ALPHA LOG

ISSUE FIFTEEN EDITOR: CHRIS LANDRY

EDITORIAL

Hello and welcome to a brand new issue of ALPHA LOG, the official newsletter of "The Springfield SPACE: 1999 Club." I would like to greet all the new members to the group. Most of you have been brought together as a result of the recent advertisement in STARLOG Magazine. Oh yes, and a special thank you to STARLOG for their services.

In this issue you will find, among other things, the results to the Readers Survey which was mailed out with ALPHA LOG #13. You might find them interesting. I realize now that there was one question missing from the Survey. That being, what regular feature would you like to see added to the newsletter? At present, our regular features include an interview, a short story, an animated review, and this Editorial. What others, if any, would you like to see in ALPHA LOG? I'm open for suggestions.

Finally, I'd like to invite all members, new and old, to freely contribute to the newsletter. Your articles, artwork, reports, and such are always welcome.

****

YEAR 3 GUIDEBOOK UPDATE

The Editorial Staff of ALPHA LOG is still working on our latest publication, The SPACE: 1999 Year Three Guidebook. For those of you who are new and unfamiliar with The Guidebook, it is an episode guide to a ficticious third season of SPACE: 1999. It is very much like the press kits for years one and two put out by ITC.

Orders were to be taken in this issue for The Guidebook, but certain circumstances have dictated otherwise. An order form, as well as a listing of episodes and writers, will accompany ALPHA LOG #16... hopefully.

MARTIN LANDAU DIES...TWICE...IN ONE WEEKEND

The title of this article deserves a bit of explanation. Rest assured, SPACE: 1999's star Martin Landau is still alive and well, but his recent character portrayals seem to be dropping like flies.

October 17 marked the opening of the new science fiction disaster film METEOR. Martin Landau stars in this film as General Barry Adlon, the American military commander who is unimpressed with predictions that the giant meteor will destroy Earth. Landau plays the closest thing to a villian in the picture. In the end, irony prevails and we discover that Adlon is METEOR's first victim.

Two days later, October 19, Martin Landau starred in another film, ABC's THE DEATH OF OCEAN VIEW PARK. This was another disaster movie with bits of the supernatural and psycic forces here and there. Landau plays Tom, the owner of the park and a rather mercenary business man. At the end of this film, Landau's character is made heroic by rescuing the young couple (played by Perry Lang and Mare Winningham), only to end up sacrificing his own life for theirs. He dies quite spectacularly in a slow-motion fall from the top of the ferris wheel.

For a change of pace, Martin Landau is soon to appear as the hero of NBC's version of THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER to be seen later this season. Watch for it.



****

INTERVIEW INTRODUCTORY

This issue of ALPHA LOG features an interview with SPACE: 1999 star Prentis Hancock. Time did not permit him to do an interview at this summer's Convention, but Prentis was kind enough to do it on his own some weeks later. I am sure that you will enjoy it as much as I did.

ALPHA LOG #16 will have an interview with David Hirsch and an article by Nick Tate on his new films.

PRENTIS HANCOCK INTERVIEW

BIO: Prentis Hancock played the character of Moonbase Alpha Controller Paul Morrow in the first season of SPACE: 1999.

Landry: How did you get involved with SPACE: 1999?

Hancock: I got involved with SPACE: 1999 by being asked by Gerry Anderson to join it. Gerry knew my work from a show I did for him in THE PROTECTORS series. It was called "W.A.M.," standing for the character's name I played, William Arthur McKay.

Landry: For what reasons didn't you continue with the second season of SPACE: 1999?

Hancock: Basically, the reason I didn't appear in the second series was quite simple: I wasn't asked. You can make up your own mind about that.

Landry: Did you have a favorite episode of SPACE: 1999?

Hancock: As far as having a favorite episode is concerned, as I said at the Convention, my favorite of all was "The Black Sun." It seemed to me to be exploring something that the astronaut of the world was beginning to find out a little more about than he had in the past. It was a rather good story, a story of survival, as I believe the whole series was. Personally, of course, I'd have to mention "The Last Sunset." It was a challenge for Paul Morrow to be played slightly differently; not his old cool, calm self.

Landry: What are some of your feelings about Paul Morrow?

Hancock: As far as Paul is concerned, he was of course the second-in-command. Sometimes I felt he was a little chained to Main Mission, when some of the other characters were managing to have a rather hectic time on a planet's surface. So someone's got to stay in charge of the shop. And it was Paul Morrow's job to do just that.

Landry: Did your work with SPACE: 1999 help to further your career?

