taxes. Paul Martin became leader of the Liberal Party and was elected Prime Minister a few years later. Shows the sort of patriotism Canadians have come to expect in their leaders...

(3) Actually, that was still a common belief even among educated people. I was way ahead of the game in my belief that we only didn’t know what 90% of the brain was for. This is scripture in neurological sciences today. The figure may be down to 85%.

“I read your mind,” I said, taking quick advantage of his gullibility. Then I bounced out of his partition, laughing as though satanically possessed.

I was fired sometime after that. Mostly likely because I wouldn’t stay overtime on the promise of days off we never actually got, but possibly for my nuisance value.

The Believer had been a mundane, and not an overly bright example of one either. Fans are different. Could I take in a fan so easily? I’m sorry to say, but the facts don’t comfort our egos. I could.

In 1989 I ran a small SF con in Toronto called Torque. Small it was. But a few fans had come up from the States, including a couple of filksingers who had mistakenly expected a Dorsai Irregular gathering. One was a Japanese guy with the silly habit of wearing a stuffed toy frog on his head. The other was a badly overweight black woman, partial to bad taste in fashion. At some point in the con, I overheard that she was not all that she seemed. She was in fact, an overweight black *man*, whose taste in clothing was not just poor but utterly confused. I was alright with that. (I’ve shown bad taste in dresses too.) But in those days it was rather hard to imagine transgendered individuals

“No. Are you sure?” I asked.

“Absolutely,” I was assured by a stranger who had never lied to me before.

A bit later that evening, I was in the consuite with friends. We were sketching pornographic cartoons in some Neo’s notebook, while the Neo looked on horrified. I drew Boticelli’s Venus rising from an oil slick, taking my cue from a costume in the vicinity. (Black leotards, sequins, and strategically placed silver starfish.) The costume in question struck back with a mythological allusion of her own. “Icarus entering the oil slick” *Splash* Quick as a third annish, I rejoined with “Icarus entering the oil slick”, a crude innuendo. (4) About then I noticed the transgendered black woman sitting nearby, watching us. Wicked thoughts came into my head.

I stopped doodling, and looked up, then went back to the notebook. A minute later, I made theatrical gestures with my hands near my temples, like Spock establishing communication with a sentient rhubarb. If I hadn’t the black woman’s attention before, I definitely had it now. I turned in her vague direction, looked around as if she wasn’t what I expected to see, and finally brought my gaze back to her. I announced to the room in general that I sensed some confusion, like two personalities superimposed on one another, or perhaps someone who gave the impression of being both man and woman.

Her back molar needed filling, I noted, when her jaw dropped. She became excited and started asking how I knew if someone like that was nearby? Had I known I had The Gift? Could I read her thought outright? That was how convinced she was that there was no other way I could possibly have known about her inner nature.

Oh hum, I replied, yes... I just feel other people around me, very vague, nothing fancy like thought transference, I hardly notice I have it, just when something unusual was in the air. Excuse me, I finished... I went back to drawing a picture of the Neo being sexually assaulted by a lizard woman.

(4) Wish I could remember what these sketches looked like. Doubtless the captions seemed funnier *in situ*.

Yes... I was that kind of an asshole. (5)

But at least I've never claimed to be a Slan.

(5) I seem to recall one loccer in the subsequent issue who claimed he knew the woman I described, and he didn't think my pastiche was especially amusing, if I'm not mistaken.

HISTRONIC HISTORY STUFF

A POCKET FULL OF HISTORIES: COIN NOTES

By Taral Wayne

The coins illustrated in these short written pieces are all from my collection. I've scanned each one, and drawn on my own knowledge to describe the coin, the Kings, the Queens, the Emperors, and the times. Certain statements are my opinions only, even guesswork, but that's alright. After more than 2,000 years in some cases, there's nobody around to sue!

VICTORINUS, "Gallic Empire"
268-270 AD, Antoninianus



Obv. IMP C PIAV
VICTORINVS
PG AVG

Rev. FIDES
MILITUM

This is perhaps the least interesting of the last batch I brought back from a coin show, but not without interest entirely. For one thing, Victorinus was the next to last emperor of the so-called "Gallic Empire". During the reign of Gallienus in the mid-third century, Gaul and Britain revolted under a general named Posthumus (Pawst-Hoo-Mus), who made himself emperor of those split off provinces. Surprisingly, the Gallic Empire lasted thirty or forty years, through a succession of emperors. Most, like this jerk, were murdered or killed in battle. The last was a man named Tetricus, who was smart enough to size up the real emperor in Rome -- a tough bird called Claudius Gothicus at this time --

and surrender peacefully to him. He was allowed to live out the rest of his life comfortably, unusual for any deposed emperor at any time. Victorinus had no such luck... His army bumped him off, which is fine irony since the reverse of this coin reads "Faithfulness of the soldiers"

LETTERS OF COMMENT

OOK OOK, SLOBBER DROOL!

(Note: Ghod-Editor's comments are in brown. I reserve the right to edit LoCs as I see fit.)

LOCS RE THE LAST WCSFAZINE (#19):

From: STAN G. HYDE, April 5th, 2009:

Graeme . . . WCSFAzine #18 was fun-as always- though RAWHEAD REX approaching THE WICKER MAN??? You meant the new one - right?

Ah, no, I haven't seen the new one.... Umm, let's see... perhaps if I put it this way... RAWHEAD REX is to THE WICKERMAN as the Three Stooges are to the Marx Brothers....

Anyway, quickly I point out that both MONSTER FIGHTERS and MONSTER ATTACK TEAM CANADA have a tiny, but nevertheless present, presence on FACEBOOK now! Excelsior!

From: ALAN R. BETZ, April 5th, 2009

Mr. Science wishes to thank you for your kind words regarding the one issue of BCSFAzine that he edited. If you will recall, that happened at a time when our existing BCSFAzine editor, I believe it was Allyn Cadogan, had moved away. The executive of the day decided that each one must take a turn at producing an issue until a full time editor could be found. I recall that Fran Skene did an issue, as well.

Regards, Alan R. Betz

The sequence in question goes like this:

- Fanned: Allyn Cadogan. #38 (Aug 1976) to #51 (Sept 1977).
- Fanned: Fran Skene. #52 (Oct 1977).
- Fanned: Alan R. Betz. #53 (Nov 1977).
- Fanned: Ed Beauregard. #54 (Dec 1977).
- Fanned: Lona Elrod. #55 (Jan 1978) to #56 (Feb 1978).

So you see, the one issue editors were Fran, you, and Ed Beauregard.

