

SPLINTER

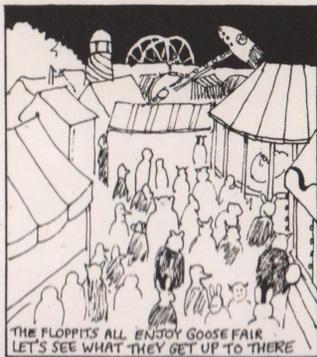


A Nottingham magazine no.3



THE FLOPPITS

GO TO GOOSE FAIR

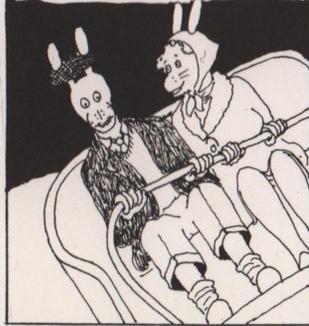


THE FLOPPITS ALL ENJOY GOOSE FAIR LET'S SEE WHAT THEY GET UP TO THERE

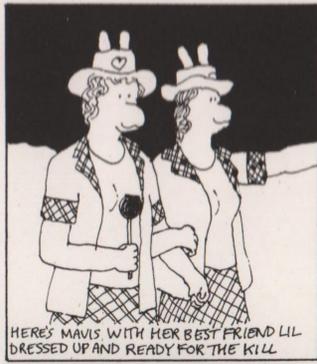


NOW JOE AND MABEL ONLY GO "TO TAKE OUR ELV AND LITTLE JOE"

THOUGH MOSTLY WATCHING FROM THE SIDE THEY CAN'T RESIST ONE LITTLE RIDE



AND USUALLY HE'LL SEE, WILL JOE, THE WALL OF DEATH, HIS FAVOURITE SHOW



HERE'S MAVIS WITH HER BEST FRIEND LIL DRESSED UP AND READY FOR THE KILL



OF COURSE THEY GO ON THE BIG WHEEL SO ALL THE LADS CAN HEAR THEM SQUEAL



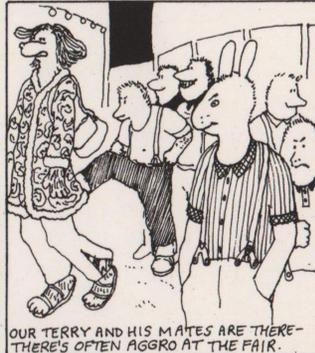
THEN ON THE DODGEMS WHERE IT SEEMS THEY'RE JUST AS FRIGHTENED, HEAR THEIR SCREAMS



AND SO, BEFORE THE EVENING ENDS THEY'VE DONE THEIR BIT AND MADE NEW FRIENDS



BUT BERYL LIKES, WITH HER YOUNG FELLA THE GHOST TRAIN AND THE CATERPILLAR



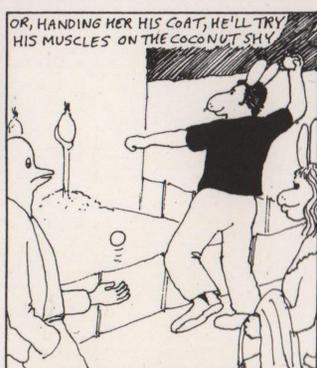
OUR TERRY AND HIS MATES ARE THERE - THERE'S OFTEN AGGRO AT THE FAIR.



OR IN THE NAUGHTY NINETIES SHOW THEY GOGGLE ON THE SECOND ROW



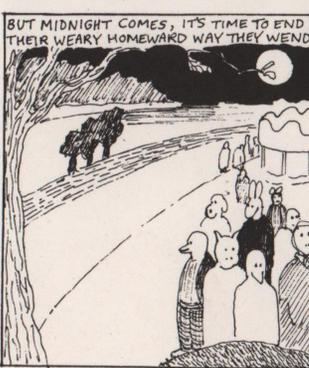
AND LASTLY ERN, WITH BIT OF STUFF JUST WANDERING ROUND AND LOOKING TOUGH



OR, HANDING HER HIS COAT, HE'LL TRY HIS MUSCLES ON THE COCONUT SHY



HE TRIES THE 'TRY YOUR STRENGTH' AS WELL - WELL DONE OUR ERN, YOU'VE RUNG THE BELL



BUT MIDNIGHT COMES, IT'S TIME TO END THEIR WEARY HOMEWARD WAY THEY WEND



GOOSE FAIR IS OVER ONCE AGAIN AND ONLY MEMORIES REMAIN

SPLINTER

Approximately every so often

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WHOSE PROBLEM?

Introducing a new series

WE BEGIN ON PAGE 8 a series about areas of society commonly neglected or misunderstood. It was tempting to label the series "Social Problems", but we felt this would be misleading - we want to get away from the idea that people in difficulty are a separate, diseased part of society, quite distinct from the general healthiness of the whole, as if they themselves were the problem and not the victims of the problem: starving old-age pensioners are not a problem, but the society that creates them is. Neglected old people, deprived children, poor housing conditions, sub-standard schools, and racial discrimination are symptoms of a sick society, not the sickness itself, which is a sickness of misapplied resources and distorted priorities - or, in old-fashioned terms, and on a wide social scale, of selfishness and greed.

Integral part

A good example of this tendency to label and isolate can be seen in attitudes to coloured immigrants. They are subjected to hostility and discrimination, and are regarded by many as unassimilable aliens; yet it can be argued that they are an integral part of the society that rejects them, and have been made so, largely against their will, by the actions of that society over the past four hundred years.

The case of the West Indian is particularly poignant, since it is particularly obvious that the involvement of his African ancestors with European society was an unwilling one, and it was particularly violent and complete. West Indians have become part of British society because Britain has made them so - originally by forcible incorporation of their ancestors into her economic and colonial system, and more recently by encouraging them to escape the poverty of their own islands (itself a legacy of colonial rule) to provide cheap labour in Britain.

Recognition reluctant

But although coloured people are now an indispensable part of the British economy (a successful "send them all home" policy would be disastrous for a considerable number of industries and services), British society has proved reluctant to recognise this, and persists in regarding them as outside it, or entitled to occupy only its bottom layers. Social pressures compel coloured immigrants to concentrate in the decaying inner suburbs of our major cities, at the precise points where the native population itself is most deprived and so feels most threatened and resentful, and thus further problems are created, not by the immigrants themselves, but by a society which finds them economically necessary but socially unacceptable.

Prejudice rarely yields to facts, but Nigel Bishop's article on page 8 may at least lessen the possibility of misunderstanding.

WHEN THE PRESSES STOP

Ian Cutler looks at the local papers

Note. Since this article was completed, there have been a number of interesting developments. First, the literacy (though not the politics) of the Evening Post's "Comment" column, criticised on page 5 of this article, has improved dramatically - however, our original text is retained for its historical interest! Secondly, the Post has increased and multiplied yet again, with a series of beautifully laid-out advertising supplements. This seems to reinforce the comments made on page 6.

Guardian Journal

WRITING ABOUT the Guardian Journal at this stage may seem faintly indecent, like prodding a corpse, but corpse-prodding is a useful enough activity in a city where sleeping dogs are usually bundled into weighted sacks and dumped in the Trent. The odd bit of dredging won't revive them, of course, but it might drag up a few things of interest.

It may seem strange now, but not-so-senior citizens can remember four daily papers in Nottingham. Since then it's been like four green bottles, except that the last green bottle, the ever-expanding Evening Post, doesn't look at all accident-prone. Believers in the free play of the market must be pleased about this (the survival of the fittest, I suppose); others may have reservations.

It's not easy to say who was to blame for the death of the Guardian Journal. As usual the unions blamed the management and the management blamed the unions. In the end even close observers were confused by the complications of the dispute.

Formans' case seemed convincing. The paper had been losing money for a long time and the strike was the final blow. The unions claimed this was only an excuse. Formans had wanted to kill off the Guardian Journal for a long time and the strike was the chance they'd been waiting for.

Perhaps there was some truth in this. It was obvious that more money was spent on the Evening Post than the Guardian Journal, even though the Guardian Journal was operating in the more competitive morning market. There were suggestions too that the accounting could have been fairer to the Guardian Journal, that capital costs were set against the paper which might more fairly have been shared with the Evening Post.

But whatever the truth behind the sparse headlines (the Evening Post was remarkably reticent about its troubles), this was one strike where quite clearly it was the public which suffered most. If a two-paper/one-management monopoly was bad, a one-paper monopoly is worse.

The Guardian Journal, though conservative in outlook like the Post, at least had a different editor and a different approach. Despite its enforced thinness, its meagre resources, it also had high standards, and its loss was therefore a loss of quality as well as variety.

For example, in spite of the screaming lead headlines every day (excusable, perhaps, when sharing a news-stand with the Sun and the Mirror), there was a general rationality about the Guardian Journal which could be seen even in the layout. The editorials were reasonably argued, and there was a serious concern for the background as well as the surface of the news, expressed in some excellent interviews and features - a series of detailed and sympathetic portraits of local councillors was a good example of this.

Evening Post

The Evening Post has taken over a number of items from its defunct sister paper, but still has one or two weaknesses. Since the Post now enjoys a monopoly of newsprint in the City, it is worth examining these weaknesses in detail.

News coverage is reasonable, the familiar mixture of agency, courtroom and parish pump, though in the absence of a rival newspaper the only comparison is with BBC Radio Nottingham. It is interesting, however, to see how treatment of news in the Post may acquire a particular emphasis. On a number of occasions, for example, the Post has publicised cases of sub-standard housing, often embarrassing the local authority enough to produce dramatic action. Poor housing is a continuing problem, however, and it doesn't disappear with the re-housing of one highly-publicised tenant. The Post places news interest before social need, and will only cover this sort of case very occasionally. But this principle is not consistently applied: the Post is entitled to its crusade against traffic restrictions, of course, but the choice of cause is revealing.