Hancock: Sometimes it's extremely difficult to know if a particular series or a particular play has done anything. And sometimes these things don't happen overnight. I did one show many years ago for the BBC on THIRTY MINUTE THEATRE called "Me, McKenna" in which I played a very harsh character who terrorized his unit in the army. It was based, I'm told, on a real person in the National Service. Although I received excellent reviews at the time, nothing particularly happened from that fortune. But over the years, one realizes that this was in some ways the turning point because people had seen the show and had remembered it. As far as SPACE is concerned, four or five years after finishing making it, I met a whole lot of people in Pittsburgh that I didn't know and realized that they were really very good friends of mine.

Landry: Of all of your performances, which one is your personal favorite?

Hancock: Again, one can think of performances on stage, performances in films, and performances in television. I suppose that my favorite performance or favorite character that I enjoyed playing would be Brick in Tennessee Williams' CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF which I did at the Palace Theater quite a few years ago, back in 1971 or 72. And of course when you've got such marvellous material to work with, it's that sort of character that sticks in one's mind. It's that kind of character that one gets tremendous satisfaction playing. It's the sort of character that's always a challenge for the actor because it stands the act up. As far as television is concerned, possibly one of my most enjoyable performances was a rather side character I played in the series COLDITZ. I guest starred in an episode with Robert Wagner and I played a Scotsman who was desperate to get back from Colditz to Scotland to see his wife. He was sad because he was hot-headed because he lacked control and because when he did eventually manage to physically get out of the castle, he was faced with the decision; did he really want to go home to the situation that faced him there. The story was left nicely enigmaticly at the end, leaving the audience to make up their mind whether he wanted to get home. I enjoyed doing that very much.

Landry: Are you a science fiction fan?

Hancock: Well, I had tickets for ALIEN last Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. and I had a lie-in instead of going. Ha-ha. So I suppose that means that I'm not particularly a science fiction fan. Although, having done DR. WHO, SPACE: 1999, and a number of other things, one can't help being fascinated by the whole business of space exploration, time travel, etcetera.

Landry: Do you have any current or future projects that you could tell us about?

Hancock: As you probably know, there's been a strike in quite a large section of the television industry here. We'll be affected to some extent. I'm lucky that I've been working for a company called Euston Films which is part of Themes Television. I played a character in one of their series called FOX. The character's name was Detective Inspector John Daisch, a policeman. And in another of their series called THE MINDER, I played a heavy called Stuart. So I'm glad to say that things are ticking along nicely.

****

FOLLOW UP

I would like to take a moment to thank Prentis Hancock for stopping to do this interview for ALPHA LOG. Prentis did this interview about a month after SPACE: 1999 Convention '79 on his own in England, with member Diana Winslow acting as the middle man for the recording. The editorial staff of ALPHA LOG has decided that Prentis is to be given an honorary membership with the club.

****

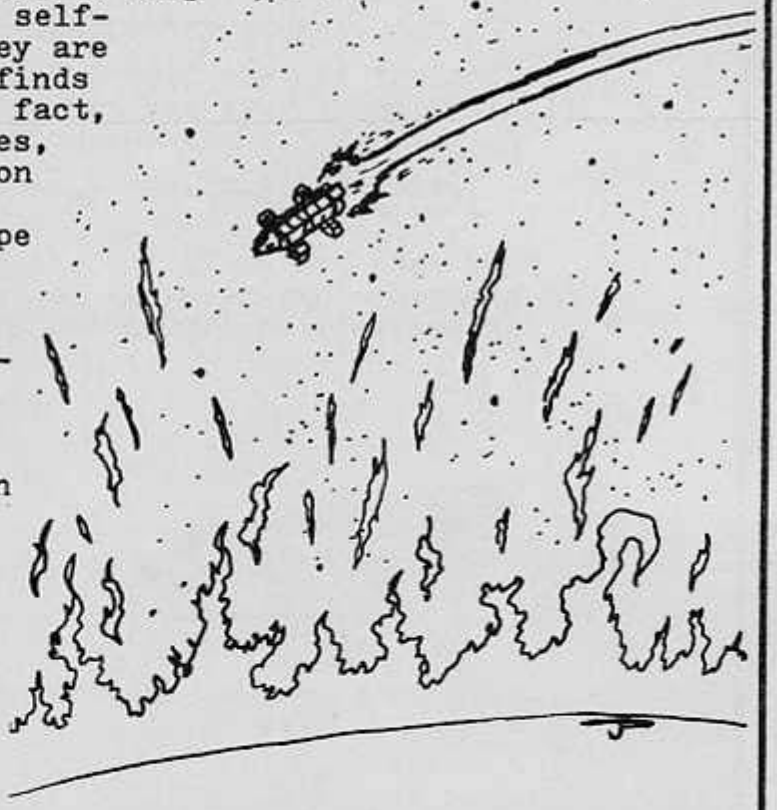


ANIMATED REVIEWS

As in the past, ALPHA LOG presents another episode in Charlton Publications' illustrated SPACE: 1999 series. This episode is titled "Another Name for Hell." Next issue, Commander Koenig and the Alphans find a colony of highly advanced aliens and their human slaves in "The Strange Ones."

