

FOLKLORE  
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FOLKLORE FRONTIERS is an independent magazine covering various aspects of folklore, particularly urban belief tales, ancient and modern traditions and lore plus contemporary culture. It is edited and published by PAUL SCREETON. Address is: 5, Egton Drive, Seaton Carew, Hartlepool, TS25 2AT. Subscription for three issues is £6, payable to Paul Screeton (NOT Folklore Frontiers). USA \$20 in dollar bills only. If paying sterling within Europe add £2. If your subscription expires with this issue an "X" will appear on the line below.

## THE DIARY ... THE DIARY ... THE DIARY

FIRSTLY an apology of sorts, for reducing paging to 16 this issue. F.F.'s finances are not healthy and I must admit the resubscriptions (and new readers) have given no reason for optimism. Perhaps the subject of contemporary legend is in decline, maybe the style and content of F.F. is out of step, or even as with the demise of Letters to Ambrose Merton and the editor of Magonia noting that the Internet is making such magazines redundant I have neither the knowhow, cash or inclination to set up a website to promote F.F. The amount of time, energy and money I put into this exercise is far from commensurate to its returns in any shape or form. It's heartening, for instance however, when author Mick Goss wrote when resubscribing that if he ever decides to return to writing, F.F. will be his first choice. Much appreciated Mr Dancing Goat! Whatever, the December issue will revert to 20 pages and I trust I can rely of August resubscriptions.

Secondly, apologies to last issue's readers for repeating the material on Page 10 verbatim on Page 11. When I was a newspaperman our excuse was that the story was good it warranted repetition. Or perhaps as it was a special booze issue, I'd sniffed the barmaid's apron too fully.



ASTROLOGER Jonathan Cainer reported that John Michell's special series (D. Mirror, Thursdays, July 3, onwards) had been having a mixed reaction. "Some readers have been spellbound," he writes. "Others have found it hard to follow."

With my gnostic worldview I can cheerfully embrace most of the creative geometry, seeing man as a replica of the cosmos and the interconnection of certain plexuses of the body traced by means of numbers and geometrical figures, in addition to a sympathetic relationship between the stars and these centres (number one represented by the circle; three triangles; 12 dodecahedron; breast Cancer; sexual organs Scorpio, and so on). However, where Michell and I part company is that he obviously trusts the ancient philosophers' view the Creator must be benevolent to have made what he sees as such a beautiful world. Fundamental to gnosticism is belief in a transcendent God, androgynous, merciful and good, but that the cosmos itself is intrinsically evil and is not the work of the true God, but of an opposing entity known as the Demiurge or "Creator" and that mankind is sinful.



IT SEEMS a John Michell renaissance is underway. His name has kept cropping up this summer. First he was quoted in The Sunday Telegraph Magazine (13/7/03) for its celebration of Sir Mick Jagger's 60th birthday as seen through those who knew or know him. Here's Michell's (sic) contribution: "He's essentially a great comedian, an early form of Ali G: he invented a character for himself and has kept it up. In the old days we used to go on excursions together, tripping to Wales to see the sites of ley-line crossings and UFO centres. I was trying to interest him in investigating phenomena, but he'd direct us off to a pub in Winchcombe because he knew it was run by Tom Gravenev, the old England cricketer, and really wanted to meet him." John also gets a mention in The Trials of Arthur (see reviews), when Druid Rollo Maughfling is portrayed as having "in his wild youth he had met John Michell, literary interpreter of the visionary kingdom..." Rollo and I were also in touch during my editorship of The Ley Hunter. Also, by chance, I came across Colin Wilson's book Alien Dawn in Foggy Furze library, in which John's ufology and leys interest and thoughts are discussed.

## 'A friend of a friend told me...'

### Corinne Abrams on those disturbing student myths

When all love student myths. Up and down the country, they are telling each other the same worrying stories in the sincere belief that it "happened to my best mate's cousin's ex-girlfriend when she was at university". The legends are passed from year to year - usually shocking, often disgusting and almost always believable. So we decided to put some of the best-known myths to the test - not knowing whether it would put our minds at ease, or scare the hell out of us.

**1 "My sister's friend used to live with a guy who spent all his loan on beer, and had to survive on a bumper bag of economy porridge oats. Because he wasn't eating anything else, he got scurvy."**

Jennie Bailey, welfare officer at the University of Manchester Students' Union, doesn't believe that students eat only beans on toast and Pot Noodles and she has never heard of students coming down with scurvy. She is also full of good advice: "I think there is definitely the belief that healthy food is more expensive, but if students shop around, it is possible to buy good-quality fruit and vegetables at reasonable prices."

**2 "Oxford will accept you only if you know the answer to their weird questions."**

University admissions procedures seem to generate a number of myths, maybe in proportion to the number of Oxbridge rejects. There is the story of the Oxford University

applicant who was asked by the interviewer to "impress me". The student set fire to the interviewer's newspaper and was offered a place immediately. There is also the exchange: Q: Is this a question? A: Only if this is an answer. Q: Why? A: Why not?

Again, an unfortunate, it seems such interactions have occurred only in fantasy: Natalie Toms, deputy editor of *Oxford Student*, says of unconventional admissions procedures: "If they got away with asking questions like that in the past, I don't think they would now because the admissions process is monitored."

**3 "Bristol will automatically reject you if you also apply to Oxford."**

Another admissions scare-story. Barry Taylor, communications and marketing director at Bristol university, nipped this one in the bud. "This was never true and now, of course, a university does not know which other institutions a candidate has applied to."

**4 "Nottingham University has six female students to every male."**

On the basis of this, optimistic young men have been eagerly applying to Nottingham for years. Un fortunately for hopeful male students, the reality is less impressive: 56 per cent of students are female.

**5 "My cousin's friend was in an exam when the guy next to him stuck two pencils up**

## More myths

- The local video shop and taxi company sell your address to burglars.
- The library is sinking because the architect forgot to factor in the weight of the books.
- A tramp died in the cellar of your house.
- Osama Bin Laden once attended your university.
- There is a secret code you can type into your phone that will enable you to make calls for nothing.
- Management positions in higher education are filled by people with little concern for students.

his nose and committed suicide by banging them on the desk."

Often this story has a "happy" ending, in which all the witnesses in the room receive a first for the exam as compensation. This is one myth that most people carry with them from schooldays and is repeated with a healthy degree of suspicion by most.