Background articles have been more frequent since the Guardian Journal

Weekly
POST CLA

POST
bag

Comment

FOR SALE WANTED

WELSH DRESSERS Original Victorian stripped pine from £48. Chest of Drawers from £10. Victorian stripped pine Chiffoniers, Blanket Boxes, Wardrobes and Cabinets, etc. etc. - At Michael and Elizabeths, 74-76 Arkwright Street, Nottingham largest stockists of Original Victorian stripped

SERVICES

AAAAAA ACE AERIALS vision and Radio Aerial highest quality, all channels television aerials erected free with meal. Low loss cable £. Repairs, removals. Five year. For fast, efficient service, i

50 years old
with interest that I read
"funk" in the

FINAL EDITION

quality of life is an kernel of what has an increasingly it. It means differ- s to different men. those who agree not a problem to but a reality to be ed and it is hard struggle fail and sometimes to suc-

ceased publication, and there is now a daily "Inside Extra" which has made the paper a lot livelier. Treatment can still be superficial, however - quite often it seems no more than what some official or other cared to say to some reporter or other, giving the feeling of questions unanswered and unasked.

It's obvious, in fact, that the Post sees its role as descriptive rather than analytical (though with a fair amount of selection and emphasis in the presentation of news). Such analysis as there is, in the editorial Comment column, tends to show a rather crudely right-wing bias, coupled with a smugly know-all tone. Trade Union and Labour Council bashing are the favourite sports here, except when the Labour Council is upholding the Conservative "Fair Rents" Act, in which case protesting tenants take a bashing instead.

Editorials

Perhaps the most surprising weakness of the Post is the poor technical quality of the Comment column (ironic in view of past attacks on the erosion of educational standards).

Editorials are a very recent innovation at the Post. At first they appeared only sporadically, were quite brief, and had no fixed spot in the paper. Perhaps their appearance every weekday and their increase in length have caused too much strain, but there have been some alarming lapses over the past few months. In response to a wave of I.R.A. letter bombs, for instance, the Post referred to the blowing off of "a hand of two secretaries", and commented indignantly that "even women and children" were vulnerable to these attacks. There is also a certain amount of woolliness in many Comment columns, and a fatal weakness for the long and badly constructed sentence. The following passage, for example, hardly demonstrates the traditional journalistic virtues of brevity and clarity:

"It is interesting that in these days of improved leisure facilities and the advance of technology, which is gradually removing the back-breaking and less interesting jobs, and at a time when more women are finding it possible to go out to work and thus are retaining their own individuality, that this air of pessimism should be about." (Thursday, 13 September)

The unnecessary repetition of "that"

(lines 1 and 9) suggests either that the sentence is too long and the reader needs reminding how it started, or simply that the end of the sentence doesn't know what the beginning is doing.

Carelessness

Two further examples illustrate this grammatical carelessness. On Monday, 17 September, discussing the value of Newark Hospital, the Post commented: "It has, and will, save lives" (there is no such construction as "It has save", of course). And on Friday, 21 September there was this puzzling sentence: "For compensation, apparently, we shut ourselves up in our homes and to contemplate the material possessions with which we have surrounded ourselves."

None of these appear to be typesetters' errors, and that the last three appeared in the space of only nine days suggests something seriously amiss.

In some ways, the best part of the Post is written by its readers. The "Postbag" has qualities of imagination and pungent comment quite often missing from the rest of the paper. A few cave-men wave their clubs now and then, of course, but comparison with the dismal Derby Evening Telegraph, for example, shows how excellent the Post is in this respect.

The layout and printing deteriorated at the time of the dispute (presumably something to do with the new process that caused all the trouble) and haven't recovered since. The print alternates between washed-out grey and mucky black (both come off copiously on the reader's hands), there is often a strange black tide-mark across the top of the page, and the design is confused and messy - less a communication sometimes than a jungle of shrieks and whimpers. This stems from a basic lack of logic - length and importance of story bear no relation to each other, to size and style of typeface, or to position on the page. The design of the page as a whole, therefore, is like a badly completed jigsaw, a haphazard arrangement of unrelated rectangular and L-shaped blocks. On inside pages, editorial material is often squashed between great irregular wedges of advertising.

How lack of logic can make editorial

continued overleaf

**'Obviously there is a serious need
for an alternative newspaper.'**

PRESS continued

and design nonsense is well illustrated by the appearance of the following dramatic story on the front page on September 29th:

"PAN FIRE. Kitchen contents were damaged last night at a house in Church Road, Clipstone, after a pan of fat caught fire. Firemen were called, but the occupant, Mr Arthur Stancy, managed to put out the fire with a damp cloth."

There must be better ways of filling a 1½-column-inch hole.

Worst evil

Unfortunately, the Post is under no pressure to change. It has no rivals and it grows fat on advertising. The increasing dominance of advertising is the worst evil of the Post's monopoly position. Advertising almost certainly supplies most of the paper's revenue, exceeding income from sales by a comfortable margin, one suspects. It's hardly surprising, therefore, that the Post grows more like Exchange & Mart every day. As an American expert said, the problem is not to stay in business but to stay in journalism. This point is underlined by the Evening Post's latest stablemate, the Weekly Post, which costs the reader nothing and is entirely paid for by its advertising.

The effect of display advertising on the layout of the inside pages has been mentioned. Even more striking is the remorseless fungoid growth of classified ads which threaten, Quatermass-like, to swallow the paper whole, leaving behind perhaps the odd page of news as a sort of satisfied burp or after-taste. And all this in spite of the present acute shortage of newsprint, without which, the Post assures its deprived readers, the volume of advertising would be even greater.

It's true, of course, that classified ads are a social service as well as a source of profit. It should be said too that the provincial press has been kept alive in recent years by the dramatic growth of the classifieds. Nevertheless, news in the Evening Post seems to occupy a less prominent place than it used to. The former centre pages, for example, creep nearer and nearer the front, and recently the Post divided in two like a typographic amoeba, with a monstrous second section consisting almost entirely of classified ads, and a couple of pages of sport thrown in apologetically at the end as if

they thought they really ought to be advertising Nottingham Forest and Notts. County and not reporting them.

In this situation there is naturally little incentive to produce a better newspaper. It's a sad let-down for a city which still remembers the great days of the Journal (in spite of its merger with the Guardian, the Journal was remembered well enough in Fleet Street to inspire affectionate obituaries when the Guardian Journal died).

Obviously there is a serious need for an alternative newspaper. The Post's technical shortcomings are much less important than its monopoly of newsprint, the availability of only one (rather conservative) point of view. The difficulty of providing such an alternative was underlined recently by the brief career of a new weekly, the "Nottingham Press", produced by ex-employees of Formans and backed by a local businessman. First appearing on October 17th, the Press published five issues and then ceased abruptly under rather mysterious circumstances, reported to concern a difference of opinion among those involved. The paper was lively, even sensational ("Terror grips girls after attack by fiend of Furlong St" was a typical lead headline), and its politics were less claustrophobically conservative than the Post's. Its failure proves how hard it has become to break the monopoly of the Post.

Free market

A small magazine like Splinter can't do much about the situation either - it seems presumptuous to mention us on the same page. But at least we exist, and so perhaps we have a responsibility to look at Nottingham in a slightly different way from the Evening Post, and to air a few ideas which might not otherwise get a hearing.

This outlook is apparent in the present issue in the number of articles which express opinion, or report on places and activities in Nottingham. There is no editorial doctrine linking them together - the magazine is a free market for ideas from all quarters, and ideas are their authors' not the magazine's. If there is an editorial policy, it is in favour of ideas and information being as widely available as possible. Most societies prefer to restrict them, and so restrict possible action to what is comfortable for those in control. We would be happy to help open a few doors and a few eyes.

Your problems with Autofare

I.N.FILINGS answers your queries



Ceaseless torment

*** I used to think that Autofare could never happen to me, that it was something that only happened to other people. Alas, too late I realised I was living in a Fool's Paradise. Will my torment never cease?

Probably not. Meanwhile, the following advice may be of some use. Don't be afraid of not having the Exact Fare. Many people develop alarming physical symptoms on finding they have a 5p piece for a 4p fare. These symptoms are usually associated with acute guilt or extreme panic (profuse sweating, palpitations, trembling hands, etc.). Try to remember you are only going for a ride on a bus.

Deal unlikely

*** I know several people who now buy an Evening Post on Long Row every evening solely to get change for the Exact Fare bus to Arnold.

I think I can see what you're getting at. However, it seems unlikely that there has been a deal between the Corporation and the Evening Post. The only plausible reason for such a deal would be that extra quantities of Evening Posts would then be available for the District Heating Scheme incinerator at the Eastcroft. Rapid calculations reveal, however, that the Post would need to reach a circulation of 3½ million per day to make such an arrangement feasible. (This estimate is based on official figures of 180,000 tons per annum consumed by the incinerator and assumes that the average Evening Post weighs 6oz.) Personally, I know people who always buy Mars Bars.

Serves you right!

*** Who benefits from Autofare?

You do, of course. I'm surprised anyone could ask such a silly question. The economics of the process are quite simple. In return for doing most of the work that used to be done by the old-fashioned conductor, you get a much quicker journey than you would by ordinary

one-man-operated bus, though still much slower than on old-fashioned, inefficient buses with conductors. The money which you then save does not come off the fare as you might expect, but is paid to the driver in return for being a conductor as well. And what's more, it serves you right for not buying twelve-journey tickets when they were tried out last year.

Refund clubs

*** Will you explain how I can form an Autofare Refund Club?

Certainly. Instead of tendering the Exact Fare as requested on Autofare buses you deliberately give a slightly larger sum (only slightly, as this is more irritating) and insist on a refund slip. You do this every time you travel on an Autofare bus, and persuade as many of your friends as you can to do the same. You then operate a simple rota for the periodic cashing of large numbers of these receipts simultaneously at the Corporation's Parliament Street Depot. If enough people do this, the resulting delays ought to make the system unworkable. (N.B. Receipts might be exchanged as currency on certain occasions. Shopkeepers and even banks might be persuaded to cash reasonable numbers of receipts for a small commission - this service could be advertised by a standard sign: "Autofare Receipts Cashed Here".)