ANOTHER NAME FOR HELL (Episode 13; May 1976)
Written by Nicola Cuti
Animated by Vicente Alcazar

An Alphan landing party led by Commander Koenig explores a desolate, desert-like planet. It is able to support human life, but is judged to be undesirable because of the lack of any other form of life on the barren world. As they are preparing to leave, the group discovers a mysterious doorway in the middle of the desert. The doorway is found to be impenetrable, but with the help of their lasers, the Alphans make their way inside. There they find a zero-gravity space with many magnetic discs floating in the space. On one of these discs, they meet the alien Iokon and his family. He describes to Koenig the paradise that once existed on the planet and the plague that wiped out his entire race, leaving this Dimention Zero as their only refuge. Koenig agrees to help the aliens escape their self-inflicted prison. As they are leaving, the Commander finds that the aliens are, in fact, an evil family of witches, condemned to their prison for creating the deadly plague. The aliens escape and trap the Alphan landing party inside. The Alphans must find a way to escape the Dimention Zero and prevent the sorcerers from going to Moonbase Alpha and wreaking destruction throughout the universe.



IRRATIONAL CHICKEN SCRATCH

by Jeff Patterson

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is not a SPACE: 1999 science fiction adventure in the true sense. It is rather a light satire of SPACE: 1999 and its fans. Many other newsletters have tested this style of fiction, for better or worse, and I thought that the readership of ALPHA LOG should be exposed to such as well. The Editor has provided occasional explanatory footnotes which will accompany Irrational Chicken Scratch. I am interested in a reader response, so please voice your opinions. -Ed.)

Chris Landry entered the room. His face was grim. He scanned the room and looked at the crew: local members like Terri Woodworth, Bob Anderson, Gopher[1], Brian Kirk, and the Clone[2], and not-so-local troopers like Becky Eisenhuth, Felix Amador, Lisa Mack, Rob Cammarata, and John Durgin. From the Land of Uselessness sat Ed Finneran. Jeff Patterson wasn't there. He was busy writing.

The hall had been rented a week earlier in order to hold the extra people. Chris stood at the front podium. Beside him stood the ominous figure of the Unknown Poet[3].

A hush came over the room as Landry spoke...

"Crew, our months of planning will pay off tonight. Tonight we will do what no man has ever tried. We will try to steal props from Moonbase Alpha."

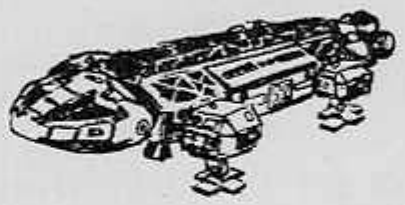
"Ooooh," "Ahhhh," "Gee Whiz," "Golly," "No shit," "Honest and for true?"

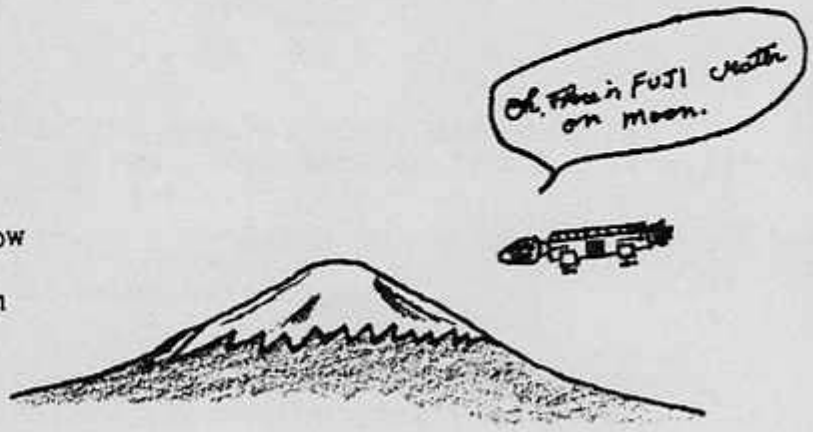
"Now, I know it sounds dumb, but if we hit them hard and fast, we can get most of the Year Two equipment in under five minutes. The Unknown Poet has devised a plan. Tell them, U.P."

The being stepped forward...

"Tonight our ranks,
Far after noon,
Shall then assault
The drifting moon.

Level by level,
Floor by floor,
We'll hunt the props
Till there's no more.





