

THE SPACE-CADET GAZETTE

OR THE AGING
OLD FART
NOSTALGIC
TIME WASTER
GAZETTE

JOE AND BOSKO IN...

PLANET OF THE TREKKOIDS!



THE SPACE CADET GAZETTE #5 – MARCH 1996

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Published quarterly (or whenever I feel like it)

by R. Graeme Cameron,
who is no longer living at:
1855 West 2nd Ave, Apt. #110,
Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V6J 1J1

E version note: As of 2008 my address is:
Apt # 72G, 13315 104th Ave,
Surrey, B.C., Canada V3T 1V5

The Space Cadet Gazette is available for \$1.00 per issue, or \$4.00 for four issues, or \$1,000 for a thousand issues, or \$1,000,000 for a lifetime subscription (necessarily my lifetime, not yours).

SCG is also available for the usual: trade with your zine or regular letters of comment.

Note: Currently SC is only available free via download from Bill Burn's Excellent web site:

< <http://efanzines.com> >

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.

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EDITORIAL

Greetings! You may have thought I dropped off the face of the Earth. Certainly I disappeared for a while. This zine is three months late! What possible excuse can I offer?

Well, the usual, namely the unwanted intrusion of Mundania. A number of crisis' relating to work, finance and health. I was simply too stressed to sit down and work on this zine. That I finally got around to publishing this is not, alas, due to my problems being resolved but rather to a sudden determination on my part to lose myself in the task and thus escape from all that dogs me, if only for a little while.



Meanwhile, I have a new hobby to distract me. I've become the archivist for the B.C. SF Association. I now get to sort and catalogue about 1000 zines going as far back as 1946 and including such treasures as WARHOON #28 (the hardcover collected writings of Walt Willis). The sole perk of the job is that I get to read all of this nifty stuff. And of course, all trades I receive for SC will be added to the archive. Some day we hope to place the collection in an institution, if any such is willing to take it. No prospects at the moment.

Getting back to this, you'll note I've eliminated the spacing between paragraphs in an effort to free up space for as many LoCs as I can fit in. Hopefully this won't make the text any harder to read. I've already reduced the print size to 8.5 and promise not to reduce it any further. Still, I haven't made use of all my options yet. Could reduce the spacing between the lines maybe... Well, we'll see how readable this is before I take any further steps.

Anyway, I hope you find the contents interesting and amusing. I still get a kick completing an issue, however late. My intention is to keep pubbing into the next century, more or less on schedule as circumstances permit. Cheers!

THE GRAEME

can no longer be reached at:

E version note: As of 2008 I can be reached at:

< graeme_cameron@mindlink.bc.ca >

< rgraeme@shaw.ca >

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ART CREDITS:

Cover: Scott Patri
Teddy Harvia: 6
Brad Foster: 17, 32
Terry Jeeves: 9, 25, 37
William Rotsler: 28, 35, 40

All articles by R. Graeme Cameron unless otherwise credited.

CONFESSIONS OF AN SF ADDICT

by R. Graeme Cameron

OR HOW I COULDN'T FIND DITTO 8 DESPITE STAYING IN THE SAME HOTEL!

DITTO! One of only two annual conventions devoted to fanzine fandom, the larger being CORFLU. This year (1995), Ditto 8 was being held in Seattle. I couldn't resist. Having stepped down as 'God-Editor' of the BCSFA clubzine and switched my efforts to my perzine SPACE CADET, I just had to go and meet like-minded fans, especially those I trade with, so I could assign faces to names.

But I was nervous. I have seldom visited the States, and this would be the first time I'd be travelling on my own. Having spent a lifetime watching American TV news about rampant crime in the inner cities, I was worried. True, Vancouver has now graduated to gang warfare and drive-by shootings, not to mention the occasional serial killer, but I live here, I know what streets to avoid, whereas Seattle was a complete unknown. Yet I'd hate to miss Ditto 8....

I confided my fears to Spider Robinson. And he suggested I simply tuck the price of a bus ticket home in my sock in case I should be robbed of everything else. (Thieves hardly ever steal your socks, especially the ones you are wearing...)

Ah! Good advice! Better make it thirty dollars, just to be on the safe side. American dollars of course. Though faith in the Canadian dollar had been restored by the recent Federalist victory in the Quebec referendum, the vote had been so close, who knew how the money markets would react as time went by? I opted to enter the US with \$300 American plus a \$1,000 recently acquired extension on my credit card limit (I had to argue them out of giving me twice as much!).

Times were grim, but I was grimly determined to have fun, I tell you. Fiercely determined.

I entered the US via Greyhound bus with \$270 US in my wallet and \$30 US already in my sock (you never know, might get mugged stepping off the bus...) I told the US Customs Officer I was travelling to an Amateur Press Association convention. Incomprehension chased boredom across her face and I was waved back on board the bus. Good. Had she pawed through my carry-on case and discovered the fifty freebie copies of SPACE CADET -- who knows what might have happened?

But now I was in America! A foreign country! My keen eyes searched the passing countryside for signs of exotica. Good lord! The grass was the same colour as the grass in Canada! And evergreen trees. They had evergreen trees! And Crows! There were Crows in America! And look at that! Wow! They even had McDonalds in America!

I sat back to think things through. Obviously this alien land business was trickier than I thought. Perhaps it was in the subtler details that the otherworldness would be evident -- what should I be looking for? Then it hit me. Flags! The Yanks are nuts about their flag! Patriotic display is a fine art in their country. Look for the flags!

I did. For the longest time, and nary a one. Odd. Not what I would expect. Finally I spotted a star-spangled etc. flying from a pole in front of a motel, side by side with a Canadian flag to draw in tourists like myself. Well, that's not unusual. In Canada I can see the same display in front of hotels, only aimed at American tourists. Did this imply similar outlook, similar customs? Hmm, not very exotic.

We passed an aging station wagon driven by an elderly gentleman. There was a huge "Technocracy" sticker on the door of his car. For a moment my heart leaped. Then I remembered, in Vancouver this obsolete fossil of a political movement has its own building (or did, I understand it's for sale now), so nothing uniquely American about the sight. Sigh. Was there nothing different in America? Nothing peculiar to America? Was America merely a slavish imitation of Canada after all?

Then we passed a sign reading: "VOTE BART FOR SHERIFF!" Aha! You don't see that in Canada! Now I knew I was in a foreign land.

And to digress, one with a truly expensive medical system. I derived great comfort from the fact I had purchased, via the Royal Bank, extra health insurance above and beyond my B.C. medical plan. I tell you, the only way to have fun is first to fully appease your paranoia....

And another important guiding principle for travellers is to empty your bladder as often as possible. I had visions of scurrying through thug-infested Seattle streets desperately trying to find my hotel before my bladder burst -- as dark a vision as can be imagined -- so when I felt the call of nature I strode briskly to the washroom at the back of the bus.

Or should I say cubicle? There I was, standing in the swaying bus attempting to take a leak, holding on to a bar with my left hand, holding on to the appropriate appendage with my right, shins braced against the sharp edge of the toilet platform, staring down a deep well at turbid green waters sloshing about below, and trying to urinate.

The bus lurched. The toilet platform cut into my shins. "Ow!" I cried. The bus lurched. Click! The door unlocked, and banged open. "Damn!" I shouted, and slammed the door shut. And locked the door. Click! The bus swayed. Shins again. "Ow!" Lurched the bus. Click! Bang! The door was open. "Damn!" Slam! Lock it again. Click! Leaped the bus. "Ow!" Click! Bang! "Damn!" Slam! Click! "Ow!" Click! Bang! "Damn!" Slam! Click! "Ow!" Click! Bang! "Damn!" Slam! Click! "Ow!" Click! Bang! "Damn!" Slam! Click!...

It took me the longest time to concentrate sufficient presence of mind to convince my bladder to empty.....

Ghod only knows what the Japanese tourists sitting beside the washroom thought I was up to.....

Refreshed, or at any rate sweating with relief, I staggered back to my seat, having experienced my first adventure. And then, after a mere 3 & 1/2 hours of travel, a glimpse of tall towers in the distance. For the next while we were embraced by the I-5 embankments, but all at once we were sweeping past Lake Union and the autumn leaves on Queen Anne hill shining glorious in the sun. What a sight! And the Space needle! And look at those office towers!

We turned off on the Stewart Street exit. I instantly placed myself on the map I carried in my pocket, a card with a cut-out portion of a Seattle map glued on to it, detailing the immediate area around the hotel. In my mind I had practiced my routine: scoot out the front door of the bus station, turn left, go west a couple of blocks, pass under the monorail, then find the hotel somewhere to my left. Dang if it didn't work. Nothing like advance planning to give you confidence.

Besides, my first impressions as I walked down Stewart were good. The buildings around me seemed a nice mixture of modern towers and well-kept older structures with nifty decoration, and there appeared to be more space between buildings than in Vancouver, even the sidewalks seemed wider, and the pedestrian and vehicle traffic less congested. Gee, could Seattle be a better city than Vancouver? Or was I just punchdrunk with fatigue?

The Mayflower Park Hotel (built in 1927) had a pleasantly ornate facade and looked kind of expensive. I rushed up the steps and through the lobby to the front desk, where I was quickly embraced by the 'Disney'-politeness America is famous for. In Canada sales clerks and counter staff are surly at best, and sometimes rude, whereas in the states such people, at least in the hospitality industry, cultivate the delightful habit of pretending to be glad to see you. At least, so I had been told, and it was nice to run into evidence of this. An artificial welcome, but hey, I'll take habitual politeness over hostility any day.

Glad to have arrived, pleased with the hotel, I entered room 401, flung my carry-all on the bed and ripped open the curtains of the window to enjoy my first hotel view of the city streets.

Aww, shoot. All I could see was a grungy brick wall about ten feet across a light well. If I looked straight up I could see an outline of sky and the tips of three office towers. Straight down: the top of a dirty skylight. To the left: assorted ventilation machinery. To the right: windows of other lucky tenants. I resolved not to open the

window but rely on the wall vent for fresh air (though maybe it drew its air from the fans I could see outside my window?). Hmmm, a minor setback. Didn't let it get me down. Wanted to enjoy the con, I tell you.

I returned to the desk and asked about the con. The woman on duty pointed at a sign and said "It's all posted." I saw a listing of rooms, 'Green Room', 'Rose Room', etc., but there didn't seem to be any activity listed. I went up to the mezzanine to check out these rooms. Empty. Nothing. Well, it was early yet.

Then I went downstairs and discovered a ballroom full of weird-looking people. Huzzah! The convention! "Are you the Ditto crowd?"

About eighty strangers looked up from their deliberations round assorted tables and stared at me. "No! We're the N.C.L.S. people!"

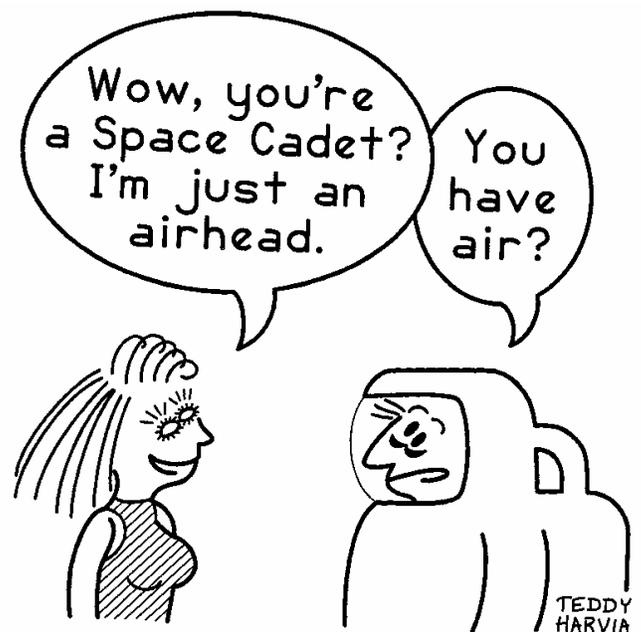
Oops! Evidently I had stumbled upon a clandestine meeting of the NATIONAL CUCKHOLDS & LIARS SOCIETY and boy were they pissed! They didn't know who I was, and I didn't know who they were, so we were even. I backed out lest they lynch me.

A trifle shaken, I took refuge in 'Clippers', the hotel restaurant, and waited to be deluged with the legendary commercial hospitality (as previously mentioned). I waited a long time. The waiter seemed more interested in laughing it up with his buddies than in serving customers. But after a half hour of fatigue-sodden patience I was startled awake by said waiter asking if I had anything in particular in mind. I managed to communicate the concept of a menu, and fifteen minutes later when he drifted by, the precise aspect of the menu I was interested in. Then, while the giant ground sloth they evidently employed as a cook toyed with what would eventually become my food, I stared blankly out the window. When my hot turkey sandwich finally arrived, it turned out to be cold and tasteless. The french fries, on the other hand, while equally cold, were admittedly tasty. Good enough. I wolfed everything down and tipped 20%. Determined to have a good time! Even if I had to pretend!

Still the public rooms were devoid of activity. I passed through the mezzanine and walked down the corridor connecting the hotel to the Westlake Center (or 'Centre' as we'd write it in Canada) housing "hundreds of shops" (as the Ditto 8 flyer put it). There were only 80 shops. I felt vaguely cheated. Especially when I entered 'Suncoast Motion Pictures', a video store. Many films available in the States are not available in Canada, so I had been looking forward to snapping up some rare goodies, like maybe "Attack of the Crab Monsters." But everything in the store was run-of-the-mill stuff, readily found in Vancouver. Another minor disappointment.

Checked out the common rooms again. Nothing. Nada. Zip. ARRGH! Was I even in the right hotel? Beginning to feel trapped in a Twilight Zone episode. In fact, it WAS twilight. The sun was going down. I figured, hey, I don't want to walk around Seattle at night, why not go out for a brief walk while the sun was still up?

So, zombie-like I stumbled out of the hotel and lurched down the hill to Pike Street Market, innumerable locals scattering out of my path. Sometimes fatigue-dementia can be very handy. Quick look at the market. Lots of trendy junk ala Gastown in Vancouver. Thank Ghod I was travelling alone. The market would be a nightmare were I in the company of someone who liked to shop.



Then I hit upon the idea of seeking out the Seattle Art Museum so that I could visit it tomorrow without wasting time trying to find it. I stalked South along Second Avenue. Bit disturbed to notice hordes of office workers pouring into a cave entrance buried in a hill. Underground rapid transit? Or volunteer sacrifice in some Lovecraftian maze of unspeakable horror? Before my mind could fathom the truth of the matter (probably just as well) I passed the back of the Art museum. WoW! What a building! All sorts of vertical fluting and terra-cotta details and such. Post-modern Etruscan. Make a great club house!

The entrance was on First Avenue. I observed a large sign opposite the museum reading "Luscious Ladies Will Undress For You." Nothing to do with the museum, unfortunately.

Then I thought, "Hey, I'm here. Why not go in?" (--to the museum, not the luscious lady display...) But as soon as I'd paid the \$6 fee and started up the incredibly long 'palatial' flight of stairs leading to the exhibits, I realized I'd made a huge mistake. I was so tired I could barely focus my eyes. So I decided to take a quick gander, intending to come back the next day for a more detailed study. (I never did.) I raced through the entire museum in 20 minutes, spending about 60 seconds per gallery. Wowee! Something baroque! And there's something modern! Too bad I didn't have time to give it a second glance. I had the vague impression the museum guards were giving me disapproving looks. What was their problem? Weren't obvious morons allowed to look at art?....However briefly?

Actually, to be fair to myself, I did linger for a few seconds before some of the more impressive exhibits. The Mesoamerican cases showed pottery pieces I'd studied but never actually seen, like Nayarit tomb figurines and jolly old Xipe Xotec, the male fertility God (and patron of the Tlacaxipehualiztli festival, just in case you forgot) who always wore the flayed skin of one of his sacrificial victims (sort of an Aztec Santa Claus...well, sort of... wore a red suit.....). And the classical stuff was pretty cool too. I particularly liked the portrait bust of the Emperor Claudius. Rather daft-looking lad was he...

