

In 1753, Carl Linnaeus realises the usefulness of the newly discovered Opuntia in devising his system of Taxonomy.

2003-04-17

OPUNTIA is published by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. It is available for \$3 cash for a one-time sample copy, trade for your zine, or letter of comment. Americans: please don't send cheques for small amounts to Canada as the bank fee to cash them is usually more than the amount. US\$ banknotes are acceptable in Canada at par value; what we gain on the exchange rate we lose on the higher postage rate to USA. Do not send mint USA stamps as they are not valid for postage outside USA and I don't collect them.

Whole-numbered OPUNTIAs are sercon, x.1 issues are reviewzines, x.2 issues are indexes, and x.5 issues are perzines.

COVER ART CREDIT: Steve Jeffery, 44 White Way, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2XA, England, shows Linnaeus was not only the founder of the system of plant and animal naming used worldwide today, but also a practical man.

I ALSO HEARD FROM: Davida Gypsy Breier, Rodney Leighton, Paula Jesgarz, Babynous Cult, Ken Miller, Julie Dorn, Peter Netmail, Christa Behmenburg, John Hertz, Steve Jeffrey, Christoph Meyer, Diane Bertrand, Lori Bucher, Billy McKay, Eric Davin, Chester Cuthbert, Ficus Strangulensis, Phlox Icona, Pat Diggs, Roberto Sechi, John Held Jr, Randall Fleming, D. Young, Brant Kresovich, Joseph Nicholas

in square brackets

LETTERS TO THE **EDITOR**

[Editor's remarks

FROM: Joseph Major 1409 Christy Avenue Louisville, Kentucky 40204-2040

"Those who yearn for the good old days of small bookstores" don't actually have an actual small bookstore in mind, but a fuzzy warm memory/dream of a Platonic-archetype small bookstore, run by a kindly old shopowner who always had the book one was looking for, no matter how obscure, knew all about it and whatever else might be relevant, was always open, never objected to people standing around reading the stock, and had a friendly cat and an old wood stove.

Some of this is spurred by having to deal with megabookstore employees who are illiterate, or at least aliterate, unconcerned with books. And trying to find a book section in a "bookstore" that has huge CD, video, game, greeting card, trading card, jewelry, knickknacks, etc. sections along with a restaurant.

FROM: Lloyd Penney 1706 - 24 Eva Road Etobicoke, Ontario M9C 2B2	2003-04-20	[We have every confidence in your ability greatest living letterhack. Soon, if not alressaying that it isn't a real zine unless it has a from Lloyd Penney.]	ady, people will be
One thing I used to do was distribute flyers for conwith the rise of the bigbox book store, the number of			
dropped significantly. Sure, there's always som numbers of stores, but the dropoff accelerated with Indigo pushing little stores out of business. It also m places to drop off flyers. The big stores need per	le dropoff of Chapters and lade for fewer	FROM: Henry Welch 1525 - 16 Avenue Grafton, Wisconsin 53024-2017	2003-05-15
head office to do anything like accept convention usually the answer was no, because of the desire to litter.		The large chains deliberately undercut the s them out of business. This has been the W years (as with other chains) and after they've and-Pops and realize that they can't profit,	Valmart strategy for e done in the Mom-
[But doesn't the rising generation instinctively chec for information rather than go into stores? I'm still small stores would go out of business when Interne	l baffled why	leave the community hanging.	
them on an equal footing with Chapters/Indigo. Luddite like me is now buying half his books online		FROM: Anna Banana R.R. 22, 3747 Sunshine Coast Highway	2003-05-25
My thanks for your comments on the Penney/War Unfortunately Harry Warner Jr passed away in Fe	-	Roberts Creek, British Columbia VO	N 2W2
and his absence leaves a gaping hole in fanzine fan some high standards for us, and it will be a challe even a dent in his record of participation in fanzine	ndom. He set enge to make	[Anna sent a letter discussing her latest art acti her home renovations. She mentioned she various mail artists the future of their archive	is discussing with
		and goes on to ask me about mine.]	-3-

[As it happens, the thought has been on my mind, what with recently inheriting my mother's philatelic collections and integrating them into mine. The death of Harry Warner Jr has raised questions about the disposal of his zine collection, one of the finest in the world, dating back to the 1930s. He specified in a letter that the collection was to go to a California university, but unfortunately this has no legal standing in law. His will said everything was to go to his church, and that takes precedence. Maryland zinesters will be attempting to convince the legal heirs

[Like Harry, I have no one in the family interested in taking over my collections, so I have specified in my will that they are to be donated to various organizations to be sold to collectors and the money to go to the clubs. My philatelic collections, into which my mail art archives are thoroughly integrated, will go to the Calgary Philatelic Society as a beneficiary named in my will, and are to be sold for the benefit of collectors. In that manner, the

material will be enjoyed by future generations of collectors.]

that the zines should go to California.]