Within the base
We move with speed
Regardless of
Our bodily need.

The guards will know
Not of our task,
So just ignore them
If they ask.

Fast as protons,
Swift as light,
We will steal
Those props tonight."

Much applause.

"One question," asked Finneran, "How do we get there?"

Landry and the Poet stared at each other. Landry leaned over and whispered, "Call Patterson and tell him he forgot the part about how we get there."

The Poet walked to a phone and called Patterson. After a lot of scribbling eeeeee and crossing out ~~[illegible]~~ words, Patterson gave a reply. The Unknown poet wrote it down and handed it to Landry.

"Ah yes," said Landry, "Jeff is going to write in a space warp."

"Not again," "Another one," "Can't he do better," "No shit," "Honest and for true?"

"So it's not totally original," commented Landry, "We're not here for creativity. We've got a job to do."

Just then a space warp appeared and sucked in the room. The group found themselves in a corridor. Mike Perrone began taking pictures, Bob Anderson began drawing on the walls, and Ed Finneran began chewing on his hand.

Alice Kimanski began mumbling about sixty-four or something like that[4] when Landry spoke. "Okay, break up and grab what you can. Meet back here in five minutes."

The group darted in every direction, leaving only Chris and the Poet.

"Let us be off
To gather the loot.
I've got my eye
On a deep-space suit."

"Right. Let's head for Command Center and peel off Maya's eye makeup."

The two darted towards the control area, checking for security guards as they ran. They were on level E when they rounded a corner to see...

"Allen McClearnen[5]!?!"

"Landry, what are you doing here?"

"Stealing props."

"Good luck. Dick DiPirro[6] just left with a load of Year One stuff. Mary Bloemker[7] cleaned out the wardrobe."

"How many clubs are here?" asked Landry.

"Well, Fitzgerald and Eramo[8] showed up first. After that, everyone came."

"What about the Alphans?"

"Busy with an old dead Earth ship on a dead planet."

"Oh."

"Well, gotta go. Chuck Raue's[9] letting me use his space warp to get home."

"Okay. Write me soon!" Chris and the Poet resumed their course. Then the Poet spoke:

"I think we are
In error, Chris.
For many clubs
Have all done this."

"I don't care, we've got to try."

The Command Center was bare except for the main screen and several near-naked Alphans. Koenig and company stared at the lousy alien make-up on the screen. No one noticed the absence of vital Alphan equipment.

"There's nothing to steal!" said Landry.

Just then, Patterson wrote in a moonbuggy appearing in the room. Again the Alphans did nothing.

"Let's grab it, quick."

The poet hopped in the driver's seat. Chris leaped to the other seat, but overshot the buggy and landed on the floor.

"Would you mind keeping quiet?" said Alan Carter, responding to the noise.

"Sorry sir," said Chris, "I'll try to be."

Chris climbed into the buggy and turned to the Poet. "Can you drive this thing?"

"No I cannot, Chris
But that matters not,
For Alphans fly starships
Without being taught."

"True enough. Start' er up!" exclaimed Chris.

The engine roared. Carter yelled again, but could not be heard. The buggy rolled through the door and left the Center.

Driving down the corridors, Landry saw Steve Poleri sketching various monstrosities on a pad. Next to him, Shimane Oderkirk was being chased by someone in a Viper Pilot suit[10].

"We've got two minutes before we meet the rest of them," said Chris.

"Let me say
In my own rhyme
That this has been
A waste of time."

"I know. This is getting confusing. I just wanted some props for my collection. I thought they'd look nice next to my cardboard Eagle[11], but this is getting insane."

Suddenly it struck him...

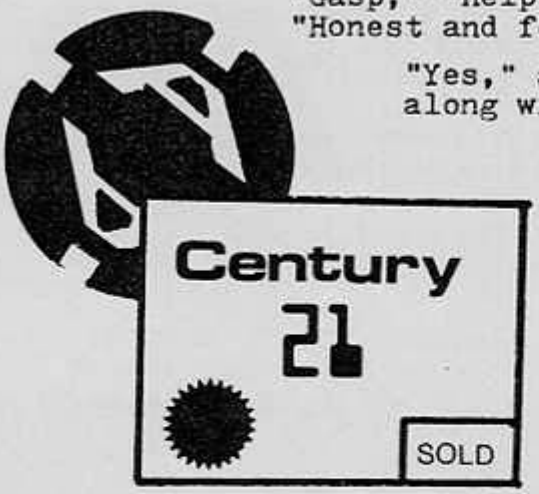
"It's as if this section of space has been siezed by..."

All was quiet.

"...The Silverman Syndrome!"

"Gasp," "Help," "Oh God," "Hide," "No shit," "Honest and for true?"

