

FADEAWAY NO. 69



FADEAWAY #69 is a fanzine devoted to science fiction and related fields of interest, and is produced by **Robert Jennings, 29 Whiting Rd., Oxford, MA 01540-2035, email fabficbks@aol.com**. Copies are available for a letter of comment, or a fanzine in trade. Letters of comment are much preferred. This fanzine is in an all pixel format now. I no longer do any print copies. Any person who has not previously received a copy of this fanzine may receive a sample copy of the current issue for free by sending me your name and address. Publication schedule is erratic these days, but mostly bi-monthly. This is the May-June 2025 issue.

WELCOME TO THE NEW ISSUE which, please note, is coming out on the old original bi-monthly schedule. I would like to continue bringing the zine out on a regular bi-monthly schedule. A couple of people have volunteered to write articles for the mag, and if you have an idea that might appeal to our diverse readership, please let me know and we can work out the details.

The cover pic this time round is another illo by master futurist artist Arthur Radenbaugh (1906-1974) created back in the middle of the 20th century. See issue #67 of this zine for a fuller write-up of Mr. Radenbaugh and his astonishing variety of artwork. I have a few more pieces of his superlative artwork on file which may be featured in upcoming issues.

LAST ISSUE I discussed, with all due alarm, the fact that all the remaining US print science fiction magazines, and the two surviving US print detective story magazines had been bought up by Must Read Books Publishing. P. L. Stevens was named as the new publisher for the group of fictionmags. He issued a statement in which he promised to keep all the magazines operating both as print and digital format periodicals, plus expanding the reach of the publications by opening new distribution and retail channels.

Since then there has been almost no new information. The magazine websites say that print issues are being published, but I have yet to see one, and I don't know anybody who has gotten a print copy in the mail via subscription either. If someone reading this has actually received a print copy, please let me know, because right now I have seen no evidence that any of the magazines have returned to any newsstand in any venue.

Both Analog and Asimov's do have digital copies of recent issues for sale. Digital copies can be ordered direct from the publisher, or from major commerce websites such as Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

The situation with F&SF seems to be completely different. Despite a cheerful upbeat assessment from former owner Gordon van Gelder and the new publisher, nothing seems to be happening with the title at all. There isn't even an update on the F&SF website, which is close to a year out of date as of right now.

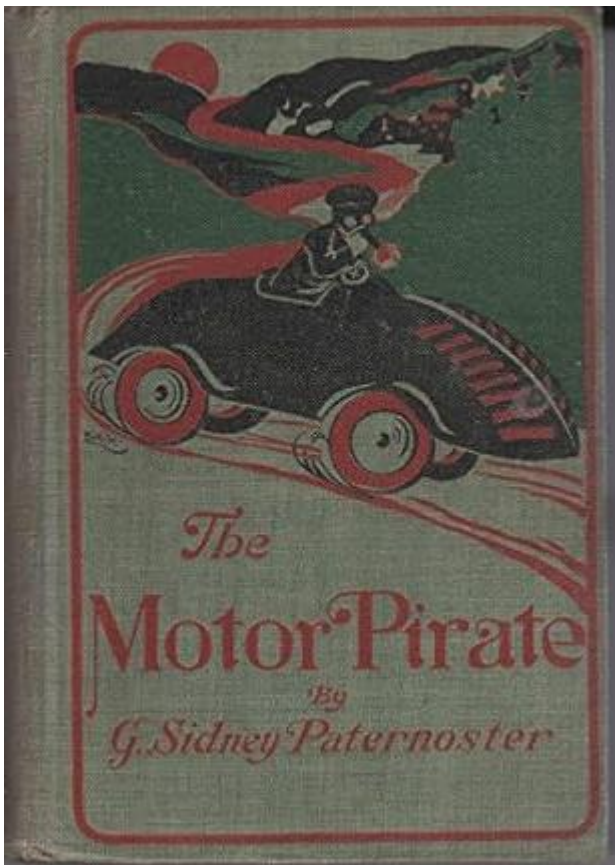
I hope this doesn't mean that F&SF has been cancelled. After almost seventy five years of printing some of the best fantasy and science fiction in the world, I would hate to see this award winning magazine vanish forever.

Unfortunately, it may be that all of the surviving print fictionmags are on the razor's edge of being cancelled. There is no reliable current info about the actual sales of the issues, digital or otherwise, under the new publisher and if the magazines cannot turn a profit then the publisher will certainly cancel them.

Without adequate distribution, including adequate on-line publicity, this may very well happen. If it hasn't happened already, that is.



Yesterday's World Of The Day After Tomorrow!



The Motor Pirate by G. Sidney Paternoster

The turn of the twentieth century was an exciting time to be alive, especially with the rapid developments occurring in the world of technology and science. Among the most interesting fields of emerging technology, and one destined to have the most far reaching effects, was the development of the automobile.

The modern automobile had been designed and turned into a workable mode of transportation in Germany during the late 1800s. In 1886 Carl Benz created a workable internal combustion vehicle and made several models of it for sale. Gottlieb Daimler developed a higher speed vehicle that ran on liquefied petroleum. From there the focus of development shifted to the United States and the UK.

This novel was published in the US in 1904, but had appeared in the UK in 1903. It was probably first run as a serial in a weekly story paper around 1902. As of this date the title of the story paper has not been identified.

When it was originally published the concepts and automotive designs discussed were day-after-tomorrow stuff, with the final revelation being well beyond the reach of an industry that was exploding with new inventions and improvements on a seemingly weekly basis.

The story deals with James Stutgrove and his friends, well to do men who own automobiles and who encounter a masked thief who uses an advanced automobile to ambush and rob motorists on the roads. This masked desperado occasionally attacked horse drawn vehicles and even trains, but his primary prey are fellow motorists plying the highways of the British countryside.

The description of the criminal and his vehicle is interesting: "As regards the appearance of his assailant, Mr. Bradshaw can give few particulars, save that he was clad in a large leather motoring coat, and his face completely hidden by a mask. The car can, on the contrary, be easily identified. It is boat-shaped, running to a sharp cutting edge both in front and behind. The body is not raised more than eighteen inches from the ground. The wheels are either

within the body, or so sheathed that they are completely hidden. It has apparently seating accommodation for two persons, the seat being placed immediately in the center of the car. Mr. Bradshaw is quite convinced that petrol is not the motive force used for its propulsion, and as he cannot imagine that an electric motor of any kind was employed; the rapidity of motion, the perfection of the steering, the absence of noise and vibration, are so remarkable that he is utterly at a loss as to what build of car was driven by the stranger."

The story details the protagonists' encounters with the Motor Pirate, plans made among themselves with the police to apprehend the culprit, with detective work, high speed motor chases, dangerous confrontations, and a love story interlaced within the adventure.

The appeal to the original reader back in 1903 was the thrill of reading about a very new technology, the internal combustion motor car, and how it played a significant part in a fast paced detective story.

For the modern reader the thrill of adventure as the story unfolds is still there, but another appeal is the strange and almost unique world of 1903, a world wildly different in so many ways from our present world of 2025.

To begin with the story casually deals with the people who are rich. They are so wealthy that they own these very early automobiles which were enormously expensive for the time period. These are people who are not just well-to-do; they are so casually wealthy that their behavior seems remarkable to us today. Nobody here works for a living. They are all independently wealthy, with plenty of money to spare, with the implication that their money came in the form of family inheritances or investment bequests. One of the characters spends his time at his special workshop trying to develop improvements in the tires used on motor cars, but his interest is not from economic necessity. He is also quite rich with a fine home, and servants. All of the central characters in this story have servants, including cooks, housemaids, valets and butlers. The clear implication is that anyone in the social class who is able to own a motor vehicle must, of necessity, also be wealthy.

The most telling display of the wealth of the characters is the fact that when James Stutgrove, our hero, in his desire to personally track down the motor pirate in order to further impress his romantic interest, Evie, the daughter of Col. Maitland, needs a car that can run at high speeds, he simply goes down to the nearest large town and buys a brand new car, for cash, on the spot. No trade-in for the old machine was even considered either.

Driving an automobile in 1903 was completely different from what we understand today. The roads of the era were generally poor for automobiles moving at even moderate rates of speed. During the course of a drive the typical motorist could expect to encounter roads ranging from rutted dirt, to loose gravel, to paved cobblestones, to surfaces little better than farm pathways.

Driving was dangerous; flip-overs were common. Cars of the era had no glass windows. Glass windows of any kind would be especially dangerous in case the car turned over, and there are thousands of cases of people killed or mutilated by auto glass in automobile accidents. The death of his daughter in just such an accident led Edouard Benedictus to develop double ply safety glass for automobiles which he was able to offer commercially in 1910.

In order to protect drivers from the very real danger of accidents and also from the dangers of driving in an open air vehicles, drivers wore full length coats, often of heavy leather, along with thick goggles, sometimes with helmets as well to protect the face from flying materials encountered, particularly dust, which was a real problem for vision and safety.

Oil and water circulation systems were usually reliable, but sometimes not, so overheated engines were a constant worry, and because of all those conditions, most motorcars were not driven during the winter months. The oil and water could easily freeze in the machine, causing serious damage. For many years into the early 20th century motorists put their automobiles up on blocks, and drained all the fluids out of the machine until warmer spring weather returned.

The body of the vehicles were stubby and compact. Aerodynamics did not exist for vehicles whose optimum top speed was between fifteen and thirty miles per hour. Aerodynamics for automobiles was an after thought as higher speeds became more attainable, and those designs were probably inspired by naval vessels. The Motor Pirate's machine features a sleek, unique aerodynamic design with wheels hidden by the body of the machine.

In those early days the gasoline tanks were smaller, and generally (but not always) better protected, since overturning on a lonely highway and having the petrol tank rupture could be a death sentence.

Headlights were provided by butane or kerosene wick lamps, later acetylene, and were often detachable so they could be used as portable flashlights in case of an accident or problem during evening drives.

