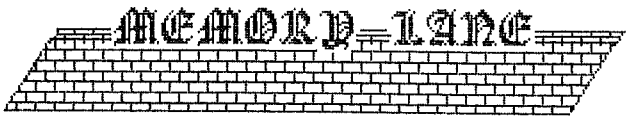
MAIN COMPUTER

Newsletter of the International Space:1999 Alliance

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WHAT KEPT US?!!

For those of you who are new members you may not know how late this issue is. For everybody else, you know this is the December issue of Main Computer. The December issue in March!!!! I'm afraid that is correct. We have had some problems which have delayed work on the MC until recently. Early in January Kathy's mom had a stroke and Kathy arranged much of the transfer to the nursing home for therapy. She has also worked on getting things ready for her mom to go back home. The same day Kathy's mom was in the hospital with her stroke, I was in the outpatient ward finding out I was suffering from colitis. Prescription - bland diet and reduced stress. The reduced stress I could handle, but the bland diet almost destroyed me. Things are better for everyone now but we just had to take a couple months off to get things back in shape. We hope this has not caused too much concern. We still hope to keep these on a more regular basis. The March MC should come out near the end of March. We will begin it shortly after this MC has been mailed. Thanks for your understanding. John & Kathy Von Kamp

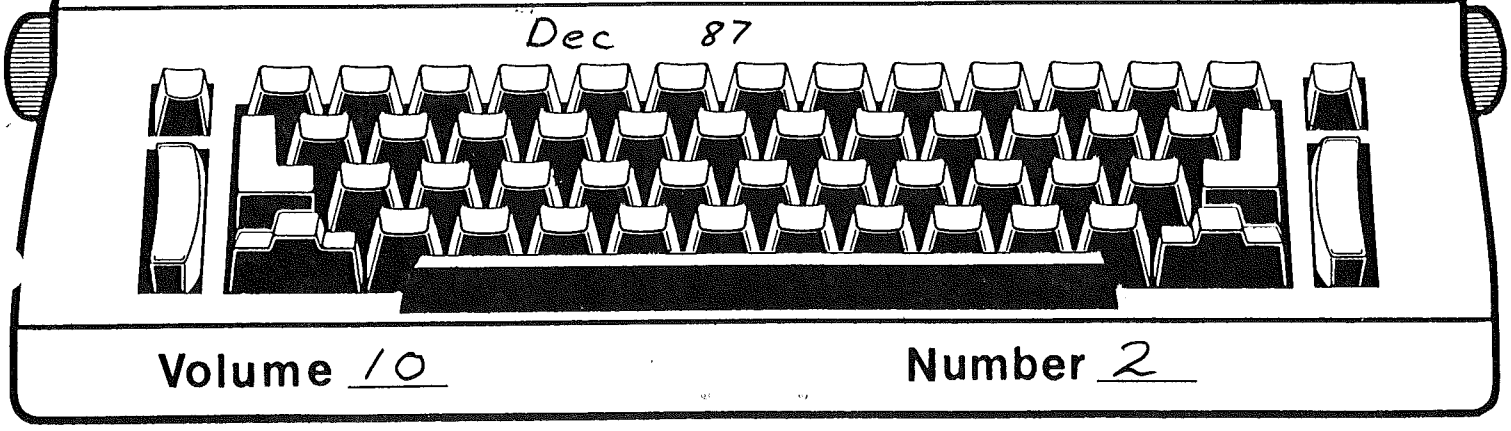


From Cathy Conrad, 320 Hartwell Street, Royston, Ga 30662

I was 10 years old in '75 when 1999 premiered. Somehow I missed the show's PR hoopla, and had my mother not drawn my attention to it, I probably wouldn't have seen it. She knew I was into SF and so was she, having worked at NASA in its early days. The first episode I saw was "Earthbound", and I loved the story, the style, everything about the show. The show was cancelled after a short run there in Orlando, Florida.

When we moved to Georgia (Arrghh!) though, I discovered 'Starlog' and through it, the Alliance and other 1999 clubs. I wasn't alone! In 1980, an Atlanta station reran 1999 and I finally got to see the second season. After being in 1999 fandom awhile, I got more into Atlanta fandom, for which I can only plead insanity. I'm back now and into 1999 again as well as UFO and other Anderson shows I've been seeing for the first time.

We like this column and hope you do also. This is, however, the last submission that we have. Would you be interested in sharing with the rest of us what you remember about the first time you saw Space:1999, the first Con you attended or the first contact you had with other Space:1999 fans? Please drop us a letter.



Volume 10 **Number** 2

FLASHBACK SPACE:1999

This issues Flashback comes to us from Lew Place. The article appeared in the November, 1975 issue of Science Digest.

SPACE:1999

Adventures in Science "Faction"

By Arielle Emmett

MOST GOOD SCIENCE FICTION today isn't science fiction at all, but a wedding of science fact and imagination sprinkled with human foibles. Call it "science faction," if you will, as does Brian Johnson, the special effects man behind TV's fall highlight, Space:1999. THe key to the new genre is its striking adherence to science in our own back yards-Cape Canaveral, Los Alamos, Soyuz, Mayo Medical Center-and to the fantastic possibilities our science holds.

Space:1999 is the newest, most spectacular and expensive(six and a half million dollars for 24 episodes) tribute to science faction ever produced for television. Starring TV's handsome acting team, Martin Landau and Barbara Bain, and produced for Independent Television Corporation by Britain's sci-fi wizards, Gerry and Sylvia Anderson, Space:1999 is a visually stunning, space-age morality play that chronicles the downfall of 20th-Century technological man.

Perhaps not a fitting theme for entertainment at first glance, but the producers gambled that TV viewers would rather see themselves 24 years from now than in several thousand, when there is probably no "future" for us at all. What the Andersons and Brian Johnson envisioned was an imaginative, often plausible, extension of present day reality: a Moonbase Alpha that is modular and solar-powered, similar to the space colonies proposed by futurists like Gerard O'Neill of Princeton; a nuclear waste disposal accident, forewarned already by physicists the world over; and the forced search and colonization of a new planet, one alternative proposed by scientists for man once he's finished with Earth.

Says Brian Johnson, who also supervised special effects for Stanley Kubrick's 2001: "Like any science fiction series, one starts off with high ideals about everything having to be as near scientifically accurate as possible until one reaches a point where science fact becomes slightly boring and science 'faction' takes over. Whether or not a forcefield would work against a black hole; or that time warps stand out as being plausible or not, does not matter. I've noticed that astronomers squabble over various ideas, and have squabbled for generations.... The prime concern of any film maker is to entertain."

And that they do. The producers have created a scenario that is real enough to be scary, just fantastic enough to capture our interest. A chain reaction of radioactive nuclear waste pulverizes mankind's newest garbage dump, the dark side of the moon, and catapults the light side and its 311 earthly inhabitants on Moonbase Alpha out of Earth's orbit forever. "I come up to troubleshoot and launch a probe," says Martin Landau, who identifies so strongly with his character, Commander Koenig, that he sometimes confuses the two, "and before I become effective in stopping the waste disposal it blows up and off we go..... We have no control over our trajectory and can barely survive. The last contact with Earth is a radio flash of earthquakes and tidal waves.... We don't even know if the Earth exists anymore...."

The story is not too far-fetched. Numerous journals, including Physics Today and the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists have recently warned of catastrophic nuclear accidents, asserting that the detonation of only ten kilograms (4.5 pounds) of plutonium, with an efficiency of one tenth of one percent, would still amount to the equivalent of 200 tons of TNT. That is enough to blow an entire city-if not a small planet-off the celestial map.

The survivors on Moonbase Alpha, led by Koenig, a former Apollo astronaut, a ship's physician (Bain), and an O'Neill-like space scientist (Barry Morse), try to keep body and spirit together as they bite and claw their way to survival against the most deadly forces of the universe-time, mortality, antimatter, and civilizations more primitive and more advanced than our own. "Technologically and emotionally we shouldn't be out there," remarked Landau in a recent interview with Science Digest. Producer Gerry Anderson adds: "We have been careful (unlike Star Trek) to ensure that the people of Earth are not a super race." Unable to even procreate on the Moonbase due to limitations in the life-support system, the Alphans search in each weekly fly-by for a planet on which to settle and begin anew. The mathematical (if not theatrical) odds are with them: recent estimates by the Rand corporation indicate that there are 600 *billion* planets suitable for human habitation in this galaxy alone.