Headed North along First Avenue. Noticed some more interesting signs, like: "50 Beautiful Ladies! And 3 Ugly Ones!" and "Live Girls!" (I should bloody well hope so. An exhibit of dead ones would be unnerving, to say the least...)

Staggered back in to the hotel, still grimly determined to have a good time. Still no sign of obvious congoers. I checked the public rooms one last time. Empty. (How was I to know about ten minutes after I left they began to fill the Green Room with fanzines?) I couldn't find anybody! Yet I still wanted to have fun. What to do?

The obvious thing. I returned to my room to watch TV for the rest of the night. First thing I discovered, no Canadian channels! The hotel is missing a bet there. Tourists from the deep South would find Canadian TV an amazing piece of exotica, but then, maybe not. I've heard that Americans generally don't hold with funny foreign stuff..... In Vancouver, on the other hand, cable services provide more American channels than Canadian.....

After awhile, as I lay spread-eagled on my bed, it occurred to me that I'd travelled a couple of hundred miles deep into the most powerful nation on Earth in order to watch an hour-long documentary on Dung Beetles.....

Still, learned something new. Did you know that Dung Beetles flying through the night, when they take it into their tiny little brains that maybe its time to descend to the ground, simply tuck their wings under their carapace and plummet straight down, smugly secure in the knowledge that sooner or later they will, in point of fact, land? Certain convergent similarities with fandom it seemed to me.

Eventually I tired of all this good fun and took a bath. After relaxing in the warm, soothing waters for about twenty minutes I discovered \$30 in now extremely soggy bills clinging to my ankle. Ah, the consequence of Spider's advice! Yes, I had tucked the money into my sock. But (you'll be glad to know) I had taken off my

socks before getting into the bathtub (the rest of my clothes as well, in case you were wondering). But I'd failed to notice the money still hanging on via my ankle hairs.... Somehow symbolic of this day in its entirety.... Sigh.

I take one last look out the window before climbing into bed. Something like a full Moon is shining between the 'horns' of one of the office towers visible above the lip of the lightwell. Weird. Downright eerie in fact.

I fell asleep circa 11PM, having missed the fanzine activity in the Green Room, the Hospitality Suite on the second floor, the partying into the wee hours of saturday morning..... I fell asleep, still grimly determined to have a good time.....

Now you know why I call my zine "SPACE CADET."

NEXT ISSUE: I discover Ditto 8.



ASK MR. SCIENCE!

The immortal wisdom of Mr. Science first appeared in the July 1987 issue of BCSFAzine (#170). Today, in addition to BCSFAzine, Mr. Science can be found in the pages of the OTTAWA SF SOCIETY STATEMENT and ON SPEC MAGAZINE. I am happy to announce that Mr. Al Betz (Mr. Science's Social Secretary), has forwarded Mr. Science's gracious permission to reprint the entire corpus of Mr. Science literature in serial form within the pages of SPACE CADET.

Ms. SC, of Burnaby, B.C., asks:

WHAT ARE COSMIC RAYS?

MR. SCIENCE - "Cosmic Rays are distant relatives of the Manta Ray, and swim in the great sea between the stars. Although immense by terrestrial standards, they are curious and gentle creatures, and have brought harm to no one. They are very tenuously constructed, however, and when they accidentally fall into the Earth's atmosphere they shrink tremendously in size, until they can only be detected by cloud chambers or other sophisticated apparatus. They are killed, of course, when they strike the ground at high speed, and it is feared this species will someday become extinct."

Mr. AB, of Surrey, B.C., asks:

WHAT ARE CONSERVATION LAWS IN SCIENCE?

MR. SCIENCE - "It was felt that it would be best if quantities of certain kinds of things in the universe remained constant. Hence Parliament passed, in 1873, what are known as the "Scientific Conservation Laws." A little-known conservation law is Conservation of Adipose Matter. This law states that if you go on a diet and lose weight, someone else must gain it, in order that the total amount of fat in the universe remains constant. So the next time you selfishly want to look and feel better by dieting, remember the harm you are inflicting upon some unsuspecting innocent person, who is probably a friend of yours."

Ms. LB, of Burnaby, B.C., asks:
WHY IS THE SKY BLUE?

MR. SCIENCE - "The present colour of the sky is caused by an accumulation of the traces of blue aniline dyes produced by the burning of tobacco in cigarettes. As the foul habit of cigarette smoking is stamped out, and photo-destruction of these insidious dyes takes place in the upper atmosphere, the sky will slowly return to its normal, beautiful salmon pink colour."

FIRST ISSUES

by Terry Jeeves



The first 162 page, trimmed edges, issue of 'UNKNOWN' appeared in March 1939. It was edited by John W. Campbell Jr., who is reported to have said he launched the magazine because he wanted to run 'SINISTER BARRIER' which wasn't suitable for 'ASTOUNDING'. A highly unlikely way to begin a new magazine, but right from the start, 'UNK' was a cut above other fantasy magazines. Its cover (by Scott) illustrating Eric Frank Russell's classic novel, misleadingly depicted an evil figure clasp the world globe whilst beneath it, a city blazed. The Vitons of the story were actually invisible energy globes which caused and feasted on the human emotions of pain and sorrow. When a means to make them visible was discovered, all-out conflict ensued.

Six short stories filled the rest of the issue:

- 'WHO WANTS POWER' by Mons Farnsworth told of an Egyptologist discovering an artifact which made wishes (and idle thoughts) come true.

- 'DARK VISION' by Frank Belcap Long had an electrician who became a mind reader after an accident. Strangely, the yarn mentions 'a television recorder' which predates audio recording on plastic tape. Could videos be recorded on the wire or steel tapes of the era?

- 'TROUBLE WITH WATER' by H. L. Gold was a whimsical tale about a fisherman who caught – and annoyed – one of the little folk.

- 'WHERE ANGELS FEAR', contributed by Manly Wade Williams, is a macabre story of a haunted house.

- 'CLOSED DOORS' by A.B.L. Macfadyen Jr. was about a time-traveller suffering from amnesia after an accident.

- 'DEATH SENTENCE' by Robert Moore Williams had an interesting idea for convicting criminals by their own thoughts and dealing with them by personality erasure.

Artwork and contents page fail to agree, as the listing gives Cartier, Hewitt, Fisk, Mayan, Orban, Gilmore and Isip but in actual fact, Mayan and Gillmore don't appear in the magazine. Cartier illustrated 'SINISTER BARRIER' and 'DARK VISION'. Orban did 'WHO WANTS POWER', Hewitt did 'TROUBLE WITH WATER', and Fisk illustrated 'WHERE ANGELS FEAR'. I think the heading for 'CLOSED DOORS' was by Isip, and Orban drew the one for 'DEATH SENTENCE'.

During its brief lifetime, 'UNKNOWN' lengthened its title to 'UNKNOWN WORLDS'. Cover art was replaced by a dull contents listing which made all issues look the same, and like 'ASF', the magazine assumed the clumsy 'bedsheet' size. Sadly, wartime paper restrictions caused it to fold with the October 1943 issue.

WAR! WHAT OF IT?

by Charles S. Cameron

PART FIVE of the World War One memoirs of my Grandfather, Charles S. Cameron, who served in the 16th Battalion (Canadian Scottish

CHAPTER XIII: YPRES -- April 1916

Various sectors of the front line trenches had various forms of strafing and frightfulness, but the Ypres salient had everything from soup to nuts. As soon as you stuck your head in the narrow neck of the bottle which widened out into the salient you were reasonably assured of a crack on the ear from any point of the compass. What a hell!! In many spots if the dead arose they could not stand shoulder to shoulder -- so thick they fell.

Conditions in the salient had changed considerably since our last visit, as far as we were concerned. The front line trenches were quite good, but no deep dug-outs like the Fritz. There was a good system of communication trenches with strong support lines, but above all we were glad to see the heavy concentration of artillery behind us. From the infantry's point of view we were very strongly of the opinion that we had received freely but had given little up to that stage of the game. Our airmen were also very much to the fore and with the ever increasing strength of the Stokes trench Mortar batteries we gracefully donned the righteous cloak of might. The French 75's were also with us; so far we had had nothing behind us to match Fritz's Whizz Bangs! An eye for an eye and tooth for tooth seemed very much the order of the day.

Our first trip in was spent adjacent and to the left of the famous International trench. Whether or not the Bosch knew of our arrival he certainly welcomed us with a first class demonstration and close up of Minnie's; his stock of trench mortars was very diversified. The ordinary run of trench motars comes through the air fairly straight and we soon learned to watch and run sideways, but the inhuman wretch who invented the "Sausage" trench mortar should be boiled in oil. I only hope I am sitting near the judgement throne at the last count when his case comes up for trial. Owing to its sausage-like shape this trench mortar wobbled through the air, first going in one direction and then in another, with the result that that the troops were left in horrible suspense until the last few seconds with little chance to duck. But when the air was full of them, as it was that day, there was little use in trying to dodge anyway. Our casualties were very heavy, although our own section got off very lightly. The next day Fritz repeated the gesture and again unfortunately we found ourselves a trifle out of focus.

Warning was sent to us that Fritz appeared to be boxing us in with a barage and might raid us. We were much annoyed and swore we wouldn't be raided, but nothing materialized and the aimless nonsense continued.

The trenches were too close together to necessitate any patrol work in No-Man's-Land at night, so it was simply the old gag of sitting and taking it -- only lots of it. What a game!!

Meanwhile the warning gas-bells and sirens sounded on the south side of the salient....

....and when we returned to billets, not far from a very large dressing station, we found rows and rows of Imperial Tommies dead and dying from some new form of gas frightfulness. Monotony was unknown in the salient.



During the past winter occupation of the trenches around Messines we had been accustomed to augmenting our rations by purchases from the canteen. The latter in that sector could always come within reasonable distance of the line, but the salient was much different and often we found ourselves confined to bare rations. To growing lads like Red and myself this caused some annoyance, but after the first trip in the line we overcame this obstacle by the simple means of carrying with us a small tin of mustard. Then when the need arose we emulated the rats scrounging around the trenches for the odd tin of bully beef which could always be located somewhere around the dug-outs or lying half hidden in the mud.

Our billets in the Ypres salient were always in or around Poperinghe and here again we met our old friends the "Guards". Though I hunted around for days I couldn't find any of my friends of the machine gun school. They may have passed on or stopped a nice safe blighty. The Guards were always a source of inspiration to me and when the massed fife and drum band of Guards played retreat in the square of Poperinghe with four Drum Majors at the head my boyish delight was surfeited if but for the hour. But even this was as nothing when the massed Pipe band of the Canadian Highland Brigade paraded with the Pipe band of the Scots Guards and played retreat the

following afternoon. The swish of the kilts, the roll of the drums and the soul inspiring music of the pipes to the accompaniment of the thunder of the guns not too far distant, and the intermittent scream and explosion of shells in the close vicinity. The French people of the town thought we were crazy.

That evening one of our awful dour Scots -- some Scots are just dour and others awful dour -- whose blood had become overheated with the native wine and no doubt with the skirl of some hundred odd pipers still ringing in his ears created more noises in an hour than he was usually accustomed to making in a year. Unfortunately a silly ass of a sergeant who hadn't sense enough to stay in his own quarters came around to issue some instructions which could easily have been carried over until the next morning. Our dour friend whose total conversation usually consisted of a few grunts promptly told him to "go to hell" and was just as promptly placed under arrest for insubordination.

This incident rankled very sorely with the troops; there was no denying the charge, but the culprit for 364 days of the year was an extremely quiet individual and moreover a very reliable man in the line. We had also been very much accustomed to looking after each other when any member happened to fall off the deep end, thus we kept out of trouble and on the face of it regulations and requirements were maintained. But for a sergeant to come into our billets and create trouble... that was a distinct breach of our code of ethics and the troops brooded bitterly. This culminated in a general request that I should interview the Company Commander

and endeavour to have the matter adjusted and some understanding made as to the future. The general feeling was that we would all be under arrest soon if this condition of affairs was allowed to drift. What a fine pickle I was in! My sympathies were entirely with the troops but I had a very warm regard and marked respect for our Company Commander who had many years previously been an Adjutant of one of the famous Imperial Cavalry Regiments. While by no means a martinet, military discipline was part and parcel of his being and for one of his corporals to ask him to reprimand one of his sergeants instead of backing him up in matters of discipline -- this was indeed a reversal of time honoured procedure. I was much perplexed!

However, I bided my time. I felt it would be very unwise to present myself at the company orderly room where I would be hampered by an air of officialdom; better to wait for some fitting occasion in the front line. As luck would have it I met him alone in the street the following day and took the bull by the horns. I briefly outlined the troops angle on the recent arrest; the brief silence which ensued was ominous; it was certainly if nothing else a clash of the old order and the new. Soldier, gentleman and somewhat of a dandy, he was withal a real man and my heart warmed to him as he said, "Jock, if this had come from any N.C.O. but yourself I would have reduced him to the ranks. You guided me on my first trip into the line and on patrol in No-Man's-Land; you have done many odds and ends for the company and never let me down. I have already forgotten your request but my company's interests are mine."

Months later in the Somme as brother officers we sat in a junk hole awaiting the zero hour and talked of old times together and laughed very heartily over the incident recorded above. Strange to relate he felt and convinced me too that this was his last morning on Earth. He spoke of it quietly and without any visible emotion and just before dawn he went over the top for the last time at the head of his company. He died as he had lived, a soldier and a man.

CHAPTER XIV: INTERNATIONAL TRENCH TO MOUNT SORREL -- APRIL/MAY 1916

Our activities in the salient were divided over the area between International Trench and Mount Sorrel with the famous Hill 60 in the centre. Some parts were just worse than others but as a mete punishment for being dissatisfied with hell as we found it we were soon to be awakened by hell turned rampant.

When taking over a new and unknown part of the line an officer and N.C.O. from each company always went in ahead during the daytime, looked the situation over and later at night rejoined their company and guided them in. Having acquired a fair sense of direction in the dark and also the proverbial luck of the bad penny I often fell heir to those advance excursions. My luck held good! "Hell's Corner" was undoubtedly hell to countless thousands, but I always got a party through unscathed.

Our journeys through the salient up to the front line were never without incident. Our own guns were packed in pretty closely and although we soon knew the general layout, batteries were moved on occasion to new positions and additional batteries also would be brought in. This was rather disconcerting and we were scared to death many a time. Our only warning would be the staccato bark of some artillery officer and the next instant a salvo would erupt from a few yards distant and fly on its way to enemy lines, just missing our heads, or so it seemed. It was most unpleasant.

In between trips one of our aeroplanes was brought down in No-Man's-Land and owing to the fact that Fritz kept a machine gun trained on it all night it was impossible to rescue the dead and give them a decent burial. But my old friend Bill and another experienced miner volunteered to sap out and make recovery. They were still working when we left the line but succeeded and were awarded special leave. As the weight of the aeroplane had pushed it considerably below the surface, this forced Bill and his co-worker to the surface. The machine gun fire at night forced a deadlock which was only broken by the rescuers finishing in the daylight on the surface when Fritz unsuspectingly was not on the lookout.

When occupying the trenches to the immediate right of Hill 60 we received a nice demonstration of the work of the "Soixante Quinze". Fritz, as we afterwards found to our cost, had a murderous intent on Hill 60 and incessantly subjected our troops to heavy trench mortar fire. This was just off our front and as nothing was coming our way we were free to take an interest in one special display. The occasion was probably the German General's birthday. The French Artillery observing officer happened our way and we soon enjoined him to give Fritz the works. Observation from our lines was very good and after a few experimental salvos to get the range he soon settled down to business much to our delight. I think he enjoyed our enthusiasm and I am sure shot off a week's supply of shells on that one afternoon. Vive Entente Cordiale!

Further over behind Hill 60 was the German position known as The Snout and just beyond that our own position known as Glasgow Cross. The line in this area was very irregular in direction, leaving ample opportunities for snipers whose enfilading fire caused quite a number of casualties and kept us humping. Fritz once bagged a Brigadier General at this point while he was on a tour of inspection of the front line trenches. Little did we dream that these same trenches were wonderful compared to what they would become in a few short weeks.