**6 "Jimi Hendrix played the back room of the students' union."**

There are always tales that a rock legend played an impromptu sell-out gig in your student union. Jimi Hendrix did play at a few universities in the 1960s: the Polytechnic of Central London, the University of York, the University of Leicester and Imperial College London. Likewise, Nirvana, Pink Floyd and Bob Marley played at universities all over the country. So this is one story that could be true.

● Corinne Abrams is a former deputy editor of the University of Nottingham's *Impact* magazine.

## More BritArt Crap

By PAUL SCREETON

THE BACKLASH against conceptual art goes on. Following on from my condemnation of spurious BritArt stupidity, I bring a follow-up (from FF42:3-8) round-up. Firstly again the misguided cleaner. In an undated but I suspect Guardian item, a brand new installation by deaf artist Joseph Grigely of crumpled newspapers, cans and other rubbish was diligently dumped by a jealous cleaner at the Anthony D'Offay gallery in London. The diarist refers to "the rumour mill", the show's opening being delayed and suggests the employee could be sent to some other galleries. Then The Times mentioned other cases of contemporary art with no exhibition label to alert people to its existence having been overlooked. A New York gallery suffered the embarrassment of dustmen taking away a John Chamberlain abstract welded from crushed cars that was left momentarily on a pavement. Also porters at an auction house failed to appreciate that the brown paper wrapping they removed from a chair was in fact a complete sculpture by Christo, the artist who covers everything from buildings to objects. (4/7/02) An item of modern art due to be exhibited in a library at Boulder, Colorado, was thrown out by the caretaker because he thought it was rubbish. Meanwhile, a guard was called in to prevent a sculpture of tiny dust piles being blown away at a gallery in Colchester, Essex. (D. Mirror, 23/4/03)

As with the last round-up there's a mural painted over in the belief that it was the work of graffiti merchants. This time council workers covered brightly-coloured figures with thick grey emulsion. The mural, in Peterborough, was part of a £10,000 art project sponsored by the Prince's Trust. (The Times, D. Mirror, 1/3/03)

Here's verbatim a case of suffering for art: Modern art and farce are often (unwittingly) to be found in close proximity. And so it proved at County Hall, a chunk of which has been rented by Charles Saatchi for his new gallery. On one side of the hall, a council workman was injured falling off a ladder. An ambulance was called. Meanwhile, on the other, Saatchi Gallery, side of the building, removal men were carting a life-size sculpture towards the gallery's entrance. An onlooker reports: "This very realistic sculpture of a man sitting down was being carried along rather awkwardly. The next thing we saw was an ambulance screaming down the road with its sirens going and screeching to a stop. Paramedics jumped out and ran towards the removal men yelling at them to stop carrying a badly-injured man in that position. It would all have been hilarious if there hadn't been some poor bugger in agony somewhere else." (D. Telegraph, 29/3/03) But how did the onlooker know about the agonised bugger?

More Chas Saatchi items. A photocopy of a double-page spread from the Daily Sport is being exhibited by Sarah Lucas, whose previous Sport piece sold for £7,000 at Christie's in 1998. The whopping blow-up was of the launch issue of the Sport's Monday edition. Sarah's new work is from a more recent edition, with the headline "Sod You Gits . . . Men Go Wild For My Body" and is on display as part of the Saatchi Collection. (D. Sport, 7/4/03) There's an adage about a fool and his money soon being parted and Saatchi spent £1 million last October on 24 hand-carved ethnographic sculptures based on McDonald's hamburgers by Jake and Dinos Chapman. (, 24/11/02) At the opening of the gallery, Spencer Tunick organised more than 160 naked models (D. Sport, 17/4/03) and later photographed over 600 naked people inside Selfridges. (D. Mirror, 28/4/03) And doubtless tongue-in-cheek, according to Craig Brown: "Explaining his absence from the launch party, friends explained that Saatchi was 'at home rearranging his sock drawer'." (D. Telegraph, 19/4/03)

As for artistic stunts, recent examples include: (1) Swiss animal rights activists protested against a couple who wanted to throw a dead horse out of a helicopter in the name of art. Rudolf Steiner and Barbara Mayer planned to launch the dead beast and make it land on a tractor 328ft below for an exhibition near Bern. (D. Sport, 7/7/03)...(2) Student Rita Fenning created a 40ft oil slick in the shape of a barge at Gloucester docks as part of a local art exhibition. (D. Mirror, 19/5/03) (3) A photo featuring Kylie Minogue's pert behind, clad in her notorious skimpy gold hotpants, went on show at the Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition. The picture, valued at £475, is part of a work called "Consumerism 2" by Dilek O'Keefe. (D. Sport, 29/5/03)

Getting a proper perspective, Julian Spalding, former director of Glasgow Museums and Galleries and author of "The Eclipse of Art: Tackling the Crisis in Art Today" writes: "Do we seriously want to be remembered for a shark in a tank? And how can a light bulb going on and off in an empty room merit winning the Turner Prize? But it's not enough just to point the finger



"It's depressing how the same old faces always seem to turn up at these Private Views"

and say that the emperor of modern art has got no clothes ... craft has become a dirty word in art today ... Nobody needed to draw anymore ... " (D. Telegraph, 26/4/03)

And for the last word on the subject, Zandra Rhodes: "I don't like conceptual art. I can unmake my own fucking bed." (The Times, 1/2/03)

\*\*\* Next issue: art and urine from the archives.

## NEWSLINES

**BIRD COUNT.** Long ago I was alerted to the topic of birds' ability to master arithmetic. A number of recent articles have returned to a subject introduced by John Michell in the year book of, I think, Ealing College of Art, in the late Sixties. Apparently coots can recognise parasite eggs in the nest, ignore them and carry on laying until they reach their personal target. Those which failed to spot the parasites would factor them in and stop laying early. In both cases, there was mental arithmetic going on. According to the reassessment of the batty little river bird, only ostriches and weaver birds can also separate host eggs from imposters. (The Sunday Telegraph, 7/03)

However, another broadsheet suggested ravens, in particular, may have the ability to count. The ethnologist Otto Koehler offered a raven a group of between two and six objects, beside five boxes labelled with black dots, two to six. The raven got food if it matched the number of objects to the number of black dots on the box lids; it did it every time. (The Times Weekend, 21/6/03)