"Yes," stated Landry, " An asinine plot, along with several less-than-serious events have taken over Moon-base Alpha. All the other clubs escaped before it got serious, but we're in danger of being caught in its web! Let's get out of here!"



Before long, they were back in the corridor with the rest of the club. Bill Dwyer was STAR TREKking, Bob Anderson was carrying off a nude Operative, and Ed Finneran was adapting .

"Where's that space warp?" yelled Landry.

Suddenly, Commander Koenig, Tony Verdeschi, and about twenty security guards streaked around the corner. Their faces were deranged, obviously due to The Silverman Syndrome. They started for the club.

"Here comes the space warp," shouted Eisenhuth.

The warp sucked the club in and dumped them back in the meeting hall. Everyone was quite once again.

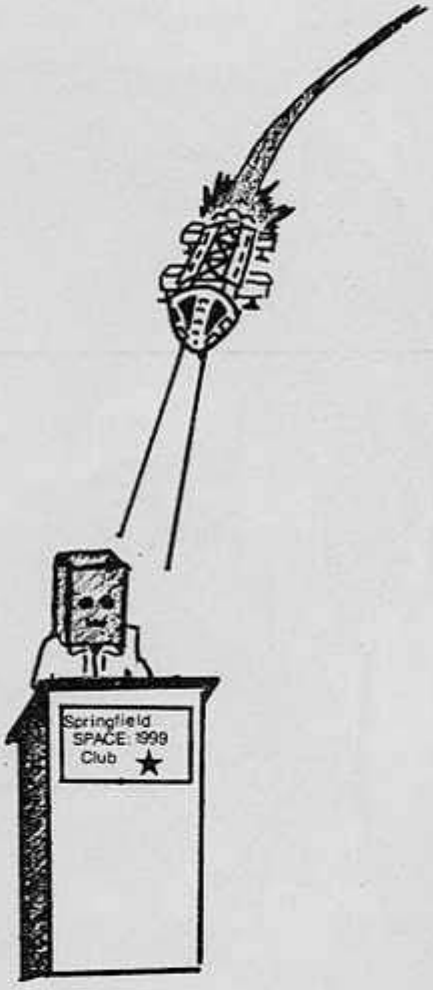
Landry leaned over to the Poet and whispered, "Call Patterson, tell him to scratch that story and start over. It's too dumb."

****

FOOTNOTES

1. Gopher: local member Todd Kowalczyk, who got his name after several Conventions.
2. Clone: my brother, Jon, who looks nothing like me.
3. The Unknown Poet: please refer to ALPHA LOG #14.
4. Sixty-Four: please refer to ALPHA LOG #12.
5. Allen McClearnen: president of "Hawk".
6. Dick DiPirro: president of "Alpha News Service".
7. Mary Bloemker: president of "Main Mission Alpha".
8. Fitzgerald and Eramo: presidents of "Nat'l Alliance" and "Alpha Newsletter".
9. Chuck Raue: president of "Comloc".
10. Viper Pilot: this person knows who he is.
11. Cardboard Eagle: a model I once made, with a permanent sag in the middle.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Certain Japanese members might find humor in the drawing on page 8. -Ed.)



ITALIAN "SPACE: 1999" EPISODES

Back in ALPHA LOG #10, an article was published on the different titles of SPACE: 1999 episodes shows in Spanish speaking countries. As many of you will remember, the titles differed greatly and were simetimes humorous. Just recently, I was able to obtain a copy of the Italian SPACE: 1999 gum card album. Titles to the first season episodes were printed inside. I had them translated and found that these episodes differed from the English even more than the Spanish did. Here are a few examples, printed for your enjoyment:

"Breakaway" is translated simply into "Separation," a much less dramatic title.

The episode "Earthbound" is changed to "Point of Destination: Earth" in Italian.

Minor revisions are seen in "A Matter of Life and Death" (retitled as "A Question of Life or Death") and "Voyager's Return" (known as "The Return of the 'Voyager'").

"Force of Life" is slightly altered into "Vital Force" in this foreign episode.