From time to time several members of our battalion were awarded comparatively safe jobs at various points behind the lines. Somebody had to fill these jobs but generally speaking we looked upon them as lead swingers, at the same time being more than a trifle envious of their safe and comfortable billets. Much to my surprise I was asked to report to the Divisional Gas School as an instructor. I must have shown some glimmerings of sense on my last visit there. I discussed the proposed move with Red. I didn't have to go; no one was ever denied the privilege of sticking around the front line if they so desired. Red finished the discussion by telling me to "get out of here, you damned fool!" and I went.

For several days I enjoyed my new found freedom from the tension of the front line. Guiding the latest reinforcements from England through a gas-filled dugout specially made for demonstration purposes was simple enough. Our quarters were very comfortable with plenty of good food and I even went so far as to buy a nail file. But the uppermost feeling of comfort and security soon wore off. By devious means I kept track of my battalion and some ten days later when I heard they were coming out of line I cut across country eager to say "Hello" to my old comrades. In the distance I spied them; kilts swinging and bagpipes skirling. I halted in my tracks, returned to the gas school, packed my kit, grabbed my rifle and reported back to the battalion for duty. Red merely grinned and said, "I thought you would". So merrily we stepped out to celebrate my return. Return to what?

TO BE CONTINUED.....

FOUR RARE CANADIAN FILMS

by R. Graeme Cameron

Readers often question the veracity of my film reviews (Why, I don't know). In fact only once have I ever tried to fool people; in BCSFAzine #203 (April 1990) I reviewed four obscure Canadian films and waited till the end of the article to reveal that one of the films was a product of my imagination, inviting the readers to guess which one. It was the April fool issue, after all. The response was pretty good. No one guessed correctly! I reprint it here. Can you do better?

Over the years, many films have been made in British Columbia which make use of our local environs to portray cities and terrains outside of Canada, the first RAMBO and the third ROCKY being typical examples. On rare occasions movies filmed in B.C. are actually set in B.C. Here are four examples:

THE RAPE OF THE SEA KING

This is an obscure -- to say the least -- 1936 Errol Flynn sea saga filmed in Victoria (our provincial capital) and now believed lost, apart from the usual rumours concerning prints in the hands of private collectors. Pierre Berton in his book 'HOLLYWOOD'S CANADA' quotes a contemporary critic: "*Flynn's latest flic is nearly as colourful as my home movies and is so exciting as to be a cure for insomnia.*"

According to Berton, Flynn viewed the making of the film as little more than a paid vacation. In it he plays a drunken, washed-up tugboat captain who, anxious to raise money to put his daughter into a finishing school (so she can 'better' herself and marry a 'decent' man), fits an enormous blade to the bow of his vessel (the Sea King) in order to collect bounty money for every Killer Whale he slices to death. (This is not as far fetched as it sounds. As late as the 1940's the B.C. government not only offered a bounty on Killer Whales but maintained three patrol boats fitted with sharp blades for the express purpose of mortally wounding these 'monsters'.)

The bang-up finish to the film -- described by the same critic as "*nothing less than less than spectacular..*" -- has the Sea King being battered to pieces by a pod of Killer Whales. This may sound moderately exciting, but allegedly the 'battle' consisted of shots of Flynn overacting in the tug's wheelhouse intercut with dramatic stock footage of Salmon attempting to swim upstream (the film's editor no doubt thought: "Salmon... Killer Whales... the midwest audience'll never know the difference." Remember, this is long before Killer Whales were ever on public display in captivity...)

My only connection with this film is #29 of 'FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND' which shows, in its 'YOU AXED FOR IT' column, a photo depicting Flynn -- clad in a Hudson's Bay blanket, white shorts, sandals and a jaunty toque -- hurling a harpoon from a wharf. The caption reads "*THE RAPE OF THE SEA KING will never happen with Errol Flynn around to defend the honour of his tug.*" (???!!!) In any case I suspect this is a publicity 'gag' shot and not an actual still from the movie which, alas, we'll probably never see.

JAP ATTACK!

Here is one you'll DEFINITELY never see! A wartime propaganda film, it was burned by the National Film Board shortly after the war, along with a host of propaganda cartoons from the same period. The reason for this willful destruction? The Canadian government did not want at some future date to be embarrassed by the vicious racial stereotyping utilized by these films to engender hatred for the enemy.

Pity, because from all accounts 'JAP ATTACK!' could have become a great cult film. Made in mid-1942, the film depicts the successful occupation of the city of Vancouver by a horde of scrawny, buck-toothed 'Japs' (played by Chinese extras) led by General Tojo himself! (Apparently played by a Key Luke lookalike.) The enemy are, of course, totally evil, and much given to slaughtering captives out of sheer boredom. In fact, there's a massacre of rebellious longshoremen at the Vanterm pier which aroused quite a bit of controversy, if only because audiences burst out laughing every time it was shown (possibly because the extras playing the longshoremen start to topple over BEFORE the Japanese sentries open fire).

At any rate, though the film was a serious effort to arouse patriotic fervour, as a propaganda setpiece it was evidently something of a disaster -- at least as far as adults were concerned -- and was soon withdrawn from release. Given the rampant paranoia of the time, it was probably just as well, for if successful this film could only have exacerbated popular ill-feeling against Japanese-Canadians, which was bad enough as it was. In burning this film, the government destroyed a souvenir of hateful times.

DEATH ROCK

I was privileged to witness a rare showing of this movie in film appreciation class when I attended U.B.C. circa 1980. 'DEATH ROCK' was a 1964 attempt by Sid Bomac (perhaps Vancouver's most successful used car salesman, his giant 'BOMAC' sign on the crest of Broadway still maintained by the city as a heritage landmark, though the company itself is no more) to finance a 68 minute theatre commercial -- all the cars in the film have stickers reading "I bought this beauty at Bomac!" -- masquerading as a youth market exploitation flic. Full marks for guts I'd say. Advertised as a "Rock Music Colossalanza!" 'DEATH ROCK' bombed at the box office once word of mouth spread after the initial showings. Why? Because there's NO music in the film! Instead, the actors speak lines from classic songs as dialogue. I was so stunned by this I just had to take notes, of which the following is a typical example:

JENNY: "Any old way you choose it is fine with me."

JOHNNY: "When you hear the music you can't sit still. It's a crazy feeling. But I lose it when your pop puts me down, lays me out flat. He don't treat me like a man."

JENNY: "Johnny, you will be a man when you're the leader of a big old band. Someday your name will be in lights. Many people will come from miles around to hear your music when the sun goes down."

JOHNNY: "Yeah babe, that's what I want. When the band is jumping the joint begins to swing."

JENNY: "So, Johnny, be good tonight. For me."

JOHNNY: "Well I love you gal, so I'll do what you say."

This film has to be seen to be believed! Unfortunately Sid Bomac's children -- who currently own the rights -- are mightily embarrassed by their father's experiment, and it was nothing short of a miracle that our Prof was able to obtain their permission to show it. Though when I think about it, maybe their reluctance to exhibit the film has to do with the highly probable fact that Sid never acquired the rights to the lyrics of the songs he utilised for the dialogue (script credited to "Bigman Lovejoy", assumed to be a pseudonym for Sid himself), and they're afraid of being sued. Hmmm, I don't recall the Prof addressing the issue. Maybe he kept silent as his part of the deal for the showing of the film?

Incidentally, Stan G. Hyde (co-creator, with myself, of the "Sex Life of Godzilla" lecture) who attended the same CrWr classes I did, has never forgiven me for not telling him my film class would be seeing this 'classic', but I swear I had no advance warning. It was a complete surprise! If I had known beforehand I would have sneaked him into the classroom.

Actually, as teenage flics go, this one isn't half bad; the plot involves SIWASH ROCK coming to life under the full moon and stalking teenagers along the beaches of Stanley Park. The special effects, while cheap and laughable, were great fun. In retrospect, the film was quite charming. Wish I could see it again.

THE SURREY STRANGLER

I caught this dreary, boring film on TV while suffering from a bad case of the flu sometime back in the late seventies. It starred Sophia Loren, George Peppard and Robert Vaughn. In 'PSYCHOTRONIC', Michael Weldon quotes Vaughn as referring to 'THE SURREY STRANGLER' as *"the worst film I ever made."* And this from the star of 'TEENAGE CAVEMAN'!

Virtually all the action takes place inside a house. It could have been filmed anywhere, but was in fact filmed in Surrey (more or less a suburb of Vancouver) thanks to Canadian tax shelter laws of the time. In short,

a film whose only purpose was to allow dentists, lawyers, doctors and other investors of that ilk to avoid paying taxes. A work of art? Hardly. Unless one interprets it as an existentialist movie....

In the film, the community of Surrey is supposed to be "in the grip of terror" because a "strangling fiend" was on the loose. So our three stars wander about the house talking up a love triangle, occasionally throwing pots and pans at each other while intimating that one of them might possibly be the fiend, but it hardly matters since Loren runs off with the boy from next door. About as vague and inconclusive a script as you could ever hope not to see. Nobody gets strangled, though well they should have been. Boring. Boring! BORING! THIS film should have been burned. Ah well. Heed my advice. Don't see it.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!

This is, of course, our APRIL FOOL issue! So, I announce to all and sundry that only three of the above four films are genuine, one of them I made up, but WHICH ONE? I'd be interested in seeing how many readers can figure out which is the fake. Send me your best guess.

And, I repeat, no one figured it out! I challenge you! Can YOU figure it out? It's NOT the most obvious one -- that's the only clue I'll give you.....

TO BE CONTINUED.....

MARVIN'S MIGHTY MAYAN MARATHON

by R. Graeme Cameron

In May of 1981 I spent a month touring the ancient cities of Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras under the guidance of Professor Marvin Cohodas of the University of British Columbia. This is part #5 of my account:

SUNDAY -- MAY 3RD, 1981

TEOTIHUACAN PYRAMIDS

(Last issue I described the pyramid of "Quetzalcoatl", explaining that the feathered serpent depicted on its facade was in fact a Teotihuacan version of the Mayan Earth Goddess Itzamna. In a recent issue of National Geographic magazine (December 1995) there is a very nice article on Teotihuacan. Interesting to note that not once does the author refer to the above structure as the "pyramid of Quetzalcoatl" (as was traditionally thought) but instead calls it the "pyramid of the Feathered Serpent." Nice to see orthodox scholarship catching up to the cutting-edge interpretations of Prof. Cohodas. However, the author does fail to point out the two-headed nature of the serpents (the key to their identity), which makes me wonder if he even noticed....)

(Of additional interest, it has also been discovered that the Pyramid of "Quetzacoatl" was a funerary monument. Beneath the perimeter of the pyramid lay the remains of 200 or so sacrificial victims, and underneath the centre, an empty tomb chamber which probably once contained the body and offerings of the dead guy for whom the pyramid was built, long since looted, either by disgruntled relatives of the sacrificees, or by architecture critics outraged by its gaudy facade...)

I am following Professor Marvin and the others North along the fifty yards-wide Avenue of the Dead which culminates in the Pyramid of the Moon complex. We tromp across a modern bridge above the San Juan River, its waters confined to a wide canal dug by the original inhabitants, then climb at long intervals flights of steps

which have the effect of converting the rising slope of the Avenue into a series of level platforms. Easy to imagine long processions of befeathered priests climbing with me, perhaps stopping to perform sacred dances and rituals while others on the continuous series of temples and platforms flanking the Avenue blow conch shells and wave banners and what not. Colourful. Then again, maybe the ancients used the Avenue for marathon charity runs to raise 'funds' for those severely disabled by too many hallucinogenic tobacco enemas (Oops, sorry, that's a Mayan practice. Not Teotihuacano, as far as I know.)

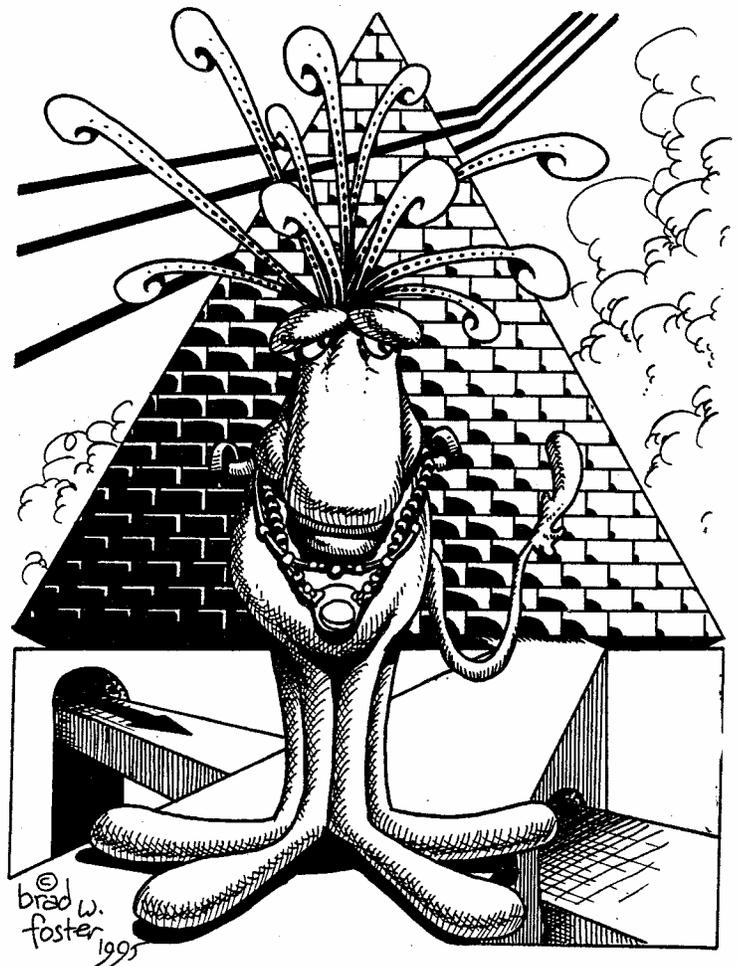
Meanwhile the enormous mass of the Pyramid of the Sun looms larger and larger ahead to our right as we progress, the details emerging from the fog of distance as we get closer. I can feel my heart beating faster. I want to climb the sucker!

But first a mass of statistics. Built around the time of Christ, it is the first (and the biggest) religious monument constructed in the city, and the second largest in North America. (The biggest was in Choula, of which more later.) A big, squat mother of a pyramid, it's 738 feet wide at the base and over 200 feet tall (height of an office tower of twenty stories -- think of it that way), though its original height is estimated to have been even greater, around 250 feet. (Don't get too excited, the Pyramid of Cheops in Egypt was almost twice as high.) The Pyramid of the Sun contains (according to somebody who had nothing better to do but whip out his calculator) approximately thirty-five MILLION cubic feet of adobe bricks and rubble fill. Can you say 'make-work project to keep the dry season peasants employed?'

Today it rises in four wide tiers (and one narrow tier), its slope remarkably pebbly and gritty in appearance due to myriad projecting stones whose shadows impart a fussy, textured look that somehow increases one's impression of infinite mass. Unfortunately, this has nothing to do with its original appearance, which consisted of smooth cut stone covered in painted plaster. Circa 1905 to 1910 the Mexican Archaeologist Leopoldo Batres peeled off the ruined facade, confidently expecting to find an earlier, intact pyramid within as nearly all Mesoamerican pyramids consist of multiple versions, each one bigger than its buried predecessor. Oops, not this one. Nothing inside but fill. So Leopoldo took the rubble from the dismantled facade and stuck it back on, sort of. The projecting stones originally served to anchor the outer stonework, and were not meant to be visible at all. Oh well, it's still as impressive as all get out.

So Marvin turns to me and says, "Tell everyone the significance of the Pyramid, and in particular the meaning of the platform at its base. You have twenty minutes."