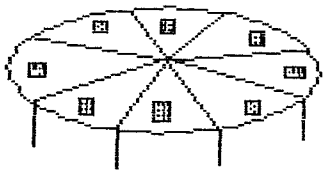
Producing such a tale of technological booby-trapping is like a good science fiction story itself. Brian Johnson, confronted with the task of creating a believable set for the Moonbase, each exterior plane surface, and every other imaginable intergalactic phenomenon(flamming supernovas, black holes, etc.), opted for a fusion of science and art;

combining the most fantastical techniques of film-making and set design with images inspired by the newest developments in avionics and space-age architecture. "I envisaged the Alpha Moonbase to be modular in construction," he said. "The method of travel was defined as a series of high-speed subway links, using a vehicle of a type which resembled more of a lift than a wheeled structure. The modular transport unit, which then became known as 'Eagle', came in a series of very quick doodles on a piece of paper, occupying a time factor of about 25 minutes. I had in my mind's eye an insect-like appearance, as the majority of interesting space and earth-flying vehicles are decidedly insect-like, vis-a-vis Concorde, Viking, and many others....I also envisaged a large technical area dealing with the servicing of Alpha Moonbase and the Eagles, with the possibility that 40 to 50 Eagles would be in service in the command area."

Two years ago Johnson constructed Moonbase Alpha in the cavernous spaces of Pinewood Studios in England. He came up with a 17-unit structure built with interchangeable parts like a "giant Lego set"; which could be reshuffled for maximum believability. The scripts for each episode were broken down into distinct sci-fi sequences, and then conceptualized visually on story-boards. The technical team fashioned and tested all the models and gadgets needed to produce optical effects for each episode well in advance; all special effects sequences were shot in a separate studio containing front and rear projection screens and high pattern fibre optic devices, and then transmitted as a series of sketches to Pinewood via Rank Xerox Telecopier. The crew took about four shots per day, mostly in multiple exposure, and then "optically married"(as Johnson calls it) the half completed sequences at a later date. The film camera, a standard 35mm Mitchell high-speed, was linked to a television monitor system which synchronized live or video tape pictures with the camera shutter; preventing the characteristic "roll" that one is accustomed to seeing when television pictures are recorded on film.

That Space:1999 is a brilliant piece of 20th-Century technological art, film-making, is readily evident at a glance. What is perhaps less obvious is that the producers are using technology and art to talk about other issues. This is the essence of science faction: "that we can humanize the spaceman so that we can identify with him," says Landau, "and at the same time touch base with something mind-blowing." After all, technology is not a dirty word. It has the capacity to maim and to cure, to entertain and to even moralize. Concludes Gerry ANderson: "The problem is not to do with technology but human nature, and in our series we try to deal first and foremost with this, for therein lies the solution."

COMMAND CONFERENCE ROUNDTABLE



BREAKAWAY
Year 1 - Episode 1 By Anthony DiPetro

In my opinion, this is by far one of the best episodes of 1999. The many elements that made it a great series are all present in this episode.

First, we are given a good dose of the many fantastic special effects 1999 is noted for. From dazzling explosions to fantastic minatures, they are all here in episode one. Second, the relationship between John and Helena begins to form. Much has been written about the lack of character building in this series. Unfortunately, not many critics have taken the perspective of the characters themselves. It should be remembered that these people are living on the constant edge of death. The moonbase was not constructed to travel through space; it was meant to protect its occupants in a known environment. Also, they are surviving with limited resources (though this wasn't strictly adhered to in some pots, i.e. endless destruction of Eagles, etc.). The list could go on, but clearly these people do not have the time to be merry and make small talk. Their goal is to survive and find another home. Third, the element of mystery, in the form of what is ailing the astronauts, is introduced in this episode. It was the element of mystery that made the first season so appealing. Almost every episode has John, Helena and Victor searching for what has gone wrong to try to make it right again. As each segment is completed, another element of the mystery is solved.

The scientific flaws of this episode have been hashed over several times so I won't get into them. Just two thoughts to leave you with...has anyone noticed that the year one and year two Eagles were different in not only the cockpit, but also in the entrance to the cockpit? In year one, there is a hall connecting the passenger module and cockpit(it held spacesuits) that is gone in year two, BUT remains in the exterior Eagle shots from year two! And, this is being picky, but in year one there were always DOUBLE doors for the travel tube units (like an elevator) whereas in year two the second set was missing!

We were lucky to receive a second analysis of the "BREAKAWAY" episode. This one from Kerry Keene.

I thought I would begin a new year by expressing my views on the episode "Breakaway". This is one aspect of "Space:1999" fandom that really hasn't been explored very deeply over the years. The only fanzine that attempted to do this was "Alpha Quarterly". This is the only magazine that I know of that tried to analyze an episode in each issue. So, here we go....

"Breakaway" -- An Analysis

This episode is one of the best introductory episodes that I've seen in a long time. The episode is a mixture of mystery, politics, technology and some of the problems that technology brings, and the episode deals with PEOPLE.

As the episode opens, we see John Koenig returning to Alpha, having been reappointed by the ILFC as Alpha's commander. But he wasn't returning for just another tour of duty. No. He was returning to the base to do two things. First. He had to get the Meta Probe launched. Second, and even more important, to solve the mystery of the deaths that were now taking place on the base.

The episode gets right into introducing the major characters to the viewer. Some may say that the acting was low key and it was, but I think the word that describes it best is serious. The situation was serious.

As I was saying, the episode introduces us to the major characters right off the bat. As John Koenig steps out of the travel tube, he is met by an old friend, Professor Victor Bergman. He fills Koenig in on what has been going in on Alpha. It is here that we see the political games that are still being played in the year 1999. Koenig then goes to Main Mission and meets his staff. The rest of the characters are introduced as the episode goes along, Alan Carter among them.

As the episode proceeds, we see what kind of people these Alphans are. A relationship is being formed between those in top positions, and this bond is continued throughout the show.

Now, we have Simmonds. This man is a typical politician and it seems that Koenig has had to deal with him before. As we see when Simmonds calls to confirm Koenig's appointment, a deal struck between the two. Koenig will keep the illness that has killed nine people a secret and he will get the probe launched. Koenig is essentially telling Simmonds to get off his back. I sense that John Koenig has as much use for politicians as the rest of us do.

The deaths on Alpha are now the first on Koenig's mind and thus he begins to face the mystery of those deaths head on. As we will see many times in "Space:1999", John Koenig goes to the one person that may be able to give him the answers that he's looking for. He goes to see Dr. Helena Russell. Here we see the initial meeting of these two. I say this because Koenig introduces himself to her. But she can't give him too much more information than he already has. So he decides to take a flight out to Waste Area Two via Area One. And so the episode goes. The climax of the episode is reached and Simmonds is part of the disaster that is about to take place.

The waste dumps finally blow and the moon is sent out of orbit to become a free body in space. The Alphans are now on a journey where no one has ever been before. Technology has brought many creature comforts, but it has also brought some problems that have mushroomed faster than we can deal with. The year 1999 sees the extensive use of nuclear power, but the problem of nuclear waste is now a major problem. We are even now facing the problem of what to do with the waste from our own nuclear power plants. The uproar from people who have been told that a nuclear waste dump is to be located in their area is loud and angry. I don't blame them.

Now, to some of the philosophy of this episode. Some have called this episode the beginning of "the quest". The Alphans are now without a home planet, so they begin turning their attention to Meta as a first attempt to find a new home. Also, some have expressed the thought that something protected them from the massive explosion that ripped the moon from Earth orbit. Some have called it the "Mysterious Unknown Force", a kind of diety. The episode "The Black Sun" explores this concept.

Well, this ends my analysis of "Breakaway", but I do want to add some final comments. Many people have criticized this series over the years AND at the time the series was on the air. i guess the most famous critic has to be Isaac Asimov. Some have said that this series was negative and presented a depressing future. My comment on that is BULL!! Earth has solved many of its problems by the year 1999. The Sahara has been reclaimed, Earth has solved many of its international problems. The ILFC is an example of this. The show is more realistic in its view of the world than other SF/Fantasy shows. At least 1999 and its creators realize there are still going to be problems in the near future. In fact there is a book out now called "The Great Depression of 1990" authored by a noted economist who predicts that this depression is going to be deep and may last the entire decade to be followed by a "Golden Age" by the year 2000. That title may not be exact, but it is a close resemblance.