From: LLOYD PENNEY, APRIL 15th, 2009

Dear Graeme:

Many thanks for WCSFAzine 19. Now there's a fanzine I miss, The Frozen Frog. Benoit Girard will be at Anticipation, and with luck, some fanned will get the chance to meet with him. Looks like another jam-packed issue; let's see if I can help pack the next issue with a loc.

I understand your health concerns. I have been feeling tired lately, but after being laid off, I have had the time to catch up on sleep, and it's helped. Keeping to a schedule is well and good, but real life intervenes from time to time, and I think the only one truly concerned with keeping to a publishing schedule is you. We're just happy to see issues arrive on eFanzines and in our e-mail.

Yes, you are right. I was the victim of a self-imposed deadline, but then I was pubbing a kind of newszine with time sensitive material. No more.

I don't watch Space: The Imagination Station any more...never saw anything of the new Battlestar outside of the pilot. I hope there will be something to catch my fancy this year. I am out of the loop; if there was a Battlestar finale party, I never heard a word.

CUFF...I'm glad there's some interest for this year. I got an e-mail from LeAmber Kensley asking for a nomination, and we gladly gave it to her. I haven't heard anything else from her, but I did hear rumour that for the first time, there might actually be a vote on more than one candidate. Let's see what happens.

I believe Kensley is the only candidate to date. Apparently a vote will take place, more in the nature of a plebiscite than an actual vote. Hope she writes a trip report.

Wish I'd been able to meet Chester Cuthbert. I remember thinking it odd that he didn't want to come to the Worldcon in Winnipeg, even when he lived in town, but I've since learned that there's a number of people who don't like going to conventions of any size. It will be interesting to hear about what the UofA does with his collection. I hope it doesn't wind up in boxes in a university basement. 2,150 boxes of books...I have to think that it was all that was holding 1104 Mulvey Avenue up.

Your article on fanzines in the early 90s...I had to check my own involvement with Star Trek Toronto way back then, and their clubzine TrekLetter. I was the founder of the zine, and I created the first 14 issues of the zine, but I cannot remember who took it over when the management of the club changed in 1988. I keep hoping that more Canadian zines will crop up, and I'd like to do a zine, but time just doesn't allow for it, and I'm still having lots of fun writing letters.

Unfortunately I have no info in my CanFancyc regarding the editors of TREKLETTER, other than that you were involved. At least now I can update my entry to show you founded the zine and edited for 14 issues. Don't seem to have any issues in the archive, alas.

Les Crutch's article on prozines...if only it was cheaper for American magazines to be printed here; there might be a printing renaissance. As it is, when I go to the websites for Quill and Quire, and Masthead, I see how magazines are dying out, even in their online editions. Got the word that Starlog Magazine is dead...I collected the first 120 issues. The world is changing too fast for some of us.

Taral's article from an issue of Carefully Sedated may be more than 25 years old, but it is still pertinent today. Yvonne and I are going through that...we've been weeding our collection from time to time over the past decade, and every few years, we've taken a table at Ad Astra to see what we can sell. A few years ago, we did about \$300 of business, and we had a table this year, too, and sold about \$125. Some of those sales were books by Jerry Pournelle, to illustrate a little coincidence.

More on The Frozen Frog...that zine did attract a lot of correspondents, didn't it? The number of people who write locs has declined to the point where people complain that it's the same name they see in the locol each issue. Sorry, not my fault, I'm just doing what I'd like to do, and I'd like more company in the locol.

I wrote about 14 locs earlier this year, but ran out of steam. Most of them were published. I will probably try again if and when I have the fanenergy.

Who needs Mystery Science Theatre 3000 when you can watch those old and bad B-movies, and provide your own smartass remarks? Help! We're being attacked by hostile stock footage! I am a little disturbed by the current phrase of remade movies...they've been re-imagined, which may show a lack

of original imagination. The new Star Trek, the new Total Recall...are original idea so much in demand, and in such short supply? They don't come from mail order houses...

Well, at least someone is planning a live action film based on Burrough's Barsoom series. And I hear, one on his Venus series as well. That's encouraging.

ConComCon sounds interesting, and something like this would do well in Toronto, too. Besides the Canadian Conrunners Convention some years ago in Trenton, ON, the previous conrunners con in Canada was Smofcon 6, in 1989. Shame about Seattle having to drop their Worldcon bid yet again...I hope they will try again. In the meantime, we have presupposed Reno, and will vote in Montreal. Reno does sound interesting, and we enjoyed Las Vegas last year, and would like to return to Nevada.

ConComCon 16 was a fun relaxacon. Intend to report on it next issue.

Sounds like another great VCon. There's just too much geography in the way. I should relay the fact that Ad Astra's numbers were up this year, reaching around 700. This is a good sign for the future, and I am rejoining the committee to see if I can boost those numbers even higher with more flyer distribution.

The Auroras...looks like the nominees are widespread right across the country, and I hope the votes will also come across the country. The Hugos are an interesting mix, too. I am hopeful that the ceremonies will bring some drama back to the awards. Cory Doctorow's had a busy year...two Hugo and one Nebula nominations.

My loc...I doubt that Mike Skeet and Paul Valcour will ever see your review. Paul has been forced away from Ottawa fanac because of health problems, and Mike had put all that fannish foolishness behind him, and has tried to become a pro SF writer for some time now.

Sorry to hear about Paul. We're all getting old it seems.

Which brings us up to the present day. The jobhunt continues ever on, and while I see lots of jobs, I see few that I might qualify for. Still, the resumes go out. I don't want them all, I just want one! Before we lost our jobs, we were pretty efficient at saving, so we do have some money set aside to attend our second convention of the year, Eeriecon 11 in Niagara Falls, New York, literally a couple of hundred feet outside the Canadian border. Looking forward to another WCSFAzine soon...take care your yourself, and rest up.

Good luck to your job hunt!

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

From: DAVE HAREN, May 15th, 2009

Dear Graeme,

There is an amazing book reviewer lives in the southlands near OZ. Alan has done a review of "Wiffle lever to Full" by Bob Fischer.

It is all about media based Cons and Fans. I never heard of it but that's not unusual regardless of

others ideas of my omniscientiousness.

If anyone doesn't know about Alan they need to type in wot i red on my hols in the search bar and play catch up.

There is no way to describe this except to say it predates the word blog and Alan is something other.

The Westnoth Game is up to ver 1.6.2 which seems to work quite well.

I checked out the open source games on Sourceforge. This gave me 188 pages of listings (lots of Chess Variants) one says it is 4 player Jetan.