Great. We're dripping with sweat (and we haven't even begun climbing yet), standing out in the open beneath a hot sun, and I'm supposed to deliver an impromptu lecture. This is what I get for writing a ten page essay on "Astronomical Orientation at Teotihuacan." The others stare at me. I can see the light of enthusiasm shining in their eyes, or is it exasperation?



Well, 15 years later, even I can't figure out what the heck I was getting at in the essay, so I'll just give you the gist of it, which more or less approximates whatever babble I inflicted on my fellow travellers at the time.

Originally the inhabitants of the valley lived on the slopes of Mt. Cerro Gordo to the North, whose eighty springs supplied water (therefore life) to the valley. In particular, a thin vertical shaft from which the sound of rushing water can be heard was probably -- given the belief that a cave represents the watery womb of the Earth Mother and that all terrestrial waters spring forth from her womb -- the site held most sacred by the early inhabitants of the valley.

With me so far? Okay. Then, with newfangled irrigation techniques, the people spread out over the valley, and they discover a cave with a spring in it. In my essay I suggested this *"was interpreted as the obvious counterpart to the shaft on Cerro Gordo, with the result that a substitute sacred mountain was built above it so that every aspect of the Earth Goddess fertility cult could be brought under the control of the newly emerged central leadership in order to emphasize their power. The building of the "Sun" pyramid (actually devoted to the Earth Goddess) therefore represents authority taking advantage of a unique geological coincidence in order to utilize religion for political purposes."*

If you think the above is gobbledygook, you should read the paragraphs where I explain why the orientation of the pyramid's principle (western) facade is aligned 15 25' East of North. But I won't inflict this on you.

Suffice to say that the entrance to the cave is smack dab in the middle of the Western facade (you're facing East when you look at it), and that the cave runs East more than 330 feet to a complex of chambers more or less directly underneath the centre of the pyramid. I suspect the architects of the pyramid believed they had established, spiritually speaking, a vertical axis between the cave's end -- a clover-leaf grouping of chambers suggesting the world axis at the centre of the four directions -- and the centre of the shrine atop the pyramid, representing the same concept.... Then again, maybe not.

So what's with the platform Marvin referred to, or 'Adosada' as it's called? Massive enough to be considered a building in its own right, it's a four-tiered platform about 200 feet wide and fifty feet tall leaning against the base of the Pyramid of the Sun (and incidentally closing off the entrance to the sacred cave). It was constructed at the same time as the Pyramid of "Quetzalcoatl" (250 AD). Since the Adosada has a different alignment than the Sun Pyramid behind it, namely 21' East of North, through a lengthy, convoluted series of suppositions I argue it is a symbolic representation of the pregnant Earth Mother, patron of the rainy season, identical to the Goddess depicted by the feathered serpents on the "Quetzalcoatl" pyramid, and therefore represents an effort to downgrade the significance of the Pyramid of the "Sun" and subordinate its function to that of the "Quetzalcoatl" temple-pyramid.... Then again, maybe not.

So enough with the details already! Time to climb! Hoo boy, it's steep. Each tier has its own degree of slope, which makes for variety. Even so, we're talking over 240 steps. I take it slowly, perspiring as if I were the source of all terrestrial waters. Meanwhile lithe young vendors bound past carrying crates of pop atop their heads, knowing full well we will willingly pay a small fortune for said pop once we make it to the top. If we make it to the top.

Suddenly we are there, a tiny group of twelve clustered on the small platform ten feet square which caps the mighty pyramid. The whole city is laid out at our feet. It's a beautiful sunny day. Mountains all around. Blue haze fills the valley. There's a terrific wind up here, to keep my straw hat from flying away I have it firmly pushed down on my head. Someone takes a picture of me with my camera. I have the same picture hanging on the wall above my computer as I write this. Dressed entirely in white cotton clothes, I'm standing in a typical hero pose against a backdrop of the Pyramid of the Moon and Cerro Gordo beyond. I look happy as a clam, and

I am. Climbing the Pyramid of the Sun is one of the highlights of my life. Better than sex. (More strenuous anyway.) I treasure the moment.

Then we have to descend. I'm proud of myself, I walk all the way down, rather than slide on my ass like some of the others. (I won't be so brave on the Mayan pyramids, some of them are darn near vertical.)

After briefly poking about in the ruins of the "Sun Palace" looking for mural fragments, we head on up the Avenue of the Dead toward the Moon Pyramid. The avenue opens up into a plaza in front of the Pyramid, a square lined with 12 lesser pyramid/temple-platforms, each one a worthy tourist attraction in its own right. I sit atop one eating my lunch and writing post cards, feeling supremely happy. Man, the ceremonies that must have gone on in the plaza below.....

The Moon Pyramid's stones are black, red and grey in colour, separated by white cement full of black pebbles. This is all reconstruction work, dating from the 1960s, but looks nifty. But the top level of the pyramid is still a tumble of uncemented stonework, some of it loose. One has to be careful moving about. Though smaller than the Pyramid of the Sun, it is still the third largest pyramid in North America, and besides, being built on higher ground, its height is roughly equal to that of the Sun Pyramid. Looking back down the length of the Avenue of the Dead is quite a rush. Even the Romans would have been impressed by monumentalism on this scale. Raw power is laid out before me, cosmic, political, imperial -- maybe a combination of all three. To those who think of Indians as being nomads living in tents, this view would come as a staggering revelation. Few modern cities have anything as spectacular. Just bloody amazing.

In my essay I argued the Moon Pyramid was built (circa 100 AD) to replace the Sun Pyramid as the principle religious focus of the city. The reason for this being that the latter was visually unsatisfactory, in that facing it, Cerro Gordo lay off to the left and appeared unconnected. Whereas when you face the Moon Pyramid, Cerro Gordo looms beyond and seems to outline its shape, thus reinforcing its status as a substitute sacred mountain. Besides, around this time the sacred spring in the cave beneath the Sun Pyramid had evidently dried up, a bad enough omen as to cripple the spiritual functioning of the building. In other words, the Moon pyramid was a badly-needed replacement which was visually much more satisfactorily symbolic, and therefore a much better crowd pleaser for them as watched the ceremonies and pageants and what not. Maybe. And then again, maybe not.

At any rate, I suspect the priests who used to stand up here were damned proud and arrogant. There was nothing in the view before them to suggest they should feel otherwise. I wonder though, did any of them ever squint at the magnificent city below and try to imagine it in a ruined state? Did any of them ever have a vision of hordes of non-believers in Bermuda shorts and straw hats swarming over the pyramids like ticks on a deer? One hopes not.....

NEXT ISSUE: The palaces of Teotihuacan.

TO BE CONTINUED.....

ZINES! WE GOT ZINES!

The idea behind this column is to list the zines I receive, describe them briefly, and hope you'll spot some untried goodies you'll crave adding to your own trade list.

Note: "The Usual" means trade for your zine, or your art, or your letters of comment, or maybe just because the editor likes you.

GALACTO-CELTIC NEWSFLASH #11 & 12, 1995.

Editor: FRANZ H. MIKLIS. A-5151 Nussdorf 64, Austria.

Perzine. The Usual. Quarterly. 50 pages.

COMMENT: Immense good fun. Exuberant and enthusiastic. Franz gets 100 zines & LoCs per ish. Wow! #11 filled with great art, including Franz' own nifty portfolio of "Monsters In Love." A discussion with Holger Eliasson on Finnish (& Estonian & Latvian) militarist SF is mindboggling, tho a relief to hear from Pekka Manninein of Finland that the Finnish Space Commando Epic 'THATIVAELTAJA' ('THE STAR ROVER') was meant as satire. #12 another Franz portfolio, this time robots. Add travel articles, reviews, news; this classic zine has it all!

GRADIENT #11 & 12, 1994.

Editor: ROBERT SABELLA. 24 Cedar Manor Court, Budd Lake, N.J. 07828-1023.

E-Mail: < rsabella@lnj.ppl.gov >

Ser/perzine. The Usual? Quarterly? 16 pages.

COMMENT: #11 -Assorted essays. Eg: rating SF writers by virtue of nominations and victories in major awards (which ones?) over ten year period. Orson Scott Card #1! Frederik Pohl #32? Of 49 on the list, 63% were first published in the '70s. Food for thought. 'The Ghosts of Labor Day' reflects frustration of remaining unsold after 18 years of writing SF, something I can identify with completely. Plus musings on what makes a good story, and why Robert prefers SF over Fantasy. I like this kind of stuff.

#12 - takes a more serious bent. In 'A Sense of Community' Robert asks the question: "Why do two agnostics such as Jean and I force our two boys to be members of the Catholic Church?" The essay explores the value of community vs. a life of solitude. This in turn leads to an essay titled simply 'God' in which Robert attempts to define same, ultimately coming to the conclusion that God is unknowable and unconcerned with human affairs. A cold conclusion. Ancient Roman intellectuals believed this as well, thus undermining the formal state religion and paving the way for mystery cults like Mithraism and Christianity, the new-age cults of the later empire, which better filled the need for something 'personal' to believe in. Myself, I find it easier to be a plain old-fashioned atheist. Also in #12, comprehensive zine reviews, comments on Hugo nominees, an index to previous issues, and locs. A philosophical perzine.

HILDISVIN #2 & 3, 1995.

Editor: HOLGER ELIASSON. P.O. Box 171, 114 79 Stokholm, Sweden.

Perzine. The Usual. Quarterly? 40 pages.

COMMENT: An onrushing torrent of words detailing Swedish history, politics, beer and some SF. A glimpse into the mind of "the Pork of Ages." Holger's particular peeve? Fantasy writers who don't have a clue what Nordic mythology (still a living religion it seems) is all about. Especially enjoyed long account of gathering of 30 replica Viking ships. Taking offense at the rich Danes crewing the 'VIKNG PLYM', Holger gets drunk and: *"I grabbed the boathook.... then proceeded to use it as a lance, preventing them from getting near the ship..... I gave him a blow..... he was swept down into the water.... now nothing was missing from a perfect night as far as my Nordic mind could fathom it.... battle frenzy never lasts for long, so I too went into the water, but of my own accord...."* Hmmm, sort of a Viking Hunter S. Thompson.... #3 has an insulting letter from Harlan Ellison (lucky Holger!), the editor's reply, and a photo of the two of them arm in arm, titled 'A BOY AND HIS GOD.' Holger is the God, by the way.....

IT GOES ON THE SHELF #13 Oct 1994, #14 July 1995.

Editor: NED BROOKS. 713 Paul Street, Newport News, Virginia 23605 USA.
Book review perzine. The Usual. Irregular. 28 pages.

COMMENT: #13 - Ned collects and deals in rare books. No mean feat considering *"What do we have in this metropolis of nearly half a million? Two Waldenbooks in malls miles apart and carrying the same stuff."* His reviews include old & new, rare & common. In "THE FICTION OF L. RON HUBBARD," his favourite quote is one of Hubbard himself explaining that *"he wrote 'BATTLEFIELD EARTH' as he had nothing better to do at the time."* He also mentions the 1920 SF novel "THE PERFECT WORLD" which includes -- among many howlers -- the concept of *"dehydrated water"* !!! Little SF reviewed, but overall a feast for a bibliophile like myself.

#14 - Usual incredible mixture of book reviews, ranging from Stephen Baxter's "ANTI-ICE" to the turgid 1798 novel "WIELAND", from Jack Speer's "UP TO NOW" (1939 history of 30's fandom reissued by Arcturus Press in 1994) to "INTRODUCING KAFKA" as illustrated by Robert Crumb! My favourite quote in #14 comes from Mr. Den Fujita, President of McDonald's Japan: *"the reason that Japanese people are so short and have yellow skins is because they have eaten nothing but fish and rice for 2,000 years... [if] we eat McDonald's hamburgers and potatoes for 1,000 years we will become taller, our skin become white and our hair blond."* Does Mr. Fujita consider this a selling point to the notoriously xenophobic population of Japan? 'IT GOES ON THE SHELF' is full of such nuggets of mindboggling info.

THE KNARLEY KNEWS #50, 51, 52, Feb-July 1995.

Editors: HENRY L. "KNARLEY" WELCH & LETHA R. WELCH, 1525 16th Ave., Grafton, WI 53024-2017 USA. Email: < welch@warp.msoc.edu >
Perzine. The Usual, or US \$1.50 Bi-monthly, 18 pages.

COMMENT: A venerable perzine. Content includes editorial *'In which Knarley gets to spume!'*, *'More Froth and Scum'* personal musings by Letha, *'Book Bashing 101'* by Knarley, huge LoC column, and zine reviews (EG: referring to SC: *"More of that Canadian explosion of new fanzines."*), and art by the likes of Sheryl Birkhead & William Rotsler. Henry complains about lack of content (hinting he wants contributors), but TKK is just fine as a perzine. Particularly like the fact he lists upcoming cons he plans to attend (so others can plan to meet him), ending with *"Mars in 2095 (Worldcon 153) -- Marsport, Mars."* The kind of innocent, nostalgic vision I cherish...

LOWER ROSEDALE REVIEW #8, 1995.

Editor: C.F. KENNEDY. Box 40 - 90 Shuter Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5B 2K6.
Zine reviewzine. The Usual. Or Money. Quarterly? 10 pages.

COMMENT: Alas, just found out to be discontinued! (#10 the last). However, the meat of the content, zine reviews, will now appear in 'DRIFT'. Cliff is very keen on amateur publishing (small press) as a source of true originality, good or bad, so his reviews incorporate every sort of zine, not just SF. Everything from 'PATHETIC LIFE' #3 to the 'CLAN MACLENNAN NEWSLETTER,' from 'BLAH BLAH' #3 to 'THE GOSPEL STANDARD.' A good source of info on zines you may want to trade with, or avoid....

MAINSTREAM 16 May1994, Oct. 1995.

Editors: JERRY KAUFMAN, SUZANNE TOMPKINS. 8618 Linden Ave. N., Seattle WA 98103 USA.
Perzine. The Usual. Irregular. 32 pages.

COMMENT: The front cover art by Craig Smith, "WELCOME VETERANS FIRST STAPLE WAR," depicting aging first fandom in tickertape parade, is one of the great fannish art pieces of all time. This ish created on computer, but produced by mimeo! Consists of essays on topics as diverse as visiting Hawaiian volcanos, Hawaiian 'Women of Power' (in this case Auntie Iolani Luahine -- whom Carol Severance witnessed

apparently controlling the wind), and Suzanne Tompkins on the loss of her mother and an unexpected problem which added to her grief. In short, a traditionally fanish zine; first hand accounts, up close and personal. Not entirely devoid of SF. "HOW TO BE A SEATTLE FAN" by Andy Hooper I found hilarious. Two examples: "Hug people whenever they leave, even if they are only going to the refrigerator for another bottle of sludgy brown beer" and "Dabble in S&M, or bisexuality, or volksmarching.... talk about these interests in a proportion of at least ten to one of actually practising them..."

THE MENTOR #87, #88 July 1995.

Editor: RON CLARKE. P.O. Box K940, Haymarket, NSW 2000, Australia.
The Usual (Poem, art, LoC) or US \$25 Air. Perzine. Tri-monthly, 36 pages.

COMMENT: #87 - "*All I can say is, THE MENTOR is still settling in.*" After 87 issues? Still evolving Ron means. Dropping fiction. Tons of good stuff tho. THE TRAVELING MUSCOVITE Pavel Viaznikov reveals Kirgizstan maintains a fleet of torpedo boats and a submarine in land-locked mountain lake Issyk-kul! Mae Strelkov lives in Argentina. She makes the point that North American Indians are lucky, they remain aware of their heritage, are proud of it, whereas "*here, the same masticized natives deny their former 'Indian' heritage.*" She also speaks of good friends in the dominant class, the "Hidlago Folk," who break her heart because they are completely unable to understand her liberal views. A land of 'Two Spains', the rich and the poor. The sixth and final part of a history of Australian fandom is rather dry, but of interest to those who wonder how fandom evolves and survives.