[I cringe when people tell me they have a holographic will (handwritten) or bought a \$29.95 will kit rather than pay a solicitor \$250 to draw up a will. I paid the \$250 not for him doing the paperwork but for his advice about how to dispose of my legacies by my intent. Doing a will yourself is like fixing the

brakes on your car yourself; fine if you know how, but a disaster

if you only think you know how. was drawn up by our family solicitor and went through probate smoothly. The lawyer charged a great deal of money to handle the estate, but in all the stress and trouble of being an executor, I never had to worry about probate, title transfers, and other legal matters. Bob decided to save money by doing probate himself. Even though he started a few months before me, he still hadn't succeeded a year after his mother's death, whereas my solicitor got probate in four months. Bob's mother's will was a \$29.95 do-it-yourself which did not meet Alberta law standards, and left out mention of sentimental and residual assets. Bob is now fighting with various nieces and nephews about how the estate is to be divided. The ne'er-do-well relatives who were scorned by his mother in life seem likely to have a piece of her estate in death. The legal fees for the fight in surrogate court will far exceed \$250.1

[Zinesters, mail artists, SF fans, everybody: please don't put off doing your will. While a holographic will is better than nothing and a \$29.95 kit worse than useless, if you can afford a solicitor's advice, then take it and pay the money. Lawyer-bashing has been fashionable even before Shakespeare wrote "The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers", but the fact is that the average family solicitor will save you and yours a lot of grief in the long run.]

by Dale Speirs

ZINE LISTINGS

on a previous issue. Americans: please don't send cheques for small amounts to Canada or overseas (the bank fee to cash them is usually more than the amount) or mint USA stamps (which are not valid for postage outside USA). US\$ banknotes are acceptable around the world.]

Pulpdom #32 (US\$30 for six issues from Camille Cazedessus,

[The Usual means \$3 cash (\$5 overseas), trade for your zine, or letter of comment

Box 2340, Pagosa Springs, Colorado 81147) Devoted to the pulp fiction magazines, and illustrated in colour. This issue starts off with a reprint of a story by Chester Cuthbert of Winnipeg, who, seventy years later, is still around! Cuthbert got tired of dealing with publishers who only paid promptly on lawsuit, so he gave up his budding career in the 1930s as a writer and went on to more profitable pursuits. Also in this issue is a look at POPULAR

Thyme #134 to #136 (The Usual from Alan Stewart, Box 222, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria 8005, Australia) Ostensibly a SF newszine, but since the issues are running a year behind in content, this is more of a history zine. The interviews, book and movie reviews, and articles are still readable, although ephemeral lists of books published and club meetings are better to be posted on a Website. Neo-Luddite and staunch advocate of the

Papernet that I am, I feel the Internet is the place for ephemeral

MAGAZINE from 1925 to 1931, book reviews, and book notes.

Usual from Christoph Meyer, Box 106, Danville, Ohio 43014)
Perzine with accounts of life with no hot water (the plumber finally arrived), the history of a piece of found art, and child raising.

Head #5 (The Usual from Doug Bell and Christina Lake, 12)

Hatherley Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8QA, England)

Genzine, with articles on contemplating modern art in a museum,

listings and news, and zines should be for lasting substance. Paper

Twenty-Eight Pages Lovingly Bound With Twine #6 (The

is archival; electrons are not.

wrecking one's arm on a bicycle, a tour of Basque country, the endless search for new zinesters, and the hazards of blogs.

Infiltration #19 (\$2 from Box 13, Station E, Toronto, Ontario M6H 4E1) This zine is for people whose hobby in infiltrating into places they shouldn't be, like storm sewers and non-public areas

of public buildings. The issue at hand deals with various

infiltrations of churches and cathedrals, particularly climbing up

to the roofs or belfries.