Anyone who doubts the Brave New World that has such creatures in its speech needs to check out this YouTube channel.

Strophanthus doesn't exactly fit within a conventional worldview.

C J Cherryh has a revamped website, a major landscaping project and lots of new ideas about publishing ebooks etc.

Unlike the old site, she aims for more interactivity. You can get older details from the excellent Ribbons available at efanzines, sadly defunct as of my last knowledge.

As an aside, I love the New Agers attempts to clean up the Futharc Runes by leaving out the non PC ones like weapondeath. I know our society doesn't feel the need for a single symbol for this.

Well, I didn't get around to checking on the sites you mention so much of the above is a trifle incomprehensible to me. Though I think I get the gist.

As for no weapondeath rune, it reminds me of that British library which threw out all the military papers and documents donated by various veterans on the grounds that a history section without any reference to war would produce a generation of peace loving gentle adults incapable of war or any violence whatsoever. Sure. Must have been a very small history section once it was purged.

The new Star Trek is a hit with the young girls, apparently the crew is all pretty boys.

They are students at an academy, so all are meant to be young, and as we all know from the commercials, youth = beauty. Mind you, they did film several scenes involving hideous alien acne outbreaks, but apparently they all hit the cutting room floor. Just as well.

Warm Regards Dave

LOCS RE THE PREVIOUS SPACE CADET (#12):

**From: BRAD W. FOSTER
Hugo Award & Rotsler Award Winning Fan Artist.**

January 1st, 2009

Greetings Graeme

Kick to see that art on the cover of SPACE CADET #12. I haven't done one of those "nutty-techno" pieces in a while, and seeing that one gets me eager to try it again and see if I can make the next one even weirder. So, something -else- to add to the list of projects to work on, in place of those I -should- be doing!

Always happy to receive art from you!

The highly-detailed remembrance of your love affair with the Forry pubs was fun to read. Somehow I came late to the monster end of pubbing. I was a comics -n- sf kinda kid, and only found out about the Famous Monsters type stuff years after they had stopped. Too bad, missed out on some real mind-blowers, it seems.

Hard to describe the high I got from every issue. They even smelled good! But the kiss of death was publisher Warren's decision to save money by constantly reprinting articles. Felt like I was being cheated. So I stopped collecting them. But the early ones were great.

Enjoyed the look back at the various incarnations of Space Cadet. I too think it would be fun to see some of those redone with the latest affects, but keep the fun, funky edge to the stories. Of course, maybe that is kind of what the wonderful "Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow" was kind of doing, that truly gorgeous retro-future look brought up to date, so to speak. (Oh, and I would love to get some of my old toys back, like "Yakkity Yob" and the super-keen Fireball XL5 multi-part rocketship!)

These days 'retro-future' is my favourite future.

I'm continued to be amazed by your exacting memory of all these events of your childhood. Thanks for putting them out for me to enjoy vicariously! Looking forward to the next issue.

stay happy Brad W Foster

From: ERIC MAYER, January 9th, 2009

Graeme,

It almost goes without saying that if you felt compelled to rush Space Cadet 12 out in December I wouldn't manage to download and read it until the end of January. My fanac tends to come in fits and spurts, and long periods of sputtering. Actually, even my active periods resemble sputtering. I think that wonderful Brad Foster cover depicts someone working on my head. To stop me sputtering.

At any rate, for most of December and January I figured I was gafiated (I do have these spells. One lasted for almost twenty years) but then I resumed visiting efanzines again. So here I am.

I want to comment first on your story, and I caution you that I am a bad audience for an sf story. You see, I haven't read sf in years. I grew up on the stuff. From the time I started reading until I reached college, I gorged on spaceships, and aliens, other worlds, time travel. I'm convinced my whole

(fucked up) world view was formed by spending every spare moment enthralled by things that don't actually exist. Then something happened. Maybe I'd overdosed. I tend to think I didn't like the literary bent too much sf was taking. I fell out of love with the genre.

I stopped reading sf when the 'New Wave' came along in the 70s. Got back into it a decade later when some old-fashioned yarn spinners appeared, but now I can't really afford to haunt the bookstores. There's one local store specializing in sf where I used to spend at least \$100 a month. Now I drop by once a year and pick up a few old pocketbooks for maybe \$20. I feel guilty, but I just don't have the money. Nowadays whenever I'm in the mood for sf I just reread something in my collection.



However, I did enjoy "See the Dancing Martian". Very amusing. (Old Man River....ouch) I love old Astaire/Rogers movies and I could understand what I was reading. Probably it's that latter problem that trips you up, sales-wise. A lot of modern sf stories don't make any sense to me. The author seems to have written them to torment readers of little intelligence with a puzzles they can't figure out. Ha ha puny creatures. You are no match for my great brain!

I admit my story is a bit silly, but it's also kinda fun, which tends to be missing from many a modern angst-ridden story.

I have vast admiration for the old time sf writers. And they at least were willing to descend to my level and let me in on their secrets.

When I was just a kid, in grade school, and discovered the wonders of the science fiction room at the small, local library, I realized immediately that my destiny was to earn a living writing sf books like all those god-like sf authors did. Unfortunately that destiny must lie in some parallel universe. Although I made desultory attempts to sell sf stories for years, I never had any success. My only "consolation" was finding out that very few of those splendidly talented sf writers who did sell stories and novels made a living at it. Which

indicates there's something very wrong with this world!

In Canada, only about 4% of any form of fiction writers earn a living. As (successful non-fiction) author Pierre Burton once said, "Thank God for hardworking spouses, otherwise there would be no Canadian literature whatsoever."

Sometimes I still feel a faint urge to try again. But then I remember I haven't read sf for decades and am hopelessly out of touch and usually can't understand the stories I occasionally try to read. Besides which, the circulation of the major mags has grown so small...didn't I read where F&SF is around 15,000? Hardly seems worth risking the almost certain rejection for.

Still, you could always publish a fanzine devoted to your own fiction. You've offered feedback to my stories, I & others would do the same for yours. Treat it as a hobby, in other words. As for

professional rejection, they don't just reject the bad, they also reject the good they have no room for. At least fan publication offers a venue for your creativity. Something to consider.

In the loccol, you mention Groggy. That's neat there are still some copies around. I recall that Susan Wood was on my initial mailing list. (Terry Jeeves too, I believe, to mention one of your contributors) The first issue was sent to either 37 or 39 people. (At one time I knew how many but since then, I've found I've contradicted myself!) It is sad to note how many of those folks are gone now. My brother, who was on my mailing list, has most of the issues and looking over them while visiting I was amazed, and grateful, that people managed to read the faint print. Hectography was a fun challenge though.