Before I end, I would like to reply to comments by the editors from my last letter in MC. When I listed the episodes that I thought were stupid from Trek in my last letter, that opinion was MY own and no one elses. Others may disagree with that list, and that's fine by me. Those are some that I thought were/are stupid concepts. Come on! The odds that another planet would have a constitution exactly like ours is astronomical! That's my main knock against "Omega Glory". Another Roddenberry gem.

Despite what John says about the room always being crowded when Trek was on, the show was never popular with the general public. The ratings were never very good. That's a fact. And the show still has a small following compared to the general viewing audience. Why isn't the new series on one of the networks? The networks can't live with the ratings the old show got. Not with the cost per episode at $2 million. They can't afford it. Name me a Fox Network show in the top ten. There isn't one.

John asked why there were three years of Trek. The third year came about due to a campaign by Bjo Trimble which is to her credit. But the show still failed to increase its audience share. There is an audience out there who loves Trek (I'm not one of them) and they are vocal, but the network deals with one thing, the bottom line. And SF just doesn't make it on the networks. That's a fact of life.

Finally, I agree with John on the Aliens that may be hostile and may shoot first and ask questions later.

"THE BLACK SUN"

Year 1 - Episode 3 By Robert Wood

"The Black Sun" seems to be considered by a large number of Space:1999 fans to be one of the best, if not the best, episode of the series. Why? The basic plot of the show has the Moonbase nearing a black sun, which is really almost the same thing as a black hole. With nearly inevitable destruction ahead of them in the black sun, they launch a survival ship with six people on board. Victor's force field ends up saving them, and after they get out of the black sun the escape Eagle appears, and the Alphas are back together again.

Now, as a plot this is a very good one. It presents the viewer with dramatic potential, but it is not this plot which seems to appeal to so many of us. The Black Sun is one of the most metaphysical, philosophical and religious episodes of the entrie series.

To start off with, no one knows what can be experienced inside a black hole (sun). It is total guess work because no one has ever been in one. This hits the veiwer with a question of wonder....what could happen? Viewers are interested in this unknown. The dramatical build up to the black sun entry serves to add to the wonder of the unknown. Some of the best special effects EVER are contained in this episode, and they add to the drama by establishing a believable black sun.

Helena, Alan and Sandra along with the three other Alphans are sent off in the survival Eagle. They head in the opposite direction - away from the black sun and away from Alpha. The significance of this is shown later. All Alphans except Victor and John go down to the lower levels of Alpha where it would be far safer. Victors scientific curiosity is what keeps him above and John is there because of the friendship shared between the two men. Bergman talks of his recent calculations dealing with the survival odds against the moon, and his questions about some sort of cosmic intelligence. John asks if he means God and Victor says that he's a scientist and knows nothing about God. Victor and John have a couple of glasses of Victor's brandy.

Shortly they appear to feel strange, and as they enter the black sun, or as they approach it, they turn transparent. When they were sitting onthe Main Mission floor, they now are sitting in the same positions but are floating in a scene of strange colors and darkness. Sound seems to stop, but we can still hear their voices. At this point they age so quickly and so much that they may be beyond numbers of years. They are now walking in a different space, one with bright lights and other things like stars. They talk but their mouths don't move, they are communicating with thoughts. Then a lovely voice starts talking to them. the way she talks and what she says has you wondering about who she is. Then Victor asks: "Are you God?" The answer? : "It was good to have known you."

The explanation which I believe to be accurate for this last line is that the voice is God and that the being is avoiding a direct answer and is allowing John and Victor to make up their own minds. If she is God that would throw a very un-sexist light on things since God is always thought of as a male. That in itself is a topic to consider for quite a while. But we are presented with more. Victor asks: "Why have I never talked with you before?" and the voice answers that she thinks a thought perhaps every thousand Earth years and that we are never around long enough to hear them, which leads me too ask: If she thinks one thought every thousand years - then how long has it taken for them to have this conversation? It would take a huge number of thoughts to have the conversation and to say the different things. Are we to believe that an incredible number of thousands of years have gone by in the black sun? I think so. And this means the Earth and all regular space would have continued aging normally while this conversation was going on.

If that is right, when they got out of the black sun the universe would be totally different, races would be gone, new ones would be around etc.. Finally, when they are out they scan for the Eagle and to their surprise, they find it! The Eagle went in the other direction, but now it is approaching the moon. Alan verifies this when he says they went the opposite direction and did not follow the moon through the black sun. It is as Helena says: "Something brought us home." The something must be interpreted as the voice, the woman, the God which John and Victor encountered.

"The Black Sun" is the ultimate Year One episode. It has a style which should have been kept for Year Two. It asks questions about why we believe God is a man. It presents no answer to that question but it makes you wonder why, if you believe in God, it would have to be a man.

The writer of this episode, David Weir, seems to be giving us his own ideas. It all amounts to a wonderful viewing experience which both entertains and enlightens you, the viewer. It is one of the very best Space:1999 episodes.

THE THIRD SEASON
IN THE FOURTH DIMENSION

By Cathy Conrad

John Koenig strode into Command Center and sat down, sighing. Another day on Moonbase Alpha. They were two weeks away from the nearest planet and getting bored. Suddenly a strong blue light filled the room and with it a whirling whine. John shielded his eyes and called, "Maya, what is it?"

"I don't know Commander," maya shouted above the din. "My scanners only show some kind of magnetic disturbance." The blue light and whine vanished, replaced by a tall figure in a billowing blue robe. He smiled gently. John stood up and walked toward the man. "Who are you?"

"I am The Anderson," he said in a deep voice. Then, quieter, "but you can call me Gerry. It's all right, you don't have to bow down and adore me."

"That sounds familiar....."

"Indeed it does, Tony," John said, keeping his eyes on the stranger. "I'm John Koenig, Commander of Moonbase Alpha."

"I know, I know. I am your creator!"

"Look, would you happen to have a cousin or something named Magus? He came 'round with the same speech," Tony said. "In fact I think you use the same tailor, too....."

"Oh, that fellow. He's doing a play in Guildford right now, I think. No, we're no relation." He waived his hands. "But I didn't come here to talk about ex-guest-stars. I have something far more important on my mind."

"And what might that be?" "Your third season, Commander."

"What's a third season?" asked Helena, who'd just come into Command Center.

"It's a little hard to explain. But I'm here to ressurect you from the twilight zone of canceled TV shows and give you a second chance. But some changes must be made first."

"Changes? What sort of changes?" John asked suspiciously.

Gerry gave him the once-over. "That pink anorak, for one. It looks so silly on you. Your fans are starting to call you 'Commander Easter Bunny.'" He raised his arms in the air and flailed them about. The pink suddenly drained out of John's jacket and grey drained in. As the personnel were being shocked, Gerry walked around the room. "This control room set is another thing. It's much too claustrophobic." He flailed his arms again and the room spun and got larger. A computer console Alan was leaning against disappeared, and he clunked over onto the floor. "Yes, that's much better. More airy, more roomy. It's now a synthesis of Main Mission and Command Center. I give you....Main Command." He smiled with satisfaction and walked to the brass, who stood ogling their surroundings. "On to the cast. I do have to cut the budget quite a bit and star salaries are a big part of the budget." He looked at Maya and circled her twice. "Hm. I think I'll keep you. You add a certain glamour to the show."

"She sure does," Tony mumbled, grinning.

"I'm glad you agree," Gerry said, facing Tony. "Because that solves another casting problem. You see, if we keep her, we keep you. You're her love interest. So you're the one we keep in the 'Young Punk Who Attracts the Ladies' role. Which leaves out..." he continued, slowly turning around to face Alan. He snapped his fingers. A silvery wind swept past him and engulfed Alan. Alan vanished.

John rushed to the spot where Alan had stood. "Alan! Where are you? What have you done?" he demanded. "Now look, whoever you are---"

"I told you who I am. An Executive Producer is the most powerful being in the universe. Well, one of the most powerful. And I can change the cast at will. But don't worry about Mr. Tate, he'll be allright. I sent him over to another series, called 'The Professionals'. He'll replace the little guy with the fuzzy hair. They say he wasn't macho enough."