Because of the rough and uncertain roadways, as well as the vibrations of the engine and the lack of reliable suspension systems, driving for long periods was extremely fatiguing, leading to frequent cramping of the hands and feet. During this particular period champagne or light wine was considered a remedy for those problems, and many motorists carried bottles of wines along for their trips. French racer Jules Goux drove in the 1913 Indianapolis 500 that he won after stopping to drink the stuff. Whiskey and soda is also carried onboard the protagonist's car in "The Motor Pirate", "for emergencies."

This story deals with all those problems and more, especially centered on the miraculous new auto the Motor Pirate has developed which he uses to rob fellow auto enthusiasts. The hallmark of the Motor Pirate's innovative vehicle is its ability to run at very high speeds for long periods of time, and to do so with little or no noise, which leads the protagonists to speculate that the Pirate has developed some new method of propulsion besides the internal combustion engine to operate his machine.

At one point in the story the Motor Pirate's miracle car clocks out at the unheard of speed of 100 miles per hour, an almost suicidal level of speed considering the sorry conditions of most roadways at that point in time, and far in advance of anything the real world had developed. Henry Ford's 999—a far more unwieldy contraption than the Pirate's—set a world land speed record at 91.37 MPH in 1902 driving on a specially designed level speed course that would have been much safer than anything our hero and the Motor Pirate encountered.

In order to apprehend the Motor Pirate our hero purchases a 60 horse-power Mercedes, which advertised as having a top speed of 68 mph. Since this model only came on the market in 1903, Patenmoster must have kept up on all the newest developments in the field to be able to place this newest model into his story.

Using his new Mercedes our hero and his friend stalk and pursue the Motor Pirate who has at this point kidnapped the hero's lady love Evie Maitland. We then read what may have been the very first high-speed motor car chase in fiction, a dangerous thrill packed journey that ran from around London to the southernmost tip of Cornwall.

Needless to say the bad guy is thwarted and the lady is rescued, but the Pirate's miracle vehicle, which we learn was run on a system of liquefied hydrogen, is lost. The villain and his vehicle plunge off the face of a cliff and are smashed on the rocks far below.

In an interesting aside, the picture plate bound into the volume shows the Motor Pirate forcing ladies from a horse drawn coach he has stopped to dance for him. This is an odd choice, since the incident was a two line description from near the end of the volume. One would think the publisher would have asked for an artistic portrayal of the miracle motor car instead.

Not much is known about G. Sidney Paternoster, the author of this book. Born 1866, died 1925, he had an extensive career writing fiction of all kinds for the weekly British story papers, and providing fiction and short sketches to the newspapers of the day. At some point he obtained regular employment with *The London Times*, after which his fiction output seems to have declined slightly, but he branched out to write several books about sensational current event crimes and natural disasters.

The unexpected sales success of "The Motor Pirate" led Paternoster to miraculously revive his dead villain in "The Cruise of the Conquistador; or, the further adventures of the Motor Pirate" published in 1905, in which the Motor Pirate takes his inventive genius to the high seas. The story appearing first as a serial in *Car Illustrated*, a weekly publication of the Royal Automobile Club, and was immediately picked up by L.C. Page for hardback publication. Copies of the original "The Motor Pirate" are relatively common. I have never seen a copy of the sequel anywhere, altho it was reprinted as a serial in other British auto club magazines as late as 1915.

Paternoster also revisited the concept of a brilliant master criminal who uses fantastic methods to commit sensational crimes with "The Master Criminal" which came out in 1907. Another mystery involving automobiles "The Lady of the Blue Motor" also appeared in 1907.

"The Motor Pirate" starts out with a stilted, antique writing style, but after the opening chapters the writing style relaxes as the characters are introduced and the actual plot begins to unfold. Paternoster is an engaging writer, able to hold reader interest, despite us knowing the identity of the Motor Pirate almost immediately into the adventure. It's a fast moving period piece that focuses on the fascination the public had with new developing science and technology, the kind of interest that would soon blossom into modern science fiction.

Inexpensive physical copies of this book can be found easily, while copies are posted for free on the internet in dozens of places, including Project Gutenberg. It's well worth reading.

---Bob Jennings



HE HAD INSISTED UPON THE TWO WOMEN DANCING FOR HIS AMUSEMENT

Around the World... Vicariously

---Richard Lynch

Anyone who's ever been to Paris knows that the city is filled with fascinating things to see and experience. That's certainly true for me, and I feel fortunate that my travels have taken me there five times. I could write a lot about those trips (and I have), about all the captivating art and architecture that attracts visitors by the thousands, but there's one place worth seeing that doesn't get a whole lot of tourist attention – the Esplanade de la Défense.

It's a very large plaza that's located just beyond where Avenue Charles de Gaulle (an extension of the Champs-Élysées) crosses the Seine. The far end is dominated by the Grande Arche building, a hollowed-out cube about 360 feet tall which prosaically mostly houses government offices. But the plaza itself is home to a really good open air sculpture garden including large ones by Alexander Calder and Joan Miró. And there's also another thing of interest there, especially to science fiction fans like me – the Jules Verne Carousel.

It's not large as carousels go, but it's ornate and very colorful. In addition to painted horses, there are stylized recreations of the types of transportation featured in some of Verne's fiction – a space capsule (*From the Earth to the Moon*), a submarine (*20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*), and a passenger balloon (*Five Weeks in a Balloon*). But I didn't notice anything specific to Verne's most famous tale of all – *Around the World in 80 Days*. That was a head scratcher. But no matter – just seeing the carousel piqued my interest enough that I decided I wanted to vicariously go around the world myself. So I downloaded an ebook of the novel.

I'm somewhat embarrassed to admit that I'd never read it before, but it was most definitely worth doing. It's a terrific story whose plot (about a £20,000 wager between members of London's exclusive Reform Club) is now so well known that it doesn't need much describing. And even though the novel has unsurprisingly aged a lot in terms of modes of transportation and how people interact with each other, it's still a pretty good read.

I liked it a lot, and after finishing it I felt inspired to do even more. So I watched the 1956 movie adaptation where David Niven played English gentleman-turned adventurer Phileas Fogg and then the 2004 remake which starred Jackie Chan as Fogg's manservant Jean Passepartout. And I also watched two miniseries remakes – ones that had originally aired in 1989 (which featured Pierce Brosnan as Fogg) and in 2021 (with David Tennant as Fogg). And now for something completely different, I even watched the 1989 BBC seven-part documentary series which followed Michael Palin in his quest to recreate Phileas Fogg's journey.

Were they all worth the effort? For anyone who is a dedicated movie watcher, absolutely. I'm not even close to being that and I never felt my time was being wasted. But are they all good? Different story...

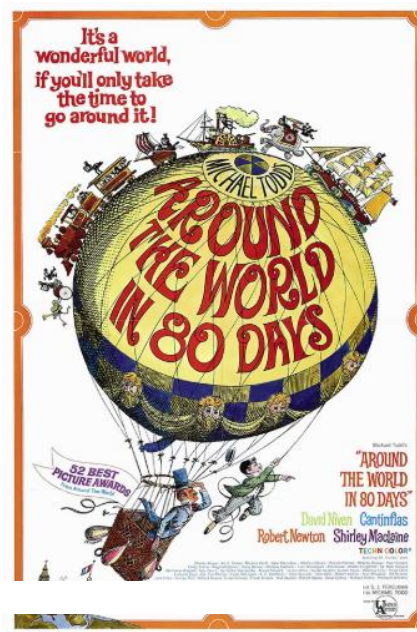
The 1956 movie *is* pretty good and sets kind of a gold standard for all the other film and television versions, as it well should. It was the winner of the 'Best Picture' Academy Award in 1957, beating out such notables as *Giant*, *The King and I*, and *The Ten Commandments*, and it also won four other Oscars, one of them for its superb cinematography. Not only that, the theme music has become an



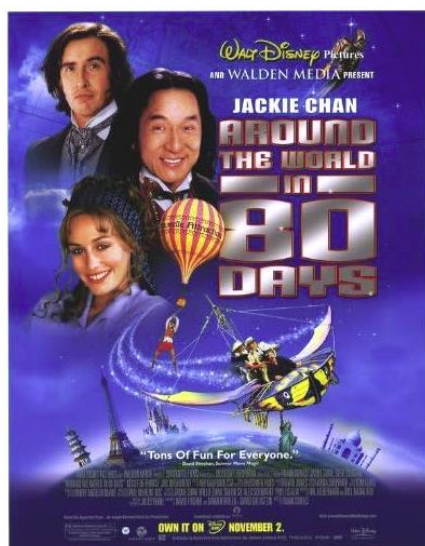
space capsule pod
in the carousel

evergreen melody that is instantly recognizable.

The film is a reasonable adaptation of the novel, even with addition of the now-iconic hot air balloon crossing of the Pyrenees (which was not part of Verne's story). Perhaps the only real nit to pick is that the movie tended to drag a bit whenever one of the stars (in particular Cantinflas, who played Passepartout) was spotlighted. And there were *a lot* of Hollywood stars in this movie – more than 50 cameo appearances by famous actors and actresses, ranging from Beatrice Lillie as a London revivalist leader to Frank Sinatra as the piano player in a San Francisco saloon. It almost became a game to spot them all, at the risk of the overall plot becoming of secondary interest. Overall it gets a 72% rating at Rotten Tomatoes and the critics consensus there states that: *"Its cheerful lack of pretense – as well as its grand scale and star-stuffed cast – help make Around the World in 80 Days charmingly light-hearted entertainment."* And that goes for me as well – I certainly would like to see it again someday.



Moving from the sublime to the ridiculous, the Jackie Chan 2004 chop-socky treatment was, to be polite, not so good. Chan has the top billing here even though Passepartout is not the main character in the story. As Verne wrote it, Passepartout is quite clearly French. And quite clearly, Jackie Chan...isn't. (Spoiler: His accent gives him away.) Wikipedia states that this version is



movie poster for the 2004 film

“loosely based” on the Verne novel, and boy ain’t that the truth – there are *many* major deviations. Phileas Fogg is provided the preposterous back story as being a brilliant inventor whose wheeled contraption has broken a land speed record. Passepartout is actually a master thief who is on the run from an evil Chinese general and his Black Scorpion minions. Instead of money, what’s at stake in the wager which started this adventure is the position of Minister of Science in the British Government. And there are plenty more than just those.