Door Knob #77 to #79 (The Usual from Robert Lichtman, Box 30, Glen Ellen, California 95442) Apazine with a wide variety of short comments.

-5-

Bossler, 145 Genoa Avenue SW, Massillon, Ohio 44646) Club newsletter of zinesters interested in preserving the history of zinedom. They are involved in the long-established Library of Amateur Journalism, which has thousands of zines dating back to the 1850s.	(The Usual from Yvonne Rowse, Evergreen, Halls Farm Lane, Trimpley, Worcestershire DY12 1NP, England) Trip and convention reports, meanderings about Britain, and a few miscellaneous items.
Mutterings At Midnight #1 (The Usual from Karen Johnson, 35 Mariana Avenue, South Croydon, Victoria 3136, Australia) Starts off with an account of the horrors of substitute teaching, has a few personal notes, but is mostly capsule reviews of books and films.	Alexiad V2#2 (The Usual from Lisa and Joseph Major, 1409 Christy Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky 40204-2040) Lots and lots of book reviews, not the bestseller pap but obscure and oddball stuff that more people should be reading. Also a Sherlock Holmes convention report and letters of comment.
Royal Swiss Navy Gazette #8/9 (The Usual from Garth Spencer, Box 15335, Vancouver, British Columbia V6B 5B1) Musings on Canfandom, letters of comment, convention reports, and other	Challenger #17 (The Usual from Guy Lillian, Box 53092, New Orleans, Louisiana 70153-3092) Doorstop zine with numerous essays and commentary, letters of comment, and goings-on in the

fannish matters. Satsuma #2 (The Usual from Sara Schaefer, 502 Prospect Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11215) A view of the bead hunters

The Fossil #316 (US\$15 annually from The Fossils Inc, c/o Gary

at Mardi Gras, and some fiction and poetry. Probe #116 to #119 (The Usual from Science Fiction South Africa, Box 781401, Sandton 2146, South Africa) Clubzine with

strong emphasis on short stories. Also several author interviews,

zine and book reviews, and letters of comment. Nicely printed

digest in card covers with the best cover art of any zine.

ap but obscure and oddball ng. Also a Sherlock Holmes ment. uy Lillian, Box 53092, New porstop zine with numerous essays and commentary, letters of comment, and goings-on in the police department (Lillian is a defense barrister).

-6-

Joje De Vivre #2 and #3

Chunga #1 to #4 (The Usual from Randy Byers, 1013 North 36 Street, Seattle, Washington 98103) The premiere issue starts off with coffee shops, rock climbing, fan fundery, Yoyodyne, reviews, convention reports, and letters of comment. #2 discusses the gap between literary and media SF, Star Trek continuity, reviews, and letters. #3 is mostly fan funds and letters, with an article about working for a dot.com before things got ugly. #4 has musings on neighbourhoods of cities, Star Trek, and convention sex.

known books old and new. If the flood of cookie-cutter bestsellers bores you, here is a source of ideas for different reading.

Kairan #5 and #6 (Mail art Usual from Gianni Simone, 3-3-23 Nagatsuta, Midori-ku, Yokohama-shi, 226-0027 Kanagawa-ken,

It Goes On The Shelf #24 (The Usual from Ned Brooks, 4817

Dean Lane, Lilburn, Georgia 30047-4720) Reviewzine of lesser-

Rated Rookie #3 (US\$3 from Josh Bernstein, 28-07 38 Street, Suite 4L, Astoria, New York 11103) Genzine with essays on kinky sex, an artist interview, and miscellany. This zine is an attempt to look cool and underground but comes off like teenagers

Japan) Essays and commentary on mail art, reviews and

interviews, and the trouble trying to sell zines to museums.

giggling over an adult magazine in a schoolyard.

Fresnoy, France) Compilation of collage art.

The Roundabout Zoo #2 (The Usual from Doug Bell, 12 Hatherley Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8QA, England) Perzine with musings about good intentions in zine publishing and distractions of the real world that keep one away from the zine

world.

The Secret Life Of Pascal Lenoir #14 to #16 (Mail art Usual from Pascal Lenoir, 11 ruelle de Champagne, 60680 Grand

Pennsylvania 19081) Chapbook-style zine of interviews with people who knew Valerie Solanas, best remembered for shooting Andy Warhol and her SCUM manifesto (Society for Cutting Up Men). Fascinating reading, although the interviews should have been edited to take out digressions and irrelevant material.