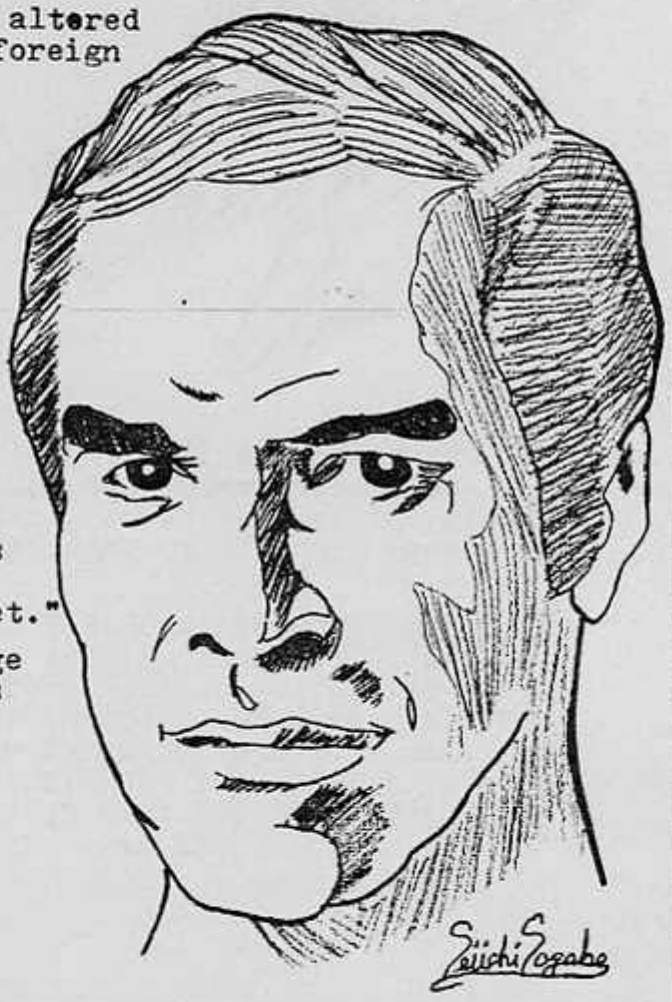
"Ring Around the Moon" is strangely titled "Eyes of Dirt," possibly speaking of the alien satellite in this episode.

The mood of "Missing Link" is changed in the Italian version, "Lovers of Space."

The same is true in the case of "The Last Sunset" which is seen as "The Ultimate Passage."

"The Guardian of Piri" makes no mention of the planet's name in "The Enchanted Planet."

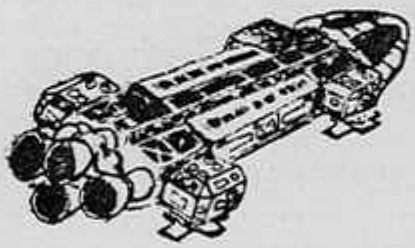
But the most fantastic change is in "Alpha Child" which is retitled as "Blue Flakes on Alpha." No kidding!



A GREETING FROM ISAAC ASIMOV

Back in ALPHA LOG #8, this newsletter featured an interview with Dr. Isaac Asimov; possibly the greatest living science fiction author of our time. This was later followed by Dr. Asimov's article in ALPHA LOG #10 on extraterrestrials and UFOs. Recently, one of our members met up with the good doctor at the STAR TREK America Convention. He showed Asimov the newsletters, at which time he promptly recalled the interview. He extended his greetings to the members of "The Springfield SPACE: 1999 Club," old and new, and wished us all the best in the future.

Thank you, Dr., and all the best to you.



To the readers of Alpha Log
Isaac Asimov

****

CONVENTION AUCTION REPORT

ALPHA LOG #14, the special Convention issue, featured a two-page report on the SPACE: 1999 Convention '79. However, through all the detail, an account of the great auction was left out. Here are some of the more memorable points:

SPACE: 1999 scripts went from $55.00 to $230.00. Promo packages from SPACE: 1999 ran as high as $100.00. A DESTINATION MOONBASE ALPHA promo package and poster was auctioned off for $55.00. (NOTE: I got that one. -Ed.) Foreign SPACE: 1999 books ran for about $50.00 a set. In addition to many other SPACE: 1999 items, Nick Tate auctioned off his t-shirt, which went for $25.00. The total ammount raised for charity was $5200.00.

READERS SURVEY RESULTS

As you will remember, ALPHA LOG #13 featured the first Readers Survey of "The Springfield SPACE: 1999 Club." The turn-out was impressive and, as was promised, the results will now be released.

The first information section dealt with the newsletter itself. The favorite feature by far was the short story, trailed by artwork and interviews. The least favorite feature was judged to be the poetry. (And which one of you doesn't like my editorials? -Ed.)

The next section was on your favorite SPACE: 1999 episodes. The results revealed thus- 1st: "Breakaway" tied with "Journey to Where," 2nd: "The Black Sun" tied with "War Games," and 3rd: "The Metamorph" tied with "The Bringers of Wonder." Nearly every episode was mentioned at least once in this section. The favorite SPACE: 1999 character was decided to be Commander John Koenig, followed by Dr. Helena Russell, Maya, and Capt. Alan Carter, respectively.