#88 - Maybe not dropping fiction, one story included (which I admit I haven't read yet). Some fascinating columns: a rather sour essay by Lyn Elvey "*My reply was that I was not so much a feminist as that I found little to recommend men.*" , Con reviews by Buck Coulson, nostalgic look at juvenile zines of the 40's by Andrew Darlington, Mae Strelkov's run-in with timber thieves in Argentina, an excellent review of Algis Budrys' "WRITING TO THE POINT" by James Verran, and much other good stuff. A fascinating zine.

MIMOSA #17, October 1995.

Editors: NICKI & RICHARD LYNCH, P.O. Box 1350, Germantown, Maryland 20875, USA.

Email: <lynch@access.digex.net>

Genzine. The usual. (Or \$3 US per issue.) Contributions welcome, especially on fan history. Annual. 48 pages.

COMMENT: Great fanish stuff. "*Merciful Ghu! The whole universe is peanutizing!*" proclaims a character in Steve Stiles cover art. Includes articles by Dave Kyle, Ben Zuhl, Walt Willis & Forrest J. Ackerman..... Zuhl's account of the history of Spayed Gerbil Fandom is priceless..... Ackerman makes the point that for the 3rd Worldcon (Denvention 1941) they could have invited H.G. Wells, or Olaf Stapledon or Edgar Rice Burroughs as GoH, but at his suggestion they went with the relative newcomer Robert Heinlein instead. Heinlein's speech, in which he introduced the concept of 'timebinding' to fandom, Ackerman considers the best Worldcon GoH speech ever.... Writer's often here the classic advice: "Write about what you know." But Esther Cole quotes Robert Bloch as saying: "*Live vicariously. You can't do and write simultaneously.*" As an aspiring writer, I say "Thank you, Robert. What a relief!"..... Truly wonderful zine. Essential stuff!

OBSCURE PUBLICATIONS #29, 30, & 31, 1995.

Editor: JIM ROMENSKO. P.O. Box 1334, Milwaukee, WI 53201 USA.

US \$10 for 5 issues or maybe arranged trade. News/Review/Perzine. Bi-monthly? 8 pages.

COMMENT: Entirely devoted to non-SF aspects of zinedom. #29 is mostly about the debate over the modern incarnation of FACTSHEET FIVE, the zine review zine, now available only for \$. Items pulled from alt.zines newsgroup on the internet. Larry-Bob, editor of HOLY TITCLAMPS, declares: "*...bugs me is people who say Mike* (Gunderloy, previous F5 editor) *used to send out F5 for free. You idiots! That's why he isn't doing F5 anymore! He was losing money like crazy!*" A grouch by M. Carter: "*the zineworld has come to be*

synonymous with slapdash inferiority & blithe, grinning disregard of whatever gives life integrity & beauty." Trying to say we're too commercial? Then in #30 there's FullForce Frank, who says things like: *"I and most of my fellow serial & mass killers..."* Hmmm. On a lighter note, Jim's review of CELEBRATE THE SELF, a zine devoted to masturbation, is hilarious, concluding: *"...an amusing read that can easily be held in one hand."*

But #31 is my favourite to date, as it is devoted to the Second Annual Underground Press Conference held at Chicago's DePaul University. From all accounts this alternate zine con offered fascinating parallels with SF zine fandom. For instance, Mark Speigler writes: *"I land at 'Sex, Drugs, Politics and Censorship' (panel) just in time to catch New York State Education Department official Paul Weinman aka 'White Boy' scream 'Fuck!' and strip naked, his genitalia bouncing giddily as he finishes off a rehearsed rant that predicts his audience 'gasps; gags; regurgitates' at the sight. The audience does nothing of the sort."* In addition to other typically fannish phenomena such as zine editors hogging panels to push their own zines, two guys published a hilarious spoof con program titled "THE LUMPEN TIMES" listing panels like: *"How Do I Pronounce 'Zine'? And What Will I Get If I Make One?"* or *"Fuck ME!?! Fuck YOU!!! Settling Your Differences in the 'Zine World."* and *"How Your Zine Can Tear Down the Pig System Through Intensive Interviewing of Bad Punk Rock Bands."* One of the organizers of the con was so incensed by this he threatened to have friends of his smash the windows of the store where one of the authors worked. Nice to know fan feuding exists in general zinedom. OP is essential reading for SF zine editors who want to keep track of the recent proliferation of non-SF zines.

OBSESSIONS #4, April 1995.

Editor: Bridget Hardcastle, 13 Lindfield Gardens, Hampstead, London NW3 6PX U.K.

E-Mail: < bmh@ee.ic.ac.uk >

Available for The Usual. Theme-driven perzine. Irregular. 32 pages.

COMMENT: Last issue was about chocolate. This theme is 'ROCKY HORROR'. Bridget very sensibly explains the history of the film in a few short paragraphs, then devotes the rest of the issue to detailing what it's like playing Frank. N. Further live during showings of the film. Sounds a hoot, but also more trouble than it's worth. 'Simo' contributes an article re his Frankenstein passion, claiming to have researched more than 200 'Frankenfilms', and as he spends all his spare cash on videos and back issues of 'FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND', I'm inclined to believe him. The LoC col is devoted to the previous obsession, chocolate, and Walt Willis asks: *"On the relationship between chocolate and sex, can you enlighten me on how Mars bars figure in the recent fuss about sex education in schools?"* To which Bridget replies: *"You know how kids are. One precocious youngster asks in class how to perform oral sex on a Mars bar and the teacher, not wanting to stunt the little darling's sexuality, feels she has to demonstrate. Then the kids go home and tell their parents, and the parents tell the local paper."* Hummp. Seems to me, if the kid wanted to perform oral sex on a Mars bar, its sexuality was already considerably warped.... The next issue will be on 'tacky' science. Bridget asked me to contribute, but alas, I was busy with my CBC radio scripts, so have missed the deadline. OBSESSIONS is fun, as any true obsession should be. Recommended.

OPUNTIA #22.5 & 23, 23.1A, 231B, 24, 24.1, 25 Jan-July 1995.

Editor: DALE SPEIRS. Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7.

The Usual or Cdn. \$3 for one-time sample. Sercon/Review/Perzine. Monthly. 16 pages.

COMMENT: Dale used to be the Canadian Harry Warner Jr., a prolific loccer and essay writer, till he conceived OPUNTIA, the best perzine in Canada, where the bulk of his output now appears. I don't understand why it didn't make the Aurora nominations this year. It deserves to win! Despite his numbering system: *"Whole numbered issues are sercon, .1 issues are reviewzine, .5 issues are perzine."* 'Whole issues' include much fannish history, such as ongoing articles by Garth Spencer, or, as in #23, "THE LIFE CYCLE OF AN SF CLUB" by Robert Runte. '.1 issues' feature a good collection of zines reviewed in some depth, & '.5 issues' are about life as a park worker in Calgary, with often humorous takes on local politics and history. OPUNTIA, by the way, is a type of cactus. For a number of issues the cover art was an ongoing series of delightful vignettes

depicting the exploration of the planet OPUNTIA by the Wuzis of Wuzilia, as drawn by Franz Miklis of GALACTO-CELTIC NEWSFLASH fame. (Tho the latest two feature hilarious covers by Teddy Harvia.)

Dale certainly enjoys doing research! #24 has him tracing the origins of the Hectograph to Austria in the 1870's, and in #24.1 he describes an 1885 (!) perzine out of Montreal titled "BRIC-A-BRAC" (#2) by Harry W. Robinson. Available only for trade, it was "devoted to amateur journalism" In its editorial Robinson complains that "amateurism" is dying: *"One by one, the Canadian Amateurs have fossilized, until at the present day, THE NUGGET, THISTLE, BOYS FOLIO, and BRIC-A-BRAC are all that are left to represent the 'dom in Canada...."* Sound familiar?

In #25 Dale talks about 'MAIL VIRUSES' (chain letters) and manages to be extremely interesting. He creates one of his own: *"....Do not keep this letter but send it to someone else. This is true even if you are not superstitious. Luis Riel did not send on his copy and died..."* Where else but in OPUNTIA do you find this kind of nifty combination of research and dry humour? I look forward to every issue.

OOK OOK, SLOBBER DROOL!

LETTERS OF COMMENT

E Version Note: All addresses (both snail mail and E mail) are undoubtedly out of date but I include them as I am attempting to duplicate the original published version of this zine as closely as possible.

From: TERRY JEEVES

Editor of: ERG

56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough YO12 5RQ UK

Many thanks for the copy of SC#3. Pleased to hear that the printouts of "FUTURE ISSUES" reached you safely along with the artwork, and that all proved acceptable. Just holler if you need any more.

I enjoyed reading SC, and your early attempts at stories were highly entertaining. I'm afraid I've never saved any of mine. The earliest I have dates from around the age of 26, when I had my LAST STAGE REFLECTORSMAN in a 1948 fanzine. I noticed that you had two different heroes, but both had the initials 'J.H.', any significance in that?

Hmmm, none that I can remember. Lack of originality perhaps.

The SLIME PEOPLE review was lovely. I hope you'll treat us to more of the same in the future. In a slightly different vein, VA has been watching a TV soap series over here. I evaded the first, but.... I suffered episode 2. It gave me an idea for: HOW TO WRITE A TV SOAP. -- Rule 1: All characters (except the horses) must be unpleasant and continually arguing. Rule 2: Each episode must contain: A) a couple bonking, B) horses jumping, C) people rowing, & D) repeat of A, B, & C. Feel free to use the outline in future film reviews.

Hmmm, add in the revelation that the horses are giant wereseahorses and I think we have the makings of a good B-movie here.

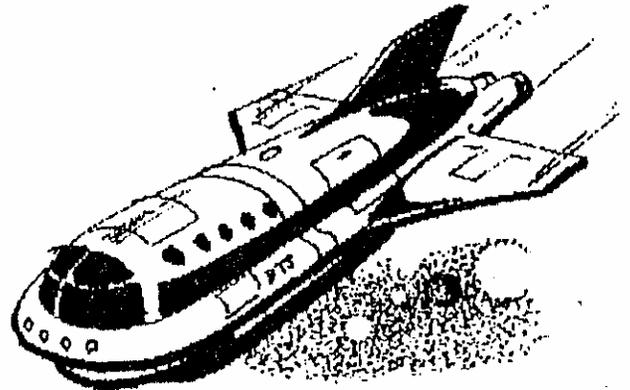
The WWI memories were not only interesting, but also shed some different lights on the affair. My own reminiscences of WW2 are currently running in Tom Sadler's fanzine if you care to read 'em. The whisky pinching was amusing. In the depths of a bitter winter, we had a similar expedition to pinch coal from a locked compound. Things never change.

Ah yes, Tom Sadler's "THE RELUCTANT FAMULUS", I've read parts 1 & 2 of your "WARTIME DAZE" so far, fascinating stuff.

I was amazed to read of the Spanish/Aztec bridge of slaves -- something the Japanese never thought of. However, EIGHT-HOUR lecture trips, DAILY!! Ridiculous. I'm afraid that when visiting any 'educational spot', house, castle or what-not, I do my level best to avoid being trapped in the entourage of a guide or lecturer. BORING!

As the trip was an actual university course, lectures were the order of the day. Thank Ghod I was auditing, I didn't 'have' to listen 100% of the time....I'm old enough and well-read enough to understand what you imply by your reference to the Japanese. The current generation wouldn't have a clue, but then, they haven't had to go to war against a modern medieval empire.

Good LOCcol, re ROCKETSHIP XM, the only bit I remember is that they (sensibly) used a clip of a V-2 launch to show their ship taking off -- engines blast, umbilical drops away and up she goes. Ok, also a good idea to reverse the shot to show the rocket landing on Mars -- except that they cut it too late and an umbilical cord reaches up to re-connect on the descending spaceship.



Really? I didn't know that. The version of RSXM I saw was the 'improved' version by Wade Williams with the V-2 scenes replaced by shots of a model spaceship. Purists were horrified, but I thought the replacement scenes worked ok. For that matter, I'm still dying to see the 'musical' version of "JACK THE GIANT KILLER" (a re-dubbed version done to avoid a lawsuit by Ray Harryhausen over the original film's similarity to "THE SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD"), but I've not been able to track it down. I'm not so much a purist as a completist. I like to see ALL versions.

Also liked the zine reviews. I finished up two pages of them in ERG, a couple of weeks back, so I'm afraid SC#3 won't be in there (SC#2 is). A nice sized zine and hopefully, next issue will have some of my fillos therein. Thanks again.

I hope to use at least one fillo by you in every issue of SC to come.

From: MURRAY MOORE

Editor of: THE SACRED TRUST

August 31, 1995

377 Manly Street, Midland, Ontario, L4R 3E2

TSCG#3 is in hand. To be accurate, it is near to hand. Or, more poetically, TSCG#3 is out of hand. Please excuse me. I have hay fever.

What are you saying? Because you have hay fever you're juggling SC#3? Or simply flinging it away from you? This sort of reader response to SC is not unknown.

Confessions of an SF Addict? My physical discomfort is causing me to pick a nit with you. I am grateful under the circumstances to have the wit to pick a nit with you. I will try not to go on and on about you choosing to use the modifier 'an' where 'a' is required. If I were to type on and on about this, covering several sheets of paper, I would be in danger of forever being in your mind, the letter of commenter who wrote the pickwit papers.

Did I mention that I am suffering from Hay fever?

And this brings to mind nits? I thought I covered cooties above somewhere.... 'pickwit papers' -- Another 'Skinnerism'. Arrgh!.... Getting down to the nitty gritty, I know beans about grammar (possible explanation for unpublishable books mentioned above), but I know what sets my teeth on edge, and avoid same.

For example:

- RIGHT: "Confessions of a Science Fiction Addict"
- WRONG: "Confessions of an Science Fiction Addict."
- RIGHT: "Confessions of an Addict."
- WRONG: "Confessions of a Addict."
- RIGHT: "Confessions of an SF Addict."
- WRONG: "Confessions of a SF Addict."

In all three cases, my choice of 'right' is easier to pronounce and flows better, even when read silently (I'm told some of my readers can do this, though I personally prefer those who take SC on the bus with them and read it aloud to their captive audience. That way I get some interesting LoCs from assorted transit authorities.). In short, I'm the editor, and I pick what nits as pleases me. Guess I still retain a bit of the BCSFAzine 'Ghod-Editor' persona.

Your reprinting of your earliest fiction reminded me that we must have bad writing in order to be able to appreciate the best writing.

Aha! You have cleverly deduced the content of the covering letters I send with my manuscripts. I argue that publishing my work constitutes a public service.

Typing of the worst brings me to your review of SLIME PEOPLE. I am trusting you, Graeme. You are reviewing only real movies. You would not sneak a review of a movie which you have have made up. You could fool me.

I'm crushed. Another disbeliever. Only once have I ever tried to fool people; in BCSFAzine #203 (April 1990) I reviewed four obscure Canadian films: "THE RAPE OF THE SEA KING", "JAP ATTACK", "DEATH ROCK", and "THE SURREY STRANGLER", and waited till the end of the article to reveal that one of the films was a product of my imagination, inviting the readers to guess which one. It was the April fool issue, after all. The response was pretty good. No one guessed correctly! Hmm, think I'll reprint it in the next issue of SC!

Did I mention that I have hay fever?

Why, no, I don't think so.

Keep your shield *ac-choo* of Umor Bright.

Someday I would like to read "THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR".... May you never picnic in the Glades of Gafia, lest you be beset by hordes of nits.

From: LINDSAY CRAWFORD

Editor of: APANUI

Fri 22 September 18:00:46 1995

Address : < lindsay.crawford@emerald.com >

4056 Southway Loop, Springfield, OR 97478-5928 U.S.A.

Thanks for sending Space Cadet #1, and #2, and #3. I meant to loc each one, and having missed the first two, I hope this is in time for four!

I enjoy Space Cadet bcoz it's fun to read. Your CONFESSIONS are a nice blend of sercon and fannish memoir. Many fmzs skirt the issue of science fiction, as if nothing fun and fannish could be written on the subject. I'm an unrepentant reader of science fiction and enjoy feeling I am not alone when I read fmz. Keep up the good work!