Valerie Lives! (US\$4 from Donny Smith, Box 411, Swarthmore,

From Cover To Cover V17#7 (Membership details from Art Cover Exchange, c/o Joseph Dole, 105 Lawson Road, Rochester, New York 14616-1444) This is the newsletter of a mail art group who exchange illustrated envelopes (known as 'covers' to stamp collectors). The artwork on the cover can be related to a topical event, to a newly-issued postage stamp, or just a whim. This group requires a steady commitment of 15 covers per month, so only those who can do the minimum activity should apply.

The Knarley Knews #94 to #99 (The Usual from Henry Welch, 1525 - 16 Avenue, Grafton, Wisconsin 53024-2017) Genzine with articles on the horrors of home renovation, a South Korea travel report, zine and book reviews, and lots of letters of comment.

Leeking Ink #25 to #27 (The Usual from Davida Gypsy Breier, Box 963, Havre de Grace, Maryland 21078) Perzine, with trip reports, job-from-Hell reports, diary entries,

-7-

and miscellaneous.

on apocalyptic fiction, goof-ups in military fiction, reviews, and letters. Vanamonde #498 to #507 (The Usual from John Hertz, 236 South Coronado Street, #409, Los Angeles, California 90057) Weekly single-sheet apazine on a wide variety of short topics.

Twink #29 (The Usual from E.B. Frohvet, 4716 Dorsey Hall

Drive #506, Ellicott City, Maryland 21042) Genzine with articles

including waiting for a riot that never happened (which caught my interest because Calgary had a riot that never happened during the G-8 Summit). Other articles on purging books from an overloaded collection, European customs officers, Australian fandom, convention reports, and letters of comment.

Quasiquote #4 and #5 (The Usual from Sandra Bond, 7 Granville Road, London N13 4RR, England) Personal notes,

Shot By A Ray Gun #7 (Mail art Usual from Billy McKay, Box 542, North Olmsted, Ohio 44070) This issue displays the works of D. Young (Obvious Front) who builds little robots from

electronic parts such as resistors and chips, and then inserts them into collage scenes. The Ten Page News #31 (The Usual from Owen Thomas, Box

9651, Columbus, Ohio 43209) An article on organizing sessionals

at a college into a union, some mail art, and a few zine reviews.

myself as one, even though I have no choice but to commute to work by car.) This issue is an account of her combination cycling/train commute the day she pushed herself a little too hard and collapsed from dehydration. This is neatly paired with another story about a bus journey through Spain when her driver collapsed while changing a flat tire in blistering heat. FOSFAX #206 and #207 (US\$6 from Falls of the Ohio SF and

Oregon 97228-6753) A zine for fans of public transit. (I count

The Constant Rider #3 (The Usual

from Kate Lopresti, Box 6753, Portland,

-8-

Fantasy Association, Box 37281, Louisville, Kentucky 40233-7281) Doorstop-sized zine of fine print; a full evening's read. Although this zine is famous (or infamous) for its argumentive politics, it is often overlooked that it reviews more books than most zines, as well as convention reports, alternative history, and letters of comment.

The Zine Dump #3 (The Usual from Guy Lillian, Box 53092, New Orleans, Louisiana 70153-3092) Review zine of mostly SF zines.

Tortoise #14 to #16 (The Usual from Sue Jones, Flat 5, 32/33)

consequences of the Space Age (more junk in orbit than

Castle Street, Shrewsbury SY1 2BQ, England) #14 is a themed issue on the subject of romance. #15 has thoughts on unexpected food issue. All issues have assorted reviews, and letters of comment.

Gegenschein #91 to #94 (The Usual from Eric Lindsay. Box 640, Airlie Beach, Queensland 4802, Australia) Rants against giant

satellites), and a strange railway station in Shrewsbury. #16 is the

conspiracies such as Microsoft, telecoms, and the Australian government on the one hand, and book reviews on the other. Also installments of travels through the Australian outback on roads so rough that every other paragraph a piece of the truck cracks or shakes loose.

AfterFX #11 (The Usual from James D. Harvey, 371 Crossfield Road, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406) Four pages, with a few listings and music reviews, and a comparison between the movie THE POSTMAN and a zine workshop.