The archive has several issues of GROGGY denoted by the Susan Wood estate. The wonderful covers are fading, alas, but much of the interior text is still good.

Darned if I recall what the knees up actually entailed, beyond putting one's knees up and slapping them or something. I've only done a knees up half as often as I've gotten married!

Well, I heartily agree, it's a wonderful feeling to not owe anyone money. I like living out in the sticks, in a tiny place and driving an old car and owing no one much more than I'd like living in a big house in the suburbs driving a new SUV and being up to my neck in debt. Not that the latter is actually an alternative.

I enjoyed the first installment of your article on Forry Ackerman's magazines. I am embarrassed to admit I never read any of those magazines. Somehow all that passed me by. The few places in town where I bought comic books out of the racks either didn't stock them or I didn't notice. But by providing excerpts you give a good idea of the flavor, and your own enthusiasm really comes across too. I guess by putting so much of himself into those magazines Forry was practically doing fanzines. Of the faanish sort that is.

You don't see magazines reflecting individual personality generally. In truth, the individual seems absent from most commercial stuff. Even a lot of best selling books read like they are written to manufacturing specifications. Yet Forry obviously connected with readers.

He certainly connected with me! I regret I never thought to write to FM, and doubly regret I never got to meet the Ackemonster. But he remains the basis of many a fond memory and I am grateful.

I never saw Space Cadet either which isn't surprising since I was only six in 1956 and probably not checking the TV Guide for sf programs. (I know there was a Dumont network but don't recall our area having a station for it. We had ABC, NBC, CBS and an independent channel, and later a PBS channel.) Nor did I read the comic, or the books, and I never saw that play set, but wow, did I love your description of it. Makes me wish I could go out into my sandbox and fight some battles. Alas, the closest thing to a sandbox I have now is the cat's litter box. I guess playing in that would simulate a poisonous ammonia atmosphere.

Not to mention the occasional attack of a gigantic furry monster unleashing unspeakable horror!

But...I had that View Master set! I did not remember what it was called, and had never figured I'd see it again, but WOW!! do I ever remember those pictures you reproduced. I can't describe the frisson

I got when I unexpectedly was hit by those for the first time in...what?...fifty years?

I'm not sure why I thought they were so great. Partly it was the 3-D effect, but when I peered into the View Master those images just filled me with wonder and awe. Hey, I was really young. But the sense of mystery they imparted has rarely been equaled. I can't really even describe it, but your "haunted my memory" comes close. Thanks for letting me see those again. I don't attend sf cons but I heartily suggest you haul a View Master and those slides around to any con you go to. You'll soon be a legend!

Try googling Space Cadet. All the slides are posted on a particular site devoted to SC, and there are other sites with a great deal of info to offer. Also, I bought my set on ebay. It's bound to show up again. In fact the books, decoder rings, thermos bottles, lunch boxes and all manner of SC memorabilia crop up on ebay from time to time. Mind you, an easy way to spend too much money. But it is fun just looking at the stuff.

Best, Eric

From: LLOYD PENNEY, January 13th, 2009

Dear Graeme:

Got a few minutes? Well, so do I, so here's a loc on Space Cadet 12. Time waits for no one, so I'm going to make it quick.

Forrest J Ackerman is the original example of how you can devote yourself to one particular interest and still be a normal, nice human being. The press labels us as nerds, dweebs and geeks, and I can see how much this pisses off the fannish majority. If we have any behavioural problems, they may arise from being labelled and generally dismissed. Most of the reports of Forry's passing were respectful, but a couple called him the king of the nerds, or the ultimate geek. I am certain that Forry would have smiled all through this. No matter what happened, Forry was pleasant and smiling, with even temper. I think we may have looked up to him because when our parents didn't understand about our SFnal desires to get our regular dose of adventure, horror, wonder and imagination, he did, and he helped us get it.

He was virtually my *only* source.



Space Cadet, the Heinlein juvenile...I'd never read it. In fact, I spotted it in a used book store a few months back, and I bought it as something obviously missing from my book collection. So, I have it, but have not read it yet.

Militaristic of course, but not much more right wing than the Tom Swift books in my opinion.

It's easy to say that we'll never grow up, but of course, reality being the harsh mistress it is, we have to. I'll get older (I hit 50 in June), but haven't grown up much. I think this means that I will keep

the imagination and wonder I had when I was a kid, and try my best not to be instantly dismissive of anything I don't understand, like my parents were. It's that attitude that's allowed me to embrace new software and new websites, like LiveJournal and Facebook, but still, I will not embrace it unless I am sure that I can use it, and it will be useful to me. Otherwise, forget it. I think I have struck a wise balance here.

(Just as well I didn't see Tom Corbett or Space Cadet on television, and just as well I didn't get any of the space toys I wanted...my younger brothers would have destroyed them in seconds. In fact, they did destroy most of my toys, especially when my parents would strongly urge me to give them my old toys because I was too grown up to play with them any more. I think that because of our parents doing this, this is why we're collectors...we finally get to keep our toys.)

Spot on! I is very happy to have many of the military Dinky Toys I used to have as a kid, especially the Centurion tank on its mighty Mars Transport truck.

I think most of fanzine fandom bridges the gap between e-zines and paperzines just fine. If I ever get my own zine on the go, my plans are to create a .pdfed zine and install it on eFanzines.com, and then make 25 (or so) paper copies for those who cannot or don't want to access it electronically, or even for those who pay far too much for their Internet access. This would keep things affordable, and most people would understand if I couldn't afford to produce more than that arbitrary 25 copies.

I can only afford one copy for my files. Ink costs too much!

I will fold this up, and get it to you asap via the net. You may have read that the Globe and Mail is looking to cut their workforce by 10% because of the global economic downturn. While I work at the G&M, I do not work for them, so I don't know if I will be affected by this cutback. Maybe not...the guy who checked my work when he got in each morning left the G&M at the end of 2008, so I may now be the only person who knows how to do my work. There's a little job security, anyway. If I am to be cut, I guess I will find out shortly. Take care, and see you next zine.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

As your loc of April indicates, you lost that job. I hope by now you've found another. Losing a job is one of the most stressful experiences anyone can face. I'm not very good at handling that level of stress. I'm lucky to be approaching 20 years at my current job. Hoping to hang in there till I can draw on my meagre union pension. But I know I'm going to be poor. Dirt poor. Retirement is going to drop me below the poverty level. I expect I'll be gafiated as a result. Like I say, I look forward to 'retro-future'. My real future is going to be miserable, unless I'm very, very lucky.