One of my favourite writers, Lucy Pinney, also dabbled in this arcane subject. I quote: "A few weeks ago a small, fluffy bantam hatched out two goslings and a muscovy duckling. She seemed very proud of her ill-assorted brood. So when I had (for complicated reasons) another ten ducklings to foster somewhere, I thought I would give them to her. I slipped them, one at a time, in at the back of her run. As her duckling gradually multiplied into 11, I could see her pause, baffled. She appeared to be thinking as hard as a chicken possibly can - but it was only for a minute or two. Then she cheerfully accepted the situation, and called the whole bobbing, black-and-yellow mass of ducklings over to some corn. I am not sure whether this proves that bantams cannot count, or just that they have a powerful maternal instinct. (The Times Weekend, 12/7/03)

**MEDIEVAL HEATWAVE.** Global warming sceptics such as myself were heartened by findings that there was a medieval warm period between the ninth and 14th centuries with global temperatures higher even than today. They also confirm claims that a Little Ice Age set in around 1300, during which the world cooled dramatically. Since 1900, the world has begun to warm up again - but has still to reach the balmy temperatures of the Middle Ages. Environmentalists' greenhouse gases fears are starkly rebutted by the UK Climate Impacts Programme. (The Sunday Telegraph, 6/4/03; Metro, 7/4/03)

**HARTLEPOOL WORM.** Having written two books on Northumbrian dragon legends, I was astonished to read a claim for a hitherto unrecorded Hartlepool Worm, which a former radio colleague of the author swore that his grandparents knew someone who often saw the beast on The Heugh at Old Hartlepool and on the Tees Bay Longscar Rocks. Others swore it could frequently be spotted from the south bank of the Tees. (Margaret Heseltine, Legends Galore, Printability Publishing, 1999)

**MONKEY BUSINESS.** When (now sacked himself) editor Harry Blackwood pulled the plug on my relatively lucrative role of local correspondent I stopped reading the Hartlepool Mail on principle. So I have had to rely on Fortean Times (FT174:31) for an item of personal interest, having written a book on the subject (Who Hung the Monkey? – A Hartlepool Legend, Printability Publishing). A man out walking his dog near Kwik Save in Winterbottom Avenue, Hartlepool, at 91m on March 27 came upon what he took to be a small human skull. In point of fact it was a polished and preserved monkey skull. This was a most curious find in the light of the famous legend that during the Napoleonic wars local residents hanged a ship's monkey in the belief that it might be a French spy. The provenance of the monkey skull was unknown. (Hartlepool Mail, 28/3/03)

**MOCK MAYORS** (FF8:16, passim). The 2002-2003 elected May of Middleton, Hartlepool, was Jimmy Hill.

**HIGHWAY TO HELL.** Route 666, which runs through New Mexico, Colorado and Utah, is to be renamed Route 491 to lose the Devil's number. D. Mirror, 16/7/03

**LASAGNE & CURRY.** Food researchers have found that lasagne -- hailed for centuries as an Italian dish -- is as English as roast beef. Organisers of a medieval festival found the meal, cheese and pasta recipe "loseyns" in the world's first cook book -- compiled for Richard 11 in 1390. Maurice Bacon, who helps with the festival at Berkeley Castle, Glos., said: "Tomatoes didn't come in for 200 years after that time, so this was the original lasagne." (D. Mirror, 15/7/03) Meanwhile, experts claimed Britain's favourite Indian dish, chicken tikka masala, was created 30 years ago in Glasgow after a customer complained his curry was too dry and the chef added a tin of tomato soup to it. (D. Sport, 13/8/02)

**BLAME THE GENES.** Feeling rough the morning after the night before? Don't blame the 16 pints Timothy Taylor's Landlord -- it may be in your genes, according to doctors who tested twins. Almost half the chance of developing acid reflux, which doctors refer to as GORD, may be down to a person's genes and not just what we eat and drink on a night out. (D. Sport, 15/7/03)

**NO PAUSE FOR SEX.** Men can't blame the "male menopause" for lack of sex drive as they're either unfit or under-performing through drinking and smoking, insisted Professor John McKinlay adding the "male menopause" is a myth used by drug firms to cash in on men's fears that they need hormone replacement. He said in Aberdeen: "Unlike hormone changes in middle-aged women, male hormones decline quite gradually with age and there is simply no support for a syndrome." (D. Mirror, 17/7/03)

**OLD HEARSE.** Known in contemporary legends lore as "barn car" phenomenon, the latest case is of car fanatic John Gould, 42, being asked to clear out a disused garage and finding a 1937 Buick Straight Eight hearse and two coffins in Brighton. (Sunday Telegraph, 4/8/02)

**REAL NESSIE.** A fossil discovered in Loch Ness is the original monster, say experts. It is part of the spine of a 35ft plesiosaur which lived in the loch 150 million years ago. The long-necked carnivorous sea reptile is allegedly identical to modern images of Nessie. Gerald McSorley, 67, from Stirling, found it in shallow water at the loch side. (D. Sport, 16/7/03)

**PENGUIN SUITS.** I thought at first this tabloid tale was a joke or a hoax perpetrated by or upon the charitable organisers. Lurking at the back of my mind was a similar story where the good-natured public rose to the occasion, but their efforts were dashed when it was exposed as a practical joker's scam. Here goes, anyway. Five thousand woolly jumpers were flown out of Britain to keep penguins warm; the tiny sweaters being needed by the world's smallest species in Tasmania, where the birds are being badly affected by oil slicks from a major shipping route. BBC Radio Gloucestershire launched an appeal at the end of 2001 and listeners got knitting. Embroidery included Posh and Becks, the scoreline "England 5 Germany 1" and "penguin suits" with bow ties. Station producer Martin Evans said: "They'll keep the penguins warm and protect them from oil." (The Mirror, 9/2/02). And also stop them flapping their wings and what about impeding their sex lives? And it still sounds dodgy.