Covert Communications From Zeta Corvi #10 (The Usual from Andrew Murdoch, 9211 Glendower Drive, Richmond, British Columbia V7A 2Y4) SF zine, with convention reports,

For The Clerisy V9#46, #48 to #50 (The Usual from Brant Kresovich, Box 404, Getzville, New York 14068-0404)

Numerous book reviews of lesser-known books that deserve

attention, zine listings, and letters of comment.

98???) Perzine with various essays, a look at the Buffy television show, pre-Holmes detectives, some zine reviews, and convention reports.

Erg #158 to #161 (The Usual from Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, North Verlebing, VO12, 5BO, England)

Littlebrook #1 and #2 (The Usual from Jerry Kaufman and

Suzanne Tompkins, 3522 N.E. 123rd Street, Seattle, Washington

Drive, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 5RQ, England)
Mostly reminiscing about how it were in the old days in England
pre-war, plus some essays muttering about how life is so
complicated these days. Also zine reviews, old aircraft, and short
letters of comment.

MarkTime #68 (The Usual from Mark Strickert, Box 6753, Fullerton, California 92834) Perzine of life in Orange County, California, as a bus fan. Interesting news of the struggle to reform the transit systems down there, like being a Liberal in Alberta.

Death Ship #2 (The Usual from Violet Jones, Box 55336, Hayward, California 94545) Reviewzine, with lots of listings, letters of comment, and a bit of gloom and doom about the future of zine publishing (unwarranted in my opinion; the Papernet is more resilient and less susceptible to government monitoring than the Internet).

that discusses the geometrical problem of connecting a square of nine dots in only four straight lines, but then goes on to three, two, one, and zero line solutions as well.

Nicky and Rich Lynch, Box 3120, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20885)
Doorstop zine, these issues being anthologies of SF fanhistory articles reprinted from previous issues.

The Newport News #204 (The Usual from Ned Brooks, 4817 Dean Lane, Lilburn, Georgia 30047-4720) Apazine with

Mimosa #28 and #29

on the effects of DDR on floor joists (no, not East Germany but a new fad called Dance Dance Revolution), bad modern art, the Eden Project in Cornwall, a steam fair, and letters of comment.

Shouting At The Postman #48 to #50 (The Usual from Ken and Mary Miller, Box 101, Newtown, Pennsylvania 18940-0101)

multiple reviewers to get different viewpoints. Also some extracts from various zines and discussion of practicalities of zine publishing.

963, Havre de Grace, Maryland 21078) Reviewzine that uses

The Nine Point Dilemma (Mail art Usual from Babynous Cult,

110 1/2 State Avenue, Bremerton, Washington 98337) One-shot

Trap Door #22 (The Usual from Robert Lichtman, Box 30, Glen Ellen, California 95442) This issue is taken up by a lengthy fan fiction story which involves time travel and the first publisher of

SF magazines.

Wabe #6 (The Usual from Jae Leslie Adams, 621 Spruce Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53715) Genzine, with articles on food, fan

travel funds, convention reports, and letters of comment.

Video reviews and obituaries of two mail artists, an account of a trip to Italy (where the trains still don't run on time), and collage mail art based on a found photo.

The Thought #131 to #134 (The Heyel from Populd Tohin Pow

(US\$5 (outside North America add another \$3) from

-10-

The Thought #131 to #134 (The Usual from Ronald Tobin, Box 10760, Glendale, Arizona 85318-0760) Essays on politics, philosophy, letters of comment, rants, and fiction.

Warp #54 (The Usual from Montréal SF and Fantasy Association, Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montréal, Québec H2X 4A7) Clubzine with news and notes, convention reports, an essay on Irish Neolithic mound builders, and reviews.

Musea #119 and #120 (The Usual from Tom Hendricks, 4000 Hawthorne #5, Dallas, Texas 75219) #119 is a listing of 70 movie script ideas by Hendricks. #120 is a mix of poetry and art news oddities.

Slush Pile #2 (US\$5 from Underground Literary Alliance, Box

42077, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19101-2077) Some rants against the snobby literit crowd, but mostly angst-ridden pieces by various contributors who write in exactly the same style. Come The Revolution, I know exactly what I would do with literary writers. No, not put them up against the wall but rather ship them to Bosnia or Iraq where they can learn what real angst is.

Park, Maryland 20740) Commentary and consideration of the culture of underground zines and the effects of synoptic media. Thoughtful and a cut above the usual level of zine commentary.