**From: Dave Haren
June 7th, 2009**

Hi Graeme,

I happened to run across this character on-line.

<http://jamius.com/>

A Canadian right out of a William Gibson novel....GRIN

I also have been grabbing the (Cdn) Fan encyclopedia as it hits the shelves of eFanzines.

This is in case the vagaries of computers decide to eat other copies. Having lost some things myself I know the value of multiple storage sites.

I get to read it all too...An added bonus.

Glad you're enjoying it. It is meant to be more than just a source of information in that, parts of it at least, reflect my sense of humour and my 'take' on things. Hopefully bits of it are entertaining to casual readers browsing through.

Gutenberg has passed the 29,000 ebooks mark and a couple of the recent ones are Clayton Astounding stories.

www.archive.org has The Risk available. Peter Cushing and Donald Pleasance doing what they do best.

Steve Jackson (father of Ogre microgame) said Eddings has left this life, he wrote the Belgariad and other series. My mind wants to make him into the author of Worm Ouroboros but I manage to resist.

Steve is involved in fandom, but your clearance level makes it hard to explain FNORD.

I think I used to know what FNORD means, but my mind draws a blank. Happens a lot these days.

Anyway hope you're feeling less worn out.

Warm Regards Dave

THE HOUSE OF PAIN!

Fiction by R. Graeme Cameron

I once had dreams of earning my living writing science fiction. All I managed to do was earn rejection slips, for many obvious reasons. Rather than let these old manuscripts molder in my closet, I thought I'd print them in SPACE CADET and see if the rot spreads to your brain cells. After all, how better to define a perzine fanned than to reveal him to be a narcissistic sadist? Don't say I didn't warn you!

Here's a story I wrote in 1984:

THE BLACKEST ART.

MacGregor Mathers paid off the cab at the foot of Hecate street. He shouldered his bundle and started up the block, grimacing in distaste as the cab fled with screeching tires and the biting, damp cold of the evening air leeched the warmth out of his bones like maggots savaging a corpse. Grimy sheets of black ice lurked in every shadow on the road. He saw no welcome here.

"Damned unseasonable weather for August in Dallas," he muttered, scornfully imitating the puzzled commentary of the television newscasters. "But I know the what and wherefore, and I mean to put a stop to it."

There were dark shapes furtively flitting about the pallid gleam of the hooded street lamps. Bats of course. Only a symptom. Another damned symptom. He'd seen it all before. If only he knew when he'd see the last of it.

"It's not fair!" he shouted, shaking his fist at the bats squeaking and gibbering insanely as their shadows crisscrossed the pavement before him. "You think you've got it bad, being rabid and all, you pestilential leather-winged bastards! But look at me! I'm an accounts-payable clerk!" The bats flapped on, jerkily wheeling and diving in their ill-omened ballet, ignoring his rage, caught in a desperate confusion all their own.

Mathers dropped his voice to a whisper. "And by night I'm the only do-it-yourself exorcist in town. Not by choice, but only through the strictest of necessities. And do I get paid well for it? Huh! Never what I deserve. You hear that, you brainless balls of bile, never what I deserve!"

He stopped, shaking his head in anger at his lack of self-control, and closed his eyes. SHE was doing this to him. This is what SHE wanted. He had to fight her, resist her morbid influence, strive to break apart the web of defeatism she spun for him at every opportunity, or else go crazy as those blasted bats. He had beaten her before, would do so again this very night, but how many more nights would he have to face? Not fair of her to creep back within forty-eight hours. And always to a different place. Why did she have to make things so complicated?

That was her style, he mused, the very essence of her soul, complication upon complication, the whole shaky edifice buttressed with lies and anchored in subterfuge. How could I have married her? I must have been out of my mind.

The wind sighed mournfully and brought a momentary scent of perfume, quickly replaced by the malodorous stink of a bog filled with skunk cabbage. Ah, she's mocking me tonight, he thought. He opened his eyes, expecting the worse.

Aside from the cold and the damp and the bats and the hordes of cat-sized slugs crawling across the frozen ground, he could discern nothing unusual. He smiled, his heart leaping a little. Perhaps her powers were waning? A wonderful thought!

Then he noticed clutches of glowing orange puff-balls imbedded in the lawn of a ramshackle wooden house two doors ahead. "Has to be the site of the infestation," he murmured triumphantly. "I know her."

Mathers ran up the slippery sidewalk and skidded to a halt facing the decayed wooden planks of the house's façade. '666' read the address above the hoary, timbered lintel. This was it all right.

He walked straight up the path to the porch, disdainfully kicking aside the writhing tentacles exuding from the puff-balls, and knocked forcefully on the rotting wood of the door. Something scratched and whispered on the other side. He sprang back as the door slowly opened.

A baldheaded man peered around the edge, his red-rimmed watery eyes staring suspiciously. “Yes?” he inquired, heavy jowls shaking as he spoke, sending rivulets of motion through the folds of fat underlying the glistening skin atop his head. “What do you want?”

“I’m Mathers. Are you Mr. Crowley?”

The man’s rubbery cheeks split wide in an obscene smile of relief. “Yes, call me Al. I’m glad you came. I’m at my wit’s end. Don’t know what I would have done if I hadn’t come across your ad in *The Order Of The Golden Dawn Tribune*. Do come in.” He pulled the door aside to allow the exorcist to enter.

Mathers crossed himself as he stepped across the threshold. It was a routine precaution, but he saw at once how vital it was. The interior of the house was an absolute riot of rot, smut, fungus, toadstools, mildew, mushrooms and mold clinging to every exposed surface with the tenacity of mindless life. Pieces of furniture were mere armatures for an explosion of fungoid delirium. Absolutely everything was ridden with decay. Mathers was glad he’d remembered to wear knee-length leather boots.



Crowley shrugged despairingly. “You name it, I’ve got it. For a while I thought bringing in as many heaters and dehumidifiers as the electrical system in this decrepit house could bear might do the trick, but I was wrong. It’s worse than ever tonight.” Tears hung suspended from the thick bags under his eyes.

Mathers considered the indecent spectacle of Mr. Crowley’s attitude. Sometimes a man pushed to the brink could be a source of ferocious strength. They would need that tonight.

“This is bad,” admitted Mathers. “I suppose it means it’s getting stronger.”

“It? The ghost you mean?”

“You’ve seen it then?”

“Oh yes.” A doleful expression crossed Crowley’s face. “Not often mind,” he added, “but enough to know it’s the ghost of a woman. Shows up at the most disconcerting times, like when I’m in my bath scrubbing off the slime.”