## UPDATE

**JAYNE MANSFIELD** (FF16:4-7). In FF38:17 I demythologised Jayne's decapitation -- her wig was knocked off. Clearing out redundant filed material, I found an old article which resurrected her dalliance with Satanist-to-the-stars Anton Le Vay, to whom she went to when her third husband tried to gain custody of their son Antonio. His curse "worked" because she won the court case according to Arthur Lyons' book "Satan Wants You: The Cult of Devil Worship in America." Carole Malone continued: "He did more tricks for her. But when he clipped an article out of a newspaper he accidentally sliced through a photograph of Jayne's head. She was beheaded in a car crash later that day." More grist for the rumour mill. (The Star, 3/6/88) The decapitation was repeated (D. Mirror, 19/7/03) and then denied -- "contrary to the myth created by a photo apparently showing her head on the car bonnet, Jayne Mansfield was not decapitated ... The top part of her skull was torn away (D. Mirror, 24/7/03)

**MARSBARIANNE FAITHFULL** (FF19:3-7, passim) Each month a men's mag resurrects and dissects the world's sexiest women. Number 10 in the series being Marianne Faithfull: "Actress, songwriter and author, Faithfull can add homeless, heroin addict, deranged drunk, part-time lesbian, full-time bad girl and foul-mouthed agent provocateur to her CV. Much more, then, than Jagger's trophy girlfriend (she bedded Keith Richards and Brian Jones to prove the point), and a unique selling point for Mars Bars. (Maxim, Nov. 2002) A special Comic Relief edition of University Challenge had the question, "Which celebrity is most associated with Mars Bars?" I can't recall which contestant correctly identified M.F. or a subsequent joke about Twix as I was so stunned. (BBC-2, 14/3/03)

**TATTOO BLUNDER** (FF33:1&15, passim) Mark Brewer was an unlucky football fan after his attempts to honour Arsenal with tattoos ended in own goals. Mark, 29, named his three children after Gunners players and had them tattooed on his right arm. All promptly quit the club. Then he paid £50 to have the Premiership club's famous cannon crest on his left arm -- and two weeks later they changed the design. (Sun, 5/2/02)

David Beckham's expression of devotion to his wife became the subject of ridicule when it was reported that he misspelt her name in Hindi as "Vihctoria" on his forearm. (Telegraph Magazine, 5/4/03). A tattooist spelled Beckham's name BECKAM on fan Michelle Plummer, 35, of Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales. Mike Williams even said "who's he?" Michelle wrote out Beckham's name, but Mike still got it wrong -- in fancy letters 1½ inches high. The single mum-of-three only spotted the error when she got home. "I went berserk and was in tears for days," she said. "I'd understand it if it was Ole Gunnar Solskjaer." Mike later claimed she wrote out the name incorrectly (Sun, 3/5/03) Meanwhile, Posh Spice has been blamed for the latest fashion trend in which young women are having designer logos tattooed on their bodies. The famous logos of Gucci, Louis Vuitton and Versace are hot favourites who want to imitate celebs like Victoria Beckham for their love of designer labels. Footballer Robbie Savage has an Armani logo on his back. (D. Sport, ?)

**RUMOURS OF LOCOMOTIVE NAMES** (FF40:4-6&FF41:6-8). DP2. The last Class 4 prototype to enter service, remained unnamed unlike Lion and Falcon. None of the names suggested for the English Electric machine appealed and one in particular ended the idea -- Challenger. "We are not challenging anyone," scolded the deputy managing director in a memo, "the rest challenge us." (?)

Class 52. On May 17, 1961, the Western Area Board of the British Transport Commission rejected proposals by staff in General Manager Roy Hammond's office for a list of names for the Westerns. These included the ill-fated Cheddar Gorge idea. On July 19, 1961, minute 1599 of the Western Area Board confirmed its acceptance of the new list of names prefixed by "Western". (Traction, February, 2003)

**WEIRD WORKSOP** (FF32:3-5). Drinkers were banned from singing "Happy Birthday" at a pub in Worksop, Notts., because it had no entertainment licence. (D. Mirror, 19/5/03)



# OLDIES BUT GOODIES

@@@ A POLICEMAN who was comforting a family upset by a burglary ran over and killed their pet dog as he left the house. The Pc only realised what he had done when he returned and heard the 15-year-old daughter crying. Police magazine reported he offered to buy them a new dog but they refused. Cambridgeshire police said: "Unfortunately when he left in a marked police car he was involved in a collision with the family's dog. The dog sadly died." Police magazine used to be regular source of myths when we got it at the Hartlepool Mail and this is obviously another one. (D. Mirror, 17/10/02)

@@@ FF has reported many soggy moggy tales, and I accept most are probably true. Here's the latest: Saffy was recovering after a 45-minute spin in a washing machine. Neil Macfarlane didn't notice her climb in at his Plymouth ome. (D. Mirror, 26/7/02)

@@@ HARDENED CRIMINALS times again. A yellowed newspaper cutting in the porch of the Peter Tavy Inn tells of one of the pub's most celebrated customers. Frank 'Mad Axeman' Mitchell drank here. He was involved with the notorious Kray gang, but rather than some rough-house East End boozier this is a sweet country pub, down high-hedged Devon lanes on the western fringe of Dartmoor at Tavistock. He's still the only man to have eascaped successfully from Dartmoor. According to underworld legend his freedom was brief and he now rests in a concrete overcoat, propping up Hammersmith flyover. What's truly criminal is that the accpmp[laying picture shows the menu with tomato and basil soup at a whacking £2.95. (The Times Weekend, 17/8/02)

@@@ THE old ones are the best ones time. Former cricket umpire Dickie Bird wasn't tight --- as he was cashwise -- with name-dropping. He once went into a bar in Leeds and said to the barman: "It's 20 years since I came in here with Don Bradman." The barman's response was: "I'm sorry, sir. I'm serving as fast as I can." (The Scurra column, D. Mirror, 2/10/02)



## James's Joke

THE young chap walked into a chemist and asked for condoms. Quizzed about whether he wanted six, nine or twelve, the teenager replied: "I've got this really hot chick and tonight I think I'm going to get lucky, so make it a dozen."

At dinner with the girl's parents that evening the lad asked if he could say grace and continued to do so for 10 minutes. When he finally sat down the girl lent over and whispered: "You never told me you were so religious."

"And you never told me that your father was a pharmacist."