Eventually there will be more nonstfnal stuff in SC, such as accounts of: the first job I ever held (clerk in a porno store), drinking wine with Tennessee Williams and his pet leather boy, annoying Eddie Rickenbacker, almost getting run over by Eddie Albert, leading a mob up an alley toward riot control police equipped with dogs, arousing the suspicion of the Dalai Lama's` bodyguards, getting drunk with the brother of the President of Lebanon, being struck on the head by a Guatemalan soldier, nearly punching out the Premier of British Columbia, seeing Dianna Rigg nude on stage, talking with the one surviving Father of Confederation (Canada's, that is), crying in the presence of the Queen, intimidating the King of Soul James Brown, booing Jimmy Hendrix off the stage at Maple Leaf Gardens, being mistaken for a Nazi at Speaker's corner in Hyde Park, London, England, being accused of cheating a Nun, miming the wind blowing off a woman's hat from her head in order to avoid my being machine-gunned to death, and sundry other true-life stuff so mundane I blush to even mention it. For a Warehouseman who mostly sits at home tapping at his computer keyboard, I've led a dull life.

Nothing fannish or stfnal about WAR: WHAT OF IT? other than reading it in a fannish context, in which it seems to fit just fine. I suspect fans find these memoirs of more interest then nonfans, other than WWI scholars, due in part to the curiosity about perspectives outside the here and now common to SF readers. The sincerity and wit make for an engaging read, and I look forward to the concluding episodes.

Probably another ten segments to come, maybe more.

Much the same could be said of MARVIN'S MIGHTY MAYAN MARATHON, except in this case it's something you've written to share your sense of wonder at this fascinating experience. You've done well to convey what this meant to you, and I enjoy the sense of enhanced reality I gain from reading it. I learn more about the world, about you, and myself. That sounds painfully obvious, but it's too vital to overlook.

Fun and fascination seem to be infused throughout: I'm sure the schlock sci-fi SLIME PEOPLE film was more fun to read about than if I'd seen it cold. Just goes to show entertainment is in the eye of the beholder.

HOW NOT TO WRITE (by David Buss) and WHY BOSCON 89 IS A GREAT EVIL also share this sense of farce. I consider it a sign of the wisdom of fans that humour such as this is welcomed. Mark Twain it's not, but the synapses are snapping!

Your lettercol is shaping up to be a real gem: all you have to do is produce a fmz that people will enjoy reading, and send out lots of copies. I doubt anyone who has not assembled and mailed a fmz can fathom the motivation and drive it takes to carry thru on a project like this, and the locs you get reflect this. Sending Space Cadet to so many faneds reflects the confidence you have in your product (good stuff, that!) and your interest in social interaction with other fans, especially those who pub their ish. Space Cadet is no tree falling in the forest when no one's about.

So what are you trying to say? A lot of noise disturbing a whole bunch of jumpy loggers but no actual tree falling? Hmmmm....In a province beset by three-way confrontations between loggers, Indians and environmentalists them's fighting words!... But seriously, thanks for the compliment.

I encourage you to write more fmz reviews, and let your opinions show. I'd like to see more discussion by the faneds about their zines and from readers of same.

I take it you feel I should be more critical? To my mind, the whole point in pubbing is to have fun, tho it often doesn't seem like it because it's so much work. To be slagged after so much pure-of-heart effort can be disheartening. I don't mind criticism myself (much), my ego is well armoured, but I've decided to be positive when critiquing others. FIJAGDH and all that. Worth sweat, yes, but tears? No.

Also, could you, would you, on a dare, put a date and number on the cover? Undated, unnumbered fmzs frustrate me. Space Cadet is otherwise well made, and I wish it a long life (and me as well, all the better to read it).

Well, Sheryl Birkhead sends me several 'generic' covers at a time so I can pick and choose whichever and whenever. But sometimes I can insert info. I go with the flow, adapting to whatever is offered.

From: GARY FARBER

26 September, 1995

Address : <gfarber@panix.com>

Subject : SPACE CADETS, 1, etc.

Thanks for the further zines. SC 1 arrived today, and was much enjoyed. A lovely little write-up of your childhood memories, and the growth of your sense of wonder. What fan couldn't empathize, and sing along to the same tune?

You're a bit older than me (I was born November 5, 1958 -- drink a toast to me at DITTO, which I'll miss, damnit), but we overlapped plenty of the same influences, of course.

I'm sure I'm not the only one who observed that the rock dropped on your head at age three explains a great deal. I took a good blow to the head at that age as well, when the little red wagon I was unwisely standing in was suddenly pulled by a "friend," and I sailed over, striking my forehead on the stone curb, leaving a nice scar that remained until it was covered by two succeeding scars in later years. That's right, at least *three* blows to my head. Explains even more, eh?



Little red wagon? My friend and I were taking turns dropping the rock onto my 'little red wagon'. Has anyone studied the connection between red wagons and pre-teen violence? We're on to something here!

I wonder if this explains other fans? A blow in the right spot at the right age?

Probably.

I just missed the TOM CORBETT tv series originally, but caught the books, though not until after earlier sf. You have a better memory than I do; I can list loads of early influences, but not in such fine order. I caught all those horror movies on tv, but wasn't quite as influenced, and wasn't overwhelmed by FAMOUS MONSTERS, probably because it was a bit later, and I was already taken up with purer quill sf. The local library branch was decently stocked, though I avoided the magazines until I was sick at age 7 or so, and I asked my mom to bring me something to read, and knowing I loved sf, she brought home a GALAXY and a Worlds of If; I decided I had been wrong to assume that good stories would make it into anthologies, or that, at least, I didn't want to wait!

What SF fan has missed seeing Burgess Meredith's glasses' shatter? Who has not shuddered? Though, y'know, he could have just gone to a shop and found another pair, probably, or ground new ones. . . .

The library seemed to be the only building that's hadn't been reduced to rubble.

As the older brother to my three years younger sister, I pulled the same kind of scams on her as your brother did on you when he claimed to be an imposter from Mars. It didn't make her a reader, though.

You and I did read some of the same juveniles, though, including Lester del Rey's, Clarke's, and Heinlein's Mars books. I, too, was frightened by Zanti Misfits (nee, znee, they approach, those antennae waving), though I rather liked insects, actually. It's hard now to explain to younger (or older) folk how impressive STAR TREK was in 1966 to a properly aged person, isn't it? (I was seven when it premiered, and I adored it.) And so I hated LOST IN SPACE as an insult to my intelligence. And so on.

My paternal grandfather also fought in the Great War, leaving a shell as a family heirloom, that I'm moved to tears over losing with almost all of my other possessions a few years ago after my great fire. My paternal grandmother was the only one of my grandparents that were still alive when I was born, though, so I never knew him, and he left no written record.

You're lucky.

I'm impressed by your close analysis of PLAN NINE's flying saucers. Though a fan of Ed Woods since before the days of the Medveds (and I've learned to despise Michael for his wrongheaded opinions, and attempts to enforce morality in Hollywood), this not a task it ever occurred to me to undertake. I salute you. (That's the polite version I'll admit to you, anyway, snicker.)

I was amazed, despite following the Wood Cult that arose over the subsequent years, when plans for the bio-feature were announced, and I'm still amazed that the film was made. That it was so excellent makes it a true marvel.

Thanks again for the zine; you're a good fannish writer. If you keep working at pro writing, you might get somewhere, you know; don't give up.

From: SUSAN ZEUGE

29 September, 1995

W. 63 N. 14262 Washington Ave., Apt. 18, Cedarburg, WI 53012-3016 USA.

The description of the Aztec Goddess Coatlique in MAYAN MARATHON brought to mind Cucuteni, the Snake Goddess, who is portrayed wrapped in serpents. Like Coatlique, she represents transformation, the change of seasons and the cycles of birth, death, and rebirth...

Cucuteni? Afraid I'm nor familiar with that Goddess. Coatlique wore a serpent skirt of course (Coatlique means 'Serpent Skirt' after all) and then there's Cihuacoatl 'Women-Serpent' the voracious Earth Goddess, who dem,anded war victims for sacrifice in her 'House of Darkness.' And there's the Tzitzimime, the female monsters who will gobble up mankind at the end of time. Man, Aztec deities would make a great set of pogs, what? There's so damn many of them.

Spanish Conquistadors were told by the defeated Aztecs of the 'Seven Cities of Cibola-Quivira' where the 'gold of the Sun' was kept. An expedition, under Coronado, followed Aztec guides to what is now Kansas. They never found the seven cities of gold and the story was labeled a myth... until this century when five structures called 'council circles' were excavated in Kansas. Shortly after, a gigantic image of a snake was discovered cut into the ground and oriented to the circles as well as the winter and summer solstices. Cibola-Quivira?

Maybe. I suspect the Aztec guides were playing a trick on the Spanish, a small kind of revenge for the conquest.

From: JOHNNY LOWE

Editor of THE CHIMNEYVILLE ALMANAC
Wed, October 18, 1995 < JohnnyRB@aol.com >
1152 W. 24th St., #1, San Pedro, CA 90731 USA.

I liked the SF Addict piece; it brought to mind some things I'd thought about doing when I was younger, but you, at least, wrote them down. Mostly I simply thought about what I'd write.

The military tale of your grandfather reminds me of just a few years ago when I briefly tried to get my father to write down his experiences in World War II. He's talked to me here and there about certain incidents, but I never could get him to put it to paper, darn it.

Your Mayan Marathon is also nicely done, though since I've come in the middle with part #3 (as well as the middles of the SF Addict and your grandfather's tale), I feel as if I've missed the first part of a movie I've just sat down to see. But that said, I'm enjoying what I have seen.

Space Cadet has a straightforward, clean layout. I'm going to utilize two columns also for most of the pages of Chimneyville Almanac for the issue I'm doing now. I'm trying to get it out soon, because I want to have another issue out by the end of the year.

Looking forward to the next Space Cadet...

From: SCOTT PATRI

Editor of THE ZERO-G LAVATORY
27 October, 1995
Box 1196, Cumberland, B.C. V0R 1S0

Yo R.G. (or whatever the hell your name is),

I forget to loc your zine last issue, and you cut my zine from your listing. Sheesh! And I thought I was temperamental. And what's WORSE you print a loc from Rodney that has nothing derogatory about me!

I certainly did NOT cut you from my mailing list. SPACE CADET #5 is merely hideously late for reasons mentioned in the editorial. As long as you want to trade, I am willing to trade. I enjoy ZERO G too much to ever drop it. Besides, as Cdn zines are so rare, they are my top priority in Trades. In short, you are stuck with SC for years to come. And, well....yes, I did cut out some negative comments by Rodney about ZERO G, but really, 18 pages of six-point-typeface single-spaced rant is a bit much don't you think? Best it not see the light of day.

As much as I enjoy reading SC, I feel that you're.... skimping on the content. Would it have killed you to slip in one more sheet, thereby gaining an extra FOUR PAGES, to finish printing you're the rest of your zine listings and reviews? Loosen up your editorial control and live a bit, for Roscoe's sake!

Yes, it would kill me to increase the size of my zine. I have a fixed budget of \$1,000 a year to spend on SC and I won't do anything that would cost a penny more. But fret not, in about ten years my serial articles will run out and free up space.

Let's get down to particulars. Fascinating that you wanted to write SF when you were young. The lizard story would have been an interesting read, just for the satire value. Before my old computer crapped out on me (15 year old Commodore 64) I had seven or so first drafts for a variety of novels, and a second draft of a 100,000+ word first part SF trilogy. I could have been a PAID and PUBLISHED writer by now, instead of performing sacrifices and praying for divine intervention just to resurrect my previous work! It's bad enough to have lost the enthusiasm and interest in writing fiction, but it's worse when what you have written is locked away in an obsolete and broken computer. I have hard-copies, but what with my fanzine interest and other writing projects, and that alien spacecraft I'm repairing, I have a hard time FINDING the time to re-type my old stuff.

Ah well, at least once you've fixed up the ole saucer you'll be able to travel to more conventions.

I guess I'll exercise my prerogative and keep this loc short, since I don't want my loc edited into non-existence because you want it short. Be warned, I will be watch.... (*snip!*) ...comments about... (*snip!*) ... (*snip!*) ...future... (Isn't it nice to publish your own zine where you can openly take other faneds to the mat when they do something you don't particularly like?)

You betcha!

P.S. The cartoon is for your next cover.

Much obliged.

From: HARRY WARNER JR.

Editor of SPACEWAYS, Hugo-winning LoC Meister.

12 November, 1995

423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740 USA.

I was both amazed and amused by SF CONFESSIONS: the former because your early prose was so similar to mine, the latter because you had what I never acquired, the patience to think up genuine plots. Actually, I

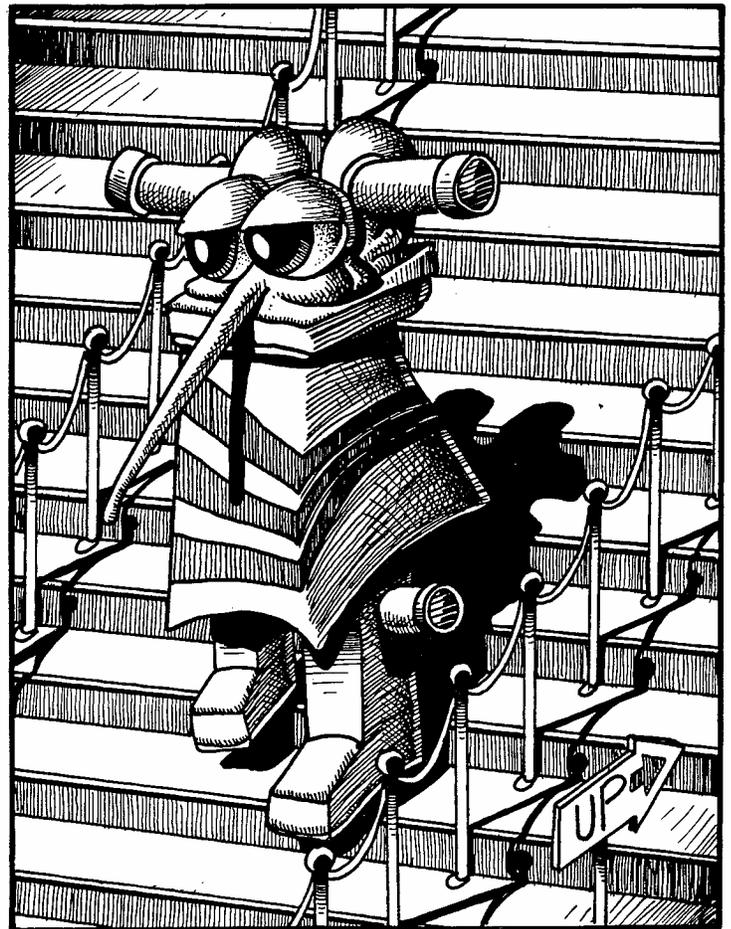
wanted more desperately (in my early teens) to become a prozine editor. But I didn't understand what they did or the conditions under which they worked. It never occurred to me that pulpzine editors suffered under slush piles, struggled to find artists, manipulated features into whatever space was available, lived in expensive big cities while being paid less than house painters, and endured the whims of the publishers. I published in an apa couple of years ago one of my very first fantasy stories, a two-pager so bad that most members tactfully failed to mention it in their mailing comments.

Hmmm, I wouldn't mind running it in Space Cadet. Do you dare send it to me?

You had me feeling exhausted after I read about those marathon sight-seeing sessions in Mexico. As for the problem the Spaniards suffered when faced with crossing those canals; if they were just twelve feet wide, wouldn't most fugitives just dive in and paddle across even if they knew little about swimming?

No. They were fighting every step of the way with literally thousands of Aztec warriors pressing alongside the causeway in canoes. Plus the Conquistadors wanted to get out WITH the hundreds of pounds of gold they were carting on donkeys, horses and Indian porters. The water being shallow, the simplest solution was to plug the gaps in the causeway with the bodies of some of their Indian bearers and march over them. Such was the forward pressure of momentum in the frantic retreat, many Spanish were trodden underfoot as well. It must have been a scene straight out of hell, what with hundreds of sweating, cursing, screaming Spaniards jammed together and hacking away with swords, axes and spears at whistling, chanting Aztecs, and all in utter darkness apart from torchlight. I believe the term 'stressful' applies.