“Hmm, you do look a bit green,” commented Mathers, peering close. “You’re lucky I’m here.”

“Is she the source of this rot? This ghost?”

“Yes, but I doubt she’s a ghost. Probably a demon hiding its true nature. Asteroth maybe. Any other manifestations?”

Crowley scratched his pot belly gingerly. “Sometimes I find messages written on my skin in the form of welts or scars, written right across the top of my stomach so I can look down and read it easy as burning a witch. Always says the same thing. ‘Mary M. Mary M. O God.’ Best I can figure, it means Mary, Mother of God.”

“Some demons display an odd sense of humour. Have you seen her, or it, tonight as yet?”

“No, thank Horus.”

“Hmmm, a good sign,” commented Mathers, nodding his head and smiling grimly. “The wee beastie must be afraid of me, afraid to confront me. Makes my task easier. Where’s your basement?”

“You don’t want to go down into the basement,” stated Crowley with a shudder.

“But we must. An exorcism can’t be performed in a penthouse. Have to get under the skin of Hades.”

Crowley shrugged resignedly, his fear wetting his forehead with perspiration. “Very well, though I think you’ll find this basement deeper than you bargained for.” He turned and led the exorcist down a slime-spattered hall to a stairwell coated in black rust. A moment’s hesitation, and he started down the steps, his shoulders hunched together as if to protect the back of his neck from his guest.

This is a frightened man, thought Mathers, exhibits all the wariness of a vampire at sunrise. I’d better be on my guard.

Mathers paused at the foot of the stairs. He was in a stone-walled cellar ankle deep in malignant green slime, as if a giant lime-sucking amoeba had splashed in from the fourth dimension. When he took his first tentative steps across the hidden floor the slime heaved and billowed like an alien sea, then shot thick tendrils up the walls to drip from the worm-eaten planks of the ceiling. A curious, sickly sweet smell perfumed the dead air. Mathers felt his stomach churn. He fought back the rising nausea and set down his bundle at his feet.

“Quite obscene, some of it,” commented Crowley, pointing at the phallic globs of glistening slime drooping down.

Mathers’ eyes burned with anger. “She always did think poorly of my priapic performance,” he muttered darkly.

“What? She? The ghost?”

“Nothing. Nothing,” said Mathers wearily. “Just thinking aloud. Do you have a shovel? Need to clear a space.”

Crowley splashed through the ocean of slime to the far wall and returned with a slime-encrusted snow shovel. “Will this do?”

"Hope so," replied Mathers, taking it from his hands. "Stand back Al, the slime's really going to fly." He leaned forward and set to work with a will. It was grim work, sliding the blade of the shovel into the living jelly to scoop up blobs of the evil stuff and fling it against the walls, but he derived a thin satisfaction from the thought he was causing it pain, causing her to grimace in pain. He redoubled his efforts. In short order he had cleared an area nearly fifteen feet square.

"Good enough," he commented, dropping the shovel with a tired grin. "Now to prepare the ceremonial environment."

Suddenly there came a sound like two slabs of wet meat slapping together. A dozen meat cleavers materialized, their blades buried in the tips of the obscenities hanging from the ceiling.

"Oh damn!" shouted Crowley, frantically pulling up his shirt and staring at his pot belly. Livid welts glowed an angry red. "Here it is again!"



Mathers glanced at the message. 'Mary M. murdered!' it read. "Definitely Asteroth," he declared. "Typical female demon threat display. Looks like she intends to kill us. So remember, unless you want to die, don't pay any attention to what she says or does during the exorcism."

"You mean I have to stay? Why can't I go?"

Mathers knelt down and began untying the fastenings of his sack. "I need you to help define the psychic territory, or else I'll not have the advantage of place. Without you I might be swept into the underworld."

Crowley shuddered. "Very well. I'm afraid, but I'll do anything to rid myself of this nightmare. Anything."

"Good. And keep calm. I know what I'm doing, everything is according to the Grimoire of Honorius, so you'll be all right if you do exactly what I say."

"I understand."

Mathers pulled a collapsed metal work stand from his sack and sprang the legs apart, then set it through the slime on to the concrete floor next to the stairs.

"You sure you know how to do this?" inquired Crowley with a puzzled frown. "That doesn't look traditional."

"I can't afford a proper altar as yet," explained Mathers, "But no matter. THESE are the important elements." So saying, he laid a white linen cloth over the table, then placed a copper chafing dish in the centre of the black pentagram embroidered on the cloth. Next he pulled out a length of iron chain and placed it in a circle about the pentagram. "Magnetized you see, very important. And I'm filling the dish with laurel and alder leaves to fuel the purest of sacred flames."

"Interesting," commented Crowley, distractedly clawing at his sore belly. "Just like in the movies."

"And these," added Mathers, drawing forth a large plastic bag filled with crumpled brown material, "are vervain leaves. This is going to cost you a great deal. Damned hard to get a hold of vervain leaves this time of year." He started to sprinkle them over the chain.

Red light flooded the room. Glowing letters spread along the wall, spelling out "Mary Mathers murdered! Avenge me!" A smell of sulphur filled the room, even as the letters began to fade.

"Damn, she's getting close. Not much time!" shouted Mathers, scrambling about the cleared space on all fours to draw a nine foot circle with a lump of charcoal.

"Any relation? This Mary Mathers?" inquired Crowley quietly.

"My wife. What of it?"

"Is she dead?"

"Of course, dead and buried four years back. Your ghost is a demon pretending to be her. Don't worry about it." He completed the greater circle and began a lesser eight foot circle within.

"Murdered was she?"

Mathers paused to glare at Crowley. "An accident, you bloody fool." Why so inquisitive? He wondered. Damned annoying. What's behind it?

"Accident?" insisted Crowley discreetly.

"well... a meat cleaver fell on her... Don't look at me like that... I wasn't even home at the time. Got witnesses to prove it. Police were satisfied."

Crowley waved his fat arms at the slime-drenched walls around them. "Then why... ?"

"I'm good at what I do. I'm a superb exorcist. Asteroth is out to get me, to defeat me. That's all."

Crowley clawed at his burning belly feverishly, fear sweating from every pore. "All very well for you," he mumbled, "this is your hobby, but why does she pick on me? I've never..."

"Shut-up!" commanded Mathers. "You want to break my concentration? You dare risk spoiling the ceremony? You want to be sucked into hell?"

"Not especially."

"Then keep quiet and stand in the centre of the circle. And be careful not to step on the lines."

Crowley hopped into the circle to stand with arms folded, morosely contemplating Mathers with a wounded expression on his jelly-like face.