@@@ THE question posed was: "If water going down a plughole is affected by the Earth's rotation, why aren't we all pushed off course when we try to walk in a straight line?" The answer included a response to the puzzle which fascinated the Duke of Edinburgh (see my 1974 book "Quicksilver Heritage"): "With water swirling down a plughole, the swirling is too fast and too small scale to substantiate the old rumour that wash basins north of the equator always drain in the opposite direction to those in the southern hemisphere. Yet the force does have a noticeable effect on much larger-scale masses of swirling fluids, notably hurricanes, which really do spin anti-clockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise Down Under ... That said, there have been claims that Antarctic penguins tend to walk in paths that bend around to the left. This, however, probably attests largely to the ability of beer to bend the truth." (Sunday Telegraph, 8/9/02)

@@@ GILES COREN recalled an oft-repeated apocryphal stage yarn: "Shades there of the much celebrated moment towards the end of Meshulam Riklis's famously awful production of 'The Diary of Anne Frank', starring his famously awful wife, Pia Zadora, when, as the Gestapo entered the house, an audience member shouted 'She's in the attic.'" (The Times, 29/3/03)

@@@ FURIOUS women stormed a shop in Nantes, France, which advertised in the window "chastity belts forbitches". Police were called, and the women left after the shop owner expalined that the £30 protective devices were for female dogs. (D. Sport, 22/4/03)

@@@ TO PROVE there's nothing new about the "stuck couple" tale where lovers become inextricably attached while making love, a 14th century English knight recorded a case where this painful medical condition was put down to divine intervention: "It happened that one Pres Lenard, a sergeant on the night delt fleshely with a woman in church. By a miracle they were tyes fast togedre that night and the morwe alle day. People came to see the miracle and all prayed that orrible sight might be ended. So the offenders were separated. And they that dede the dede were joyned to penaunce to go naked afore the procession three Sondays beting them self and recordying her synne before the pepille. (The Complete Illustrated Encyclopedia of Erotic Failure, Dr Peter Kinnell, Futura, 1989)

@@@ AND here's a modern take on it. When a man found his wife was being unfaithful he appealed to a witch-doctor to put a curse on her in Choma, Zambia. But the husband was surprised by the magic spell. The next time the wife had a tryst with her lover the pair became stuck fast. Neighbours alerted by the woman's screams could do nothing to separate them. Police had to carry the couple to hospital where they were eventually prised apart by medical staff. (D. Sport, 20/5/03)

@@@ ONE not too dissimilar. Passion proved a tender trap for two teenage lovers when their lips set in a red-hot kiss at traffic lights in Lille, France -- and the braces on their teeth got tangled. They caused a rush-hour traffic jam. (D. Sport, 11/3/03)

@@@ I ONCE read that Winston Churchill took to smoking cigars because he heard they were shaped by Cuban nubiles rubbing them between their firm thighs. A tobacco shop in Havana sent a dozen cigars to former U.S. President Bill Clinton of the Romeo y Julieta variety which, legend has it, are thigh-rolled. Clinton has dispatched a thank you note to store owner Emilio Egeraige, saying: "You were very kind to think of me and I appreciate your generosity." One is left wondering what he did with the stogies now that Monica Lewinsky is no longer around him (The Scurra column, D. Mirror, 29/8/02) However, R.W.F. Poole visited Cuba and reports: "Cigar manufacture is highly skilled and the myth of them being rolled on the soft thighs of Cuban maidens is just that -- a myth. The rolling is done on wooden benches, by hand." (D. Telegraph Weekend, 26/4/03)

THREE MORE "hardened criminals" cases coming up. Firstly an international hunt for kidnaped Stefania Bini, 17, ended when her body was found cemented into the floor of her uncle's basement flat. (Sun, 14/8/85) Also two corpses were found cemented together in a concrete flowerbox in a Hong Kong apartment block. The men's hands were chained behind their backs and their identities was a mystery. (Sun, 2/4/84) Manchester Crown Court heard the murder case of a bizarre love triangle where "killers encased the remains in quick-drying cement, parcelled them into metal bins and threw them into the Bridgewater Canal in Manchester.2 (D. Mirror, 13/7/02)

@@@ A drunken fat woman in her 50s got up on the stage of a Soho nightclub and started to undress in time to the music. She was driven off by a chorus of male voices chanting: "Put her on ... put them on." (D. Sport, 24/12/02)

@@@ JAN Harold Brunvand called this one from my archives "The Mexican Pet": "John and Valerie Collins, American tourists in Mexico, picked up a stray chihuahua, named it Pepsi and tok it back to their Acapulco hotel room. Next morning Pepsi was foaming at the mouth and they took him to a vet who told them Pepsi was actually a gutter rat suffering from rabies. (S. Express, 2/3/86)

@@@ I WISH I had a pound for every version of this automobile coming to harm theme. A couple making love in a car parked near a clifftop plunged to their death in Genoa, Italy, because they left the handbrake off and the rocking of the car sent it over the edge. (D. Sport, 17/12/92)

@@@ EQUALLY ubiquitous during the Seventies and Eighties was this one. Steve Owens couldn't believe it when his imported yucca plant squeaked and the garden shop in Fareham, Hants., said: "Evacuate the house!" Then he spotted a nest of deadly tarantulas. Experts warned other yucca fans to watch out. (News of the World, 18/10/87)

@@@ THE Association of The Dull Folk of America reckon their latest parade in Chicago was a great success. Nobody, not even the organisers, turned up. (D. Sport, 17/6/03)

# PROTO-LEGENDS

OO Richard Littlejohn japed with this unlikely claim that a few years ago Haringey Council, in its barmiest phase was busy renaming streets and community centres and generally trying to erase Englishness throughout the North London borough. It also decided to take an interest in pub names to make sure they were "appropriate" to a multi-cultural society. When a new pub opened in Wood Green, the landlord told the council it was to be called The Nelson, in honour of Nelson Mandela. Councillors gave the thumbs up but were surprised to see a sign outside depicting a dead white admiral rather than a black African freedom fighter. (The Sun, 26/3/02)

OO On the subject of Lord Nelson, feminists wanted Nelson's Column removed because they claimed it looked like an excited male organ. Spokeswoman Jenny Taylor (genitalia? geddit?) said: "It towers over London reminding women of a man's rampant penis." (D. Sport, 8/7/02)

OO An Israeli man who hired a prostitute suffered a heart attack when she arrived at his Red Sea hotel. She was his daughter. (Sunday Telegraph, 13/10/02)

OO Two unlucky robbers hailed a taxi after breaking out of jail and took a ride straight back inside. The cabbie in Sao Paulo, Brazil, was one of their warders earning a bit on the side. (D. Sport, 16/10/02)

OO A Chinese tourist was refused entry to Russia after he set off a geiger counter at the customs desk. Medical treatment for a thyroid disorder gave him a radiation reading 200 times higher than normal. (Sunday Telegraph, 13/10/02)

OO Stunned taxmen received a letter asking them not to send any more tax return forms to an address in Stuttgart, Germany. It read: "I have been dead for four years." (D. Sport, 8/7/02)

OO Noisy Martina Schaeffer -- evicted with her lover five times because of her screams during sex -- advertised for a deaf landlady in Berlin, Germany (Sun, 24/7/96) They finally found a home with a woman who agreed to turn off her hearing aid at 8pm each night (D. Mirror, 24/7/96)