"Who's Mr. Tate?"

"What? Oh, come now. He's only been your co-star for two years." He laughed and faced the main view screen. He waved a hand. "This will be the first story of the new season." The screen filled with static, then showed a tropical beach. A human-sized palm tree was in the foreground, a tree with feet, eyes, and a pair of large black-rimmed glasses. "Behold, the planet Alliance. Some set design, eh?"

"What is that--that tree thing?" Maya asked.

"Thing? that 'thing' is a John Von Kamp," Gerry answered, amused. "I forgot to tell you. To further cut the budget, all our guest-starring roles will be played by fans of the series. In this story, John Von Kamp plays a tree creature from the planet Alliance, where all plant life is intelligent. It's a beautiful story, actually. Kathy Von Kamp plays the Alpha botanist who falls in love with him--er, it--or whatever." He sighed. "They run away together to the other side of the planet and live happily ever after. Their offspring is a lovely little heather bush with blue eyes."

"Weird story."

"Isn't it. The writer's another fan, Cathy Conrad. Ever heard of her?" Helena clasped her hands together and laughed. "No, really, we have a hard time keeping up with Earth's scriptwriters out here on the other side of the galaxy. You see, they cut off my subscription to 'Variety' when we blasted out of Earth orbit." The personnel laughed and Gerry glared at her.

"Laugh if you like. But your salary is another one of my budget headaches. I've been thinking of replacing you with a beautiful, younger--cheaper--blonde actress with a large chest."

John's eyes widened. "Really?"

Helena gave him a sour look and nudged him. He cleared his throat and said, "Uh, that is, I mean, I won't let you take Helena." He resolutely put an arm around her.

"Hm. Have it your way. But, I'll have total to your agent." Gerry turned around and made another slow circuit about the room. "Yes, I have a lot of ideas. To cut down on our hardware budget I'm going to re-use some stuff from my older shows. Uh, how about we have Tony hee take a bath when Stingray comes up through the drain? Yes, and have Atlanta SHore come in to assist? No," he said suddenly, frowning. "No, that's been done before in England. On the Des O'Connor Show from the 60's, wasn't it? Yes." He walked further, hands behind his back. He stopped and snapped his fingers. "I've got it! We get Virgil drunk from sniffing too many rocket-fuel fumes, he gets in Thunderbird 4 and goes so fast he goes into hyperspace. He crash-lands on Alpha and tries to rescue the whole base. Everything fits except the Main Mission Tower, so he ejects everything and everyone and goes home." He started walking again. "Yes, I do think that has possibilities."

"But-----"

"Oh, and we can have you all digging for tiranium again when you blast out two people in a 'cryo' chamber, just like 'ol Pasc and Etrec. Only this time it's Commander Straker and Colonel Lake from my old 'UFO' series. Straker's tired of being in--heh, heh--'cold storage7, so he meets with all the ex-SHADO personnel now on Alpha and tries a mutiny. Maya overpowers 'em and saves the day. They send Straker in a module toward the alien planet where the UFOs came from. Colonel Lake steals an Eagle and goes off with Anouska Hempel to form an intergalactic USO troupe. Yes, that idea has possibilities too."

"Wait a minute, you can't----"

"And we have a spoof of that old classic movie, 'The Blob'," he went on, oblivious now to the personnel. "Ron Butler and Lew Place are guest-starring in that one. I call it 'Grandson of Blob', and the costume's cheap. Those two are running around in a giant purple plastic garbage bag in Hyde Park right now, getting into character." He chuckled. "They've been scaring heck out of everyone, too!"

"But what-----"

"Oh, dear, I've got to get back to Wardrobe now and check on those tree costumes for the first episode. We're running out of time, and we still don't have a kapok tree outfit for Becky Eisenhuth. Nor is that cute little bonsai tree costume finished for that girl--what's her name? Oh, yes, Karen Domain." Maya quietly requested a computer information readout. A man's picture appeared on the screen,and she grinned. She changed form and stood up.

"Hold it, Anderson." Gerry whirled around, shocked. "Lord Lew! Lew Grade! Gee, how'd you get here? I was just talking about ways to cut the budget, and--"

"Yes I heard, and I don't like it. If you're going to do the show again, do it right! No penny-pinching. Use whatever money you need. And bring that Tate kid back."

"Okay. Okay, whatever you say, Lord Lew." He flailed his arms and a swirling silver mist appeared in a corner of the room. The mist disappeared to revel Alan. He was dressed in an ultracool black leather outfit, and he was crouching, a shotgun in his hands. Next to him appeared Lewis Collins of 'The Professionals', similarly attired and also with a gun. Collins stood up uncertainly, looking around. "Oh, my. Back you go," Gerry said. He flailed his arms and Collins disappeared.

"That's better. Now go back to the drawing board. make me a third season of '1999' that will stagger the mind!"

"I certainly will, Lord Lew, oh, yes!" Gerry flailed his arms one last time and disappeared. The form of Lord Lew disappeared and Maya reappeared. She giggled and went back to the little group.

"Wonderful performance, Maya!" John exclaimed. "That's even worthy of Martin Landau!"

Helena cocked her head and frowned. "Who's Martin Landau?"

THE END

Launch Pad

From Anthony DiPetro / 66 Evans Street / Medford, Ma 02155

Just a few comments on the many items appearing in the last issue of "Main Computer". First, I must say that i find it annoying to have every letter interrupted by comments from the editors. Could you please put ALL editorial rebuttal in a paragraph at the end of the letter? It would reduce the discontinuity that occurs when you have to go back and forth between letter and editorial comment. Second, I do like the name "Command Conference Roundtable" chosen by Kevin McCorry for the column I suggested. I also like the idea by Kerry Keene to start the column with Breakaway, hence my contribution to this issue's column. At this time, I have nothing to add to Kevin's analysis of "Dragon's Domain", so I'll just contribute by going to another episode.

As for the new Star Trek, i have already been turned off. Surprisingly, some reviews I have read have similar criticisms that were leveled at 1999. There seem to be many similarities between ST:NEXT GENERATION and 1999. For example, the budding romance between captain and doctor (a female doctor as in 1999). The all-knowing Data who doesn't comprehend English idioms (sounds like Maya, doesn't it?). Also, the addition of a security chief that is emotional (a female version of Tony Verdeschi?). The costumes look as though there should be a cape attached to the back and finally, the alien who can read emotions is downright annoying! That's all for now.....1999 lives!

From Kevin McCorry / 105 Linden Crescent / Fredericton, NB / CANADA E3A 5A1

I read Kerry Keene's letter on Fred Freiberger in the July MC (MC 6 Vol 9) and enjoyed it immensely, particularly because I agreed with 99.9 % of what he said. Contrary to popular belief, Mr. Freiberger can not be justly called a "show-killer" although he may appear to under the pretense that he produced the final season of 3 sci-fi series. The problems of Trek can be traced to the lousy second in which Roddebberry had a heavy hand, re. scripts. Many of the stories of that season were either cheap take-offs of those of the first season or were based on that accursed Non-Interference Directive, focusing on primitive planets that often practiced gladitorial games. I don't know who dreamed this up but I know it wasn't Freiberger since he wasn't around at the time. The end result of this ridiculous conception was a series of poor stories like "Gamesters of Triskelion", "The Apple", "The Omega Glory", "A Private Little War", and "A Piece of the Action". And I'm afraid I must echo Kerry's comment that many of these horrid scripts were done by Roddenberry, Coon, or Fontana, and NOT Freiberger. By the time Freddie came along, the damage was done. The show was on its way out, relegated to a doomed late-night time slot.In fact, Freiberger did all he could to put things right. First, the Non-Interference Directive was thrown out and, consequently, so were the primitive gladitorial stories. Second, he stressed the need for original stories, NOT take-offs of earlier ones. The problems of the second season had been dealt with. Sometimes the result of the change was good- "Enterprise Incident", "Tholian Web" and sometimes bad - "And the Children Shall Lead", "Way to Eden". As to my 0.1% disagreement with Kerry, I believe Freiberger was a bit hypocritical in abominably pushing scientific clarity while, under the pen name Lee Cronin, submitting two of the most scientifically cockeyed stories of the series (Spock's Brain, Wink of an Eye). Apart from that, Kerry is quite correct in his assertion that Freddie did not destroy Trek, but forstalled the impending doom caused by the bad second season.