This is going to be a bitch of an exorcism, thought Mathers as he strolled the perimeter of the circle dropping iron crosses, silver pentagrams, and copper plates embossed with the names of power in the gap between the lines. He reversed direction and sprinkled vervain leaves over the metal fetishes.

"Very interesting," commented Crowley. "You seem to know your stuff."

"If I don't, we're both doomed," stated Mathers dryly as he left the circle and waded through the advancing slime toward his sacred altar. "Remember, once the action begins, you leave the circle only at your peril. Understand?"

"I think so."

Mathers bent over the sacred chafing dish and applied a naked flame to its fuel. It caught, and he raced back to the security of the double circle.

Blue smoke rose in lazy drifts, shriveling and blackening the unholy muck on the ceiling above. Crowley approved. He smiled, his petulance fading. "Now what?" he inquired.

Mathers stood beside him and faced the altar. "I'm going to trap her spirit within the smoke, render her form visible."

"Oh boy," shouted Crowley. "At last, vengeance. What do I do?"

"Shut-up, sit down, hug your knees, and pray."

Crowley, much sobered, complied. Mathers stood silently, arms crossed, chin resting on his chest between his hands, eyes closed, composing his thoughts, seeking the proper mood to ensure victory. He felt the power build within. He smiled, and softly began chanting, his voice increasing in strength word by word till he was shrieking like an animal in pain.

"oh, deep, dank, dark of the death,
I charge thee by the triple-jawed Cerebrus,
I call your spirit from the vasty, nasty deep,
Let fly your corporal soul, habit the smoke,
Be chained to my will and harm me not,
Mary Mathers! Mary Mathers! Obey! Obey! Obey!"

The smoke rising from the alter pulsed violently like a puffing steam engine, magically lending solidity to an emerging form, a woman with a sad expression pointing lugubriously at Mathers. "Murderer!" she howled. "Murderer!"

Crowley began to rock back and forth on his haunches nervously. "I don't know, maybe we should call it off."

"Pay no attention!" shot Mathers at him.



“Free me! Free me!” screeched the smoke woman. “Confess your sins lest I haunt this world till all mortal men know you are the foul beast, the cruel beast, the bestial son of Satan!”

“This is the part I hate the most,” admitted Mathers, hurriedly donning a robe of red silk. “Malicious slander, harder and harder to endure. Rotten bitch.”

Crowley’s eyes lit up at the sight of the embroidery on the back of Mathers’ robe. “Ah, the authentic stuff. Hexagram within a circle. Weird lettering. What’s it all mean?”

“The double seal of Solomon, you ignorant twit. Don’t distract me!”

The apparition was screaming now, howling like a banshee.

“What will the neighbours think?” shouted Crowley.

To hell with the neighbours, thought Mathers, got to do this right, no room for mistakes, in too deep now. He lit three black candle sticks and placed them just outside the boundary of the protective circle. Carefully he strew vervain leaves between them to form a triangle. Then he pulled apart a red silk bundle and lifted out an iron sword forged in the fire of sacrifice and quenched in holy water. Using the point, he drew an imaginary circle around Crowley and himself. This complete, he relaxed, sagging with relief. “Now I will summon the chief of demons to remove Asteroth,” he explained.

“I am NOT Asteroth,” declared the creature imprisoned in the misting scent of laurel and alder leaves burning. “I am Mary, corpse of our love, foully murdered! I swear by my own tormented soul!”

“Lying demon!” retorted Mathers, swirling his red robe dramatically for Crowley’s benefit. “You must be Belial then, demon of lies. It matters not, for you are doomed.”

The image of the mist witch wavered as she laughed scornfully. “Beloved husband!” she cried, “forty times I have appeared, forty times I have informed a pious soul of your misdeeds—“

“And forty times I have thrust you back into hell!” Mathers cried triumphantly. “Forty times I have defeated you!”

“And forty times I will come again, forty glimpses of hell for you, my sweet, and yet forty more, and—“

“Enough!” he commanded. “Shut-up, or be further damned eternal by the mighty powers I summon!” He waved his sword about him, chanting:

“I conjure, bind and charge thee,
By all the names of power,
By him who spake, by the dreadful joy,
I constrain you to appear!”

He looked around expectantly. Mary laughed. Nothing.

Frowning, he stroked the air with vicious cuts of his magic sword, this time speaking in a grim voice booming with menace.

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“I conjude, bind and charge thee,
By all the names of power,
Helim! Joth! Agla! Adonay!
Tetragrammaton! Yahweh Kadosh!
Sotou! Yod He Vau He! Eloy!
Saboath! Elohim! Emanuel! Yah!
By the real name of God!
By the ineffable name!
I command you to appear!”

Again nothing. Mathers was crestfallen. Wasn’t anything going to go right? Was she to get the upper hand at last? No! Never!

“Excuse me,” said Crowley, rising to his feet to stare incredulously at the womanly form writhing in the smoke, his voice barely audible over the roaring of her hysterical laughter. “She seems to be rather strong, are you sure we can get out of this?”

“Not to worry, she’s playing hard to get is all, pretending to be reluctant, but I’ll show her. I know what to do,” declared Mathers. “You hear that, demon? You can’t resist me now. I’m going to use the spell of last resort, hear me?”

With a desperate eagerness he pulled more implements from his duffle bag: a second chafing dish, iron wire, a black wooden box, a roll of parchment. “The Demon Pontiff shall read your name!” he shouted. “Hear me? I’m writing it down, you don’t stand a chance. I’ve got you now!”

Mathers lightly ran his sword across the palm of his left hand, drawing an ample supply of pulsing blood in which he dipped his right index finger to write her name on the parchment as Crowley watched in nauseated astonishment. Next Mathers placed the parchment within the box and secured its lid with the iron wire. Scattering vervain leaves into the chafing dish, he set light to them, then lifted the box with the point of his sword and held it suspended above the flame. He began a third chant, his voice loud with anger.

“I conjure, bind and charge thee,
By all the names of power.
By all the powers of hell!
Yog-sothoth! Nyarlathotep!
Tsathoggua! Azathoth! Cthulhu!
If you do not appear,
I will increase your torment
A billion years in hell!
Come corporally before my eyes
And abide a while here this place,
Beelzebuth Baalzebub!
Beelzebuth Baalzebub!
I conjure, bind and charge thee!
And the word was made flesh!
Fiat! Fiat! Fiat! Amen!”