Discrimination

*** Why do some routes still have conductors? It doesn't seem fair.

I'm glad you asked this. This is yet another example of creeping socialism, where the lower classes benefit disproportionately at the expense of respectable rate-payers - rather like council houses, really. You will have noticed that all the routes which still have conductors serve disreputable working class areas, like the Meadows, Radford, Colwick Road, and Hyson Green. Various theories have been advanced to justify this. The most plausible are: (a) working-class people are not intelligent enough to use Autofare; (b) so many of them travel by bus in preference to car that a conductor is needed to keep them all in order. It's a well-known fact, of course, that working-class people spend all their money on colour television sets or converting their coal-houses into bathrooms, and therefore can't afford the cars purchased by their more thrifty middle-class neighbours. Obviously this ridiculous subsidy should be withdrawn at once and all routes switched to Autofare.

Problems of adjustment

NIGEL BISHOP on why young West Indians find it hard to settle

Editor's note. The article which follows is an extract from a study of the problems of young West Indians in one area of Nottingham. The author, Nigel Bishop, is a youth leader with extensive experience in this field, and it is on this experience, together with lengthy interviews with twenty-five young men of specifically Jamaican origin, that his account is based.

Extended family

THE PATTERN OF ARRIVAL of the Jamaican family coming into this country seems quite consistent. Generally speaking the father comes over first followed later by his wife and finally his children, often in dribs and drabs. In many cases the father has been in the United Kingdom for such a long time that the children do not remember him when they finally arrive. When the decision to emigrate has been made, the father makes the journey first and the wife and children simply move into the home of the maternal grandparent, and eventually the grandparents take over sole responsibility for the children when the mother leaves to join her husband.

The most complicated part of the interviews I conducted was concerned with the family, both in Jamaica and in Britain. As one of the young men put it, "We don't go on like you do over here."

This point is worth elaborating, leading as it does to confusion and misunderstanding between West Indians and the native community. Derek Humphry and Gus John describe the situation as follows ("Because They're Black", Penguin, 1971, p.p. 91-2):

"The structure of family life in the West Indies is one which allows for great variations of blood relationship extending far beyond the single family unit of parents and siblings. Uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, sons of nephews and nieces, cousins of cousins, all form part of the extended family unit. The extended family could be called upon at any time to play a supportive role, operating as it does at this intermediate level of family life. . . Many fathers have had to leave home to find work either in other islands or abroad. During the father's absence mother and children could count on necessary assistance from the extended family, i.e. from relations no matter how distant. In a community with such ready-made

support, based on family groupings, it is the norm rather than the exception to have children separated from parents for any length of time and with no recognizable ill-effects. Children brought to England out of such a situation, however, have continued to pose problems to parents, teachers, and children's departments."

West Indian attitudes to the family can be traced directly back to the days of slavery when slaves were not allowed to marry: in fact if any attachment was discovered the couple would usually be separated. The patterns of family life created by this have persisted. Many of the young men I interviewed did not know their blood father, as their mothers had had several children by different fathers. The most complicated interview of all revealed that the natural father had had three separate families, one in Jamaica and two in Britain, and the mother had had two, one in Jamaica and one in Britain, as well as having had two other children before her first common-law union.

Views of marriage

This sort of situation is not uncommon, but it leads to non-understanding between West Indian and British people. The British may look upon the fact that many West Indians are not married, as they understand it, as being wrong and even promiscuous, not appreciating that this is the accepted norm in the West Indies. Often women may have had children before they enter into a more stable relationship. This relationship is a common-law marriage, and there is no civil or religious ceremony attached. The man will care for the children whilst he is living with the woman, but if they part it is quite normal for him to have nothing further to do with them. If the mother is left quite literally "holding the baby" the family immediately steps in and looks after them. In some ways I feel we could learn from this. In this country in such circumstances the mother and child are sometimes rejected by the family, often punishing the child for what we term an "indiscretion" by the mother.

Marriage, therefore, is looked upon very differently by West Indians. They do marry, but usually later on in their lives, perhaps in their forties, when the union has stood the test of time, when it has proved to be lasting. Marriage in the West Indies is a symbol of success, and



there is always a great fuss and outward appearance of affluence at the wedding. They look upon it as showing that they are prosperous, to prove that they have "made it".

A different world

The change from living in Jamaica with the grandparents to living in Britain with the parents is a terrific step for the young West Indian. It must seem like going from one world to another. At its most simple the climatic change is enormous, but the social changes are even greater. The young West Indian leaves behind a large family group with all its security and joins a small one. Often he has not seen his parents for many years and in many cases he cannot remember his father at all. The chances are that his parents have started another family over here and so he must join in with these. It is fortunate that great stress is laid upon real love between brothers and sisters by the West Indian family. In many cases they leave behind a rural life and are immediately thrust into the centres of large cities, and their houses that were gay and light are now dark and gloomy. The only gain they seem to have made in their change of housing from the West Indies to the United Kingdom appears to be the acquisition of a lavatory and sometimes a bathroom.

In the West Indies each village or community has its own professional baby-minder to whom the parents hand over their children during the day. The climate is such that the children can play outside nearly all the time and there are comparatively few hazards. They can run, jump, climb and throw, there are animals to play with; in short they have a natural adventure playground with fabulous creative opportunities for play. In the United Kingdom they are denied all these things. So that both parents can work the baby-minder is still employed but all she can do is have the children in her house.

The highlight of the week in the West Indies is Sunday and mothers spend days preparing for this. Clothes are starched, washed and brushed for their day at church - and it is a whole day. These Sunday gatherings affect mainly the women and children and appear to cater for a combination of religious, recreational and entertainment needs. They were described to me as "non-stop sabbath entertainment". The families who attend these revivalist meetings go for the day and take a picnic with them. The main activities appear to be dancing, singing and communication with God and each other. This is undoubtedly their way of relaxing from the rigours of their day-to-day lives. This Pentecostal revivalist form of Christianity began in the slave states of the United States, but is now so popular in the West Indies that it has become the third largest denomination in the Islands. The children become involved in this at an early age but the men-folk seldom take part. This very important part of their lives is almost entirely missing in the United Kingdom and leaves a large unfilled gap in the lives of the West Indian women in particular.

Bright interiors

One reads much about the poor housing conditions of immigrant families. Every home of those I interviewed was of the same kind, a terraced house of the industrial revolution opening immediately onto the street with a tiny garden or yard at the back. They were all similarly described by the young men: a kitchen and two rooms downstairs, three bedrooms upstairs, and a bathroom and lavatory. Generally speaking the third bedroom was an attic room in the roof. They are depressing externally but in all the houses that I have been in belonging to Jamaicans the interior is clean, bright and gay, with ruffles, lace antimacassars and the china cabinet. Apparently the china cabinet is

continued overleaf

World War III : Aftermath

COLIN HALL

"On a clear day you can see for
miles,"

She said.

But that day was a misty one,

And to tell the truth,

We could only see as far as

The window.

Smiling a half-smile

She turned from the window,

And we talked in utter silence:

Later I made a cup of instant sorrow

And we stirred our cups with words

Of despair,

Bravely I handed her a smile from my

Wallet,

And so, hands in each other's pockets,

We walked the banks of dawn.

An empty bottle floated by,

And we put a message inside it

Which read: "Send help - we are

Marooned on Planet Earth."

She painted her name in

The dust that covered the sky,

As I sat back and cried.

We walked further down the lane,

Past the old school-tie,

And dropped in to say "Hi - hello",

To one or two, but they'd long gone

So we started to make love in

classroom 2b,

Only to be caught by the headmaster

Who declared that it "wasn't

cricket",

So, polishing his acute powers of

observation,

We ploughed back home,

Whereupon we found the sun had been

and gone

For ever.

Now all that was left was the misty

heat,

And a clock which had stopped

When all time had stopped forever;

Things were bad, so our only solution

Was to slip into bed and make love

Until time started again,

Or until Someone discovered the world

once more . . .

WEST INDIANS continued

essential; all the best china, glass-ware and ornaments are housed in this cabinet and they only come out on very special occasions. One fact which surprised me was that only three families rented their homes, the remainder all owned them. They all lived in houses and none in flats: presumably with their comparatively large families they need the extra room afforded by a house. The supposed overcrowding in immigrant houses is commonly quoted, but this is not apparently the case with the Jamaican in the area I studied. Not one family out of the twenty-five concerned had anyone other than immediate family living with them in the house, and only five of those interviewed had to share their bedroom, and in four of these cases it was with only one brother.

The relationship between Jamaican parents and their children seems, at the moment, rather turbulent. They have come from an authoritarian society in Jamaica to a much more relaxed one in the United Kingdom.

The Jamaican parents to whom I have spoken are often despairing about their children, saying that they do not listen to them, or do as they as they are told. Unfortunately, there seems to be a real lack of contact and understanding between the generations.

Summary

To sum up, it can be clearly seen that the transition from living in Jamaica to living in Britain involves many changes in the basic pattern of living of both the young West Indian and his parents. The breakdown of the large family group would seem to be the most important change, but along with this they have problems of climate, housing, religion or lack of it, employment, and the seemingly lax attitudes of authority. The parents remain West Indians, unaffected to a great degree by our society, but not so the young West Indian: he has got to live with one society in the home and another outside.

A nasty story

JOHN SHEFFIELD

THIS IS A NASTY STORY - readers with weak stomachs should turn to the Floppits instead.