The Die #3 (The Usual from Red Roach Press, Box 764, College

Snake Den #17 to #19 (The Usual from Ken Faig Jr, 2311 Swainwood Drive, Glenview, Illinois 60025-2741) Apazine for Lovecraftiana, with a variety of book reviews on various horror authors. There is a review of a video on Lovecraft's life, an

honour to Faig's father, and assorted mailing comments. Southern Fandom Confederation Bulletin V8#1 and #2 (The Usual from Southern Fandom Confederation, c/o R.B. Cleary, 138

They Made Me Do It and They Made Us Do It (The Usual from Maxine, 20 Bakers Lane, Woodston, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE2 9OW, England) One-shots with miscellaneous personal accounts and a convention report.

federation of SF clubs, with news and notes, convention reports,

Bibb Drive, Madison, Alabama 35758-1064)

MAIL ART LISTINGS

and letters of comment

Artist Trading Cards: (Chuck Stake, 736 - 5 Street NW, Calgary, Alberta T2N 1P9, Canada) ATCs are works of art created on 64 mm x 89 mm card stock. They are the same size as hockey trading cards, but the similarity stops here. Cards may depict anything, be 2-D or 3-D, they may be original, a series, an edition, or a multiple. Cards are signed on the back by the artist and, if necessary, an edition number is included. ATCs are paintings, drawings, collages, photographs, rubberstamp works, mixed-media, etchings, found images, recycled works of art, assemblages, etcetera. The only stipulation is that the card fits in the standard plastic sheets that hockey cards are normally stored within.

Clubzine of

Pierluigi Zappacosta, found Logitech in 1981. They took up Engelbert's idea and transformed his clumsy box into a handy little animal, tapered to a point with a fat back part and a long tail. The computer mouse was born. Later on Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, and finally Bill Gates, helped the plastic rodent to spread all over the world. Today no business, no communications, no information can do without it. It has changed the world for better or worse. But how tragic; with development it is going to lose its tail. Within the next decade it will probably have died out.

What do you think about the computer mouse? How has it influenced you and our world? Save it for the future by your art work! For a documentation and exhibition of cartoons, caricatures, photographs, paintings, and collages of the computer mouse, I need contributions from artists all over the world. The exhibition will take place in Berlin in 2005. Deadline is April 2004. All techniques. Size: postcard. No return, no jury, doc to all.

Giancarlo Da Lio. Moreover, as well as they work, they must manage their work making use of everything and everywhere. Well, it is necessary to show works not only in the official galleries, but above all in the alternative art spaces: where people go and come, on the road, in the shops, in the gardens too; so the Tree of Poetry was born and is growing. Do you want to send your mail art or mail poesy?

Photo Exchange: (Scott Garinger, Box 321, El Segundo,

The Penguin: (Jeroen ter Welle, Boeninlaan 393, 1102 TL

Amsterdam, Nederlands) Theme on the penguin, size A6 (14.8 x

10.5 cm). Send 16 originals or copies, documentation to every 15

contributors. No deadline.

California 90245-0321) Will trade photographs, any subject.

The Tree Of Poetry: (dott.ssa Tiziana Baracchi, Via Cavallotti,

83-B, 30171 Venezia-Mestre, Italy) The Tree of Poetry is a very

uncommon species of plant; it is an American maple which is in

Venezia-Mestre in 83/B Cavallotti Street, Itinerari '80 Centre.

Giancarlo Da Lio dedicated this tree to poetry in a lot of artistic

performances. Below its fronds, sheets with verses, in plastic

envelopes to preserve from rain, hang down. The poets read their

lines in the shade of the tree. Painters and sculptors put their

works on walls and grass. Itinerari '80 is an artistic movement:

from different trends many excellent artists gather strength around

Vancouver, British Columbia V6R 1G0) From the book SACRED CONTRACTS by Caroline Myss: "Platonic forms are not conceptual abstractions that the human mind creates by generalizing from a class of particulars. rather they posess a quality of being, a degree of reality that is superior to that of the concrete world. Platonic archetypes form the world and stand beyond it. They manifest themselves within time and yet are