OO Two zookeepers near Cologne, Germany, were suspended for eating the zoo animals. Police believe the men had eaten five Tibetan mountain chickens and two Cameroonian sheep. (Sunday Telegraph, 13/10/02)

OO Dairy farmers were being swindled by breeders giving cows Jordan-style implants in their udders. The cows were injected with special gas to give them "falsies" that made it look like they produced loads of milk -- which increased their value. (News of the World, 27/10/02)

OO "All clocks, electric or otherwise, will be referred to in the South Yorkshire Times as time-pieces" -- Michael Parkinson on an entry, still current, added to the paper's style book after he ended a report: "The groom presented the bride with an electric cock." (The Times, 19/10/02)

OO A London friend, whose beloved cat died quietly from old age just before Christmas, told the Peterborough column that she was not only deeply distressed by the loss of her pet, but also in difficulty as to how to lay it to rest. She agreed with her brother that he would take the body to the country and bury it in the garden of their parents' home. So she took the cat, wrapped in newspaper in a white carrier bag, by bus to her brother's flat on the other side of town. On the way she burst into tears and was comforted by a sympathetic fellow passenger surrounded by shopping. When the brother got down to the country, had dug the grave and looked into the bag, he found a 5lb leg of New Zealand lamb. (D. Telegraph, 3/1/87)

OO A radio DJ who woke his wife for a joke by calling her live on his breakfast show was speechless when a man picked up the bedside phone. Following this, Argentinian Beno Segovia got a divorce. (D. Sport, 20/4/96)

OO An advert for a nude model to pose for art students at a girls' college in Houston, Texas, drew only one reply from a 31-year-old man who had just served two months in jail for flashing at girls at the same college. (D. Sport, 8/7/03)

OO A serial burglary victim left a sign saying "Beer in fridge, don't damage anything". Thieves only stole beer and left no damage in Oggersheim, Germany. (D. Mirror, 17/7/03)

OO A 6ft 8in French tourist in a fur coat was battered by a frightened crowd of villagers in Uldz.

# ARTICLES ELSEWHERE

TICKLE STICK. -- A work-in-progress which relies heavily on public contributions is "Birds Britannica". Its compiler, Mark Cocker, has again appealed for tales, myths and superstitions regarding our avian friends. Even I was somewhat startled by the following paragraph: "A highly-prized part of the woodcock was the pin-feather, a single small plume found on each wing. It was traditionally employed to draw the gold stripe down a Rolls-Royce and was a standard tool for watercolour miniaturists, but today there is just a single artist still using it. Colin Woolf, of Betws-y-Coed in North Wales, perfected his technique after a gamekeeper chanced to give him a prized feather. One of his favourite subjects for these meticulously detailed paintings is the woodcock itself. He has also unearthed a more exotic purpose in which the pin-feather was mounted in a silver stick and used to stimulate a portion of the female anatomy ... exactly which part I leave to your imagination." Wile: "Bird symbolism of aless sublime nature was brought to my attention by Mike Pennington, of Unst, Shetland. It hinged on the sorry double entendre of the national avifauna, the shag, close relative of the cormorant, whose local name is scarie in the Northern Isles. The Shetland Youth Information Service nicely blended the old with the new in the creation of 'Scarfe the Safe Shag', a 7ft model of the seabird complete with hard hat and steel-toecap boots. While a similarly-sized condom was banned from the Lerwick streets by Shetland's elders, Scarfe was deemed not to undermine public morals and was allowed to walk the town selling the message of safe sex."

\*\* "Birds Britannica" is seeking contributions, particularly from people with anecdotes, literary references, old country names and superstitions concerning songbirds, pigeons, owls, cuckoo, swift and woodpeckers. Personal reflections in which birds, and their songs and calls, are central to a sense of season, place or the past are welcome. Write to Mark Cocker, Birds Britannica, The Hollies, The Street, Claxton, Norwich, NR14 7AA. Contributions will be acknowledged.

ROCK 'N' ROLLING STOCK. -- You don't expect a discussion on megaliths in a train magazine, but the Victorians driving the west coast main line through Kemp Howe stone circle is mentioned, as too the knowledgeable Dave McAlone mentions Long Meg and her Daughters (near anhydrite train sigings of that name) and Shap Avenue favourites Thunder and Goggleby Stones in his article "Hard rock from Shap Fell". (Rail, No. 463, 2003)

HAND JOB. -- There's a series "Someone's got to do it ..." and the first words in this case were -- "I have to admit I thought your job was an urban myth". Followed by -- "Tell the uninitiated, roughly, what you do." So freelance fluffer Fran, 20, who most recently worked on Playboy TV explained that: "I keep blokes excited. Filming takes a lot of time and he's got to keep going for quite a while -- an hour or more until it's time to do the final scene." I think you get the picture. (the times magazine, 28/6/03)

NEGATIVE EQUITY. -- I normally chuck away broadsheet property supplements without a second glance (I've lived in my property since 1969 and have no intention of moving). However, my eye caught the front page showing a dowsing from Lifespace UK Ltd. In a nutshell, the piece was about negative energy and geopathic stress lines. To balance the positive claims, a Dr Ted Nield, of the Geological Society of London, made the following assessment: "There is no known scientific basis for notions of so-called 'geopathic stress'. It is a concept more akin to ley-lines and natural magic than any definable force, though it is a convenient means of parting gullible people from their money." (D. Telegraph, 30/11/02) Nevertheless, in a short straight stretch of Kildale Grove behind where I live I know of at least five serious cancer conditions, all in men, and I wouldn't live there if I was given a house for free.

WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN. -- All kids love chips. Not my granddaughter Louise, who won't have potatoes fried, baked or mashed, but will happily join me eating gorgonzola and demolish a jar of gherkins.. I mention this as the British Potato Council is giving the humble spud a £1million makeover to counteract the anti-carbohydrate crusade. In the Inca civilisation potatoes were credited with mystical healing properties and by noting how long they took to cook, correlated an early unit of time. The anonymous profiler noted: "Its introduction to Europe in the late 16th century was ferociously resisted, with the medical establishment denouncing it as a 'pernicious substance' that caused madness, syphilis and leprosy or worse, and the mere cultivation of it (I have potato plot in the back garden -- Ed.) became, in some regions, punishable by death. The close family relationship between the potato and deadly nightshade was quickly established, and word spread that eating the new plant was hazardous in the extreme. The Catholic Church declared potatoes to be unwholesome if not ungodly." (The Sunday Telegraph, 13/7/03)

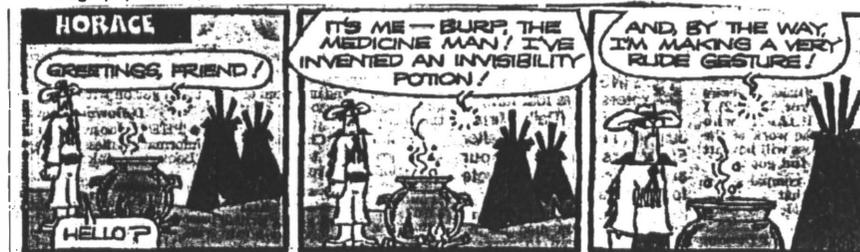
**GILLIAN GAGS.** – Arthur Mathews, co-writer of BBC2's surreal "Big Train" wrote: "Sketches with punchlines are essentially jokes; played out rather than described. In fact, jokes have to have punchlines. I know comedy writers who create material for programmes such as "Have I Got News For You?" and "Never Mind the Buzzcocks", but I don't know anyone who actually writes jokes. Who are they? Certainly, when a major disaster or tragedy occurs, they immediately spring into action like the R.A.F. during the Battle of Britain. After the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, there was an absolute spate of hugely tasteless gags circulating within days. And they didn't just write themselves. Someone must actually have come up with them. But who? Maybe it's just one person. They should put a blue plaque on his house when he dies. (It might be a woman, but the grisly nature of the work makes me feel that it's a man.) "Bill Thompson, bad taste tragedy/disaster jokesmith lived here. Creator of the joke 'What do Dodi Fayed and a blind bus conductor have in common?' Anyway, punchlines will never die out as long as we have tragedies like Royal deaths and Bill Clinton. (Clinton/Monica Lewinsky jokes recently passed the 300,000 mark, according to my wild estimates; the British record is contested between the Gillian Taylor 'motorway incident' – 20,000 approx, hugely popular at the time – and anything about Paul Gascoigne; ongoing, potentially millions." (D. Telegraph, 14/11/98)

**BREAKFAST HAPPY HOUR.** – A magazine gaining a select readership in the U.S. is "Modern Drunkard", aimed with political incorrectness at bar flies, old soaks and long-lunchers. In it a short piece of analysis draws predictable conclusions from a famous baseball performance by "Boomer" Wells, the former New York Yankees pitcher. In a recent autobiography, the magazine reveals, Wells claims he played his best-ever game while "half-drunk, with bloodshot eyes, monster breath and a raging, skull-rattling hangover". Editor Frank Rich concludes: "Alcohol can be a magnificent source of inspiration." Mr Rich also opined: "A lot of the time, it is alcohol which helps us to function in different circumstances. Look at Churchill. He was more or less drinking all the way through the Second World War. If you took any list of the greatest politicians, writers and artists that the world has produced, you'd find it dominated by functioning alcoholics." The magazine is hated by Alcoholics Anonymous workers. In Denver, a volunteer with Cares, an organisation providing refuge for street drunks, said angrily: "Come down here and I'll show you some modern drunkards." To counteract this an articulate subscriber and denizen of the Cariola bar in degraded Denver (morning Happy Hour: 7.00-10.00) said: "They've got magazines for every other minority. Why not one for drunks?" Such defiant drinkers are subscribing in increasing numbers, with latest readership figures topping 50,000. A U.K. version is planned. (The Sunday Telegraph, 29/6/03)

**SQUAWK ON THE WILDSIDE.** – Wild rose-ringed parakeets are squawking all over London these days, with an estimated population of more than 7,000 individuals. With an annual growth rate of 30% those "flying rats" pigeons had better watch out. They appear to have no natural predators here and there are even accounts of sparrowhawks trying to catch them without success. James Owens comments: "How they got here has become something of an urban myth. There are stories of them being set free from film studios, of breakouts from airport quarantine, and of bedraggled castaways from a vessel capsized in the Thames." I'd heard sailors would simply release them as they entered the Thames to plunder Kentish orchards. Owen adds: "One woman was delighted when 277 (how did she count them? - Ed.) parakeets settled in her garden – until the noise kept her awake all night." (The Times, 31/5/03) Of course, their distribution is on a quite grand scale in the South-East. Sir Christopher Lever reckoned there are three separate sources for feral long-necked, rose-ringed and green parakeets: flying home colonies kept at semi-liberty by aviculturalists which have failed to return to their aviary; escapees from pet shops or exotic bird farms; or deliberately released by sailors realising importation could necessitate long and expensive quarantine. (The Naturalized Animals of the British Isles, Hutchinson, 1977)

**CARHENGES.** – Lads' magazine Maxim has a wonderful picture of the automobile Stonehenge. Local people near Alliance, Nebraska, created Carhenge over eight days during June 1987, placing 38 vehicles in a similar astronomical alignment. "Sadly the nine-degree difference in latitude between the two henges means these mid-western druids have their big solar bash 23 days after Blighty. There's Cadillacs, Pontiacs and Plymouths, with Stonehenge's crucial Heel Stone replicated by a 1962 Caddy. After burying the vertical vehicles in the ground, the horizontals were secured with wires and cables, before the whole monument was given a lick of grey paint to provide a granite look for myopic tourists. "Gee look honey, they've carved those rocks into cars." It attracts 80,000 visitors annually, around 60% having never heard of Stonehenge. In fact, there are five American versions of the U.K. circle, making it the most widely-replicated old-world wonder in the States. (Maxim, April, 2003)

**SEX AND TRAVEL** – Fortean Times' Mythchaser should investigate the validity of this old chestnut as rolled out again, though the bad language aspect was new to me. "The two-finger V-sign, a British favourite, is said to have originated during the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, after the French had threatened to chop the 'firing fingers' off any captured English fighters. The English archers, however, waved their intact fingers at the enemy in a gesture of defiance: they also shouted 'fuck off' as they did so, thus linking the phrase with the gesture." (The Sunday Telegraph, 13/7/03).