The Collin's Almshouses on Friar Lane were built in 1709 and were owned and administered by the Abel Collin's Trust. They were listed under the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act as of special architectural or historic interest, and were considered to be of national not merely local importance. With the exception only of St. Mary's, they were the most beautiful buildings in Nottingham - which has precious few relics of its elegant architectural past.

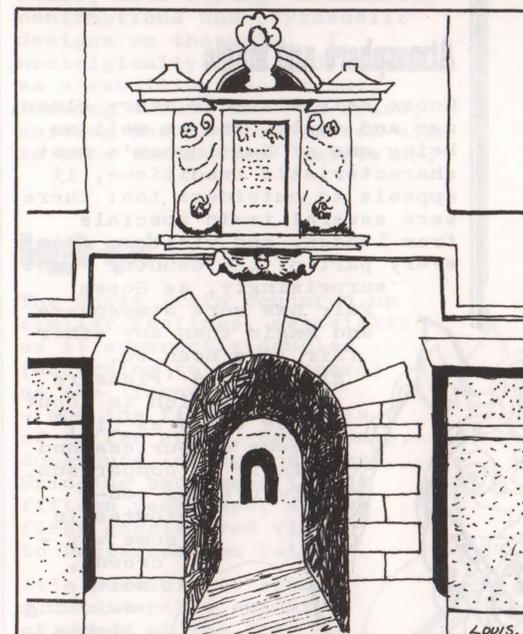
For redevelopment

By 1956, the buildings, though basically sound, were thought unsuitable for their original purpose. The Trustees, therefore, decided to sell the site and with the proceeds build 24 bungalows on land already owned by the Trust at Beeston. Obviously the site was worth more if it could be sold not as Almshouses with a Preservation Order on them but as a site for redevelopment, and so at the beginning of March, 1956, the Trustees, according to the procedure laid down for listed buildings by the 1947 Act, gave the City Council Planning Committee two months' notice of their intention to demolish. The Committee in turn forwarded this notice to the Minister of Housing and Local Government. At this stage, either the Minister or the Local Authority could have secured the future of the Almshouses by making a Building Preservation Order. Correspondence passed between the Planning Committee and the Minister, in which the Committee made it clear that they were strongly opposed to preservation. Finally, in a letter dated April 28th, 1956, the Minister, with regret, accepted the Committee's views and informed them that he did not propose to make a Building Preservation Order.

Liaison between the Committee and the Trustees was evidently close, and was no doubt facilitated by the presence on the Trust of Corporation nominees. Liaison between the Committee and the citizens it was supposed to represent was not so close. At no time was knowledge of these manoeuvres made public, and at no time was any indication given of the Trustees' intention to demolish. The first suggestion that anything was amiss appeared in a tiny news item in the Guardian Journal of May 5th, 1956, tucked away among the classified ads on page 2. This announced that the Ministry had removed the Almshouses from its list, meaning, in effect, that the Ministry would not now take any steps to prevent their demolition, "should this be proposed".

May 10th, 1956, was local election day. At 4 o'clock in the morning a squad of workmen moved in and began demolition. Again there was no public announcement, and it was a day or two before any public reaction was

continued on page 30



1973 GOOSE

OF ALL THE LARGE gatherings - demos, sport, rock festivals, public ceremonies and so on - the fair must be the only entertainment that offers something to everyone - except the most puritanical!

Atmosphere and magic

Goose Fair attracts every class, age and taste, and as well as being one of Nottingham's most characteristic traditions, it appeals to outsiders too: there were several train specials from London, and visitors from every part of the country - not surprisingly, as Goose Fair has more atmosphere and magic than any other fair I've been to.

Blackpool's 'Pleasure Beach', which is about three times as big, seems colourless and static by comparison. Everything con-

tributes in some way - crowds, noise, swirling lights and loud colours, most of

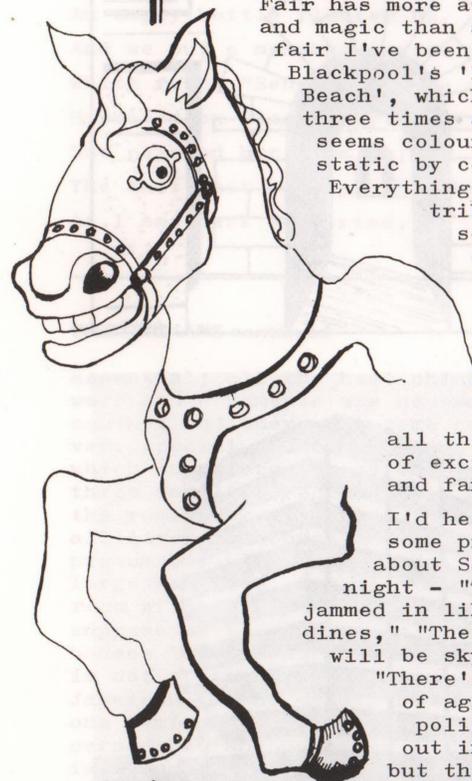
all the feeling of excitement and fantasy.

I'd heard gruesome predictions about Saturday night - "They'll be jammed in like sardines," "The prices will be sky-high,"

"There'll be lots of aggro." The police were out in force, but there was no sign of serious

bovver - and the crowds, if anything, were on the sparse side.

The prices were reasonable -



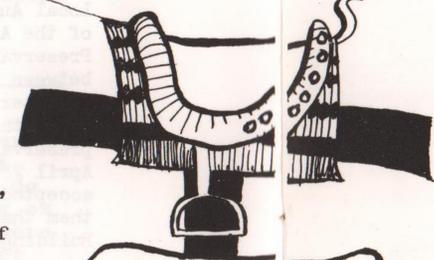
and better than, say, Hampstead Fair. The Wall of Death at 15p was one of the best deals, with a Go-Kart and push-bike as well as the usual motor-bikes ridden feet-first, side-saddle, and an incredible no-hands/no-feet along the sheer wall. One reason it appeals is the pleasant relief when they actually finish in one piece - you can stop biting your nails and start breathing again. The same could be said of the dreaded Meteorite, Waltzer, and Dive Bomber - it's probably a good idea to let the hamburgers, candy-floss and hot peas settle a bit before trying the more hectic rides!

'Horror' sideshows

Those of a nervous disposition should perhaps also have avoided the 'horror' sideshows with their odd disturbing bits of realism. In the 'Bride of Death' (5p), a group of eleven- to twelve-year-olds were not best comforted by the sudden appearance of a gentleman with long, greasy hair and Guy Fawkes mask who jumped from behind a curtain shrieking and making threatening gestures. One small girl, in fact, attempted to crawl to safety under the side of the tent. The 'Chamber of Horror' (5p) featured some quite convincing method acting from another horribly garbed figure, who stood in a corner cackling and grimacing at everyone who passed.

There was another interesting side item - a bored lady in a bubble-bath, the bubbles successfully hiding all but her arms and face. Still, what can you expect for 5p?

Despite heavy rain early on



FAVOURITE 1973

Saturday evening, the main items seemed to be doing well enough, including one of my own favourites, the Dodgems. When the cars started up, however, I was relentlessly pursued by two vicious-looking twelve-year-olds, who carried out what appeared to be a personal vendetta, barging me systematically and persistently! Everyone seemed to approach the Dodgems with deadly seriousness; indeed, I saw few expressions of the glee or delight one might have expected at a fair - many people looked fairly grim and preoccupied! This was especially true of the thirteen to sixteen age-group - many of them just stood around the main rides without moving, talking, or actually doing anything.

Hoping, perhaps, to entice the teenybopper element, many sideshows displayed pictures of Cassidy, Osmond and co. among the usual array of coconuts, glass ashtrays, piggy-banks, etc. There were also several shooting galleries, looking deceptively easy. You shot at conventional targets or split strings, although personally I would have preferred a full-length picture of Donny to shoot at.

Traditional feeling

Goose Fair still has a few 'weird' shows - the mouse circus, 'Tiny Tim' the dwarf, a Scottish giant - and there are other things which give the feeling of the traditional fair, including the Swing Boats and a couple of old-fashioned roundabouts playing 'oom-pah' tunes. Sounds like these, blended with amplified 'chart' records, the garish colours and flashing lights, gave that familiar fairground feeling of dreamlike unreality.

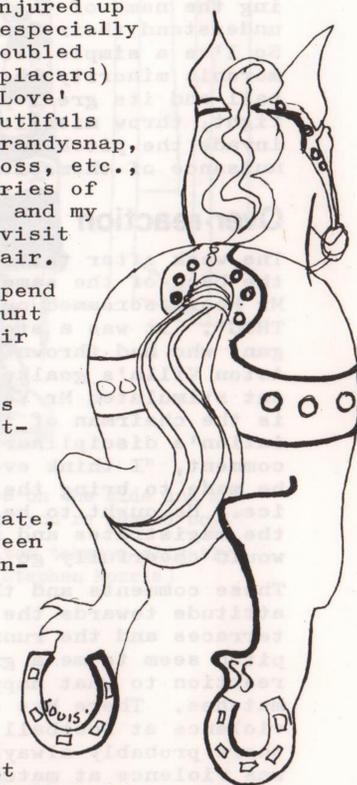
As usual there wasn't enough time - or money! - to do everything. The Fun House looked inviting and suitably grotesque. I wondered if it would be similar to the Blackpool Fun House, with strange mechanical contraptions and psychedelic designs on the wall. I nostalgically recalled myself as a revolting adolescent, lurking around the Fun House, waiting for the compressed air to blow the ladies' skirts up.

Goggle-eyed

The Ghost Train conjured up similar feelings, especially as it apparently doubled (according to the placard) as the 'Tunnel of Love' - and the first mouthfuls of toffee apple, brandysnap, doughnuts, candyfloss, etc., bringing back memories of fifteen years ago, and my first goggle-eyed visit to Battersea Fun Fair.