I'm not sure I believe the explanation of the pink sky in the first photographs taken on the Martian surface is the whole truth. I believe the Martians have been staging a successful attempt to keep themselves and their civilization hidden. Remember how Mariner 9 was unable to get decent photographs as it approached Mars because an extremely severe sandstorm hid the surface? How the Viking Landers detected something similar to life in the Martian soil? How the most recent probe, the Mars Observer, vanished from the ken of men before it got to the planet? The pink sky in the Viking photos probably resulted from the dust stirred up by the Martians covering up the vegetation at the landing zone...



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Hmmm. I like this train of thought! Would that it were true!

From: BUCK COULSON

Former Co-Editor of YANDRO

19 November, 1995

2677W – 500N, Hartford City, IN 47348 USA.

I recall that first issue of ASTOUNDING. Had one in my hands once. But didn't have \$75 to spare.

I'm still envious of your Mexican trip. Incidentally, "American" can, technically, apply to anyone from North or South America... Perhaps the driver and conductor were merely amused at your insistence on a specific term. Or maybe they thought Canada was a US state?

I assume the airplane on your cover is an early model of Fairey?

Nope.

Yes, I could well be mixing up RED PLANET MARS with ROCKETSHIP X-M. It's been a long time... and neither film is particularly worthy of being remembered.

You've got to be kidding! Classics, I tell you. Classics!

I fully agree with you on Atlantis. You sound like you've read Pellegrino's UNEARTHING ATLANTIS, which Juanita and I consider the final word on the subject to date.

Yep. Great book.

Carey Rockwell is listed as a pseudonym in Barry McGhan's book on the subject, but for the real name, there's only a question mark. Not included in Nicholls/Clute, of James Gunn's encyclopedia. Not in Tuck. We do have a complete series of the SPACE CADET books I believe; Jaunita was a fan of the TV show in her misspent youth.

Misspent? With SPACE CADET to lay a firm foundation of goshohwowoboy sensawonda?....By the way, 'Carey Rockwell' was actually Joseph Greene, who not only wrote all the SPACE CADET books but created the Tom Corbett TV series as well. Heinlein had no input on either at all.

Yeah, I liked Ed Hamilton, both personally and as a writer, but I liked Leigh Brackett better. (So what if Brackett's Mars was really a desiccated India? It was ALIEN!) They used to come to Midwestcons since they lived not too far away. At one Hamilton bought one of the few I've sold without Gene De Weese's help, and asked, "Well, aren't you going to autograph it?" So I autographed it to him, "who writes this sort of thing much better than I do." He looked at it, and asked, "D'you mean it?" I stuttered a bit and said, well, he had been doing it for a lot longer than I had, so yes, I meant it. He laughed and said that L. Sprague de Camp had autographed a book to him in much the same language, and he'd asked Sprague the same question. Said that Sprague hesitated a minute, and then said, "Hell, no!" I treasure that story, as did Hamilton, evidently.

One of Leigh Brackett's best comments came when someone asked her how she could live in Kinsman, OHY, and write for the movies. Straight-faced, she replied, "I commute."

Thank you for sharing the above memories with my readership.

From: SUSAN ZEUGE

20 November, 1995

Congratulations on the production of your radio scripts. If they are as humorous and as well written as your movie reviews in SC, they should be a big success. When do, or did they air? Any chance of them being heard on public radio?

All four shows were taped – three of them in the CBC cafeteria as they were renovating the studio – and aired but once. Not carried across the nation, alas, just broadcast by the Vancouver CBC. Got paid though, and received egotism from friends who listened, so I'm happy.

How does it feel to end your 'God-Editorship' of BCSFAzine? Do you miss it after doing the job for six years?

Nope. I still write for the zine, but no longer have to keyboard in everyone else's articles. Life is more relaxed.

I really enjoyed MARVIN'S MIGHTY MAYAN MARATHON. It seems contradictory to me that by ascending to the top of a pyramid a person is descending into the underworld. Though now that I think about it, such heights as Glastonbury Tor, England, have been believed to be an entrance to the otherworld.

To the Mesoamericans pyramids were substitute sacred mountains, the temples atop them symbolic caves representing the womb of the Earth Goddess where in the underworld lies. Add their belief the night sky was the reflection of the underworld, and climbing the pyramid, especially at night, can be easily seen as a descent into the underworld realm of transformation. At least, it makes sense to me.

Congratulations to Teddy Harvia on being awarded the Fan-Artist Hugo. I've had the pleasure of viewing his work in several zines and can easily see why he was selected for this honour.

I agree.

From: DALE SPEIRS

Editor of OPUNTIA

20 November, 1995

Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2E7

To: The Broken Arrow.

From: The Watchman's Son Who Lives in the Valley of the Victorious People.

(Which is what my name translates as from the Scots.)

SC#4 arrived and read. Let me hasten to assure you that Dinny, the concrete lifesize model of a Brontosaurus, is still there at the Calgary zoo. When the new dinosaur park was built, Dinny was obviously too big to move, and there was no question of destroying him, as he had been declared a Heritage Site by the Ministry of Culture. Still popular with tourists, who like to climb up on his tail to be photographed. When Dinny was built back in 1935, so the story goes, part of his framework came from a Model T Ford, the sculptor using any scrap metal at hand.

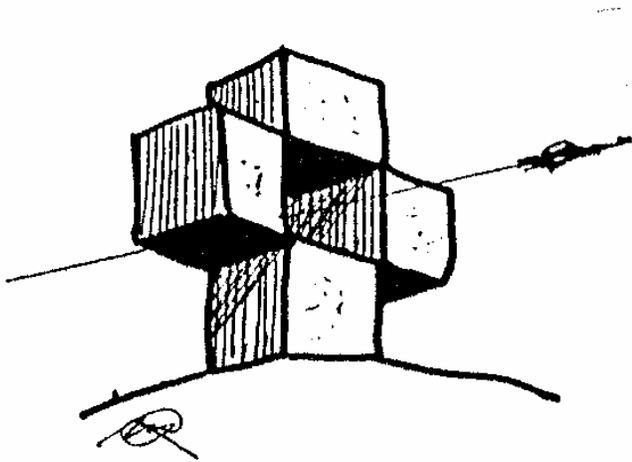
Dinny, and his fellow dinosaurs, were on St. George's Island. The Calgary zoo has now expanded off the island onto the mainland, which is where the new dinosaur park is, with umpteen lifesize fiberglass dinosaurs in a recreated Cretaceous environment. Interestingly enough, when the zoo expanded, it was discovered that the Streets Dept. had been trespassing on Zoo property for about fifty years. As a consequence, Memorial Drive (the major East-West freeway in Calgary) had to be rebuilt further inland from the river bank. The new dinosaur park sits where the old freeway was. Streets Dept. managed to keep this quiet by rebuilding the interchange where traffic turns off to the zoo. People naturally assumed that the sudden swerve in the new

Memorial Drive was due to some engineering restraint. Only when an Alderman asked why the road veered for no apparent reason did the truth come out.

I remember reading that a City of Rome official once suggested that the Colosseum be torn down to widen the traffic circle around it! Gotta watch out for them sneaky City Street Depts!

Calgary has a nice habit of turning freeways into parks. My office, and the golf course behind it, sit where once was the Blackfoot Trail.

The Zoo interchange used to be maintained by me when I was in charge of the Parks Maintenance District containing it (I am now in a district far south in suburbia). Along the flanks of the interchange are shrub beds, many of which I planted. They are irrigated by a system whose control valves are inside the new dinosaur park. Every spring, when it comes time to turn on the system, we had to contact the zoo foreman to get permission to enter the zoo and turn it on. The main valve is about the third Hadrosaur in from the west end, hidden in the vegetation.



From: MICHAEL McKENNY

Editor of BARDIC RUNES

20 November, 1995

424 Cambridge St. S., Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 4H5

As to the Statue of Liberty being absent from the cover of DAYBREAK 2250 AD (aka STARMAN'S SON) that's a good thing I think, as the story seems to describe a guy who sets out from the mountains in the west (the eyrie) to a city on a lake, which I always thought was Chicago. By the way, Donald Wollheim in his introduction to THE BOOK OF ANDRE NORTON mentions how he changed the title to DAYBREAK 2250 and avoided the hardcover's juvenile focus when he published this, the very first ACE Andre Norton.

Looking it up in my own copy, I see that Wollheim wrote: "I presented it simply as a darned good novel for anybody who reads science fiction. It was so accepted and it has been selling steadily ever since."

As to Joseph T. Major and the Tom Swift Jr. Books, over the past few years I've picked up a dozen or so hardcovers (along with one Tom Swift Sr. book: TOM SWIFT AND HIS WAR TANK) and even a 1913 THE SPEEDWELL BOYS IN A SUBMARINE top read to my son Kevin, 6 & ½ and a great fan of both written SF and TV. He likes classic STAR TREK and now BABYLON 5 as the action picks up. One question, do you know anyone who has taped SPACE PRECINCT? It doesn't seem to be showing this season. We have some but not all and it would be neat to track the others down. However most fans (except for an enthusiastic group here) seem to feel it is a terrible show.

TOM SWIFT SR... Always wanted to read one of those... And as for SPACE PRECINCT, never seen it, I'm afraid.

From: NIGEL E. RICHARDSON

Editor of ANORAK REDEMPTION

21 November, 1995 < Nigel@impolex.demon.co.uk >
35 Cricketers Way, Kirkstall Lane, Leeds, LS5 3RJ

I haven't responded to your issues mainly because I assumed I was going to have a new issue of SLUBBERDEGULLION ready any day now... any day now having dragged on since the middle of June last year. Anyway, I have finally given up on SLUBBERDEGULLION and started a small, ensmalled fanzine entitled ANORAK REDEMPTION, which I'll send your way when I get over this bout of flu and have the energy to lick the stamps again...

Liked the teenage diary and novel openings. I'd be too embarrassed to reprint anything like that. It did bring back memories of the dreadful skiffy stories I wrote in English though when I was 14. At least one ended with the line:

“Later when they analyzed the substance that had destroyed the monsters what had threatened to destroy the world the scientists found it had been hydrogen dioxide – water!”

And of course “it had all been a dream” cropped up a few times too....

Nigel E. Richardson has a rather lovely home page, boys and girls. So get thee to SLUBBERDEGULLION ONLINE at < <http://metro.turnpike.net/N/ner/> and bide a wee. Okay?

From: HARRY ANDRUSCHAK

23 November, 1995 < harry.andruschak@greatesc.com >
PO Box 5309, Torrance, CA, 90510-5309 USA.

Received SPACE CADET #4 a while ago, not sure when. I was unable to get vacation time in August from the Post Office to attend the International Clan Cameron gathering (my first choice for vacation) or the Worldcon in Glasgow (2nd choice) so I went on an extended vacation visiting the National Parks of the USA to see them before Republicans in Congress gut them and destroy them forever.

Anyhow, I did read the fanzine, and noted your trip to Central America. I went to Chile in 1991 to go white-water rafting on the Rio Bio Bio. Haven't been back to South America yet. 1996 is already planned for a two week trip to Italy in February, and MAYBE three weeks in Greece (September) or two weeks in Egypt (October).

Man, you sure do travel!

OK, and I will admit to wasting way too much time playing computer games. Right now I am working on mastering SimFarm. When the going gets tough, the tough get farming.

What I read of SF and fantasy is whatever the library buys, which isn't all that much and tends to be the popular stuff. So I have read most of what Mercades Lackey has written. The local Librarian seems to like her stuff. She also buys a lot of Piers Anthony, but I gave up on him a long time ago from boredom.

And I am still sober 11+ years and the secretary of the “We Agnostics of Torrance Group of AA” which is still quite small as we have yet to be listed by the Los Angeles Central Office.

I've been sober for four or five years I guess. Maybe once a year I'll have a beer to 'take the pressure off' but essentially, I no longer drink. Friends tried to get me into AA, but I just decided to stop by myself. It worked.

...Nightmare, cats with opposable thumbs.

From: NED BROOKS

Editor of IT GOES ON THE SHELF

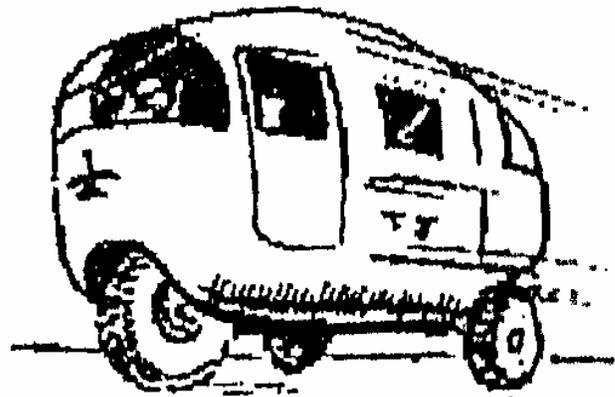
24 November, 1995

713 Paul Street, Newport News, VA 23605 USA.

Much thanks for the SPACE CADET, great Taral cover.

I had a vague notion that I had seen the 1959 movie THE ANGRY RED PLANET but confused it with a memory of the novel by John Kier Cross with its strange illos by Robin Jacques, called THE ANGRY PLANET. There is a sequel called THE RED JOURNEY BACK, and I thought they were combined for the movie. I see from his letter that Brian Earl Brown almost remembers the Cross book – he calls it a ‘juvie’, and I think it was intended for that market. However, I am apparently altogether wrong about the movie version, as that bible of bad movie fans, the PSYCHOTRONIC ENCYCLOPEDIA, does not mention either THE ANGRY RED PLANET or RED PLANET MARS as having anything to do with the Cross novels. And reading your review, I’m not sure I ever saw the movie anyway – sounds like one to watch the next time it comes around on the late show. Tonight USA has FRATERNITY DEMON....

THE ANGRY RED PLANET was written by Ib Melchior and Sid Pink. No where in the seven pages Bill Warren devotes to it in his KEEP WATCHING THE SKIES is there any mention of it being based on a book. I guess next time I watch it I’ll have to pay careful attention to the credits. I also note that the C/N ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SF describes Cross as a UK writer, and that the original (UK) title of the sequel was S.O.S. FROM MARS. The two books had something to do with: “...vegetable life (on Mars) to have suffered a Manichean evolution into alternative races” – whatever that means, one good, one evil? At any rate, I suspect the Cross books are unrelated to the movie.



I remember the magazine photos of the Canadian saucers. Some 30 years ago I assisted in a wind tunnel test of a curious sort of suction wing – the cross-section was circular and the wall-mounted half-platform rather like half of an ellipse. It was made of porous bronze, and had a moveable trailing edge. As the trailing edge was rotated below the horizontal line of symmetry, the flow was kept attached by suction through the porous surface and the silly thing developed considerable lift from the downwash. The engineer in charge was Clarence Cone. No attempt was ever made as far as I know to actually build an aircraft from this concept.

But surely you’ve heard about the fleets of Coneships the B.C. Government once employed as heavy-lift devices to pile mountains atop mountains in order to prevent the annual migration of Giant Wolverines swarming into our coastal cities? People here still talk about it, how life is so much safer now than in the old days, population actually increasing, etc., and all because of the timely invention of Coneships. Last I heard, the fleets have been leased to Australia to herd Giant Wombats.

Your description of Mexico confirms my suspicion that it is a good place to be from – far from. But if Teotihuacan was built of masonry and adobe, how did they manage to burn it down?

Furnishings burn, wooden roof beams burn, stockpiled fabric and foodstuffs burn, possibly even painted plaster when the heat is hot enough to ignite the paint... Don't forget the major monuments of Rome were made of brick and marble, yet catastrophic fires used to sweep through the Forum on average about once every century, necessitating much rebuilding.

They must talk funny out where Buck Coulson comes from – I never heard nuclear pronounced ‘nuclar’, around here they always said ‘nucular’.