Archetypes And Altars: (Ginger Mason, Box 39168,

timeless. They constitute the veiled essence of things." And Kay Turner in BEAUTIFUL NECESSITY reveals how the altar is a home for sacred images. We gather together statues, flowers, pictures, photographs, amulets, stones, shells, talismans; symbolic of our most intimate beliefs and fears, memories and dreams. We carry on, or re-make ancient spiritual traditions. Tell me about or show me your archetypes and altars. I'm looking for the art and meaning of our joys and sorrows, themes that figure largely or recur in our lives. Contributions will appear in an open-ended,

Comforters: (Lois Klassen, Box 74540, Vancouver, British Columbia V6K 4P4) Send me quilt squares (6" x 6") to be used on the top of comforters that I am making for displaced people (refugees). The comforters, also known as blankets or quilts, will be distributed by the Mennonite Central Committee, the Red

Cross, and the Red Crescent societies. The squares can

incorporate artwork but they must be washable and durable; poly-

ongoing documentation.

documentation about the project. Think Here: (Jose Roberto Sechi, Av. M29, N° 2183, Jd. Sao Joao, Rio Claro SP - 13505 - 410, Brazil) Mail art magazine. Drawing, design, painting, engraving, gluing, rubber stamp,

cotton is the best material. Send as many as you want because each comforter needs 130! I will return photos and periodical

writing, poetry, visual poetry, photograph, etc.. In black and white, please, maximum 13 cm x 8 cm (horizontal format). Theme free, no return, no jury, no deadline, documentation to every 18 participants.

Postcard Mail Art Project: (dott.ssa Tiziana Baracchi, Via Cavallotti, 83-B, 30171 Venezia-Mestre, Italy) Technique: free. Size: 15 cm x 10 cm. No deadline.

Brain Cell Fractal: (Ryosuke Cohen, 3-76-I-A-613, Yagumokitacho, Moriguchi-City, Osaka 570, Japan) Send 150 stickers or some other type of small mail art image. These are collated into a collage on an 11" x 17" poster, and a copy sent back to each contributor, along with a list of names and addresses

of those participating. Collage d'aujourd'hui: (Dianne Bertrand, Art terre, 9109

-13-

Deschambault, Saint Leonard, Quebec, H1R 2C6)

Mail art collage.

BOOK REVIEWS

by Dale Speirs

Battle Of Wits by Stephen Budiansky (Simon & Shuster Touchstone, 2002) is a history of World War Two cryptography. While the methodology of how Japanese and German codes were broken is discussed, the major part of this book is devoted to the bureaucratic infighting and military obstructionism of the cryptographic agencies of Britain and the USA.

The code-breakers scored some notable successes, the Americans in particular at Midway, and the British against the U-boat wolf packs in the mid-Atlantic. The computer age had its beginning with the machines designed to break the Enigma codes of Germany, as giant mechanical calculators were built to do the brute force work of breaking the messages. Rommel's tanks were halted in northern Africa not by British soldiers but by sinking all the German re-supply ships, using route information based on decrypted messages.

There was always an ongoing struggle against the inertia of military commanders who would not pay any attention to intercepted communications. Indeed, one reason why the Japanese and Germans stayed so long deluded that their codes were secure was that bloody-minded Allied commanders refused to make use of the information. The code breakers were always

worried that excessive use of the decoded
information would give away the secret, but often they
need not have worried. The stupidity of Admiralty House, and the
inter-service feuding of the U.S. Navy and Army meant that much
information went unacted upon, or was squirreled away in some
pigeonhole where it may as well have remained in code for all the
good it did.

The German coding machine Engima was captured by the British during the war from U-boats. Knowing what the machine looked like was only the beginning of the decoding process. The early computer-like machines built by the British and Americans were then needed to crack the codes by brute force, by breaking every possible combination of ciphers. It was a lot of work, and every time the Germans or Japanese changed the settings on their machines, the cryptographers had to start over again. There were some easy cribs though. Many enemy radio operators were lazy or slaves to habit, and started their messages in an constant way, which allowed cryptographers to successfully guess opening or closing words and phrases, and from there the rest of the message.

One is impressed by how much fighting went on between the U.S. Army and the Navy, each with their own bureau, and each failing to communicate in a timely manner. In Britain, it seemed as if Whitehall was as bad an enemy as the Nazis. Churchill once remarked that the Allies only won the war because they made

fewer mistakes, not because they were the superior force. The Battle of the Code Breakers seems to bear that out.