It's possible to spend a considerable amount of money at the fair (I was dragged forcibly from the amusement tents: as an inveterate fruit-machine addict perhaps my abrupt removal - by my wife! - was fortunate, because I hadn't seen anyone actually winning!), but even if you're broke it's still good fun to wander around taking everything in. It may be true that if you've been once you might as well have been half a dozen times, but nothing will stop me going next year - I'm an incurable fairground fan!

CHRIS STANLEY



Soccer violence

STEPHEN MORRIS

(Editor's note. Stephen Morris is a committed writer who believes that sport and politics do mix.)

WHEN THE NEW FOOTBALL season opened there were howls from the pundits of the press and the television commentators about something called "soccer violence". Cries for blood went up, and there were none more hysterical and vicious than those of Mr Len Shipman, no less a figure than the President of the Football League, who stated that the re-introduction of the birch was the only way to deal with "vandals" who attended football matches.

To a lesser degree the cry was echoed by Bobby Moore, O.B.E., otherwise known as the Captain of England and West Ham, who in his Daily Mirror column stated, "You've heard them. You've seen how they carry on, tainting the name of the game. I'll never understand their mindless mentality. So I've a simple message to that moronic minority who don't watch football and its great players but go to fight, throw missiles at policemen, invade the pitch and make an utter nuisance of themselves - Clear off!"

Over-reaction

The week after this, the headline on the back of the same paper that pays Mr Moore screamed out, "FIND THIS THUG". It was a story about a "hooligan" who had thrown a lump of coke at Aston Villa's goalkeeper. This incident stimulated Mr Vernon Stokes, who is the chairman of the Football Association's disciplinary committee, to comment, "I think every effort should be made to bring the culprit to justice. He ought to be brought before the magistrates and made to sweat. I would cheerfully go along to watch".

These comments and the general attitude towards the fighting on the terraces and the running onto the pitch seem to me a gross over-reaction to what happens at football matches. There has always been violence at football matches and there probably always will be. There was violence at matches long before the mass media decided to sensationalize it, and to some extent criticism could be levelled at the media - perhaps the presence of the television cameras at matches actually stimulates certain kinds of violence.

A further point could be considered regarding the seemingly new phenomenon of football hooliganism. Since the World Cup victory by England in 1966, the middle classes have taken

up the sport and have, as could be expected, instilled it with their own values. Many, having lived comparatively sheltered lives, have never before seen a fist thrown in anger let alone a broken bottle. Hence the recent reactions. In spite of the middle-class invasion of the sport at spectator level, football remains a working class game, and it is on the football grounds that the average spectator can express his emotion. If a spectator behaved outside a ground as he does in it he would be arrested or committed to a mental hospital. However, this does not explain the ferocity that accompanies some games.

I can only believe that this violence is a significant, if subconscious, political protest. We are, as always, living in a violent world, and the mass media, particularly television, continually publicise the fact. We see death on our T.V. screens, we see the effects of dropping napalm and the effects of bombs in Belfast, and more recently in parts of England. We have actually seen executions on our screens, which, in effect, take us back to Tyburn. It is not surprising therefore that some people act in a violent way.

Nor is it always an obvious violence that people have to face. There are the places where many of the football followers work. One has only to examine statistics of industrial accidents to know that a lot of factories and pits are very dangerous places to work in. It could be, of course, that it is the very jobs that lead to violence. Who or what can people kick against? Who can they object to? Who would listen to them even if they could articulate their protests? They have often grown up in underprivileged areas, have been taught in overcrowded schools and have been exploited and victimised by unsympathetic superiors. Given this, it is surprising that police get off so lightly at football grounds, as they are the ones who, when the chips are down, protect the society in which football fans have to live and work. One could argue that at a football match working-class youth feels a kind of intimate solidarity, that this is its domain, and that this is threatened.

The ironic thing about this is that one might suspect the establishment to be secretly very pleased with the existence of football. The grounds are controllable safety valves, and in actuality belong to an elitist few. Herein lies an incredible paradox, in

'these safety valves at these strange temples'

that, although the sport is working-class, it is controlled by a few businessmen, i.e. the local millionaires. Another paradox is that the players the fans shout for have, almost to a man, adopted middle-class values; they wear trendy suits, drive big motor cars and stay in large hotels - and for doing what? Basically, it's for doing something they love doing: playing a game that almost everyone who follows the sport spent hours of their childhood doing.

Football has become very big business, as the Americans realised after the 1966 World Cup when they tried to set up their own clubs and leagues. It is also significant that when the Football League Cup was created in 1960 many of the leading clubs, including Arsenal, Tottenham and Manchester United, boycotted it, but now it has become a top money-spinner they all join in.

Offended morality

There is, then, a lot of money in football, and the money for the sport basically comes from the followers, and the game therefore cannot do without them, whereas the opposite is not true. The press also need the game; football pools need it; the new pulp soccer magazines need it; television needs it; and so do the scores of parasites on the fringes of the game. The crowd therefore should control the game, but when they merely use it to voice some discontent, the bourgeois morality is offended.

One has only to recall the Final Test Match against the West Indies to realise how deep this offence can really go. Here we had a team of black men who wiped the floor with the English team playing them at their own traditional game. The West Indian supporters were overjoyed and they showed it. They had beaten their symbolic suppressors, and rather sadly this has been the only way that the immigrants have been able to express an identity. The reaction of the mass media to this expression was incredible. The immigrants, of course, are the bottom layer of the under-privileged, and like the football supporters they will be silenced, as they were at Edgbaston.

The paradox is that while we have these safety valves at these strange temples which are only used for a fraction of any year, the class struggle will slip into lethargy and the battle to bring about equality of opportunity will be harder to fight.



"There's twenty pence on the side and an apple . . . Make sure you're a good boy!"

(Cartoonist Andy Bolton takes a slightly different view from Stephen Morris)

BECAUSE THE TREND FOR HOME BREWING AND DRINKING HAS BECOME POPULAR, WE THOUGHT WE MIGHT IMMORTALISE THE TRADITION OF PUB DRINKING BEFORE IT DISAPPEARS. TO DO THIS WE HAVE DESIGNED A THEATRE TO ASSEMBLE AND CHARACTERS TO PERFORM -

THE PUBLIC BAR

TO HELP YOU, THE LINES ARE WRITTEN ON THE PLAYERS. CUT OUT THE SCENERY AND COLOUR IT. ASSEMBLE SO -

DRINKING STRAW.

THE STORY STARTS AT TWENTY FIVE PAST TEN, BEN THE MINER HAS HAD ONE TOO MANY.....

DOG.
SNAP SNARL
GROWL GRUNT
RIP ROAR RETCH
BARK BITE BAWL
ETC.

PLINK PLONK!

JOE ANNA. "WHEN THERE ARE GREY SKIES I DON'T MIND THOSE GREY SKIES I STILL HAVE YOU - SONNY BOY!"

PLAIN CLOTHES DICK.
THAT'S A NICE WATCH I'VE NEVER SEEN ONE LIKE THAT BEFORE ETC.

BARMAID.
I'AVENT GOT TWO PAIR OF BLEEDIN' HANDS SO WAIT YR BLOODY 'URRY!

MINER.
ARE YOU LAUGHIN' AT MY JOHES?

WIND.
I SH WISH THISH WISH WYSH WASH (GLUG GLUG) RODSH WASH GURGLE GERK GUSH SPEW WRETCH (REPEAT)

RC.69.
'ULLO 'ULLO 'ULLO WHAT'S GOING ON 'ERE THEN?

SWANSEA TOWN FC

RU 18

JAN.

WILL CUSTOMERS KINDLY REMAIN SEATED WHILE THE BAR IS IN MOTION

BISMARCK PORT 2 OF THESE AND YOU'RE SUNK

COF + SPIT

OLD IDIST RUM

PUNY

BEND ALONG HERE

CELLAR DOOR

BARMAID'S HANDBAG

STAND BAR HERE

(SPEW)

SPIT

LOUIS MOORE + SEAN FEENEY

HOT PIES

SORRY NO CREDIT

Death of a street

JANE BAKER

IN THIS SERIES of articles I have tried to explore Arkwright Street a little, before it loses its murky, intriguing character, before the old buildings come down and the area is rebuilt and reformed: clean, conventional and boring.

When I was a small child Arkwright Street used to frighten me - everything was dirty and hostile. At twelve, as an ardent Forest supporter, I was excited by the ceremonial parade from the Midland Station to Trent Bridge down the dusty, tattered street, scarf and match programme in hand.

Plenty to say

Now I have been watching people walking up and down the street, and have been talking to people who live and work on and around it - to the vicar and the tattooist, to policemen and greengrocers, to bookshop and sex-shop owners. They all had plenty to say about the place and the changes that are to befall it.

There was my West Indian sex-shop owner, with the flashing eyes and smile (his shop has since been pulled down and he's moved to Forest Fields). He certainly didn't want the street to change. Bathed in the sultry lights of the shop, he was quite forthright in his opinions (not that he lacked forthrightness about anything).

"I am sorry Arkwright Street is going. I have no complaints about the local people. They are just friendly. It is a real pity the street is going, because when it goes, the Meadows

will be gone and I wouldn't change it for anything."

Was there never any racial prejudice?

"No, there is none. There is no discussion of race or colour around here. I don't care if you don't fancy me. I know another girl will."

(I assumed this last remark was merely an impersonal illustration.)

His sentiments about the atmosphere of the street were reiterated by almost everyone I talked to.

The Vicar of Saint Saviour's, the local church, a middle-aged man with greying hair, kindly, jovial and apparently very domesticated (he popped out several times during our conversation to attend to the dinner, as his wife was expected home at any time), had this to say about the street and community:

Tremendous spirit

"Arkwright Street was a flourishing shopping centre which is dying and the shopkeepers find it difficult to exist. It is sad to see Arkwright Street going because a tremendous community spirit has built up over the years and the Church derived great benefit from it. This, of course, will be lost and it will take a great effort to try to replace it. You see, the shopkeepers gave personal service and were always charitable and friendly and ready to offer help and support to their church and to their community."