I wasn’t surprised to find that this remake only scored a 32% rating at Rotten Tomatoes, and the critics consensus there tersely points out the obvious: *“Hit-and-miss family fare that bears only the slightest resemblance to Verne’s novel.”* But you know, even though it’s not a very good adaptation I still found it reasonably entertaining. Jackie Chan fight scenes are invariably outrageously amusing and there were several of those in the movie. It was never

boring and the characters were likeable. If one is gifted with an industrial-strength suspension of disbelief and has never read the novel, this might be considered a masterpiece dramedy. And it helped that the overall running time was only two hours – by far the shortest of the five versions I’ve seen. That’s not long enough for the plot to drag.

That unfortunately wasn’t the case for the Pierce Brosnan three-part miniseries. The total running time was close to five hours (though it seemed longer) and made for a glacially-moving plotline. That plus the woodenness of Brosnan and the inclusion of Eric Idle and his painfully bad imitation French accent as Passepartout made me wonder what was going through the minds of the show-runners when they cast and scripted this production. I’ll give them some credit for mostly following the Verne narrative, though they inserted minor storylines for several historical figures (Louis Pasteur, Sarah

Bernhardt, Jesse James and Cornelius Vanderbilt, to name a few) who did not appear in the novel. This, probably, was so that they could follow the example set by the 1956 movie and have dozens of cameo appearances by notable actors such as Lee Remick, Patrick Macnee, Christopher Lee, Darren McGavin, and Roddy McDowall. All this didn't really help, though – there was just no panache to the production. I'm not sorry I watched it, but in the end I was relieved when it was finally over.

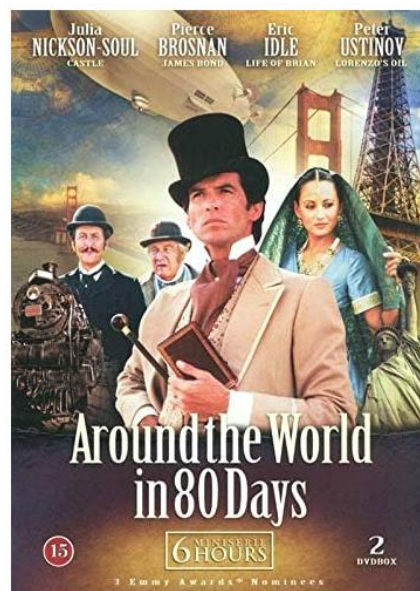
I'd looked forward to seeing this miniseries with hopes that it might approach the 1956 movie in terms of being a quality production. But instead, I came away really let down on how disappointing it turned out to be – it was easily the worst of the five versions I've seen. It gets only middling ratings at IMDB (Rotten Tomatoes doesn't have any score for it yet), and any adaptation of the Verne novel should aspire to be a lot better than that.

Much better is the eight episode miniseries that aired on PBS in 2021, though it's probably an even looser adaptation than the Jackie Chan movie. But it appeared to be intended that way. Each episode is a separate and interesting drama in itself, sometimes touching on current-day themes such as political unrest, racial discrimination, and social norms. Perhaps the best one took place in the middle of a foreboding desert – during a trek across Saudi Arabia's Empty Quarter, Fogg's expedition is robbed and stranded by its Arab guides but is rescued by English aristocrat Jane Digby and her sheik husband. The depiction of Digby, famous for her many lovers and adventurous lifestyle, was an interesting character study that induced me to learn a bit more about her life and times.

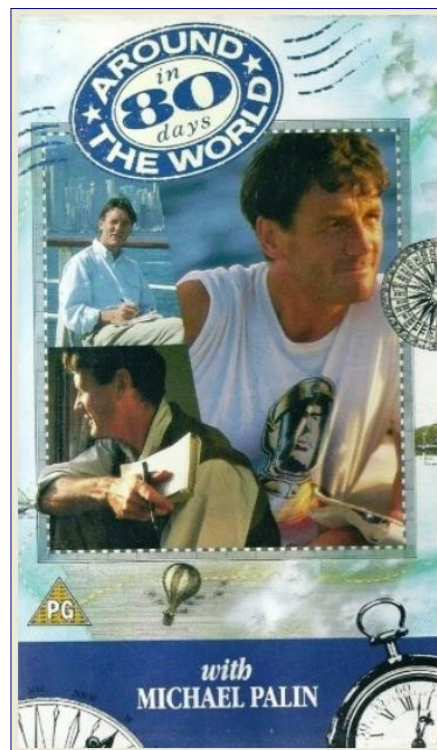
What made this a superior production, for me at least, was the acting, especially David Tennant's really good portrayal of Phileas Fogg. And also Ibrahim Koma's Passepartout, which was head-and-shoulders better than Eric Idle and Jackie Chan, and probably as good (though in a different way) as Cantinflas. Tennant and Koma really breathed life into their characters, making them seem as 'real' as their counterparts in Verne's novel.

I'd expected that Rotten Tomatoes would also like the series, and it did – it got an excellent 81% rating. The critics consensus is that: *"Around the World in 80 Days sometimes stumbles when it tries to add modern resonance to Jules Verne's globetrotting epic, but the core cast make for terrific travel companions."* They certainly were for me.

And then we come to the best of the lot – writer and actor Michael Palin's superb 1989 BBC documentary about what was then a current-day attempt at recreating Phileas Fogg's journey, starting at the same place (the Reform Club) and same day & time (October 2nd at 8:45pm) as did Fogg. The BBC had given Palin the challenge of completing Fogg's circumnavigation in the same 80 day timeframe, but (true to the novel) he had to do it without use of any aircraft. It made for some incredible experiences. There were misadventures here and there as well as continuing



poster for the 1989 miniseries



pressure to make up lost time resulting from a critical missed travel connection. But the most memorable part of the series was the people he met along the way.

Palin is a very outgoing person, which I guess is why The Beeb had wanted him for this recreation. And as such, he never seemed fazed about much of anything. I consider myself a fairly seasoned international traveler but I know I would have been anxious, to say the least, about coping with all the language barriers he encountered and the less-than-optimum conditions aboard some of the modes of transportation he used in his travels. But Palin seemed to relish the challenges, taking every opportunity to talk and interact with common folk and fellow travelers.



poster for the 1989 documentary series

Perhaps the best example of this, in what I think is the best episode of the series, happened when Palin and a four-person film crew (collectively referred to as his Passepartout) had to find a way to get from Dubai to Bombay. There weren't many surface travel options back then, and they ended up on a small commercial dhow for what turned out to be an eight-day voyage through the Strait of Hormuz and across the Arabian Sea. The conditions were rustic, with Palin and his team sleeping on deck using big sacks of grain, nuts and dates as their beds, having to use an open-air latrine where one's butt hung over the edge of the boat, and observing the dhow's captain navigate using sextant, compass, and a lot of dead reckoning. When boarding the vessel, Palin seemed somewhat apprehensive about what he and his team had probably assumed would be a very difficult time at sea. But the dhow's crew was very friendly and it didn't take long for bonding to happen. By the end of the voyage it was as if they had all become a large extended family, eating the same food and sharing life experiences among each other. When Palin finally left the dhow at Bombay he

expressed remorse that he'd never see them again.

This is a truly superior series, a delight to watch. Each episode was absolutely compelling viewing. There's no rating at Rotten Tomatoes, but IMDB reviewers loved it. One of them wrote that: *"The trip is beautifully filmed and Michael Palin's wit and charm makes it a special experience."* And I totally agree. The series was successful enough that it provided Palin with a new post-Monty Python career as a travel adventurer and documentarian – there are nine more epic journeys he's made though various parts of the world that were filmed and turned into multi-part television series. I haven't seen any of them yet. But I absolutely intend to.

In case you're wondering, there are other adaptations of *Around the World in 80 Days* besides these. Back in 1972, a somewhat comedic 16-episode Australian-produced animated series was aired in the USA as Saturday morning children's programming. There was also another animated version, a 2021 French-produced film with anthropomorphic animals (such as 'Phileas Frog') as the main characters. And way back in 1919 there was a German silent film whose cast included an actor who later became a Nazi. I'm not really intending to look for any of them, though – there's a limit on how much of a completist I'm willing to be.

Before I close the book, so to say, on *Around the World in 80 Days*, I'll mention that in all my international travels (and there have been a lot of them) I never once had a trip which took me completely around the world. It's not really a regret but if I had a bucket list that would probably be the #1 entry on it. So if Michael Palin is planning any more trips like that, I'm definitely interested.

Hey, Michael, bring me along! ☀

THE GREEN HORNET HITS THE SMALL SCREEN

---Martin Grams Jr.



During the thirties, forties, and fifties, when dramatic adventure radio programs attracted a juvenile audience craving blood and thunder, parents deplored them as unwholesome trash. (It is ironic that when compared to today's television programs, they are about as violent as the puffed cereal they peddled.) The Green Hornet, for example, felled his adversaries with a harmless gas squirted from a gun that only the masked man carried. He scared miscreants and knocked them unconscious so the police would find the crooks with possession of the goods and cinch convictions. Like The Lone Ranger, The Green Hornet never killed or permanently injured anybody. Variety described it best when it commented how *The Green Hornet* program was "aimed for young teeners and it dishes out the kind of excitement that should take them away from their comic book literature for the twice weekly tune-in." This did not stop concerned parents from writing letters of complaint to sponsors, however, making the program a hard sell on a national coast-to-coast hookup from 1936 to 1952.