The personal interest/television portion of the Survey displayed a wide area of interests. Aside from SPACE: 1999, the most popular television series was determined as STAR TREK. It was followed by BATTLESTAR GALACTICA, UFO tied with MISSION- IMPOSSIBLE, and MORK AND MINDY.

I would like to thank those of you who participated in the Readers Survey. Your comments and suggestions have been so noted.

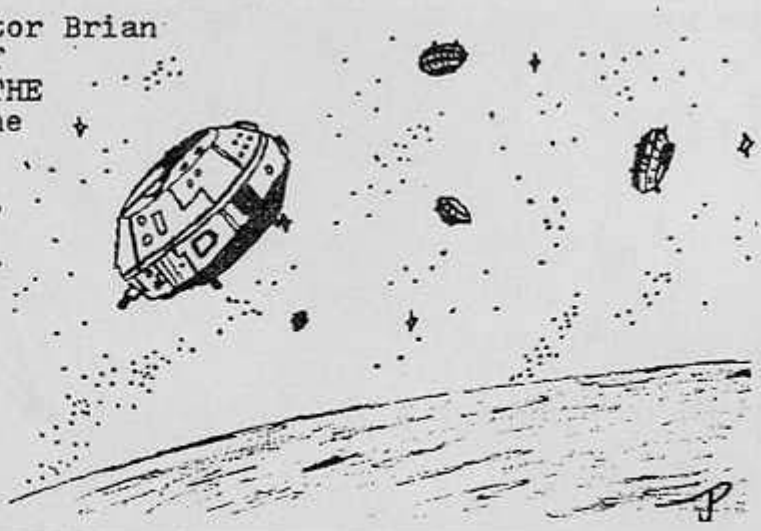
****

UNEXPECTED SIGHTING

As in the past, this newsletter likes to point out the appearance of a prominent SPACE: 1999 star or guest star in a different, recent production. This is especially true if actors re-occur in the same series.

Recently, we spotted actor Brian Blessed in an episode of RONALD DAHL'S TALES OF THE UNEXPECTED. He played the part of Inspector Jack Nelson in the episode "Lamb to the Slaughter."

This is an excellent anthology series and many favorite SPACE: 1999 stars make frequent appearances on it.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people for contributing to this issue of ALPHA LOG:

Felix Amador, for his fantastic SPACE: 1999 artwork.

Rob Cammarata, for his Convention Auction Report.

Luciano DiMarco, for his Italian SPACE: 1999 translations.

Becky Eisenhuth, for her alien artwork

Jeff Patterson, for his story and artwork.

Steve Poleri, for his SPACE: 1999 spacecraft artwork.

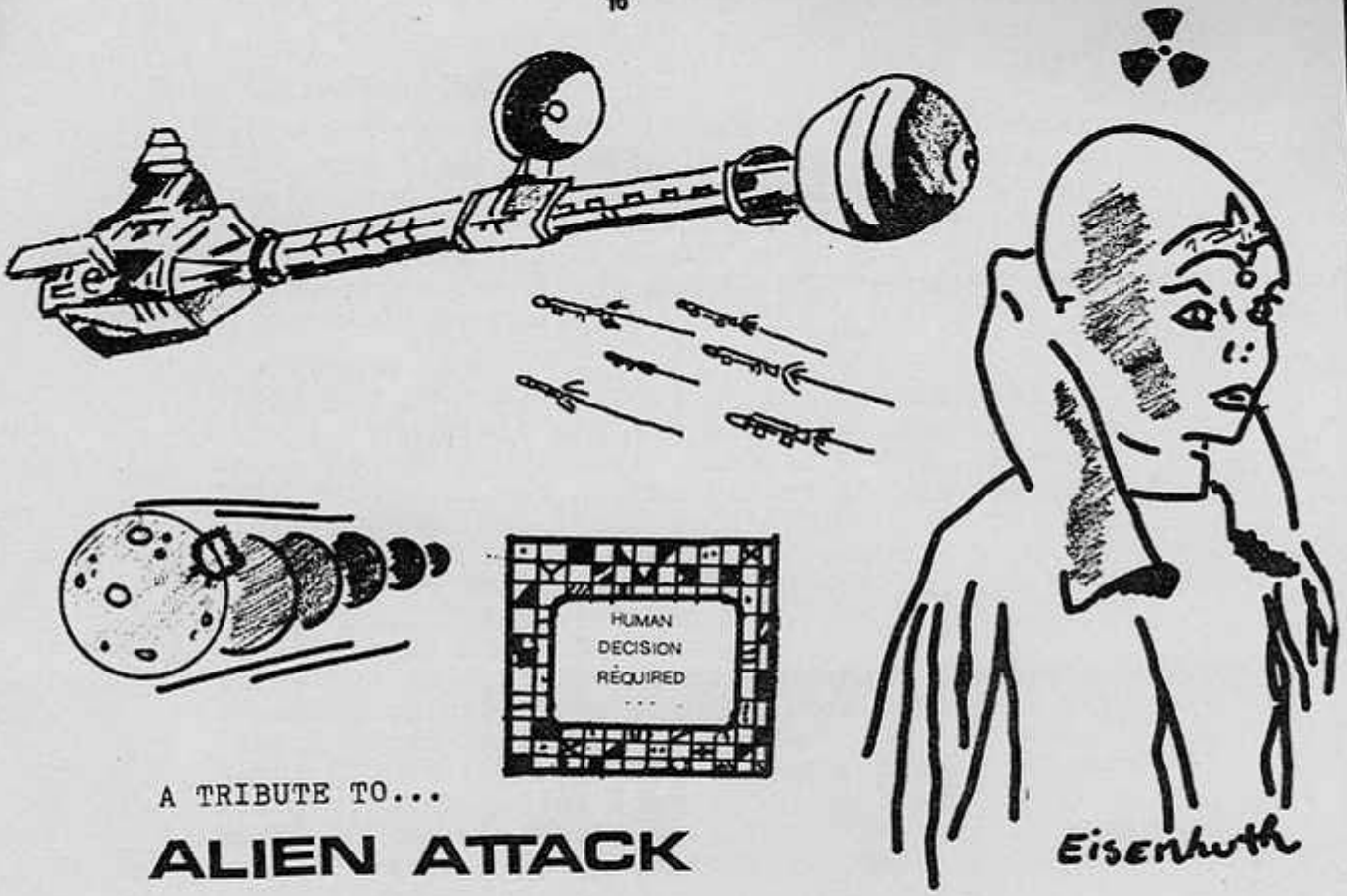
Gouhei Shinpo, for his humorous story art.