From: LEWIS TANNER

25 November, 1995

120 Haven Ave., #35, New York NY, 10032-2636

Received SC#4 a few days ago. As usual, it was fascinating. I especially liked your installments of your travel diary, your Grandfather's memoir, and the review of RED PLANET.

Coincidentally, a few days after I saw an ad in the Village Voice for a lecture and film “The Hungry Gods” of the American Museum of Natural History that “explores the ritual of Human Sacrifice among the Aztecs.”

Thanks for sending me the clipping. I see it “...contrasts the practice... with their sophisticated artistic traditions...” Implying what, that human sacrifice is ‘primitive’? Not under the Aztecs! Their empire was not administrative like that of the Romans, but tributary in nature. Organized sacrifice of subject peoples ensured their continued submission, not to mention the continuing flow of tribute goods. Further, the title ‘The Hungry Gods’ implies the victims are food for the Gods. It was more a case of the victims as God-substitutes or representations of same, the Gods needing to die in order to be reborn and continue the cycle (of the seasons, the universe, etc.). But what particularly gets my goat is the illustration in the ad, namely the photo of the feathered serpent sculpture from the so-called ‘Quetzalcoatl’ pyramid at Teotihuacan! A pre-Aztec culture which had nothing to do with the Aztecs! Who at the time were still living somewhere in Northern Mexico or the South West United States. Granted, at a later date the Aztecs claimed descent from the people of Teotihuacan, but only because they thought it had been Tula, the capital of the Toltecs (they were wrong). Sigh. One hopes the film and lecture were more accurate than the ad.

I remember seeing on the tube a 50ish movie whose name I've forgotten. California is invaded by extraterrestrials. The army attempts to destroy them with artillery fire but is unsuccessful. The ‘aliens’ do leave in their flying saucers. And the human protagonist falls in love with a woman who is resident of the town near the landing spot of the aliens. Any idea of the name of this movie?

Sounds like a truncated capsule description of the infamous PLAN NINE FROM OUTER SWPACE made by Ed Wood in 1959. Another possibility might be a very obscure film called THE DAY MARS INVADED THE EARTH circa 62/63, but I understand – never having seen it – that it's more of a cheapie INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS rip-off than anything else. One neat thing though, the Martians win!

Loved your cover for SC#4 but was wondering what a scantily-clad female carrying what appears to be a helmet was doing in an illustration of WW1 biplanes and their pilots.

The biplane in the foreground is a Nieuport 17 I believe, the other aircraft are ‘modern’ biplanes of a purely imaginary nature. Apart from the bearded gent with the Nieuport, all other figures are female and ever-so-slightly non-human, so whatever they are doing is quite normal for them.

No apologies are needed for the time interval between #3 & #4. SC is a labor of love. I don't expect you or any zine publisher to stick to some schedule, because zines are non-commercial and the publishers must first make a living if they are to have the money or time to put together a zine.

Thank you, though this being 3 months late may possibly tax your generous viewpoint to the limit.

Congratulations for getting paid to talk about SF movies. I assume the program will be broadcast in Canada only?

Worse. Only to where ever Vancouver CBC broadcasts reach.

From: CHESTER CUTHBERT

Past President of the Canadian SF Association (1951)
26 November, 1995
1104 Mulvey Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3m 1J5

SC#4 continues to convey useful and interesting information, and your determination to have a job which pays the bills while you write in spare time is sensible and prudent. I am aware of too many writers who have toiled their lifetimes and died in poverty. It is noble but impractical to live for art alone; bread must be put on the table.

Alas, despite having a union job, I live from paycheque to paycheque. My takehome pay is about 17 grand a year. As soon as I stop working, no more bread on the table. Might as well make my life's goal to die in poverty. Something eminently satisfying about easily achievable accomplishments...

I have noted your recommendation of the Rip Foster novel, but cannot promise to read the book.

I understand. You are eager to read the entire TOM CORBETT, SPACE CADET series first in preparation for Rip Foster...

Brian Earl Brown's recollection is correct THE ANGRY PLANET was written by John Keir Cross (Coward-McCann, 1946) and a copy is listed by Robert A. Madle in his latest catalogue #22, near fine with dust wrapper at \$25. I have a copy of the book myself but have not read it.

But did Ib Mechior & Sid Pink base their screenplay on it? That's what I wish I knew.

Your grandfather's war memoirs continue a realistic account of warfare and should help to prevent those who read it from illusions of the romantic. The horrors of war are publicized every day in the news, but I wonder if it will ever be abolished.

In a word, no. As we SF fans know from conventions, humans never learn from their mistakes, but go on repeating them endlessly.

Your ENTROPY BLUES REPRINT about Flying Saucers leads me to draw to your attention that the Book of the Month News for August, 1995, offers CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FOURTH KIND: ALIEN ABDUCTION, UFOS, AND THE CONFERENCE AT M.I.T. by C.D.B. Bryan, a Pulitzer Prize-winner (Publisher's price \$33.95, Club price \$28.95). My friend Chris Rutkowski has written two books on the subject, and has investigated more local sightings than anyone else.

Your friend is quoted at least six times in THE LITTLE BLUE BOOK OF UFOS compiled by John Robert Columbo (1992). I like best Rutkowski's comment: "With regard to UFO literature, don't always believe the believers, and try to be skeptical of skeptics." Myself, I used to have an open mind, but there have been so many frauds exposed (yet continue to be accepted by 'believers' – like the case of two kids wrapped in saran wrap running alongside a highway while shining flashlights on themselves, of which photos taken by a passing motorist continue to be published as 'proof' of alien visitation) that my mind is now firmly closed. Recent hoaxes like the Alien Autopsy' film help nail the door shut. There are NO aliens visiting the Earth. Interesting atmospheric phenomena, like the ability of the Earth's magnetic field to create images, yes, but no alien spaceships. "But what about the Men in Black?" asks an acquaintance. Sigh...

Your MAYAN MARATHON contains more in-depth information than a tourist's account, and I wonder if you saw anything alien enough to suggest the legends of MU.



There were no legends of MU until what's-his-name decided to invent them. As for Mesoamerican culture, it was strictly an advanced Neolithic stone age culture beginning a transitional stage to metal working. In other words, technologically quite primitive, but sophisticated in art, politics, naked-eye astronomy, mathematics, and party-going. I do wish the Native Americans would receive credit for what THEY accomplished. The theories of people like Erich von Daniken are quite biased – operating on the assumption the Indians were too 'primitive' to create such 'advanced' technology. Ergo, it must have been Space Aliens who did it. On the contrary, massive adobe-brick or stone-built pyramids are precisely the kind of structures Neolithic cultures build when they (or the Grand Poobahs in charge) get ambitious. The MesoAmericans hadn't even got around to inventing the true arch yet! Besides, people forget that 'primitive', in terms of technology, does not mean 'unsophisticated' in terms of culture. In a sense, the Mesoamericans were BOTH primitive AND highly advanced, depending on which aspects of their civilization one talks about. I could go on and on, but will save it for appropriate points in my travel account.

As is obvious, you managed to push one of my buttons, one of my pet peeves. I just like the ancient cultures being appreciated for what they were, without dragging in Space Aliens or assorted Master Races... Oh well, every faned is allowed at least two rants per ish, I hope.

Reviews of fanzines are always interesting., but I cannot give adequate attention to more than those I already receive, so I do not ask for others. Also, many of your correspondents write letters to me, so in reply I mention anything relevant noticed in your SPACE CADET.

By the way, I noticed a LoC of yours in a zine perhaps 15 or more years old (THE MAPLE LEAF RAG by Garth Spencer, I believe it was) in which you mentioned you had devoted your life to reading since your

retirement. How I envy you! Sounds like the life of quiet relaxation and intellectual stimulation that I've always aspired to ever since reading the letters of the Younger Pliny in me youth. Trouble is, instead of relaxing in a shady marble colonnade at my seaside villa, reading from a scroll while my slaves bring me fresh grapes, I live in a ground floor bach pad five blocks from English Bay., my picture window displaying a panoramic view of a back alley and my building's dumpster, which IO can't see anyway because it's dark when I stagger home from my shift at the warehouse at one in the morning, with just enough energy left to pop a meal into the microwave and turn on the TV to channel surf between infomercials. At best I find an hour or two in the mornings when my mind is relaxed aqnd fresh enough to settle down to a good read. As for retirement, I'm 44 and have nothing saved. No RRSPs, no investments, nothing (I keep wasting my spare cash on books!), so I'll have to keep working till I drop. I repeat, I envy you. Reading is one of the great pleasures in life. The other biggie being, as we all know, watching B movies from the 1950s!

By Ghu, my response is about twice the length of your LoC! You certainly succeeded in firing up my synapses with your comment hooks. My responses to LoCs vary, sometimes I reply very little, or not at all. This has nothing to do with the value of the LoC, but has everything to do with whether or not one of my pet interests or peeves is touched upon, or if I see an opening for a delightfully witty comment (and/or stupid, moronic faned attempt at humour) or minor rant. In short, if I feel like saying something, I write. (If I have nothing to say, I don't, for often the loccer has said all that needs to be said. The mysteries of faneditorship revealed!

From: TEDDY HARVIA

Hugo Award winning fan artist

Why do I put these labels in? To embarrass the loccers? No! To inform any neos who may be reading this zine into what context they should place the loccer, and thus gain further insight into zinedom.

28 November 1995

701 Regency Drive, Hurst Texas 76054-2307 USA

And why these addresses? So other faneds can contact these artists, other faneds, etc., to arrange for art, trades, etc. Doing my bit to spread zinedom!

I understand well the interlude between combat your grandfather mentions in his WWI memories. In Vietnam we savoured even the smallest things which reminded us of home and civilization.

The civilizations in Mesoamerica fascinate me, too. Who knows what parallel universe they might have created had not the Spaniards interrupted.

The mindset of the Mesoamericans was cyclical in nature. The universe endlessly repeating itself, for instance, till it comes to an end. Even then, it would probably be reborn. Contemporary Aztecs lived in the age of the 'Fifth Sun', for example. I think the concepts of 'change for the sake of change' and 'progress' would be rather alien to them. A concrete example: immediately after the Spanish conquest, orders to certain city states to send masons and carpenters to the rubble of Tenochtitlan and reshape it into a European-style capital for Cortes were presented by the Kings of those cities as an opportunity for their people to "offer volunteer tribute service to the Gods" as in the past. An obvious process of denial, a reluctance to accept the reality of the RADICAL change the Spanish had brought about through force of arms. Fact is, 'progress' in Mesoamerica was always along the lines of 'variations of a theme'. I'm not sure, even given another 1,000 years, that they would have 'advanced' technologically. On the other hand, a Spaniard by the name of Gonzalo Guerrero, having been shipwrecked in the Yucatan in 1511 – 8 years before Cortes arrived – became first a slave, then an advisor to a Mayan King, and helped lead an attack on a small Spanish expedition the year before that of Cortes. He was later killed in battle while commanding a Mayan army resisting the Spanish invasion of the Yucatan (which took place after the conquest of the Aztecs). Guerrero

*was but a sailor. Had he been a gunsmith or a blacksmith and imparted such knowledge to the Maya....
Hmmm....*

I first saw ANGRY RED PLANET on the small screen at home. It made me laugh and cringe but its poor quality I think reflects the chaos of the real world better than many of the high-tech SF movie clichés.

Good Point. Excellent point, in fact.

From: JOSEPH T. MAJOR

Contributor to FOSFAX

1 December, 1995 <jtmajor@iglou.cm>

3307H River Chase Court, Louisville, KY 40218-1832 USA

From Plug Street to Wipers – your Grandfather seems to have been in the hot places. Did his battalion hand over in January 11916 to the 6th Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers?

No mention of this in the official history, so I'm afraid I don't know.

The demise of the Avro Arrow seems to have come about because Avro and Diefenbaker were playing chicken and Avro won. Or lost.

The MARVELOUS MAYAN MARATHON seems to have involved seeing lots of feathered reptiles. Considering that birds evolved from reptiles this somehow seems to be a curious finding. Entire volumes of Daenikism (the Daeniken should be Daeniken with two dots over the 'a') could be written from this. "I believe the ancient astronauts told the Mayans of the reptile origin of birds..."

(My younger brother, noticing that von Daeniken and Uri Geller's father were both hotel managers, wondered if there was something about the profession.)

I certainly hope not. Otherwise the world is doomed!

Chester Cuthbert is to be looked upon with envy and joy for not being burned out after reading voluminously. Let us all wish him many more years of reading pleasure.

I think the movie Brian Earl Brown saw was BEACH BABES FROM BEYOND. It had the annoying feature of starring relatives of more famous actors – Patrick Swayze's brother for one – and billing their last names only on the box cover. (Straight-to-video, that is.) It is right up your alley with the fifties B-movie mindset.

I was a little too young for HOWDY DOODY but grew up with CAPTAIN KANGAROO. Did you know that Bob Keeshan (the Captain) and Hugh 'Lumpy' Brannum (Mr. Green Jeans) were both Marines? "It's not nice to say bad things about the Corps, Mr. Bunny Rabbit."

No, I have never seen PROJECT MOONBASE. Heinlein apparently had vast media dreams during the fifties. He wrote a dozen screenplays for a TV show to be based on his Second Future stories (the stories in THE GREEN HILLS OF EARTH, originally not in the future history of the stories from ASTOUNDING in the forties as conceived). And then there was the Abbott and Costello movie...

GREEN ACRES was a loose adaptation of GREEN HILLS I've heard...

I have been picking up MIKE MARS books as I come across them, and found one where someone does indeed drive fast. Not one of the astronauts, but a scientist's daughter introduced, I guess, as a sort of romantic interest. One of those I have is MIKE MARS AT CAPE KENNEDY, which is interesting when you realize the book is set in 1962 (and revised in 1966 to anachronistically reflect the new name).

Hope you survived Ditto 8.

Yep.

WAHFS: Henry L. Welch, Alexander Bouchard, Sean Alan Wallace, Sheryl Birkhead, Brad Foster, Rodney L. Leighton, George Flynn, Lloyd Penney and again from Harry Warner Jr. These LoCs will probably head off the loccol nish.

AFTERWORDS

Hmmm, never seem to find enough room for the LoCs I receive....

Wish I had handled the transition from snacking atop one of the Moon Plaza platforms to moving about the Moon pyramid a little more smoothly.

Had promised Scott Patri to fit in a review of ZERO-G LAVATORY thish but never got around to it. I imagine he will kill me. Maybe nish, if I'm still alive.

In the latest issue of OPUNTIA (27.1) Dale Speirs includes a repro of the 1885 zine BRIC-A-BRAC from Montreal. Quote: *"The saddest news... The tidings may be put in three words: 'Khartoum has fallen', but how much do these three words mean? They mean that Gordon is a prisoner..."* Wrong! The forces of the Mahdi cut his head off. Gordon be dead. Further: *"It is said that Canada will send a regiment of volunteers to help..."* This was done. The first time we sent troops overseas... Reviewing another zine, the editor comments: *"Their dispute with Emery has gone far enough, and the sooner they drop it the better will Amateurdom be pleased."* Fanfeuding nothing new, it seems.

I hope nish will appear on schedule.

E VERSION AFTERWORDS

The original print version of thish was 32 digest-sized pages of 8.5 font with no spacing between paragraphs. Adding the spacing and increasing font size to 12 added 11 pages but makes the zine far more accessible to eye trackers. Going to letter-sized pages allows me to show off the artwork far more pleasingly. Not to mention scanning and inserting works much better than photocopying images, pasting the results on to the master copy and then photocopying again. Mind you, in some cases my only option was to scan the murky images from the printed copy, but for the others I still have the original art and am able to scan & insert images for a vast improvement in clarity. And then there's my Trajan Pro type face for headings, which I really like.

It would cost a fortune to print and mail this expanded version of SC#5. But thanks to Bill Burns this 'new improved' version is available free to possibly many more people than my original 150 count mailing list. Thanks Bill!

Ghod-Editor The Graeme