The premise was simple: Britt Reid played the militant newspaperman by day, putting his principles into action by night, when, as The Green Hornet, he struck at every phase of crime fostered by a racketeering syndicate. Under cover of night and known only to one other living person as The Green Hornet, Reid waged a one-man fight to bring law breakers to his self-made justice. Through police circles and his own reporters, Britt Reid was familiar with crime and racketeering and this source of information gives him first-hand opportunity to enact the secret role of "The Green Hornet."

Kato, his faithful valet, was the only person who knew Britt Reid to be The Green Hornet and he rendered valuable assistance in the crusade against crime. Kato usually remained in the shadows, ready

to shoot the lights out should a situation become dangerous, or remained behind with the getaway vehicle to apply assistance when the risk was too dangerous for The Green Hornet to act alone.

Britt Reid's father, a retired financier, believing that his dilettante son should find a serious mission in life, turned over the publishing of The Daily Sentinel to Britt, with carte blanche opportunity to handle the newspaper. That was in 1936. Also, the senior Reid, knowing of possible pitfalls to any exuberant young man, assigned as a personal bodyguard Michael Axford, a former police detective. Axford was put on the payroll as a reporter and took his duties seriously, especially when The Green Hornet began his one-man raids upon "law breakers within the law." As publisher, Reid offered a huge reward for the capture of The Green Hornet, keeping people from suspecting he was, himself, the notorious masked man. This circumstance allowed for highly interesting plots and situations and yet furthered the success of his fight against crime.



The Green Hornet debuted on radio two years before Superman premiered in comic books and was among a number of notable airwave heroes to originate from radio station WXYZ, Detroit, Michigan, such as *The Lone Ranger*, *Ned Jordan*, *Secret Agent*, and *Sergeant Preston of the Yukon*. "It had the best ingredients," recalled George W. Trendle, the co-creator of the masked avenger. "It was a mystery, really, a melodrama. All the stories were based on common things that you read in the newspapers."

In truth, the radio program was primarily created by Fran Striker (with Trendle's request for a modern-day crime thriller to replace *Warner Lester*, *Manhunter*). It was Striker who borrowed elements from *The Adventures of Jimmie Dale* (1914), a pulp fiction hero written by Frank L. Packard. Jimmie Dale was a wealthy playboy by day, but at night put on a costume and became The Gray Seal, who enters businesses or homes and cracks safes, always leaving a

diamond shaped, gray paper "seal" behind to mark his conquest, but never taking anything. In Striker's rendition, The Green Hornet left behind a green seal at the scenes to taunt the police and remind the racketeers who was responsible for betraying their partnership, an element that would be dropped from the program by 1940. It was Striker who decided to replicate *The Lone Ranger* formula which he himself also created, that of a minority sidekick. Instead of a white horse speeding away, The Green Hornet and Kato sped away from crime scenes in a black roadster known as the Black Beauty.

During World War II, the radio plots were tweaked to feature black market racketeers and fifth column spies as villains. In 1947, due to an ever-growing criticism of *The Green Hornet* program from concerned parents, the plot device was changed so that The Green Hornet worked alongside Commissioner Higgins of the police, was cleared of all charges and no longer considered a wanted criminal, and even his secretary, Lenore Case, was brought into Britt's confidence. During this four-month transition on the program, Britt's father, Dan Reid, learned of his son's secret and chuckled in response. Calmly, Dan revealed he once rode alongside a masked man on a white horse... Britt's great uncle was the masked man known as The Lone Ranger!

By 1952, during the final year of the radio program, The Green Hornet found himself exchanging fisticuffs with Communist spies. But after a 13-week revival, the radio program ceased any chance of returning to the major networks. Trendle himself confessed the program had always been a “tough sell,” even after the major revision of the character.



Still, the radio program was popular enough to generate a series of comic books beginning in 1940, running for a span of 47 issues through the summer of 1949. These were followed by one Four-Color issue in 1953 and three Gold Key issues tying in to the television series in 1967.

During the course of World War II, The Green Hornet and Kato battled Japanese saboteurs and Nazi fifth columnists as well as racketeers and gangsters. Historically, issue No. 13 was the first *Green Hornet* comic book to depict a Nazi on the cover. Issue No. 20 featured a two-page text story with a plot involving Japanese who take charge of an old, unused movie studio on Fisherman’s Sound to rig up a television set and demoralize the American people with fraudulent images. That same issue featured “Terror From the Past,” a 10-page comic story about a mad Japanese who seeks revenge against Americans with a Tyrannosaurus Rex, still alive and awakened from its slumber in a

cave on Long Island. Not the type of stories children expected to hear on the radio program, but that is what makes the comic books so unique and sought after.

Careful review of the publisher’s production files reveals that the first issue had a print run of 213,169 copies, and the comic book reached a peak of 480,000 printing with issue No. 21 (November 1944). While print runs should dictate the scarcity and value of the comic books today, the condition of the issues now also makes a major difference.

In the same year the comic books premiered on newsstands, *The Green Hornet* made the transition to motion pictures. Universal Pictures produced and released a series of 13 film shorts based on the radio program, a cliffhanger serial in the studio’s finest tradition of *Buck Rogers* and *Flash Gordon*, and with the same production values. Gordon Jones played the title role of Britt Reid, alias The Green Hornet, with radio’s Al Hodge reprising the role of The Green



Hornet whenever the mask was covering Jones' face. The role of Kato was played by Keye Luke, known then for his recurring role as Lee Chan in a series of Charlie Chan movies.

There has long been a common myth circulating that Kato switched from Japanese to Filipino the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor. In truth, Kato was referred to as Filipino on the radio program months prior to the attack. For the cliffhanger serial, Universal Pictures had its own solution: Kato's nationality was disclosed in the very first chapter of the serial as Korean, avoiding any possible reference to the Japanese.



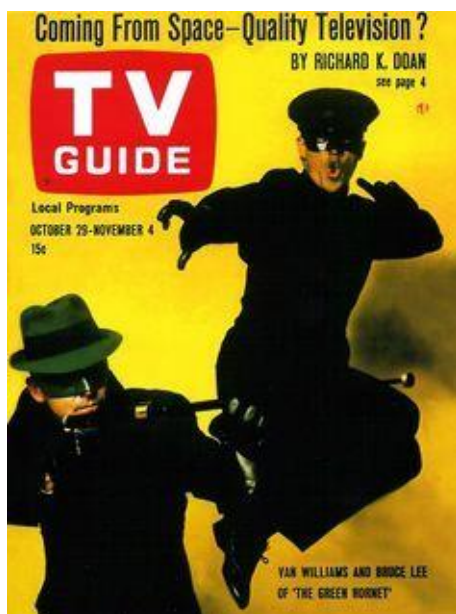
The cliffhanger was financially profitable for the studio, which produced a second serial, released a year later in 1941. *The Green Hornet Strikes Again* starred Warren Hull (replacing Gordon Jones) and Keye Luke. Like the first serial, the second recycled plots from radio scripts. Trendle would later attempt to make a TV series cut from the serials. Unable to sell the proposed series by 1951, though, he chose to film a 25-minute TV pilot with Steve Dunne in the title role. (To date, that 1951 pilot is considered “lost” due to a lack of preservation.)

In the summer of 1965, producer William Dozier (of *Batman*) approached George W. Trendle for the rights to produce a weekly television program based on *The Green Hornet*. Trendle was open to the idea but negotiations took long months because Trendle insisted that he had all rights of refusal for television scripts. As a result, throughout production, Trendle found multiple flaws in every script and even when it looked like the rewrites were satisfactory, he still found reasons to lodge complaints. Trendle expected the program to resemble the radio rendition, while Dozier was shooting for something to cash in on the James Bond craze, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*, and his own popular *Batman* series.

Trendle never liked the gimmick of the fireplace going down to a lower level of the house like a secret passage, nor Kato alongside The Green Hornet. Trendle rationalized that if anyone saw an Asian – also referred to as Kato – standing alongside a masked man, they would be able to put one and one together and identify the Green Hornet as Britt Reid. Dozier assured him that this was television and therefore viewers applied a suspension-of-disbelief aspect.

This did not stop from Dozier having to negotiate for colorful plots such as having John Carradine play a notorious Jack-the-Ripper style killer known as “The Scarf,” who owned a wax museum, or a two-part adventure involving aliens from outer space, despite Trendle's protests. Having learned the valuable lesson of having two of every prop made for the television series, auto customizer George Barris produced two of the Black Beauty, both of





which appear on the same screen in one episode where a counterfeit Green Hornet roamed the streets in his own black speedster.

Today, *The Green Hornet* television program is best known for having had Bruce Lee in its cast. Before his untimely death in 1973 at the age of 32, the Chinese-American martial arts fighter also played the lead in a handful of international hit films produced in Hong Kong. As *The Green Hornet* series was his first role for American film studios, his salary was \$400 per episode – a mere pittance compared to that of Van Williams, who played the title role, for \$2,000 per episode. (By comparison, guest stars on the episodes were paid more.) Overseas in some countries, the program would be re-titled *The Kato Show*, while Bruce Lee confessed that he had no qualms regarding salary because the program boosted his name status and popularity. In the mid-seventies, three episodes of the TV series were edited into a motion picture and released in theaters. In some countries,

including the United States, the movie was not titled *The Green Hornet*, but instead promoted as *Kato*.

The ABC network expected the same popularity from the show as *Batman*, but the ratings were not as strong, nor was the fan mail. This did not stop ABC-TV from renewing the initial 17-episode contract for an additional nine episodes, for a total of 26. First run episodes of *The Green Hornet* aired for only half a year and it was never renewed for a second season. By that time, producer Bill Dozier had filmed a five-minute *Wonder Woman* pilot (starring Ellie Wood Walker) as well as a 25-minute *Dick Tracy* pilot, neither of which would be bought by the network heads.

When Dozier noticed the ratings slipping, he theorized: “I think there was a great deal of curiosity about it at first, particularly because of the great success of *Batman*, and apparently now that the audience has sampled *Green Hornet*, they are more inclined to prefer what they see on *Wild, Wild West* and *Tarzan*. My personal feeling is that our shows have all looked pretty much the same and that our format is much too narrow.”