With 1999, Freiberger came in with the departure of a number of popular characters. I agree that the missing characters in year two were not his fault, and changes had to be made to accomodate the loss of these characters. Although these changes may have been a bit drastic in places (i.e. costumes), they were for the good of the show. As much as I liked year one, the show needed change. All shows do from time to time. Otherwise, things become redundant. I liked the more open characters. The new moonbase layout and music change and I think the addition of Maya was a marvellous inspiration. The problem with series two was the pace at which it was shot - not Freiberger's doing but Lord Grades' for wasting so long between seasons then hastening filming. Doing a high-budget series like SPACE takes time. When things are rushed, quality suffers, and the doubling-up (filming two episodes at once) hurt story quality deeply. We, consequently, had episodes in which favorite characters had little or no part, or, episodes that needed fast rewrites to accomodate missing characters, ending up somewhat ambiguous. (i.e. "Matter of Balance", "Mark of Archanon") Often when there was a double-up, we came up with one good one and one bad episode and sometimes two bad ones. The problem with year two wasn't Freiberger but the series shooting pace. Also, under rushed conditions, a script consultant is forced to make concessions to to meet deadlines. Again, I must knock Freddie for hypocrisy on story clarity. The three episodes he did under the pen name Charles Woodgrove may have been double-ups but still contained needless plot holes such as in "Rules of Luton". Maya could have escaped from her cage by simply transforming into a fly. We have seen that she can transform directly from one creature to another (Space Warp), so this is a serious transgression of Freiberger's own standards (see Making of 1999).

This is becoming long and I want to address the four MC's per year issue so I'll sum up by saying that I agree with Kerry that Fred Freiberger should not be blamed for the demise of Trek and 1999.

I'm divided on the proposed 4 MC's rather than 6. It does mean more infrequent contact but the promised length and on time delivery are quite an inducement. I guess I must welcome it IF things go as promised. I probably don't have any choice other than dropping out and I don't want to do that. So, if the MC's are circa 15 pages and come on time (Sept. issue in Sept. Dec in Dec etc.) I welcome the change.

From Kevin Peterson / 930 1/2 5th Street / Golden, Co 80403-1454

Re: Kerry Keene's comments about the "nefarious" Trek Fandom.

There are two kinds of Trek fan, if anyone has been paying close attention to what goes on at science fiction conventions. One is the "trekkie", who is a rather unpalatable creature; obsessive, overly defensive, and therefore offensive. No one knows in what solar system these originate. The other is the Trekker, who, although they adulate Star Trek's praises to this day, also laud the likes of Alfred Bester, Theodore Sturgeon, and Fritz Leiber, to name a few. They don't restrict themselves to visual media sf, and above all, they don't call Trek science fiction. They call it space opera.

Which brings us to the cast members. True, the three main characters have experienced various problems in their personal lives, but that has no bearing on their status as figures of popularity. If Leonard Nimoy seems cool at conventions or other such gatherings, I don't think anyone can assess that as being unfriendly. Did anyone think of the word caution? Can you imagine how you would react if you had been trapped in a department store called Macy's by a star-crazed crowd? He had to escape from the roof of the building, and barely made it with the clothes on his body, no to mention his personal safety. That wasn't the only time either.

If you want nice people, why don't you look up Jimmy Doohan, Walter Koenig, or Nichelle Nichols? Have you ever talked to them? Nichelle, for instance, is a lovely lady, and always tries to make the conventions held in Denver--usually makes it, too, as she doesn't live that far away. She's rather well known around here. And Jimmy is a great conversationalist--he also loves a good practical joke.

And who didn't go on to other things? Leonard Nimoy hosted In Search Of, starred in a terrible remake of The Invasion of the Body Snatchers, was even on Mission: Impossible for a while. I've seen him in commercials, and he has also cut a record album. Nichelle Nichols also made an album. William Shatner has been on Hawaii Five-O, was in an awful movie called Visiting Hours, was in a good movie called Terror at 25,000 Feet, and, of course, starred as T.J. Hooker.

More or less, they came back to working with the characters that captured the imaginations of America. Milking their popularity? I'd call it supply and demand. Their fans want to see them, and they've done their best to accomodate. If they were milking anything, they'd appear on the cover of The Enquirer every week. For these people it's also a job. If someone offered you a job you like doing and pays well, would you take it? Don't tell me you wouldn't, because that's a lot of malarkey.

And why not? It's not a bad thing. Trek appeals to quite a lot of people, me included, and the show always tried to make a point about the characters and their situations clear. The stars were able to reappear in their former roles because the show did fire people's imaginations.

1999, unfortunately, didn't have enough fire to keep it from fizzling. The reason? It's a thinking person's show, for those with a philosophical bent. Most people are not that cerebral. I am, but that doesn't count for the guy who lives in the next apartment, now does it? Not unless it would happen to be true for him. People have complained to me about 1999's lack of strong characterization, or its "ridiculous" premise that made it the Planet Of The Week Showcase, etc., etc., when all it really boils down to is that you've got to love to think.

Kerry isn't the only one with, seemingly, something against Star Trek. I've heard these glittering generalizations from other fans of 1999. I don't know what atrocities were committed against them by Star Trek fans, but sheesh! Consider the source. Trekkies, as per the definition at the beginning of this, are nothing to worry about. The reason is simple enough. They love Star Trek. They love Star Trek. And they love Star Trek. They do not love science fiction. Trekkers do. Kevin Peterson.

From Devin Turner / 810 Hi-Lo Way / Tallahassee, Fl 32308

I would like to list some of my favorite episodes and why I like them. I really liked the first episode "Breakaway". I liked the episode because the Alphans had a tough decision to make. How were they going to survive being torn away from Earth, living in deep space for the rest of their lives. The next one was "Another Time, Another Place." This episode really thrilled me. It was interesting to see how one person could see themselves in a far distant future or different future. The alternate Professor Bergman told Koenig if he and the landing party didn't return to where they had come from, they would have no place in the two universes to die in. Which means that Koenig would be trapped forever in that universe with the rest of the landing party. Another year one episode I liked was "Troubled Spirit".

This episode sort of gave me the creeps for a while after seeing it. The episode began with some eerie music and dealt with a ghost who wanted to kill the people responsible for his death. It seems this Alphan ghost was very much alive. It seems the ghost (anti-matter?) took the law into his own hands to get revenge. This turns out to be useless when Koenig forces a confrontation between the Alphan and the ghost. The confrontation is between matter and anti-matter. My other favorites are as follows: The Metamorph, Journey to Where, All That Glisters, Mark of Archanon, New Adam, New Eve, A.B. Chrysalis, Catacombs of the Moon, Seed of Destruction, A Matter of Balance, the two Bringers of Wonder episodes, and the Lambda Factor. The only episode of Space:1999 I have never seen is "Space Warp".

From Kerry Keene / 417 NE 18 Ave. / Pompano Beach, Fl 33060-6543

Well, another year has come and gone. we have entered our tenth year of existence, and much has happened since our group began back in 1978. I wonder if the founders of our club could have dreamed, back then, that this club dedicated to "Space:1999" and quality SF, would have lasted this long. (IF WE HAD WE MIGHT NOT HAVE STARTED) WELL, The International Space:1999 Alliance, in various forms and under different names has survived.

We have survived through the dedication of our members and through the hard work of those who have been past presidents and section reps, and the hard work of our current presidents and section reps. So, let us go forward with the same enthusiasm that has been such a part of the history of our group. Let's keep it up.

Now, on to the current issue of MC (at the time of this writing, MC Vol. 10 No. 1). My first impressions of the new format is very positive. With the expanded format, I believe that many things can be done. Artwork (when available) can be added. Short stories can be added and perhaps new columns can be introduced as new ideas are sent in. But let me get down to topics brought up by John in his comments on the cover page. First. I was somewhat disappointed to learn that the first issue of the Alliance fanzine didn't sell well. Yes, I had a story in that issue, but that aside, i would hope that the members of this club would consider one thing: the stories written by the fans is one way to keep the interest in "Space:1999" alive. Through these stories, those who aren't currently seeing 1999 on any of their local TV stations may find these stories their only outlet for fresh and new ideas. Who knows, those who read them may get the inspiration to write their own stories for others to read.