Seiichi Sogabe, for his Commander Koenig sketch.

Diana Winslow, for serving as the middle-man in the Prentis Hancock Interview.

****





A TRIBUTE TO...

ALIEN ATTACK



ALPHA LOG BACK ISSUES

Finally, those ancient back issues of our newsletter, ALPHA LOG, are finally available. This is the chance to complete your collection. All newsletters are reprints and are priced at $1.00 each (U.S.A. and Canada) and $1.75 each (Overseas). Please note that the one double issue runs for $1.50 and $2.25, respectively. This price includes postage.

Newsletters

__1. ALPHA LOG #3 (SPACE: 1999 on ABC...STAR WARS... Story: "The Civil and the Savage"...Barbara Bain)
__2. ALPHA LOG #4 (ITC Update...LOGAN'S RUN...Story: "The Future is Not So Far Behind I"...Anniversary)
__3. ALPHA LOG #5 (Con '78...I, CLAUDIUS...Story: "The Future is Not So Far Behind II"...Local Reruns)
__4. ALPHA LOG #6 (Science Fiction Happening 2...Interview: Fred Pohl...Interview: Phillip Jose Farmer...Nick Tate Comedy...Boston Exchange)
__5. ALPHA LOG #7 (Con Updates...SUPERMAN...Interview: Nat Segaloff...Interview: John Wallace Spencer...Story: "The Inhuman Sacrifice")
__6. ALPHA LOG #8 (Foreign Exchange...Interview: Isaac Asimov...Story: "The Luck of the Alphans")
__7. ALPHA LOG #9 (Pioneer One...Interview: Allan Asherman ...Interview: Shirley Maiewski...DESTINATION MOONBASE ALPHA...The Alpha Book)
__8. ALPHA LOG #10 (Asimov Speaks on UFOs...Spanish 1999... Story: "The Adaptoids"...Barry Gray Music)
__9. ALPHA LOG #11/12 (Double Issue...Science Fiction Happening 3...Interview: Robert Thurston...Interview: Ben Bova...Interview: James P. Hogan...Story: "Alien Spectres"...UFO...Special Photo Section)
__10. ALPHA LOG #13 (The SPACE: 1999 Year 3 Guidebook... Interview: Robert Adams...Interview: Janet Morris... Story: "Test Flight"...Blueprints)
__11. ALPHA LOG #14 (Con '79...Interview: Nick Tate... Interview: Anton Phillips...Story: "The Otherworlders" ...Special Photo Section)
__12. ALPHA LOG #15 (Martin Landau Films...Interview: Prentis Hancock...Story: "Irrational Chicken Scratch" ...Italian 1999...Greetings from Isaac Asimov)

****

MAILING FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip ____

Enclosed is _____ (U.S. Currency Only) for ____ of the ALPHA LOG back issues marked above. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.