Further down the street, the local tattooist, a young man with a cross

tattooed on his forehead, and a very pretty wife, also spoke of the "fantastic atmosphere" of the street and felt that the re-development would take "all the body out of it".

It was the same everywhere on the street. No-one seemed to wish to go. Some bitterly resented it. For one man in a small newsagent's it meant the loss of his livelihood, for as he explained, "The compensation we get when the compulsory purchase order is carried out isn't enough to get anywhere else".

Friendliness

As I trekked up and down, and in and out of church and shop, I began to realise why they felt that way. Every shop, every restaurant is different. You can buy a quarter of pork dripping, a record, a second-hand hair-dryer, or a diamond ring on Arkwright Street. You can eat Indian, Chinese, Italian or even English food. Wherever you go there is a friendliness, an intimacy even. Everyone seems to know everyone else, and if they don't know you, they want to. They ask you how you are and what you are doing, and once they know they'll talk (literally for hours in some cases) without any formality or pretence.

Outside the shop, people gather to talk or just to stand. Scruffy children chase each other round the legs of gossiping mothers, men in open shirts and shabby coats wander in and out of the bookmaker's. Tramps go to Saint Saviour's vicarage for a cup of tea and a sandwich (no money is accepted on principle), and many become regulars ("Gentleman Jim", for instance, is a very polite man with a beautiful voice). Then there are the young "trendy" folk who have made Arkwright Street their "King's Road" as it reaches the end of its day. They sit in junk shops or hover around the buzzing Selectadisc or run small, fashionably tatty, informal restaurants, and park their E-types and Stags on the street, maybe next to an old pushchair that has found its way into the gutter.

This is the Arkwright Street that is

being destroyed, to be replaced by a new, clean shopping precinct to match the new, clean houses that are to be built all around.

I shall be sorry to see it go - but to take that view is perhaps a little short-sighted. As well as being a friendly, lively, exciting place, Arkwright Street is also one of the worst areas in Nottingham for prostitution, violence and poverty. The police inspector I spoke to certainly had no qualms about the impending doom of the street and its unique atmosphere.

"Arkwright Street is the best training ground in Nottingham for a police officer. There are restaurants, pubs and shops on the street, all open till late. There is always trouble, particularly at the weekend - fights, vandals, soccer hooligans, pub brawls. I won't be sad to see it come down."

And what of the prostitutes?

"There are not so many now, but it is mainly a car trade."

Unconvinced

Of course there aren't only problems for the police on the street itself, but in the terraced houses round about.

"The main problems are the domestic disputes which take place. There'll be a row about the husband's mistress and a young policeman will be called in and expected to give advice on their marriage problems."

The sneer on his face clearly expressed what he thought about the area (and possibly what he thought about me for wanting to write about it). But I remained unconvinced. Within ten minutes I was in the street again "prostitute spotting" and "weirdo watching".

I stopped to buy an apple. The man in the shop was old and fat and round.

"That one alright for you, me duck?"

He smiled and gave me the apple, obviously undercharging. Then he sat down on his stool to read the Evening Post.



Last of three
reports on a
doomed
thoroughfare



G.T. Women

Lou Moore

THE NUDE HAS ALWAYS been a subject to grapple with. Especially as an art form. For hundreds of years it has been a favourite object of self-expression. In modern times, however, it has been realised that if a woman's face can launch a thousand ships, then her full-frontal can sell a million cars, or anything else it is associated with.

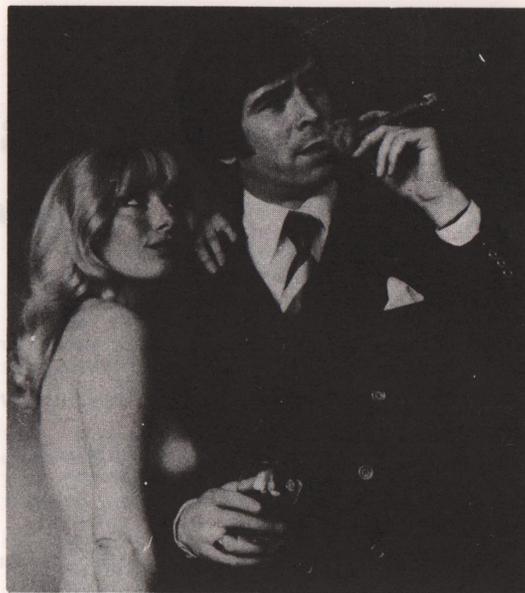
The girls portrayed in men's magazines are offered in an unreal way, as are Lotus Europas, Sony tape-recorders and Karate after-shave. It is apparent that the G.T. image has radically affected the car buyer, so we can assume that the "Pet-of-the-Month" image has too. Consequently, many young men spend their money on a G.T. car and their time on a G.T. woman. The car is what they pay for it, the woman isn't worth the time. A woman is human and has the freedom to respond in her own way. A car responds according to the exact laws of physics. If you choose your woman the same way that you choose your car, then you are in big trouble.

Average cheesecake

The skin-mag. photographs are accompanied by blurbs describing the meat concerned. If one believes them, the average cheesecake lives in a Georgian country mansion, speaks several languages, had a strict convent education and finds Greco-Roman architecture "absolutely divine!" The truth is, of course, much different, as I happened to discover with one juicy "Pet of the Month". She was described as "a devoted dramatist (who) lent her talents to Jacobean tragedies". She also sang in clubs ("I really like old English music - its mathematical precision appeals to me"), and had catholic tastes in partners ("I like a man who can talk well and keep me amused, and of course he must be sexually attractive"). And, of course, "A man only has to say do this - and I do it".

Unfortunately, while this hope-of-every-G.T.-driver was being lusted after by millions of readers, she was in fact living in the next bed-sit to me in the poorest area of a South Wales town. Her "man", who lived with her, was a hooligan, cannabis smoker, and frequenter of Social Security establishments.

Because of this kind of marketing, the nude has been removed into an unreal position in society. This is where another chancer steps in.



Realising the potential of the processed nude, he then proceeds to make it "respectable" (not the nude, the process). This can be called "art". The conscience-pricked, under-the-counter-buying, skin-mag. reader suddenly becomes trendy, buying Penthouse with articles on Andy Warhol and photographs by Bob Guccione. And so this "art" is readily accepted. People who lever themselves into positions like "art teacher" or "art dealer" by their social, financial or quite often physical, connections, and have no real understanding of or interest in art, find this glamorous approach more easily understood, and so they identify with it and push it to the masses.

The art galleries then follow the trend and have exhibitions of "the nude" photographed in weird positions. One had a nude lying in a pool of smashed eggs; in another the photographer had balanced an apple on her bum. Very tasty.

Apple balancer

Sam Haskins, a well-known apple balancer, stated that he wanted to show healthy, young, lively girls in a fresh sort of way, and show that they could be the girl next door, living, breathing creatures. The trouble is that none of his nudes look anything like the girl next door. For instance, the ones wearing only gunbelt and stetson (anyone next door to you like that?), and one on her back with her legs open about to swallow a pike and half of Big Ben clock tower.

Studying the nude obviously gives people great pleasure. The only thing is - before you study a nude, understand the motives for your action. Then it will become obvious which pictures are a tribute to the greatest of creations, and which pictures exploit that creation for commercial interests - to the ultimate detriment of the good living they so temptingly offer.

Different in '74

Harold Wilson in Carlton

YOU HAD TO HAND it to them. The way they progressed up the hall from rostrum to bar, from T.V. cameramen to party faithfuls was very smooth. William Whitlock ('Bill' to everyone for the afternoon), and effortless Tony Gardiner: a superb double act. There they were, out ahead of the main party, carefully interrogating each table of party faithfuls in turn, and reporting back to the leader, who was then able to approach each trestle of curling sandwiches and copies of 'Labour Weekly' on christian-name terms. And Harold was very good. So was Mary, who managed to wander up the other side of the hall with an electrifying aimlessness which would have done the Queen Mother proud. It was part of her technique that she was able to leave successive trestles with the sensation that they had established relationships with her as meaningful and enduring as the insights in her latest poems. After all, that's what it was all about - Harold and Mary meeting the party faithful. They had come to get to know us. Funny, really . . . we, of course, haven't yet come to know them. But that's a silly expectation in a pre-election year: Harold's and Mary's upper lids fall so low these days that any unguarded expression is undetectable.

Free booklet

The opening speeches and the walk-about were lost on the fellow next to me. He had his head buried in the Labour Party Manual on the Art of Public Speaking. It turned out to be the only publication which didn't actually cost anything. He'd got it buckshee, and small wonder! One of the sections gave him very precise instructions on how to eliminate regional vowel sounds from his speech. Inevitably, the vowel sounds recommended would have qualified him beautifully for commentating on the Horse of the Year Show. The recommended postures needed not practice but a strait-jacket, and the strictures on appearance suggested that the booklet's free distribution must have been sponsored by Colgate, Gillette, Lever Brothers and Hepworth's. It goes without saying that every Labour M.P. in the hall was ignoring its advice.

"No, I'm not convinced. What he's just said is no different from what he was saying in 1964. Anyway, you couldn't hear half of it."

The local Party Organiser put down his beer and wiped me behind the ears.

"Isn't that what you expect? Whenever Harold goes anywhere to speak, they turn down the P.A. system. You believe me, if Ted Heath had been here, they'd have had it up full."

He picked up his beer again.

"No, you can take it from me," he went on, "this constituency is winnable at the next election."

"Which constituency?"

"Nottingham North! We'll show them what's what."

Tory stronghold

"Er, don't you think William Whitlock would find that rather amusing? He's held Nottingham North for years. This is Carlton, and Carlton's a Tory stronghold."

"No, at the next election we're Nottingham North."