One final point on this subject before I move on. If there is no fan interest in the stories that are written by others, then look for the stories to stop coming to the Alliance. If you who are reading this letter were an author, and you knew the fans didn't care about fan efforts to keep 1999 alive, would you take the time and effort to sit down and rough out a story? Would you then take the hours and days it takes to then write it out in long hand and then the additional hours and days to type it up? You probably wouldn't. But that is what we who write these stories have to do. And this doesn't even include the time it takes for John and Kathy to format the fanzine for final printing. And what about those who have done fanzines in the past and are currently doing them now? What about Denise Miller who spends hours setting up "Lunavisions" and Robert Wood who does the same to get "All That Glisters" ready for your enjoyment? And there are others like, Tony Wynn (great to see his fanzine back), Terry Bowers, and all of the rest. These people do this work out of love for a TV series and for our enjoyment.

If we aren't going to support the separate fanzine of the Alliance, then I can't see John and Kathy taking the time and money to produce one. I suggest that the stories be printed in MC over several issues. Personally, I'd love to see another Alliance fanzine. It would be another way to bring in revenues to the club. "Starlog" is a master at this by offering all of the things other than the magazine.

I would like to thank Doug Pelton for giving us a description of the recent 1999 convention that took place in England in September. From what he said, it looks like the first, of what I hope will be many cons, went so well. It is good to see that the country of "Space:1999"'s origin is finally recognizing what a fine TV series was produced there back in the years of 1973 to 1976. I think that the gathering was quite good for a first effort. And it was great to see that some of those who worked on the show still have a fondness for it.

For those of you who would like to write to "Starburst", you can do so by writing to: Starburst Letters / c/o Visual Imagination / 38 Melrose Ave. / Wimbeldon Park / London / Great Britain SW19 8BY. This is one way to get those we like from 1999 interviewed. It would be nice to see what they have to say after 11 years since 1999 went out of production. So, WRITE!

As I continue to go through the current issue of MC, I just want to thank those who sent in their impressions of our recent Relax-A-Con, and to the two articles on Barry Morse's current play "Merely Players"; I found them most enjoyable. It just goes to show once again what an unusual person Barry is. Not many actors of his stature would take the time out of their lives to do something like helping other actors who weren't as fortunate as he has been. And especially an event like this play that will take so much of his time. He's a great person and we should be honored that he worked on a TV series that we all have a fondness for. And for me to say that takes quite a lot. I'm not one who is generally impressed by actors and actresses and the Hollywood scene. But I have made an exception in Barry's case and the others who worked on this series we call "Space:1999".

Now, we come to what I hope becomes a regular feature of MC, the discussion of 1999 episodes. The first one is "Dragon's Domain" as reviewed by Kevin McCorry. Well, Kevin. I basically agree with what you had to say about this episode.

It also happens to be one of my favorites as well. But this episode has another function. It is a bridge episode to year two. In this episode, we see the first of Helena's medical log or status reports. This would become common in year two. Also, the jackets worn by Koenig and Bergman would become a part of the year two uniforms. And, finally, the ID badges seen in this episode would become a fixture in year two.

OK. John and Kathy would like opinions on the two new SF/Fantasy shows that are currently airing. i.e. "Beauty and the Beast" and "Star Trek: The Next Generation". First, let me comment on "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST". In four words, I can say or state my opinion, and they are: I like this show. I have enjoyed this series from the start. To me, someone sat down and really thought out these characters. The two lead characters come across as caring and deeply devoted to one another. There is a link between our world and Vincent's through not only Catherine, but also through "Father" as portrayed by Roy Dotrice. This was shown in the 11/20/87 episode when Father had to re-live his past while jailed. All in all, this is a good fantasy series and I hope that it lasts. But I do have my doubts, as the ratings aren't that strong. I do understand that its future may be helped by the fact that it is winning its time slot. But it is finishing around the middle of the ratings overall.

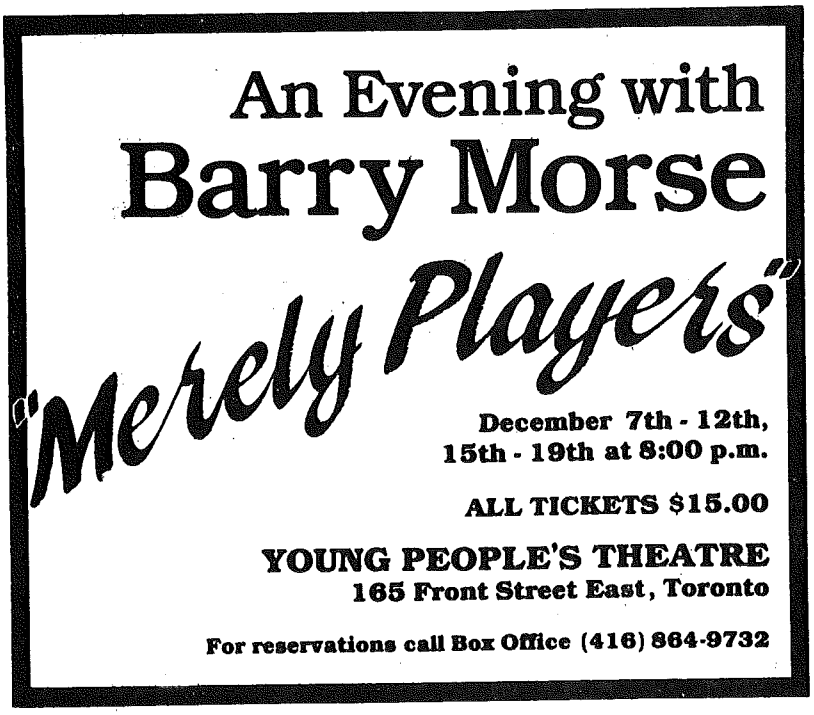
Now, to the other entry in the SF/Fantasy world. I'm afraid that I am less enthusiastic about "Star Trek: The Next Generation". There are a lot of reasons for this. Let me start with the characters. Outside of maybe Picard and Riker, and perhaps the Klingon Worf, these characters don't inspire at all! Roddenberry has to create another half-human, half-alien character for what reason I can't tell you. This woman Troi has absolutely nothing to contribute to the series as the character is now portrayed. To me, she is nothing more than a walking, talking sensor with what appears to be no scientific background at all. Burton's character, La Forge, is similar to Sulu or Checkov: Seat warmer. He, too, is essentially a sensor. Those visors have got to go! If they wanted to do another bionic man, why no do it like the Austin character? Although I'M not wild about the Doctor, I may become able to like her. But that kid of hers I can't take. I'm all for helping the bright kids, but when this kid thinks he knows more than trained personnel, then he becomes something of a wise guy. Yar is so far nothing more than a card board character. Her solution to a problem is to shoot it. She doesn't seem to have the ability to reason through a situation and then use force only if you have to. Maybe it was her background, but her training should have taught her something. Finally, Data. I'm not one who is all that wild about androids as SF characters. I get that feeling that having another Spock on board would have created some real problems, so they decided to come up with a character similar, but a machine instead of a flesh and blood person.

Now, to the stories. The first two hour movie was a bit long for the plot line. I also found too much of the episode "Squire of Gothos" in it. One of the worst episodes in the old Trek series and here we see it again. And this is the problem so far with this new series. There is too much of the old series in this new version. "The Naked Now" is a perfect example of this. This entry is a total rip-off of the earlier episode and with even less science than the original. The episodes have been inconsistent. The one called "Where None Have Gone Before" took this show into fantasy from SF. There is no way a ship can travel a billion lightyears and return to the same galaxy at the same time it left it! And there are more problems that I see with this series.

Despite the problems that I see with ST: TNG, I have seen some good things, too. The episode "Justice" was good. Simplistic, but good. The episode "The Battle" was good. It gave us a look into Picard's background, something the original series failed to do, or did little of. The SFX and production sets are top notch. Visually, this series is excellent. I think the episode "Lonely Among Us" (I think that was the title) was good, but two things bothered me about this entry. First. The cohabitation of an alien inside the body has always been a pain to me. When the alien energy force entered human bodies, I moaned to myself. The second problem is the way they recovered Picard from the energy cloud. Obviously, those doing the writing don't care about biology and the life process. Using the transporter in this way caused another moan. Recovering Picard by beaming his "pattern" out of the transporter is a real nonsensical way to solve the problem.