In desperation, after an exchange of letters, Trendle relinquished script approval to Dozier and granted permission for a Green Hornet crossover on a two-part *Batman* adventure. The crossover was meant to draw in a ton of fan letters from viewers to convince the network to renew *The Green Hornet* for a second season. Alas, it was not meant to be. The expected large volume of fan letters totaled four.

Over the years, the commercial property has been marketed through a series of short story collections, comic book revivals, and Funko Pops, and even the original radio episodes continue to be released two or three times a year on CD through Radio Spirits. The television program, however, has yet to be released commercially on DVD or Blu-ray, giving fans a practical reason to buy homemade DVD sets from the remastered Action telecasts on the “grey” market.

In January of 2011, a big screen movie of *The Green Hornet* was produced and released through Sony Pictures, with Seth Rogen in the lead. The film received generally mixed reviews from critics and grossed \$227.8 million against a \$110–120 million production budget. (Which is not bad when you consider that many eagerly-anticipated movies released that summer never even grossed half the money it cost to produce.)

Martin Grams Jr. is an author, researcher and acknowledged expert on the history of television, old time radio, and motion pictures. He has written over twenty published books and hundreds of articles devoted to these subjects. He hosts an interesting and informative web site at: <http://martingrams.blogspot.com/> He also puts on the popular Mid-Atlantic Nostalgia Con which features dozens of media stars, authors, and other people involved in the entertainment biz. 2025 will be the convention's 15th year and will take place from September 18th to the 20th at the Sheridan Baltimore North Hotel in Townson, Maryland. Additional info can be viewed at: <https://www.midatlanticnostalgiaconvention.com/>



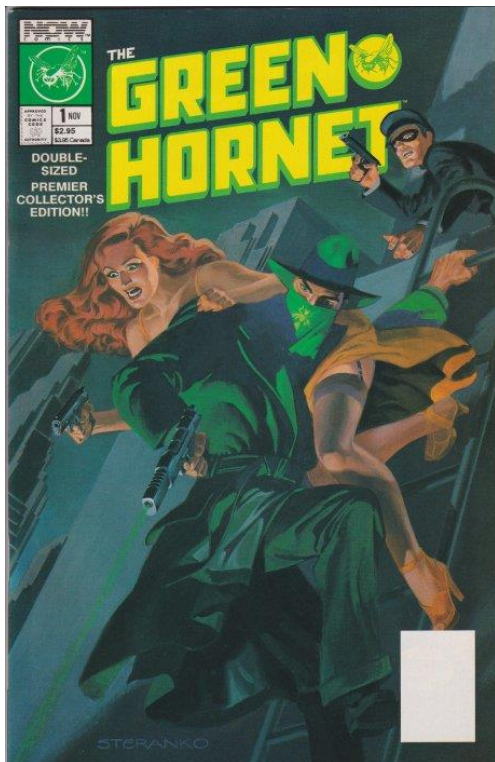
Bob Jennings here again, with a few words about that 2011 movie version of “The Green Hornet”. This was a dreadful Technicolor travesty that savages the previously sterling reputation of the Green Hornet character in a multi-million dollar fest of destruction and mayhem.



This was a *very* loud movie notable for the number of explosions, multiple scenes of senseless violence, raging gun battles, lack of a believable story, and even more explosions. To paraphrase science fiction writer Harlan Ellison, today’s film makers feel obliged to insert explosions, chases and major mindless destruction of property in their films to cover up the fact that they have no plot, and this “Green Hornet” film is certainly a prime example of that.

This movie was originally conceived back in 1992, when the first option was taken. The path toward actual filming was long and convoluted. No fewer than twelve script writers either crafted or rewrote, or redialoged, or repositioned the script to the mindless mess that finally did emerge onto film.

This project was actually begun back in 1992, which, coincidentally, also happened to be the time that NOW Comics released their excellent *Green Hornet* comic book series. It bounced around various studios and producers a couple of years, and George Clooney was signed to be the star on a pay or play contract, which means he got his base salary whether the movie was made or not. It wasn’t made, but



Clooney got his fee while more rewrites and rescheduling took place. By 1995 Jason Scott Lee was signed on to play Kato, and the project was supposed to be done and in the theaters by 1997.

But, of course, more obstacles lay in the way. By 2000 several studios had optioned and dropped out of the running, while a whole slew of new stars had been signed and dropped out because of the long delays in production. Placement for vehicle design was signed with Ford Motors, while Dark Horse Comics came on board as a co-producer to get the story turned into a workable script with full story-boards and breakdowns.

Except that Miramax Films won a short bidding war to take over the project (coughing up three million for the whole package), and they didn't like what had been done before so they started with yet another new script.

In 2004 the president of Miramax hired cult film maker and comic book writer Kevin Smith to create a completely new script for the movie. Despite constant interference from the studio and the assorted producers who came and went, half the new script was done by the end of 2004 when Smith abruptly threw in the towel and turned his attention to reworking the character for Dynamite Comics after Now Comics went bankrupt. NOW Comics had published a long and successful run of their *Green Hornet* comic book series based directly on the original radio character.

This comic book series was successful enough to launch several spin-offs, some mini-series and an ambitious but ill advised effort to reprint the original *Green Hornet* comics from the early 1940s. (The early years of the original 1940s series are awful, featuring bad art and crappy stories that tried to shoe-horn half hour Green Hornet radio scripts into nine page comic book stories.)



Both the NOW Comics and the Dynamic comic series and their spin-offs, with the notable exception of the classic reprint series, were all very successful. Lured by the obvious public acceptance of the character's potential, as shown by the impressive comic book sales, Neal Mortiz obtained the film rights, and in a complex deal involving Sony, Original Film (his outfit), and others. Paramount Pictures optioned the project in 2007.

Seth Rogen was signed as the new star, and as part of the deal, was allowed to write a new script, throwing out almost everything Smith had created. He stressed action, and lots of it. Evan Goldberg helped him smooth the script into something workable. Meanwhile more producers, directors, sequence actors, and backup production people came and went with astonishing rapidity.

The series was supposed to be shot in Detroit, the home of WXYZ Radio where the original Green Hornet radio series was created and broadcast. The mixture of ultra modern new century polish with the decadence and urban decay that marks current Detroit would have been ideal for the movie, but the newest producers decided they liked Los Angeles much better. Actual filming took place rapidly because so much of the film involved super-imposed special effects for all

the new action sequences filled with explosions and chases.

During the production twenty-nine modified Imperial Crown sedans, models 1964 to 1966 were used as the Hornet's super car. Twenty-six of them were completely wrecked during the filming. Only three survived to make a public promotions tour when the film was (finally) released in 2011, after five delays, including one to convert the film to 3-D. The 3-D treatment added another ten million bucks to the production costs.

The results were mixed. Critics and purists all hated it. On the other hand the teenage and early twenties age group audience that goes to see action films did like it, or at least they paid money to see it. The film cost 120 million to make. It grossed 98.7 million in domestic sales, plus 129 million overseas, for a total of 227.8 million, which would seem respectable, except the film had very short legs and hidden costs, particularly with the post release publicity, and apparently, limited appeal for the TV market. As a result the studio and the producers have declared there will not be a sequel. Thankfully.

Nobody I know who actually saw this film really cared for this movie. The irritating thing about this is that if they had accepted Kevin Smith's script the movie could well have been as successful as his ongoing comic book version of the character. Going for the juvenile treatment, with an overload of explosions, dumb jokes, gadgets, lots of gun fights and chases insured this movie will be on the lower end of the Rotten Tomatoes list for many decades to come.



MORE NEW MATERIAL IN THE OLD TIME RADIO HOBBY HAS SHOWN UP

in the first
twenty-five

years of this new century than had turned up in the last twenty-five years of the previous century, the same period during which the OTRadio hobby was becoming established.

Why this has happened has been a source of mystery and speculation within the hobby. In some cases it has been a simple matter of asking hard core record collectors to look over their material and determine if they happen to have transcription disks of old radio shows in their collections.

In the days before tape recording became popular in the early 1950s, and for a long time thereafter, transcription discs were the primary way that radio programs were recorded and preserved. Companies that syndicated programs were the primary users of this system, but even in the days when all the major radio networks insisted that all their programs be performed live on the air, transcription discs were used to preserve the shows. Copies were made for the sponsors, sometimes copies were made for copyright, sometimes copies were made in case there were problems with the rebroadcasts to the other side of the country due to the time differences between regions. Sometimes the stars or the writers of the shows wanted copies for their own purposes.

Then there are the cases of when transcription discs were made, and were preserved for a long long time, surviving against all the odds, against all the efforts to have those shows destroyed, or turned into recycled material for the WWII scrap drives, or lost and forgotten for a dozen other reasons.

That is the case with "Cecil and Sally", a very early sit-com radio show from the late 1920s. Enormously popular when it was introduced, transcription copies were made of those programs for syndication across the country. By all logic those transcription discs should have been destroyed as newer shows and newer projects were introduced to the medium. But for assorted reasons, a tremendous cache of "Cecil & Sally" transcriptions was preserved and kept in good condition for almost a hundred years, until they were discovered, cleaned up and released to the hobby thru a very successful recent Kickstarter campaign.

I was one of the early supporters to that cause. As soon as those thousands of transcription discs were released in MP3 format to the backers, I started listening to the shows. There were a lot of them. I got a couple of years into the series when I got diverted by other things, and only recently started listening to the series again. This is a charming, fun show that has stood the test of time nicely. Rather than trying to explain the program and its appeal myself, please read this excellent article on Cecil & Sally by Doug Hopkinson---

We've enjoyed finding and collecting Cecil and Sally since its rediscovery a couple of years ago. But the preeminent current expert on Cecil and Sally is **Doug Hopkinson**, who has generously permitted us to include his excellent paper on this fascinating program on our site. Here follows his comprehensive report on one of earliest West Coast Radio's most entertaining--and popular--programs:

Cecil and Sally: A Study in Obscurity by *Doug Hopkinson*

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About two years ago a friend of mine sent me an audio CD with two episodes of a radio show called Cecil and Sally circa 1930. My first thought was, what the heck is this? Probably some dusty old soap opera I'm not going to want to listen to.