Man On Fire: The Paul McCartney Anthology is a two-disc

CD by Robert Alley (2002, Decca). Normally I don't review

music but this one is an interesting item; it is alternative history.

Is this the first musical AH? In the timeline of this CD, Paul McCartney did not hang about Liverpool, but instead went off to London to become a record producer. He did meet George Harrison, but his contact with John Lennon was brief and unpleasant, when a drunken Lennon recorded an incoherent monologue over one of McCartney's demo tapes. The discs are exactly in the style of Beatle documentaries that only completists buy, with tinny 1960s era songs and lots of fragmentary pieces never previously released for good reason. In this alternative timeline, McCartney was an enthusiastic proponent of electronica, so the later tracks are heavy on the synthesizers. The style is very close to our timeline's McCartney for the early years, then logically diverges as it would in a different timeline. A wellthought out AH, and every Beatles completist will want Alley's AH.

Dr. Strangelove's Game by Paul Strathern (Alfred Knopff, 2001) is a history of how economic thought developed over the last few centuries, written as a series of biographies of famous economists and how they influenced history. Although the word 'economics'

comes from the ancient Greeks (it means "running the household"), it wasn't until a few centuries ago that thinkers seriously began to contemplate economics as we know it today. The dismal science was meaningless in human society until the mercantile class developed, and businessmen began to see that their affairs were ordered by some sort of invisible hand.

Accountancy did not exist in Europe until the idea of zero had been imported circa 1200. All calculations were carried out on the abacus, and the idea of negative numbers was unknown. When zeros made it convenient to jot down numbers on papyrus and do scenarios on slate or wax, the idea of profit and loss took hold. The next giant step was made by the forgotten genius of the Renaissance, a monk named Luca Pacioli, who taught Leonado da Vinci mathematics and, more importantly, introduced doubleentry book-keeping into Europe. Pacioli also posed a famous question that introduced the idea of mathematical probabilities, from which later economists centuries later would develop the methodology of insurance, mortality tables, investment risk, and economic forecasting. In his time, random events were God's will, and it was not to be given to mortal men to be able to calculate future events with pen and paper. We take all these things today for granted, and like most such discoveries, they are so obvious that we wonder how people got along without them.

demonstrated convincingly that humans are not cold calculating merchants but instead are easily swept up in herds. Tulipmania is Dutch speculated in virus-infected tulips (the streaks of colours on

collating Bills of Mortality and other vital statistics into useful information. What he had invented was demography, and future economists and insurance underwriters would rely on those statistics as the fundamental basis of their work. As one example of how Graunt changed the insurance industry, it used to be that life insurance premiums were the same regardless of age.

By the 1600s, nations had begun to recognize the importance of

capital and wealth, and that money was useless unless it

circulated. The Dutch made famous the financial hysteria that

a byword in economic history that has not faded with time. The

tulips are caused by a virus), our grandparents bought stocks on

margin in 1929, and the Baby Boomers threw away their old-age

As tulipmania faded into a bad memory, an Englishman named

John Graunt would, in the next few decades of the 1600s, start

savings on dot.coms. There is never any new thing.

In 1776, six months before the American Revolution broke out, Adam Smith's famous work was published, AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF THE WEALTH OF NATIONS. Here he introduced"the invisible hand", and here he points out that as societies progress from hunter/gatherers to agriculture to

industry, the complexity of laws and social order increase. He

correctly identified the fact that progress reduces -16leisure time. Hunters and gatherers only need to work a few hours a day. The industrial society gives little leisure to the average worker, and those who work in the next stage, the Information Age, have even far less. It is interesting how predictions that computers would give us an age of abundance where people need work only a few hours a day, if that, completely missed the mark.

In 1848, the Year of Revolutions, when governments in Europe were toppled one by one by mobs, John Stuart Mill published PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY, the first generally accepted economics textbook. It was used for teaching for many years to come and had a tremendous influence. 1848 saw the appearance of another famous text, the COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, which was to have an even greater influence. "A spectre is haunting Europe", wrote Karl Marx, and it was soon to haunt the world. Marx brought the idea of class warfare into full development, and insisted that economics be put into practical use to bring forth a new society, a final step in the evolution of

Strathem's book is a compelling read, illuminating the search for patterns and control of human activities. It is remarkable how many economists started as mathematicians and drifted into or near insanity. A dismal science indeed.

humanity up from tribalism.