There came a blinding flash of cosmic light, the shrieking laughter of Mary's ghost immediately drowned by the hideous droning buzz of a buffalo-sized iridescent-winged fly materializing from beyond the terrestrial plane to land directly in front of the altar. It stamped about on hinged feet, agitated, till it turned its bulbous eyes on Macgregor Mathers, their every facet reflecting his capering image.

"Bloody hell, not again!" moaned the gargantuan fly, manipulating its unspeakably loathsome mouthparts in the most remarkable fashion to simulate human speech.

"Take her away, old blowfly," said Mathers lightly with a wave of his hand, winking at Crowley as if to say, see? I told you I could do it.



"Forty times I've performed this little task for you," complained the monstrous fly. "I'm the Chief Pontiff of the Nether Regions! I don't have time for this petty stuff. Couldn't you summon a lesser demon for this work? Lilith maybe? Or Moloch? I'm so damned sick and tired of doing your bidding!"

"Maybe you better do what it says," whispered Crowley.

Mathers shrugged. "I'm in command here. Baalzebub! Do as I decree. You have no choice in the matter!"

"But it's all so damned futile," whined the giant fly. "Now souls are no problem. All are welcome in hell. But a ghost? An immaterialist whose soul is fixed in purgatory? Unheard of! Every time I bring her down Lucifer slaps an injunction on me and I have to let her go. It's all so unfair."

"Do as I say."

"I hate you! I really hate you!" roared the Demon Pontiff, drumming his feet in frustration. "By the Goat I hate you!"

"At your peril!" shouted Crowley, lunging forward to shove Mathers from the circle. Caught off guard, the exorcist gasped as he stumbled to his knees, then screamed in terror when Baalzebub snatched him up and pressed him close to its monstrous thorax.

“Aah, fresh carrion soul!” hissed Baalzebub. “This is more like it!”

“Mercy!” shrieked MacGregor Mathers. “Mercy! Have Mercy! Oh God, save me!”

“Now you’ll learn what it’s been like for me!” yelled Mary.

Crowley smiled, folded his arms and softly began singing:

“By the Black Pullet,
Because thou hast granted our prayers,
I hereby abjure thy corporal presence
Without hateful result to I and mine.
I command thee to depart in peace.
Amen.”

With one last despairing “Noooooo!” MacGregor Mathers shrank into oblivion in the firm grip of the Lord of the flies.

“Revenge! Revenge! I have my revenge!” shouted Mary gleefully.

“One of the finer emotions,” commented Crowley, waddling out of the circle and going to the altar. “Let me set you free.” With one quick swipe of his pudgy hand he knocked the chafing dish to the floor.

The phantasm that was Mary Mathers whirled about the massive bulk of Al Crowley, caressing him with her mist. “My love, My love!” She cried. “I’m so lucky I chose your house for my latest manifestation. We might never have met, never have fallen in love! Your plan worked just as you said it would. You’re wonderful.”

“Yes,” agreed Crowley. “I really am the best of Warlocks, am I not?” A ghastly, ghostly gleam lit his eyes. “Sometimes, just for kicks, shall we conjure up your late husband? Or would that be too cruel?”

“Yes, it would,” she giggled. “But let’s do it anyway.”

-- The End --

Believe it or not, I first sent this story to PLAYBOY magazine, mainly because I wanted a genuine PLAYBOY rejection slip, which I received and yet cherish. It reads in part:

“The material enclosed has been given careful consideration and is not suitable for use in our publication at this time. Due to the volume of submissions received, we regret that we cannot offer individual criticism.... Your interest in PLAYBOY is most warmly appreciated.... The Editors.”

I next sent my MS to PULPHOUSE: THE HARDBACK MAGAZINE. It read in part:

“Thank you for submitting your story to Pulphouse.”

“While we found the writing intriguing, we did not accept it for the following reason(s).

- () NOT OUR KIND OF STORY (unchecked).
- () WE’VE SEEN SOMETHING SIMILAR (checked)
- () WE’VE PURCHASED SOMETHING SIMILAR (unchecked)
- () SEE SCRIBBLE BELOW (checked)

While this story did not work for us, others might. Please try us again.”

Kristine Kathryn Rusch, the Editor, added the following note beneath her signature:

“Richard, I’m afraid this is too traditional for us, but please do try again – “

I never did follow up with further submissions. Pity. Something might have clicked.

For them as are interested in the process of writing, before beginning the actual story, I prepared the following info on a single sheet:

FOUR CHARACTERS:

MacGregor Mathers.	(Clerk / Exorcist)
Mary Mathers.	(Ghost)
‘Al’ Crowley.	(Retired Magician)
Beelzebuth Baalzebub.	(Demon Pontiff)

PREMISE:

MacGregor murdered Mary with a meat cleaver some years ago. Got away with it. Except her ghost has taken to haunting homes in order to build up astral strength enough to manifest evidence of his crime. In self defence he’s become an exorcist to conjure up Baalzebub and order him to carry her off. Trouble is, she always pops back up somewhere else. A routine he very much dreads. This time something different occurs.

BASIC PLOT:

MacGregor arrives at Crowley home. Much evidence of Mary’s presence. Go into basement. Sets up magic circle etc. Crowley must stay to help define psychic territory. First conjures up Mary’s visible form and traps it. She accuses him of murder, which he dismisses as lies. Then conjures up Baalzebub to take her away, though the demon protests futility of it all. MacGregor suddenly shoved out of circle by Crowley, who then conjures demon to go away with MacGregor and leave Mary in peace. Seems the two are now lovers, of a sort. She is avenged.

I next followed this with three pages of DETAILED PLOT which included bits of dialogue and description as well as a blow by blow account of events.

After determining all of the above and digesting it for a while, only then did I turn to fleshing out the story to its full 17 page length. Maybe not the most spontaneous of writing methods, but it works for me.

COLOPHON

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All past issues are available in PDF format from the web site above.

SCG is open to submissions, especially (short) articles reminiscing about your personal experience within the SF genre, be it fandom or your favourite books, movies, conventions or whatever. But in truth I will consider anything that evokes the ‘sense of wonder’. No payment, but lots of egoboo.

Copyright reverts to contributors upon publication. I reserve the right to edit any and all contributions.

AFTERWORDS

This issue was not in fact completed on Sunday the 14th as I indicated it would in my editorial, it is being finished on Friday the 19th. Instead of rushing to meet an arbitrary deadline, I took a multi-hour nap instead, and worked on #13 off and on for the following week. This is a much more civilized and relaxing approach to the task. Enjoying the freedom of a total lack of deadlineitis will be my working method from now on.

You can expect #14 sometime in the future, at some point in time, as decreed by fate, the gods, my fanenergy levels and personal whim. Just like politics!