When I played the CD what I heard was a couple of teen-age kids having silly conversations with each other. The two episodes I had were not sequential. The show was extremely simplistic in nature. It also sounded as if the recording was made too fast. The girl's voice and giggles are really what made it sound too fast to me. The boy sounded like Arthur Lake (Dagwood Bumstead). I was convinced it was him until I began to research the show. Once I started digging, I found that Cecil and Sally was not an obscure radio show at all but rather, a forgotten gem that wooed the nation and succeeded. It was one of the earliest radio shows to be distributed via

electrical transcription, just on the heels of Amos N Andy. Tracing the history of the this radio show and it's two main actors revealed many other intertwined stories. I found myself going off on different tangents several times and collecting information on other subjects when they intersected with the Cecil and Sally story.



In January 2009 I was very lucky to make the acquaintance of a gentleman by the name of Wayne Eberhart, who sold me a number of transcription discs of Cecil and Sally. Wayne happens to be the grandson of Vincent Kraft.

Vincent Kraft (left) owned and founded radio station KJR in Seattle, WA back in 1922. He was also co-owner of the Pacific Broadcasting Corporation along with Frederick Clift. Pacific owned radio station KYA in San Francisco, which broadcast from the top of the Clift Hotel. KJR and KYA were both later sold and became part of Adolph Linden's failed ABC Network. My point here is the transcription discs were owned by Vincent Kraft and stayed in the possession of his family all these years. Wayne discovered the discs in his grandfather's house as a youth. He even broadcast them to the public from his high school's radio station. He also recorded 2 episodes onto 45 rpm

records which he still sells to this day on his e-bay store. Incidentally, those 2 episodes are the same ones that I was given which started me off on my quest.

In real life, Cecil and Sally were Johnny Patrick and Helen Troy. John Patrick Goggan was born May 17, 1905 in Louisville, KY. As always, the more research you do, the more seemingly conflicting information you will uncover. Depending on the source Johnny was: A) abandoned by his parents and raised by his Aunt and Uncle, or B) abandoned by his parents and raised in various foster homes and

boarding schools, or C) raised in a military family which frequently moved around from military base to military base, or D) Traveled a lot with his family until he was made an orphan (whatever that means) or E) Born and reared in the Island City of Galveston TX. The most complete biography I found listed his parents as John Francis and Myrtle (Osborn) Goggan. It also provided a list of schools he attended. They were, Holy Cross College, St. Edward's College, St. Mary's Seminary, Harvard University and Columbia University.

Quite an impressive list but no details are given as to when or how long he attended any of them. One source claims he had a delinquent youth. A 1932 article in the Galveston Daily News named Johnny as the grandson of Thomas Goggan who was a well known music store owner in that city. All sources



agree that in 1924 or 1925 he decided to strike off on his own and get a job. Depending on the source, it is said Johnny was hired as an announcer at radio station KPO or as a switchboard operator at radio station KYA. Both were San Francisco radio stations, however, KYA was not established until December of 1926 while KPO was in operation since April of 1922. Both accounts could be true but one thing is for sure, our Cecil, Johnny Patrick, met his Sally, Helen Troy, at radio station KYA in 1928.

Helen Troy was born December 23, 1903 in San Francisco, CA. She was educated in Traverse City, MI at Sacred Heart Convent. After graduation she studied music, piano and organ in Chicago, IL. She went back to Traverse City for 2 years then to Detroit and finally to San Francisco, always employed as a theater organist. In 1928 she was hired as a staff organist at radio station KYA. This is where Sally met Cecil.



Helen made her stage debut beside her Uncle at the age of five on what was then known as the Keith Circuit. *The Keith Circuit* was a very dominant entertainment chain that was owned and operated by two (not very nice) men named *Benjamin Keith* (left) and *Edward Albee* (below Keith). They originally made a fortune by staging unauthorized productions of *Gilbert and Sullivan* operettas. They used their money to build a chain of theaters across the U.S. They borrowed the variety entertainment concept from the originator, *Tony Pastor*, and used it to produce continuous, multiple daily performances in their theaters. They called it "vaudeville". They did not invent the word but they were certainly responsible for making it a familiar term in the U.S. and Canada. Incidentally, some of you may be familiar with the motion picture company RKO. The "K" in RKO stands for Keith as in Benjamin

Keith....But I digress...

Helen would pick up her mail at the switchboard that Johnny worked. They became friends and developed a regular routine where Johnny would do Milt Gross characterizations and Helen would respond in baby-talk. (Milt Gross was a popular cartoonist/author of the day, famous for his Yiddish dialect humor.) They eventually worked up a couple skits. One day a regularly scheduled show had to cancel at the last minute and somehow Johnny and Helen got to fill-in. One source says after filling in for three weeks, they were taken out of the schedule only to be put right back in after the station received many calls and letters wanting more *Cecil and Sally*. And that is how it all began.

The show itself was titled *The Funniest Things* and in the beginning that is how it was listed in the radio schedules. This quickly changed to



being listed as Cecil and Sally. It was often referred to in newspapers as "*The Comic Strip of the Air*". It began as a three day a week show but soon became a six day a week show in most places that it was broadcast. Some stations even played it twice a day. It was popular with children, college students, housewives and just about everyone else. The appeal of the show was its simplicity. It all revolved around a very average pair of American teen-agers that always managed to find themselves in a predicament.

The dialogue between Cecil and Sally was often entertaining. Sally could blather on and on following her own convoluted logic while Cecil would listen and interject contrary or insulting comments which were very subtle at times. The plots were always fairly believable; things that could easily happen to a pair of young teens. The show was "chapterized" in the sense that a storyline could run anywhere from 4 to 20 shows to conclude. Over the years Cecil and Sally lost money, found money, got arrested several times, solved crimes, went to college and eventually got married to each other. The simplicity of the writing was the genius of Johnny Patrick and the formula to success for the radio show as well as his future. He wrote every script himself. Cecil and Sally was just the beginning of his long and successful writing career.

The Funniest Things was first broadcast in 1928 on KYA. (The earliest published date of broadcast I have found so far is April 10, 1929).

In November of 1928, KYA was sold to the new ABC network. The ABC network began as a string of radio stations running up the West Coast from Los Angeles, CA to Spokane, WA with it's flagship station being KJR in Seattle WA. The president and owner of ABC was *Adolph Linden (left)*. Linden quickly expanded his network into Salt Lake City, UT and Denver, CO. By July of 1929, Linden had pushed into the Midwest market with radio stations in Lincoln NE, Muscatine IA, St Louis MO, Chicago IL, and Minneapolis, MN. There were already plans and deals set for the East Coast but they came to a screeching halt on August 23 when Linden announced all operations at ABC were suspended. The company filed for bankruptcy the same day. At the time of its demise the ABC network consisted of 20 different radio stations. As the story unfolded a scandal was revealed, fingers were pointed and arrests were made. Adolph Linden was the central figure and on March 28, 1933, after four years of litigation, he finally went away to Walla Walla State Penitentiary on charges of grand larceny where he spent the next five years until his parole on March 19, 1938. This is a story in itself and I find myself digressing yet again....

The point is, the ABC network greatly expanded the exposure of Cecil and Sally to the radio audience. With the failing of the ABC network, Cecil and Sally were *off the air from August 24, 1929 until December 16, 1929* when they began broadcasting on KPO in San Francisco. Johnny and Helen quickly made a decision to move to electrical transcriptions. *Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll as Amos and Andy*, had already proven the effectiveness of syndication via electrical transcriptions not much more than a year prior. If a network of radio stations could increase a fan base, a syndicated release via electrical transcription would increase a fan base exponentially and that is exactly what happened. By 1930 it was estimated that Cecil and Sally had over *15 million fans*. Their show

was broadcast on 53 radio stations in 27 states, 5 Canadian provinces, the Hawaiian Islands, Australia and New Zealand. This is not the description of an obscure show.

A 1930 article gives credit in part to *Dick Haller* for the success of Cecil and Sally. He was vice president and general manager of *Patrick and Company*, which handled the business interests of Cecil and Sally. Haller was previously

involved with a very popular radio show in Portland, OR called the *Hoot Owls*. This show had had a rather talented young performer by the name of *Mel Blanc* who soon moved on to Hollywood to bigger and better things.



Dick Haller had also been production manager for the failed ABC network. One could draw the conclusion that Haller helped guide the young Mr. Patrick to the pathway of success via the electrical transcription.

This company was incorporated in 1929 but wasn't listed in the San Francisco telephone directory until 1930. They specialized in producing small runs of personal recordings for musicians and non-professionals. In 1932 the company changed its name to *MacGregor and Sollie*, also located in San Francisco. This company lasted until 1937 when it became *CP MacGregor Studios* and eventually moved to Hollywood.

'CECIL, SALLY' HERE ON STAGE

The box office opens Wednesday for the stage appearance of Cecil and Sally, radio stars. In their three-act comedy, "Cecil and Sally," at the Fulton Theater. The engagement begins with the matinee of Sunday, February 26.

Johnnie Patrick and Helen Troy, who are Cecil and Sally, have never before appeared in public, and Oakland will be the first city to see them on the stage.

"Cecil and Sally," the three-act stage comedy, was written by Patrick from the radio sketches and skits which he and Miss Troy have presented over the radio. All the popular radio characters of the presentations will be seen in the play, which was directed by John G. Fee.

The play will be offered at popular prices, and three matinees will be given during the week's engagement on Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday.

The MacGregor in these companies was C.P. "Chip" MacGregor.

Prior to starting these transcription companies he was manager of the San Francisco territory for Brunswick Records. Going into the transcription business was a natural transition for him. He made a name for himself in the transcription business. He not only produced them, he also distributed them. The list of radio shows he produced as syndicated electrical transcriptions is impressive.