Well, to wrap up my views on ST: TNG, I'll simply say this. I will continue to give it a chance and hope it makes it. I still have mixed views on where it is heading. But I feel that a lot of improvements need to be made beginning with the characters, followed by the stories, which need a lot of work. I had better end this before John and Kathy shoot me. Take care everybody. 1999 LIVES!!!!!

From the editors - It is quite true that many of the first episodes of ST: TNG appeared to be extensions or reworked copies of the original series. Two former members of the Alliance are working as production assistants for the show and informed us that this was done by design to introduce the new cast of characters and to try to instill the flavor of the original series. After a short time totally new and original stories were to be written. These new stories have now been airing for about 2 months. We would be interested in your opinions of the show as it is now. We were also informed that a second year would be produced even if this year did not catch on right away to give the show a chance to stand or fall on its own. We have heard of several impromptu polls on the popularity of the cast members. We would be interested in your reactions to the cast members and why you think they should or should not stay with the show. If response is great enough, we could forward the results to Mr. Roddenberry through our contacts in California. Please write and let us know your thoughts on this matter.



At this time we have some good news and some bad news to relay to you. The bad news can wait till the good news is through. The following are some reviews of Barry's touring play "Merely Players".

PLAYER MORSE IS MERELY MASTERLY
By Bob Pennington - Toronto, Sun

Merely Players, two "chummy, informal" hours with Barry Morse, at Young People's Theatre, is one of the great joys of this Christmastide.

Canada's master raconteur is giving over a year of his life, entirely without pay, to raise funds for performing artists in need. Toronto is the 25th of over 100 locations in his cross-nation tour with a collage of humorous and affectionate vignettes of artists and writers over three centuries. But the greatest fascination in this engrossing scrapbook of theatrical experiences was the astounding revelation of how one of our finest actors entered the profession he has now graced for over 50 years.

Barry Morse was born in the far from affluent London borough of Shoreditch and left school at the age of 14 to become an errand boy. Delivering on his bike one fateful day, he chanced to read a notice about a performance being given by students of the Royal Academy Of Dramatic Art. The prime attraction was that it was free. Neither he, nor his parents had ever seen a play. "It was not for people of our class."

But he was a cocky young cockney: "I thought they (the actors) were terrible." On learning the Academy awarded a principal scholarship each year, he entered, only to find he was competing against over 300 other applicants. The odds against him succeeding were enormous. "I was an urchin youth with an accent you could cut with a knife."

Shrewdly, having picked up the jargon, he decided to do market cries as part of his audition. One wa of a "desperately sick-looking person" selling a cure-all called *The Ungent*: - " 'Ave you got a fluttering in your stomach as if two birds were mating in a paper bag? What you need then is *The Ungent!*"

A public library was the source of an extract he gave from *The importance Of Being Earnest*. "God does take care of idiots." RADA gave him a scholarship that year, making him, at age 15, the youngest student it had ever admitted. Dame Sybil Thorndike, a member of the jury, told Morse later: "We found your offering curiously touching." A verdicgl
his marriage of 48 years to actress Sydney Sturgess, still his companion on this marathon tour by van.

Among his theatre *Heroes* were Shakespeare, David Garrick and Sir Henry Irving, "the first actor knight who took lessons for 15 years to cure his stammer." The Canadian Dumbells, Charles Dickens and the Crummles Company and a soupcon of Chekhov were other pleasures.Carl Bernard, a great original, was a hilarious memory of an actor who was a great character (rather than a great character actor).

Best known internationally on TV as the relentless policeman in *The Fugitive*, Barry Morse has starred in and directed many plays on Broadway and London's West End and has so far played more than two thousand roles on stage, film, TV and radio. One day soon, one hopes, Canada and the profession he has always enhanced will both give a great trouper the full recognition he has earned.

ALL CANADA'S A STAGE FOR MORSE'S TRIBUTE
By Robert Crew - Toronto, Star

In his theatrical scrapbook called *Merely Players*, Barry Morse devotes a long section to an old actor named Carl Bernard. As Morse points out, Bernard's name won't be found in any history of the theatre. Yet he was truly a great original epitomizing the joy and zest of theatrical life at its best. Morse spins two glorious yarns about Bernard, a man who didn't always know his lines but was quick-witted enough to improvise his way out of any situation. the first tells of how Bernard, who was playing a butler, spun one line of dialogue into a 15-minute lament about the conditions of life below stairs, dragging a reluctant Morse along for the ride. The second tells of how Morse tried to get his revenge, only to be adroitly upstaged.

These two tales tell a lot about Morse as well as about Bernard. And what shines through the whole of *Merely Players* is

Morse's feeling about the stage and his fellow actors. After nearly half a century in the business, he is still filled with love and respect for both. And that in turn explains why Morse is now on a grueling tour of Canada with this one-man show, which began a two-week run at Young People's Theatre last night. The purpose is to raise money for a new charity, Performing Arts Lodges of Canada, dedicated to the needs of the aging and disadvantaged in the country's performing arts industry.

Morse is now a quarter of the way through the tour that will end next May, after more than 100 performances coast to coast. It's his way of saying thank you, of giving something back to business that has been good to him. Act I is a little history, a little autobiography. We hear how a resourceful little Cockney kid named Barry Morse bluffed his way into London's prestigious Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, winning a scholarship and graduating in 1935. Morse then takes a look at some of the historic figures of the British stage - the Elizabethan actor Edward Alleyn, David Garrick and Henry Irving. The second half of the show focuses on the "rank and file". Morse works a little magic, acts a little Chekhov and tells stories - wonderful stories. He also sings a song or two, including the Cockney ballad "My Old Dutch" which he dedicates to his wife, Sydney Sturgess. What gives th show its charm is its warmth and chattiness - Morse is an accomplished raconteur with a sure delivery and rascally sense of timing. But there's also a deep sense of awe, an awareness of being part of a hallowed tradition that is enriched by those that are "merely players" as well as the great. In two short hours, Morse honors them all.

MORSE ENDS TOUR DUE TO LOW SALES
By Robert Crew - Toronto Star

Faced with personal losses of $75,00, actor Barry Morse is cancelling the remainder of a cross-Canada tour *Merely Players*. The one-man show, mounted to raise funds for the Performing Arts Lodges of Canada, will close after tomorrow's performance at Young People's Theatre.

It was a quarter of the way into the tour. As of yesterday, there had been 28 performances in 23 locations. Morse told a news conference that the show had received standing ovations and "reviews that only my mother could have written."

"But despite the best efforts of everyone involved, and despite the reception for the show itself, we have failed to sell seats. We have yet to play to a paying audience." The show cost a modest $42,000 to mount and had weekly running costs of only $4,000. But Morse estimated it was only attracting audiences of "low to mid 20 per cent" of capacity. "I have no explanations why." Morse, who offered his services free, has guaranteed to meet all costs of the tour and to indemnify Performing Arts Lodges against any losses. "In fairness to my own family, I can't undertake to carry the project any further. It has been one of the most exciting, valuable and most personally rewarding, and one of the most deeply bewildering experiences of my professional life."

"I think Barry has given us a tremendous profile across the country," said Roy Wordsworth, president of the organization that helps aging members of the entertainment industry. But he noted that if all the local ACTRA and Equity members had bought a couple of $15 tickets, the scheduled two-week run at Young People's Theatre would have been sold out five times over. "It is a very selfish profession, with no security."

We were very sorry to here about the cancellation of the play since we had made plans to attend it. We heard that there was an attempt being made to get corporate backing and to try the show again. We can only hope this is successful.

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We also have some more good/bad news. Time is growing short for planning a summer convention. Jeff Jones had discussed having a convention in Florida but now things have become a little hectic with the NASA project he is working on. Due to budget cuts and governmental shortsightedness, the Russians have managed to complete a similar project before ours is started. Now that the project is ready to go, it's hurry, hurry, rush, rush and Jeff plays a key part in the program. Due to this he will not be able to prepare any kind of get-together for us. We don't think there is enough time to set up a full scale successful convention anywhere. There may be several options. We could have small gatherings at other conventions and notify members in advance of these other conventions. Each section could get together and have smaller scale relax-a-con type meetings. A possible idea at the smaller meetings would be to hold them with the thought of generating funds for a larger convention the following year. Please let us know what you want. We ARE increasing membership again and it is important to decide what actions will be scheduled in the future.