"Look, I'm sorry if I seem awkward, but at the next election we're in a new constituency, and it's such a safe bet for the Tories that they were even thinking of having Ted Heath in here."

He turned back to the bar and I left.

Well, Harold was probably tired after a long week; the Art of Public Speaking might have been left among the buns and the fly-shit; and the local organiser was half pissed anyway. Mind you, the afternoon had one mild irony left in store. The speech which the Tory tannoy had allowed me to only half hear had been printed in full in the local Tory press before it had been delivered to the Labour faithful.

Never mind, it'll all be different in '74.



Not misty on Mars

JOHN SPENCE

I HAVE BEEN TO SEE two very different films in Nottingham recently, two films which are unconnected in theme, treatment, production cost and value as cinematic art. One was "2001 - a Space Odyssey", directed by Stanley Kubrick, whose brilliant record includes "Paths of Glory", "Lolita", "Dr Strangelove" and, more recently, "A Clockwork Orange". The other was "Play Misty for Me", directed by Clint Eastwood, better known as a cowboy actor than a director (this did not prejudice my view!).

Comparisons

Comparisons between these two are interesting. The mind is thoroughly invaded by each, by the first expanded and exhilarated, by the second assaulted and brutalized. "2001" concerns subject matter which has been the headline material of our age - an epic of exploration and the pushing back of the frontiers of human understanding; "Play Misty for Me" focuses on the problems of one man, involved with a psychotic and determined woman who wishes either to possess him entirely or destroy him.

Although these two films are a more or less random choice, I can't help finding similarities: in "2001", technical virtuosity and complacency bordering on the insane destroy the astronauts; and in "Play Misty", the casual acceptance and use of means of communication at their most trivial levels kill the psychotic woman.

First, some observations about "Play Misty for Me". The story concerns a disc jockey who receives a regular request from a woman to "Play 'Misty'" for her. He meets her in a cafe, by chance, he thinks, and has a casual affair with her. She attempts to possess him completely, and commits brutal assaults and murders in the process. He is a vague, baffled character, completely lacking in common sense, and finally remains alive only by good luck. The style is casual, to put the audience at ease, and gives the film a happy-go-lucky feel at the beginning. Many of the early shots are very dark, and, apart from suggesting the menace that is to erupt, are very annoying and claustrophobic. This darkness is accompanied by a constant stream of pop music, which is justified because played by the disc jockey hero, and also by helping to create a false world of smooth, cool sentiments and life styles with which the woman's later insanity can be contrasted.

The script is so full of banalities that one is tempted not to listen to it at all, since the sound quality is also very poor. I suppose having to concentrate on clichés does reduce the viewer's thresholds, so that when violence erupts later he is really shocked - after one has concentrated hard for very little, the sudden thrusting of bloody violence into the consciousness is doubly shocking.

In the early stages, the visual metaphors are purposely banal, e.g. waves breaking and gulls soaring during love scenes, creating a feeling of familiarity, of having been there before, perhaps to make you feel that it's all going to be corny and clichéd. As the two lovers walk along cliff tops in the early parts of the film, the sound is at one remove from the action, which lends a dream-like quality - all the atmospherics of sound are smoothed out and the sound dubbed straight on.

Manipulation

This action-replay approach is in direct contrast to the documentary immediacy of the scenes involving brutal violence later, the ruse being to switch from the sentimental "B" movie approach of the beginning to the excessively brutal post-Hitchcockian approach of the remainder. It worked to some extent, but failed by manipulating your sensibilities as though you were one of Pavlov's dogs. I suppose Clint Eastwood would have been thoroughly satisfied to hear a member of the audience near me mutter "Hitchcock" as a carving knife was drawn through the hero's clenched hand. Not on your life!

I find the disparity between the director's intentions and the audience's actual reactions an interesting equation to ponder. "2001" is generally regarded, and rightly so, as a film with a considerable depth of approach, where themes are introduced and allowed to run both independently and added to one another's vibrations, building from simple tableaux to profound speculations. Despite this, some people have found "2001" oversimplified and boring - a mere cartoon. On the other hand, a film which sets out to exploit the audience without scruple, like "Play Misty", seems to many to be the more profound, "Hitchcockian" work.

continued on page 30

A folk aviary

AL ATKINSON

FOR THE BENEFIT of those music lovers who either have yet to visit a folk club or, having done so, remain baffled by the experience, I would like to submit a rough working guide or sort of ornithological survey of some of the identifiable types who inhabit the world of folk music.

First, a brief word about the organization of a typical club evening. The basic club night will



be something like 2½ to 3 hours of music and singing split into two halves, with "resident" singers starting the show, followed by a selection of "floor" singers, i.e. locals or visiting singers who turn up on the off chance and usually sing for the privilege of free admission and the occasional pint. Most clubs are run on a pretty limited budget, so professional guest singers would only appear every other week, giving the club chance to recoup money on a "Singers' Night".

Anyway, here is a brief round-up of some standard types you are likely to encounter in a typical folk club.

Urban Rustic. Sings almost exclusively pastoral songs with a strong emphasis on the exploits of ploughboys, milkmaids and other picturesque figures. Has cultivated a strong yokel accent and the vocal range of a short-winded octogenarian. Sounds like Peter Bellamy.

Blues Singers. Easily identifiable - they always have a cigarette which they always spear on the stray end of one of their guitar strings for the duration of the song. This mannerism was Josh White's chief contribution to the folk idiom.

Cowboy Singers. Includes a wide range of performers - "Wayfaring Strangers" in the Burl Ives mould, hillbillies and bluegrass musicians, perpetrators of Country and Western or Culty and Western (Irish Country and Western) - in fact, the whole range of American Music not classifiable as blues.



Beer-break Singer. A willing but less gifted singer put on by the organisers when they wish to go out to the bar. Keep an eye on the residents and follow them.

The "Ay up lads, half past ten" Singer. Closely related to the above. Put on to sing rousing or funny songs just before time is called, so the residents can get the last pint in to see them through the finale. This singer is often semi-paralytic and invariably pitches the song too high, forgets the words or sings the verses in the wrong order. Gifted performers can accomplish all three.

Rising Star. Eager young singer who turns up every week - usually the first customer in the club. Always attempts to sing the residents off the stage. Sings new material every week - usually forgets the penultimate verse.

Dialect Singer. Singer who has cultivated a strong regional accent and a repertoire encrusted with gems of local folk wit and parlance. It is a point of honour to be as incomprehensible as possible. Many expatriate Scots, Geordies and Yorkshiremen in this category.



Resident Singer. Mainstay of the club - (unwillingly) opens the proceedings every week, but has moment of glory at the end of the evening in final sing up. Collects glasses and ashtrays afterwards. Can be seen yawning in corners or indulging in private jokes during floor singers' spot.

Comic Turn. These range greatly in talent from the comic genius who can save the night to the dire-bollicial last resort, put on when no other floor singers are available.

Ballad Singer. Serious singer who ploughs a lonely furrow in most clubs. Specializes in thirty-five-verse ballads in an intermittent Scottish accent. Usually performs with hand

continued overleaf

Mallets aforethought

JOHN SPENCE

(Editor's note. In this article, our Jazz critic, John Spence, comments on his own jazz scene.)

THE HARRY BROWN TRIO has been a regular feature at the Green Dragon, Oxton for over three years, during which it has undergone a number of transformations.

One of the main problems in the old days was the small size of the room, which meant a very pleasant intimate atmosphere for those early enough to get seats, but a severe limit to the total number acceptable. It also meant that the group was cramped into a corner at the opposite end to the bar. Things have improved now - accommodation has doubled and the group is right next to the bar.

Varied line-up

The policy of the group has altered also. To provide greater variety the line-up is varied fairly often. It is basically Harry Brown (piano and soul vocals), John Spence (string bass), Phil Alexander (drums), and either Dilly Archer or Jill Ball (vocals). Every few weeks, a quintet line-up is introduced, which seems to be popular with the audience. This comprises Colin Ball (tenor and clarinet), Ian Ballantine (vibes), and Chris Jones (drums), plus Harry Brown and John Spence. The quintet is based on the Benny Goodman format, providing clear melody lines which really swing for the soloist to improvise to.

Colin Ball has had some really good notices in the Derby Evening Telegraph when the quintet has performed at the Crown Club, Spondon. You would have to go a long way to find a more professional and swinging tenor player. His solos are lyrical and positive, building from chorus to chorus with ease and precision.

FOLK continued

cupped over ear to exclude adverse criticism.

Committed Singer. Singer of protest songs striving for social justice, etc. Most of these songs/singers well worth a miss - usually identifiable by sombre clothing, beard and scowl of righteous indignation assumed during songs.

Ever-ready Hero. Eager to perform but only put on as stop-gap in dire straits - has guitar unsheathed from early on, but is not offended if not called on to sing. Doesn't mind



The quintet came into being in Sunday lunchtime sessions at the Avenue Hotel (the 'Clock') at the junction of Birkin Avenue and Randall Street, Hyson Green. The landlord, Bert, is one of those rare men who have the foresight to invest in good equipment, like a new piano and P.A. gear, in order to attract good musicians. Laurie Rodway, the entertainments organiser, books acts for the evenings but leaves Sunday lunchtime free for the local musicians to come down and have a blow. The gig is unpaid, so that musicians have complete control over choice of material, and musicians in the audience often sit in on the sessions - men like Neil Squires and Johnny Brown on bass, Paddy Burke on trumpet, and others too numerous to mention.