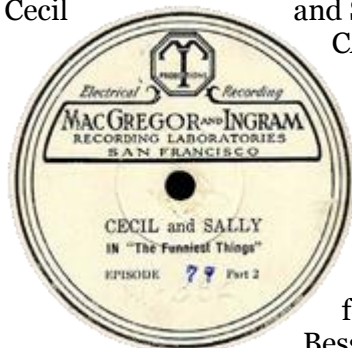
The list includes *The Shadow*, *Cecil and Sally*, *Sambo and Ed*, *Proudly We Hail*, *Al Jolson*, *Jubilee*, *Lux Radio Theater*, *Hollywood Theater*, *Eb and Zeb* as well as musicians such as *Leadbelly*, *Charlie Parker*, *Stan Kenton*, *Peggy Lee* and many others. Many people felt that transcription discs were not equal to a live performance and took something away from a radio program. MacGregor countered this by maintaining that transcriptions allowed for a flawless performance and that losing the excitement of a live performance was a small price to pay. In 1941, he began producing (*Skippy*) *Hollywood Theater*. He was also the host of the show. It became one of the most successful syndicated radio shows ever. It had all the commercials

built-in. It ran for 8 years and made Skippy peanut butter a household name.

Due to the fact that the format of the show was similar to *Lux* and C.P.'s role was the same as that of *Cecil B DeMille*; he became known as "*The DeMille of Discs*". He had his own radio show in the mid-Fifties called *The C.P. MacGregor Show*. There are two circulating shows that are both AFRTS broadcasts (circa 1957). MacGregor was on the radio as late as 1965 hosting *Heartbeat Theatre*.

Cecil and Sally were at the height of their popularity between 1930 and 1932. On Jan 21, 1933 KPO announced that Cecil and Sally was coming to an end as far as live appearances behind the microphone went. The article in the newspaper claimed that Johnny and Helen had exclusively been broadcasting live on KPO while everywhere else they were heard via electrical transcription. This is contrary to every other article I have found.

Within a week the newspapers reported there was a rumor that Cecil and Sally might be touring as a stage show. On Feb 18, 1933 an official announcement came out that there was a 3 act play entitled Cecil and Sally starring Johnny Patrick and Helen Troy that would open in Oakland, CA on Feb 26th. By March 20, 1933 Cecil and Sally were back on the radio in San Francisco but not live. KYA picked up their transcriptions and announced the show would continue right where it left off in January on KPO.



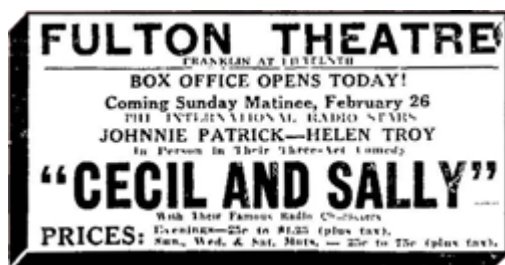
The touring stage play began in Oakland, CA on February 26, 1933 as a three act comedy sketch. It was written by Johnny Patrick, using scripts he previously wrote for the radio show. Aside from Cecil and Sally the play featured six other characters from the radio show; Uncle Thomas, Aunt Bess, the Widow Mason, Gregory Gilliwater, Dr. Morgan and Mamie.

It is unclear if any of these supporting characters were portrayed by the original cast members from the radio show. By May of 1933 the tour was in Fresno, Ca and was billed as a 2 act sketch. The tour progressed Eastward. In January 1934 they were in Lincoln, NE. In February they were in Cedar Rapids, IA with the next stop scheduled for Albert Lea, MN.

In March 1934, they played at The Strand in Oshkosh, WI. I have been unable to find any stops beyond Oshkosh.

Every review was favorable and the tour was considered a success. The actor that portrayed Gregory Gilliwater was singled out by one reviewer as being particularly good. His name was Ralph Bell. IF this was indeed the same Ralph Bell we all know from Barry Craig and CBS Radio Mystery Theater and many, many other radio shows; my math indicates he would have been 17 or 18 years old at that time.

Then again, it could just be coincidence.



Helen Troy returned to San Francisco and to the radio in June of 1934. She became a cast member of a show called *Carefree Carnival* which was broadcast on radio station KGO, an NBC station. Her first appearance was on June 9th. There are 2 shows known to be in circulation. Luckily one of them has Miss Troy in it. Interestingly, she portrayed a telephone operator in this show, a role that was

to have a profound effect on her future.

Upon his return from the tour, Johnny Patrick was less visible to the public, until September 18, 1934 when it was reported in the newspapers that he had filed for bankruptcy. Listed as one of his creditors was Helen Troy in the amount of \$120.00.

Research shows that Patrick must have devoted his time to writing. His first play titled *Hell Freezes Over*, opened in NY in December of 1935 and closed in January 1936 after only 25 performances. It featured *George Tobias*, a character actor most well known for his much later television role as Abner Kravitz on *Bewitched*, although, he appeared in many, many Broadway performances as well as films and television shows. In 1936 Patrick was hired on by 20th Century Fox as a screenwriter. He was credited in 17 films between 1936 and 1938.

Helen Troy, on the other hand, was making her debut in front of the camera. In April of 1936 she picked up a small role in *Song and Dance Man* (a George M. Cohan story) which starred Claire Trevor. Ironically, her character's name in the film is Sally. She played a telephone operator, a role that she

was most likely specifically chosen for from her work on *Carefree Carnival*. She did so well that she became typecast for it for the remainder of her rather brief career.



At the end of April she had already landed a term contract for Claire Trevor's next movie *Human Cargo*.

In 1937 she joined the cast of *Eddie Cantor's* radio show, *Texaco Town*. Her character was (of course) a telephone operator. Eddie always referred to her as "operator" until a naming contest was announced. Listeners were asked to send in their choice of a name and the reason for the name. The judges of the contest were *Rupert Hughes*, *Walt Disney*, *George Burns* and *Gracie Allen*. On the night

of the show of April 18, 1937, Eddie Cantor told the audience that there were more than 250,000 letters submitted. Of these, five had the same name that the judges chose. The winner of the contest was then chosen on the basis of the reason given for the name. Cantor neglected to reveal that reason but the winning name chosen was *Saymore Saymore*. The winner of the contest was *Miss Susie McKee* of Valdosta, GA and received a trip to Hollywood for two as a prize.



Helen Troy heckles Ned Tollinger on their Carefree Carnival program

Meanwhile, Johnny Patrick is said to have contributed to the NBC show *Streamlined Shakespeare* in 1937.

He was also reportedly linked to writing for *Helen Hayes* and her radio show. If this is true, she could very well have helped open doors for his play writing career that was yet to blossom. He continued his work with 20th Century Fox in 1938 until December 11th when it was announced that he was let go. After 1938 there are no screen writing credits to his name for the next 10 years.

As Johnny Patrick's career was slowly gaining speed, Helen Troy's was quickly winding down. Helen's last known radio appearance was on *Texaco Town* on Sept 29, 1937, which was the opening night of the second season. She was in six films in 1937 and one film each in 1938 and 1939. She was in two films in 1940 before retiring due to an undisclosed illness.

Sadly, *Helen Troy passed away on November 1, 1942* at the age of 38. She was survived by her husband of many years, Dr. Alton Edward Horton and her 2 children, Kathryn Jane (15) and Troy Thomas (18).



This girl is named Helen Troy, but Eddie Cantor feels that a new name is in order. So they're having a contest on the Sunday night show aired over KFAB and CBS.

Interesting is the fact that during the Cecil and Sally years there was never any mention of Helen being married and having a family. Newspaper and magazine articles portrayed her as a young single woman although in their defense they never stated it as a fact. Newspapers even played upon this by noting that Helen received at least one marriage proposal a week in her fan mail which she personally responded to every time, kindly turning down the offers.

The math involved would indicate that Helen was married and already had a four year old son and a one year old daughter by the time she was hired at KYA.

The same media portrayal was applied to Johnny Patrick as well. All the articles stated he was a Roadster driving, eligible young bachelor living in his Golden Gate, ocean-view high-rise apartment. His biography indicates he was married in 1925 to a woman named Mildred LeGaye. There is never another mention anywhere I have found, about divorce, re-marriage or children.

It is also interesting to note that a newspaper article in 1932 stated that Johnny Patrick aspired to be one of the country's leading playwrights and that those who knew his work and temperament were predicting he would attain his goal.

In 1942, John Patrick wrote his second play *The Willow and I* which opened in NY in December 1942 and closed in January 1943 after only 28 performances. The play featured *Gregory Peck* and *Martha Scott*. Before the play even opened, John Patrick had volunteered to join the American Field Service, which provided medical support to the British Army fighting WWII. He served with Montgomery's Eighth Army in Egypt and saw action in India and Burma. This experience was the foundation for his next play, which he finished writing on a ship-ride home after his tour of duty in 1944. The play was

titled *The Hasty Heart* which opened in NY in January 1945 and closed in June 1945 after 204 performances. This play featured *Richard Basehart*. The play's successful run led to a film adaptation in 1949 starring *Ronald Reagan* and then a television movie in 1983.

It was in 1953 that John Patrick reached the pinnacle of his long career as a writer. He wrote a stage adaptation of the Vern J. Sneider novel, *The Teahouse of the August Moon* which opened on Broadway in October of 1953 and closed in March of 1956 after 1027 performances.

This play featured *John Forsythe*. Teahouse won Patrick the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for best American play of the year, a Pulitzer prize in drama, a Tony award, a Donaldson award from Billboard magazine for best new play and the League of NY Theaters and Producers Aegis Club award. In 1956 he wrote the screenplay for the movie it became, which starred *Marlon Brando* and *Glenn Ford*, also in the cast were *Eddie Albert* and *Harry Morgan*. John Patrick went on to write at least 48 more plays over the following 39 years including a musical adaptation of *Teahouse* (1970), under the title *Lovely Ladies*, *Kind Gentlemen*. None of his other plays had the same acclaim of Teahouse although many are still being performed in schools and small theaters to this day. As for screenwriting, John Patrick was responsible for several that resulted in prominent movies. Among them were *Three Coins in a Fountain* (1954), *Love is a Many Splendored Thing* (1955), *High Society* (1956), *Les Girls* (1957), *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960) and *Gigot* (1962). He also won two awards in 1957 for his screenwriting of *Les Girls*, the Screenwriters Guild award and the Foreign Correspondents award.