If you would be interested in helping or setting up a section get-together, please contact your section representative or write us and we will send the information to them.

ADS and NOTES

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..John Koenig stormed into the conference room. "All right, what happened?" Dr. Helena Russell pushed her hair back before answering. "According to Maya's figures, we've lost over half our water supply." "How!" Koenig demanded. ....

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WANTED - Fans of/material about my favorite star Tony Anholt! If you like Tony Anholt or have material that you would be willing to share with me, please write Marion Kollrich / Am Wall 24 / 4270 Dorsten 11 / West Germany

HAVE - fourteen original, uncut episodes on tape. Desperately want (if not the rest) the few favorites I still lack. Will trade or buy. Contact: Christopher Paulsen / 18600 Clark St. # 204 / Tarzana, Ca 91356

HAVE - the following 1999 movies done in VHS 2 hr. mode: Alien Attack, Destination Moonbase Alpha, and Journey Through the Black Sun. If you would like a copy, send a blank VHS tape to: Jeff Hale / 4031 Strathmore Dr. / Montgomery, Al 36116

FANDERSON - We received several addresses to contact if you wish to get in touch with this group. The most recent address is: Barbara Kitson (Fanderson secretary) / 62 Meath Rd. / Ilford, Essex / Great Britain IG1 1JB

1999 - Now showing at 3 AM on WVEU Ch. 69 on Sunday in Atlanta. The Protectors are also on at 8:30 weekday mornings. Space is also on WUAB Ch. 43 on Saturday at 2 AM in Cleveland.

1999 videos - From Cathy Conrad - To add to Kerry Keene's info on Star Tech. They do have all 1999 episodes on first generation tapes(all purchased tapes are 2nd generation). Many are uncut from PBS showings. Basic tape cost is $10 for the first hour of recording and $5 for each extra hour per tape. You can send your own blanks and save money if their standard TDK tape is not to your liking. They charge $8-$10 for the tape itself. They also have other Anderson shows. All UFO, some Fireball XL5, some Stingray and Captain Scarlet. The clarity of the Stingray and Scarlet is not too good. The address is: Star Tech / P.O. Box 456 / Dunlap, Tn 37327



The British NICK TATE Club

69 FRANCIS ROAD
ACOCKS GREEN
BIRMINGHAM
B27 6LT
ENGLAND



HELLO,

The British Nick Tate Club is the official international fan club for Nick Tate and as such has his full approval and active interest.

Upon joining, new members receive a copy of the most recent newsletter, a photo of Nick, a printed membership card, Nick's biography and career details, Alan Carter's official biography, and a list of our many exclusive photos which are for sale, (These include photos of all regular 1999 cast members), plus lists of other goods for sale. After this they receive four newsletters per year, updates on photos and goods for sale. On renewal members get a different photo and an updated membership card.

Our quarterly newsletter features the latest information on Nick, both professionally and personally, news and adverts for events in SF 'fandom', pen-pals, messages from Nick and many features written by our members such as Space 1999 stories, convention reports, 1999 episode synopses, poetry, encounters with Nick, reviews of his work, prize competitions and many other items of interest. We cover Nick's work, past and present. On the covers of our newsletters we reproduce artwork and photos and articles on Nick.

We hope you will join our club as we feel that if you like Nick and his work, and Space:1999 in general, you will find much to interest you in this club.

Yours sincerely
Eileen Skidmore Phyllis Proctor

EILEEN SKIDMORE & PHYLLIS PROCTOR
CO - PRESIDENTS

TO JOIN SIMPLY RETURN THE FORM BELOW, ALONG WITH THE APPROPRIATE DUES TO:-
THE BRITISH NICK TATE CLUB, 69 FRANCIS ROAD, ACOCKS GREEN, BIRMINGHAM, B27 6LT, ENGLAND.

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SPACE:1999 MOONBASE ALPHA BLUEPRINTS PACKAGE 3

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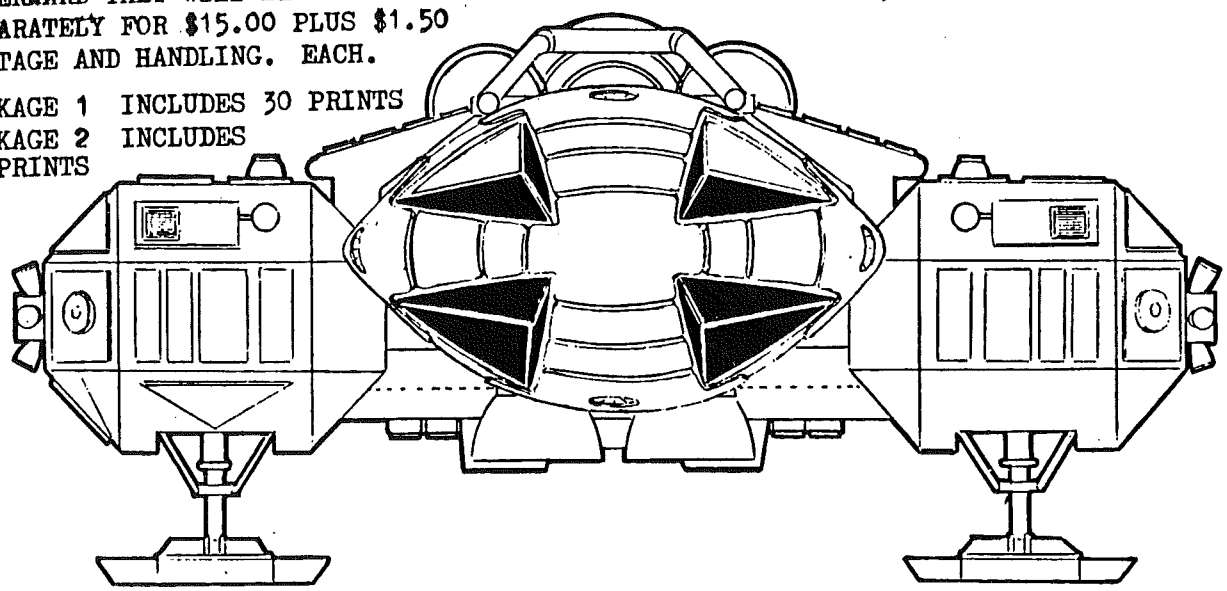
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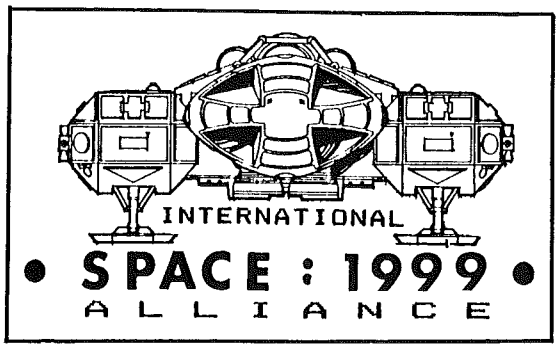
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NEW LOGO

Several issues back we listed some ideas for a new logo and asked which one you liked and asked for other submissions. We got several other submissions. We would like to ask you to vote on the logo designs shown below. The one with the most votes will be used as the official logo on future membership cards and other Alliance items. It's your decision. Please let us know which one you like best.









Put a check by the number of the logo design you like best.

1 _____ . 2 _____ . 3 _____ . 4 _____ .

Send to: International Space:1999 Alliance / 86 First Street / New London, Oh 44851-1196 USA

MAIN COMPUTER ©

1987 International Space:1999 Alliance/ a Non-profit organization

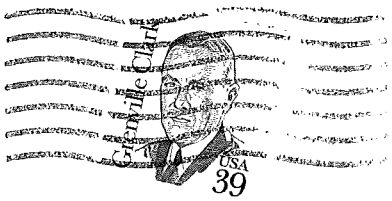
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Tony Wynn Mar 88
LOGMAN Div. (SHAPE)
APO NY
09055

AN X BY YOUR NAME MEANS
IT'S TIME TO PAY DUES FOR ANOTHER YEAR