**PARENT PARANOIA.** – Do strangers snatch children? No, writes Birna Helgadóttir, following up a handwritten sign which appeared on her school noticeboard, a warning from a well-meaning parent. Someone, it said, had tried to abduct a child from their local Sainsbury's. "It eas, in fact, an urban legend that has been circulating in various forms across the globe for decades," writes Birna. "The respected American myth-debunking site, www.snopes.com, carried several versions of the tale. Usually, it includes the added motif of abductors altering the appearance or clothing of the child in order to fool CCTV surveillance." She continued: "A couple of years ago, when we made a family trip to Disneyland, Paris, two separate friends had warned me of just such a kidnap risk, which they assured me had happened there recently. I, of course, took the story as gospel and panicked when I lost sight of one of the children in the video arcade. In fact, no child has ever been abducted from a Disney theme park anywhere in the world. (The Times, 12/4/03)

**DRAG QUEEN'S DIVA.** – When I was young, I heard a rumour that Dame Shirley Bassey was the product of a prostitute's liaison on board a ship plying between Middlesbrough and Hartlepool. Maybe it's more than coincidence that her mother came from Yorkshire and her father a merchant seaman from Nigeria, who abandoned the family when she was two. She has, however, even speculated doubtless not in all seriousness, of an extraterrestrial origin. "She often talks of her voice as if it were a separate entity. I don't know where my voice came from. It was like some gold dust went down my throat one day. Maybe I am an alien. Maybe my mother never gave birth to me. Maybe I dropped out of the sky," she told Nigel Farndale. (The Sunday Telegraph Magazine, 4/5/03)

**LEGENDS IN THEIR PLAYTIME.** – Taffy Thomas is a professional storyteller earning around £18,000 a year from telling tall stories. Asked if television hadn't killed the tradition, he answered: "You'd be surprised by the urban myths circulating in every school playground. When I was storyteller-in-residence at the Gateshead National Garden Festival, with my 'stop me and hear one' tricycle, I came away with more stories than I went in with." (Telegraph Magazine, 10/4/99)

**SIX-PACK OF LEGENDS.** – A freelance new to me, Will Hodgkinson, presented half a dozen urban myths quite stylishly, some familiar, others not, and seemingly well researched. The fullest case of the myth and then truth concerned the oil-drilling crew in Siberia who supposedly struck Hell and released the Devil, a huge bat and some of its inhabitants. I was also aware of Procter & Gamble's alleged donations to the Church of Satan and a ghost in the film Three Men and a Baby. New to me were the killer tropical spiders in a Chicago airport toilet, a Billie Holiday (and others) suicide song called "Gloomy Sunday" and inner-city lowlife spreading a mixture of LSD and strychnine on the buttons of payphones as an initiation ritual for innocent victims to hallucinate and die. What amounts to a commendable piece of journalism is only spoiled by the standfirst, which refers to a B-52 bomber found on the moon. Now, I'm no great aviation expert, but as I recall the front page splash of the Sunday Sport depicted a British Lancaster aircraft. (The Sunday Telegraph Magazine, 13/7/03)



## MAGAZINES

FORTEAN TIMES. News-stand. £3.20 with extra 16 pages. No. 170. After denouncing alignments and abandoning editorship of The Ley Hunter, Danny Sullivan took a commission to pen a book on leys, and is now unmasked by Chris Morris and David Clarke over an "Angel of Mons" scam to sell another book. My revelation to the world of the Holy Ghost as a bird, hovering in what appears to be an oval UFO shining a beam of light on to the central characters in "The Baptism of Christ" by Aert de Gelder (1645-1727), which hangs in Cambridge's Fitzwilliam Museum, is mentioned in the article "Renaissance Saucers"; transcendental meditation; disembodied intelligence; brain-influencing machines; phone malarkey; griffins galore. No. 171. Guy Lyon Playfair was shamed for his article here on identical twins in the letters columns of one of the broadsheets by someone he quoted, so let's move on to 12-year-old electricity malfunctions piece (why no update?); sponge spoof; synchronicity; out-of-date crow prophecy. No. 172. UnCon 2003 report; Sars epidemic studied; Buffy and the teen girl witchcraft phenomenon; sea-faring yarns; latest cold fusion thoughts; functioning "brainless" people; Octopus intrigue; squids in ... ; a Norwich protofortean. No. 173. Western civilisation's decision-makers controlled by alcohol; the tragic history of submarines; witches' flight; "starchild" skull; Stonehenge as depicting vagina notion revived; pseudo-gnostic gonzo-guru Jack Horsley; Everest conquest mystery; what is reality?; another doomsday Japanese cult. Strange Days weird worldwide round-up with new layout having regular features more compartmentalised, alphabetically aliens, archaeology, conspiracy, medical bag, mythconceptions, strange deaths and ufology. Plus letters, reviews and archive tales.

NORTHERN EARTH. Q. £6.50 for 4. Cheques payable to Northern Earth Mysteries Group. From 10 Jubilee Street, Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire. No. 94. In an article of the mysteries of the Lower Tees, Andrew Riley mentions the Hell's Kettles hydrogeology phenomenon and Sockburn falchion, but upon reaching Croft Spa he mentions a strange carving at St Peter's Church (but neglects to mention a carving which inspired Lewis Carroll's Cheshire Cat) and the adjacent hotel (but seems unaware that a timepiece here inspired the well-known "My Grandfather's Clock" song). I trust when his excursion reaches Sockburn that the worm legend is more complete and that Neasham's two ancient stones have their tales told fully. Also baffling sacred geometry; "art" and archaeology; dowsing Aberdeenshire recumbent stone circles such as Midmar and Sun Honey by Echt, which I've visited and written about. Regular features: archaeological round-up, book reviews, editor's musings, letters, events.

AMSKAYA. Newsletter of the STAR Fellowship. £2 for 4. Cheques payable to J. Goddard at 25 Albert Road, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey, KT15 2PX. No. 53. Jimmy unveils his new website on Philip Rodgers, a blind musician who claimed to receive extraterrestrial messages on his tape recorder; continued account of James Cooke's second trip in a spaceship, plus two other contact claims from Earth Men, Space Men edited by the late Tony Wedd. No. 54. How and why Chris Tannlund set up his Uforia Research Database; other early flying saucer contacts.

MAGONIA. Q. £7 p.a. or £9.50 for 6. Cheques payable to John Rimmer at John Dee Cottage, 5 James Terrace, Mortlake Churchyard, London SW14 8HB. No. 81. The rather bizarre relationship as misperceived by people who should know better between ball lightning and UFOs is discussed within social history of contemporary notions; the admirable Kevin McClure deconstructs the false history of Nazi flying saucer inventor Viktor Schauberger; Erich von Daniken as a template for how to write a best-seller. Regular pieces being back page diary, letters and reviews.

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