Unlike Helen Troy, John Patrick never got in front of a movie camera, although a few internet sites erroneously credit him with several film appearances. Patrick also liked to compose poetry and dabble in art. He did the artwork for two book covers in the 1990's. The books were *The Growing Light* by Martha Conley (1993) and *Inches* by William Marshall (1994).



John Patrick owned a 65 acre estate he called Hasty Hill, located in Suffern, NY. He purchased it following the success of his play *The Hasty Heart*. He also lived in retirement in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands for many years.

On November 7, 1995 John Patrick was found dead in his apartment at the Heritage Park Assisted Living facility in Delray Beach, FL. He was found by a housekeeper with a plastic bag over his head. He was said to have been in normal health for a 90 year old man and his death was ruled a suicide. The last thing John Patrick wrote was a poem he left behind. It was titled A

Suicide Note. It read in part., "... *I won't dispute my right to die. I'll only give the reasons why. You reach a certain point in time. When life has lost reason and rhyme...*"

Although in the end he wasn't remembered for having written Cecil and Sally, it isn't surprising. Many years had gone by and radio shows were *and are* ancient history to a modern society. This illustrates how short the memory of our culture has become and perhaps has always been. A few generations go by and memories pass on with the people that held them. In its day, Cecil and Sally was well known to millions of people. Today, very few people are even aware of this old radio show.

Cecil and Sally enjoyed a nice run on the airwaves. My suspicions are that no more transcriptions of the show were made after January 1933 as Johnny Patrick and Helen Troy were preparing to go on tour and after that they went off to establish themselves individually. They were finished as a team.

The radio show itself, however, was not quite finished. Electrical transcriptions made sure of that. Many cities enjoyed the show for years afterwards.

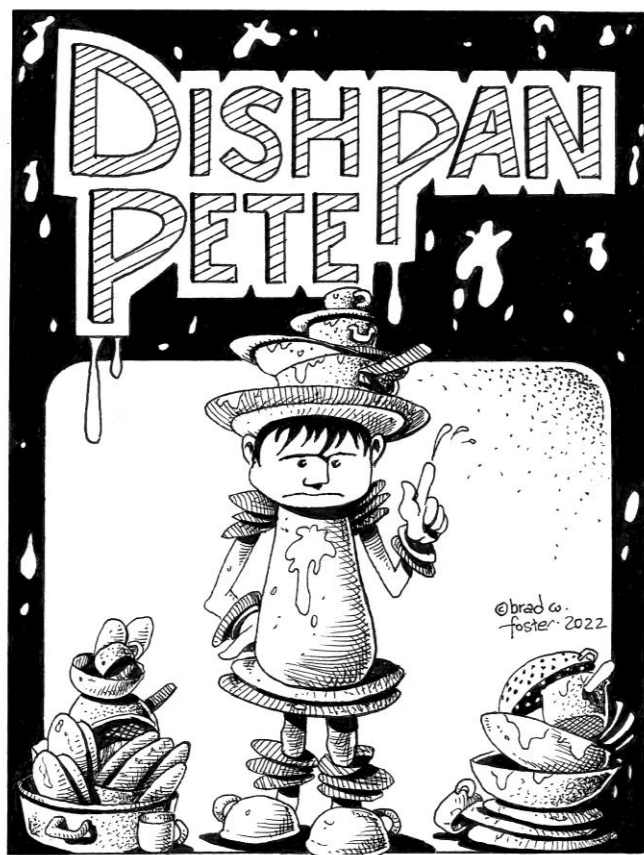
The exact number of shows in the Cecil and Sally series is not known but an article in the *Avalanche*

Journal from Lubbock, TX on June 20, 1937 noted that the Cecil and Sally show was leaving the air on KYFO radio after 1392 broadcasts. The latest published date of broadcast in the U.S. that I found was February 22, 1938 in Uniontown, PA on radio station WWSW.

Cecil and Sally, a 15 minute West Coast radio show that through a series of fortunate events, timing, writing and foresight, captured the imagination and attention of millions of listeners nationwide for an entire decade. A 15 minute show that launched the short career of Helen Troy, the long career of Johnny Patrick and rubbed shoulders along the way with some very interesting and influential people associated with the radio industry. A 15 minute show that time has relegated to obscurity; a 15 minute show that deserves to be remembered in radio history.

We thank Doug for his insightful and thorough research on Cecil and Sally. There's very little we can add to Doug's observations. As a personal observation, this was a truly delightful program for any era, but given the competing serial fare of the day, truly remarkable by contrast. Patrick's scripts were both charming and biting humor. They poked holes in many of 'polite society' conventions with earthy, common-denominator type humor. Never cruel, but deliciously ironic and timely, given the post-Depression years of its setting.

Helen Troy's tiny, lispy voice in the character of Sally was particularly charming. It's easy to understand how hard it was for Cecil to refuse her every whim--*or scheme*.



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DISHPAN PETE

After a terrible accident trying to develop an atomic-powered dishwashing machine, Pete Panter became the evil Dishpan Pete. He is able to make any amount of plates, pots, pans, and other usual kitchen utensils incredibly dirty in a reasonable period of time. Not much of a superpower, really, but you got to play the cards you are dealt.

His first appearance in "*The Unusual Utensilman*" #6 garnered an unexpectedly large positive reader feedback. He made eight more appearances in that title before being spun-off into his own solo series.

Unfortunately, the writers tried to turn him into a hero, sales plummeted, and that was the end of Pete.

"The Unusual Utensilman"

#6, 14, 18-20, 25, 26, 30 (1954 - 1957)

"Dishpan Pete" #1 - 7 (1957)

Reader Reaction



Steve Green www.ghostwords.uk

Like Darrell Schweitzer, I see little point in would-be writers using "fanfic" as an entry point into the profession: the vast majority of reputable markets value originality above knowledge of existing canon. The exception would be writing for Hollywood, where plagiarism seems to be actively encouraged. Indeed, the five episodes of *Star Trek: Discovery* I watched before cancelling my Netflix account were not only extraordinarily badly written, but displayed only a slight grasp of the franchise's established backstory and themes: a lose-lose on all levels.

///I don't think fanfiction is ever seriously considered by editors and publishers when they consider a wannabe writer's abilities. However, there are people who enjoy reading fanfic, and there are fanzines and semi-pro journals devoted to the assorted media franchises who publish the stuff. I don't think it does any particular harm, and it at least gives the authors a chance to practice their craft.///

Lloyd Penney; 1706-24 Eva Rd.; Etobicoke, ON CANADA M9C 2B2 penneys@bell.net

Welcome back to *Fadeaway*! I have issue 68 here, and in this busy day, I will attempt to commit letter of comment. Let's see if I truly am guilty.

SF readers tend to have wandering interests (my experience, anyway), so your 'contributor' redefined failing to keep a promise. Postage is killing this fun activity, and imagine where we'd be if we didn't have technology like the .pdf.

In the US, funding is disappearing for libraries, museums, public media like educational TV, and so much more. As if the government was trying to keep the public stupid and uninvolved, or something like that... Now comes the reorganization of the Smithsonian Institutions to 'better reflect American values'. Fascism marches in...

I look at the three major SF magazines bought up by one person, one organization, and I have to wonder how long that will last. Jean-Paul Garnier has revived Worlds of IF and Galaxy, and they seem to be cruising as .pdfs, will the three magazines survive? Amazing Stories is doing well as a website...we'd rather have a magazine, but we will have to have a hard look at the economics behind it. I would like to have a magazine ready for sale and distribution for 2026, the 100th anniversary of the beginnings of AS.

I think I have made all the comments I can at this point...send me the next issue so I can resume, and with luck, make more of them. See you then.

///I suspect if digital technology did not exist that fanzines would find some way to survive in the print format despite the enormous costs. They would probably be much smaller in physical size, with much smaller type, but the urge to communicate with fellow fans about subjects of mutual interest seems to be one of the few constants in this hobby. I recall in past days fanzines were mostly pages of type with short margins and almost no illos. The internet and pixels allows a much greater degree of creative expression. And after all, we're stf fans; we're expected to keep up with the latest technology.///



Tom Feller tomfeller@aol.com

Thanks for e-mailing the zine.

My understanding is the reason Tolkien's elves are immortal is that their ultimate ancestors never committed an original sin, unlike human beings whose punishment was that we experience death. I noticed that David M. Shea does not mention *Romeo and Juliet*. Although they are not from different ethnic/social/economic groups, I believe the universality of the concept of two lovers from feuding families accounts for its popularity.

Although I preferred Superman, I was a big enough fan of Batman as well to enjoy your retrospective.

I made a few attempts at writing fiction many years ago, but with little success. I once sold a horror story to a web site that paid \$2, but a few months later I got an e-mail from the editor saying he was no longer taking submissions because he was checking himself into a mental hospital. However, those attempts made me a better reader, so I think the time was well spent.

///The ancient-elves-never-committed-original-sin thesis always struck me as a pretty thin religious paste-over to explain the immortality concept. It would seem to me that having immortality would be a curse in itself, particularly unless eternal good health and at least some kind of invulnerability to bodily harm didn't come with the deal. However the elves can be harmed and slain, so the concept is flawed to begin with, at least in my opinion. It would have been better if Tolkien had stuck with folklore, which held that altho elves might sorta-kinda look like humans, that they are a completely different species with unusual powers about which normal humans know almost nothing (except to avoid them if at all possible).///

**OUR ESTEEMED ART STAFF
& WHERE THEIR WORK
MAY BE FOUND HEREIN:**

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