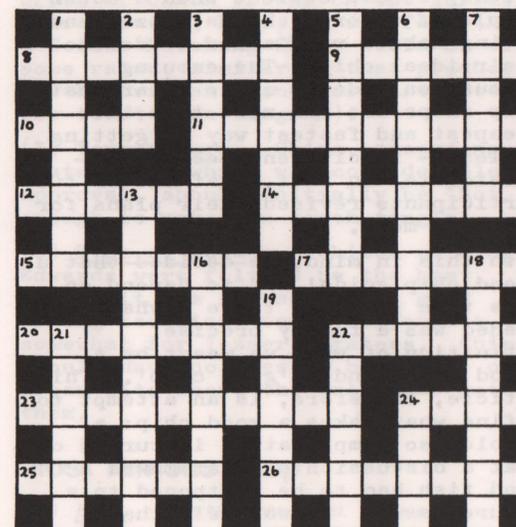
A note of humour often creeps into the sessions, as when Ian Ballantine lost a soft mallet head during a frenetic solo - it landed in a lady's glass of brandy and she watched appalled as it soaked up the liquor. It should be noted that the squelchy tone which resulted did nothing to dampen Ian's spirits.

The quintet recently began Monday evening sessions at the Avenue. It's clear that while Harry has two hands, he'll be playing good music somewhere!

opening the evening, starting second half, filling in generally. Much abused.

Guest singers are another consideration altogether. Being only transient visitors, they are not subjected to such prolonged critical scrutiny as the home singers. The gradation of their performance, from good to bad, is usually commensurate with the size of their fee.

Anyway, I hope this guide won't dissuade any potential folk fans from undertaking a club visit - the convinced folk fans I presume to be beyond redemption.



Across

- Sport (8).
- Declares America is United (6).
- Agitate (4).
- Destroy oil and make a play-thing (3,7).
- Child's roller (6).
- Pressman (8).
- Nottingham Fields (7).

Chess

IN THIS CHESS FEATURE we propose to include material to interest players of varying standards, especially in the sphere of opening play. In future issues we would like to cover the exploits of local players - so all contributions gratefully received!

A good many players succeed consistently by catching out opponents in lesser-known, out-of-the-book opening lines; this accounts partly for Fischer's success in the recent world championship match, and for Larsen's continuing prominence. To illustrate this, an unusual Black counter to 1. P-Q4 is analysed below - a variation which can pose virtually insoluble problems to players not familiar with the footnotes in their latest copy of "Modern Chess Openings"!

1. P-Q4, P-Q4; 2. P-QB4, P-K3; 3. N-QB3, N-KB3; 4. B-N5, P-QB4; apparently leading to the Semi-Tarrasch Defence 5. PxQP (so that if 5. . . . , KPxP; 6. N-KB3, with P-KN3 etc. to follow, with pressure on Black's centre).

But 5. . . . , Q-N3! with unpleasant tactical threats, which can lead to panic on White's side of the board! 6. PxKP (all other moves clearly fail), PxQP. Now White has only one saving line, which involves exact timing. Black has an attack and open lines in return for a pawn; White's only chance is to simplify. 7. PxP ch., KxP (if 7. . . . , K-K2; 8. N-Q5

- Neither pined nor firmed but smartened (7).
- Conservative hooter in the cold? (4,4).
- A Brother may become one? (6).
- Would George's autobiography be one? (10).
- Buttons the leaf? (4).
- Tell all about the calf (6).
- Catalogue filled by degrees (4,4).

Down

- Not what Jesse made in Nottingham? (4,4).
- Top actor in the night sky (4).
- Nottingham's Rock building (6).
- Actors in the cigarette business (7).
- Deceleration, like a short little dog? (1,4,3).
- Traveller's urge to be off? (10).
- Retreat from decree (6).
- Time to wrap up? (3,7).
- Expressionlessly - in the manner of the Trojan Horse? (8).
- Rise Gene - supply power (8).
- Revolutionary mouth? (3,4).
- Ogled the contents in a bottle ere dinner? (6).
- Exponents of 8 at home near 15 (6).
- Remedy may prove bitter to swallow (4).

ADAMAS

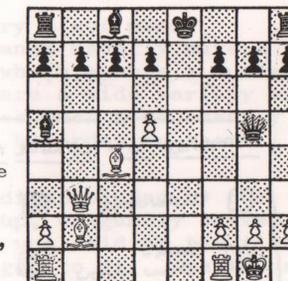
ch. wins!); 8. N-R4, forced, Q-R4 ch.; 9. B-Q2, the bishop comes back to the rescue: B-QN5; 10. Q-N3 ch. (if 10. BxB, QxB ch. wins a piece), N-Q4; 11. BxB, QxB ch.; 12. QxQ, NxQ; 13. R-B1.

Probably White's only winning chance, and the only likely refutation of this line. 13. K-Q2, fails to QN-R3. With 13. R-B1 White prevents 13. . . . , N-B7 ch. and threatens R-B7 ch. or P-QR3; White can liberate his king's side by P-KN3, N-KB3 etc.

However, White is given so many chances to go wrong from move 6 onwards, and in practice the over-the-board refutation is very hard to find; so this variation can be confidently recommended to players who wish to spring a surprise.

Position No.1

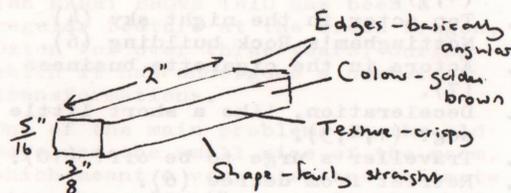
The first position in the series features a brilliancy by Fisher (White, to move). In a game against Reuben Fine, the great American grandmaster of the 40s and 50s, he has built up a powerful attack. How does he clinch it? (In the actual game, Black was forced to resign after four more moves).



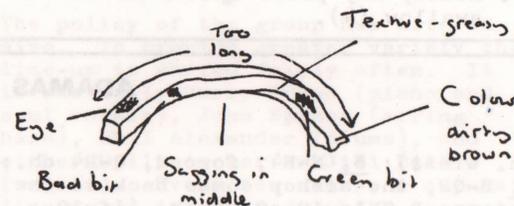
'Twixt chip & lip

'NOSHER'

Good chip

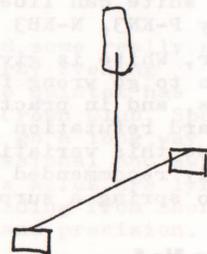


Bad chip



British Standard

Chip Gauge



STANDARD CHIP COLOUR MATCHING CHART

| | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Underdone | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Overdone |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good - Straw yellow | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dirty fat |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good - Golden brown | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Burnt |

THOUGH CHIP SHOPS rarely feature in good food guides, few people are indifferent to the chip. This quickly became obvious when a dozen people of diverse shapes, sizes and eating habits were asked to define their ideal chip. The ensuing discussion made it quite clear that chip shops are far more than the cheapest and fastest way of getting fullest - involvement became so passionate, in fact, that one or two participants revised their plans for the next meal.

With this in mind, we decided that a 'good chip guide' had to depend on more than personal taste - what was needed was a fairly precise definition of what we meant by a 'good fish' and a 'good chip'. This article, therefore, is an attempt to define what makes a good chip: a problem so complicated, it turned out, that a discussion of what makes a good fish had to be postponed to a future issue. It was felt that reviews of specific chip shops would also have to wait until satisfactory definitions had been achieved.

The conclusions which follow are based on the opinions of a fairly large group of people, but were made simpler by a surprising degree of consensus. The best way of defining the ideal chip seemed to be a description under a number of distinct headings.

Basic angularity

(1) Shape. Should be straight rather than bent. Sagging in the middle indicates poor quality potatoes or inefficient frying, or possibly that the chips are too long (see 'Size' below). Chips may be rounded in accordance with the shape of the potato, but should have fairly sharp edges and a basic angularity of shape. They should be rectangular rather than square in cross-section

(2) Size. Can vary considerably according to taste. A bag of chips should average out at about two inches in length. A percentage of small crispy ones was felt by some to be very enjoyable, while long ones were considered agreeably succulent. Four inches is probably the maximum, however - larger chips are often undercooked and show signs of sagging (see 'Shape' above). In cross-section, the ideal chip is 3/8" by 5/16", though some preferred theirs slightly broader. There is a danger here of undercooking, however, while chips smaller than the proposed standard tend to be over-crisp or even hard (see 'Texture' below). It was suggested that a Standard Chip Gauge might be of assistance to friers and tasters alike. A possible model is shown in the sketch.

(3) Texture. The texture of a chip should be firm to crisp on the exterior, and soft (or 'fluffy white', according to one contributor) in the interior. Chips should be dry (i.e. not greasy), and should separate like rice (i.e. not congeal together).

(4) Colour. Straw-coloured to golden-brown, according to taste. Chips

should not be yellowy-white (underdone), or deep brown (overdone), or black (burnt), and there should be no brown or black specks on the surface (dirty fat). Here, it was felt that a Colour Matching Chart would be of some value, similar to that produced by the British Standards Institute for toast (see diagram).

(5) Temperature. Chips, according to a statement which won considerable approval, should initially be 'hot enough to make the teeth tingle'.

(6) Type of potato. Whites or King Edwards were felt to be the best, though it was stressed that good frying technique could compensate somewhat for lesser potatoes. Chips should have no eyes or bad bits, or green bits where the frost has got at them.

Most famous shop

(7) Fat. Tastes varied between vegetable oil, beef dripping and pure lard. It was pointed out that Harry Ramsden's in Guiseley (near Leeds), described as 'the most famous chip shop in England', used beef dripping, but older inhabitants remembered clearly that the non-pareil chips from Tom Wilson's ("T.W.'s"), served from a stall opposite Yates's Wine Lodge in the twenties, were fried in pure lard heated by coke. These were sold at 6d per portion, and were described as 'expensive for those days, but worth it'.

(8) Chip papers. Wrapping for even a moment makes chips soggy, since the steam generated in the enclosed space affects the surface texture. Chips should be eaten open from the bag, preferably widely spread to prevent those underneath from going soggy. For this reason deep chip bags should be avoided. Newspaper was felt by some to be essential to the serving of chips, one contributor even commenting that the real smell of fish and chips was that of warm newsprint.

(9) Price and quantity. Were felt to be of only moderate importance as long as they were reasonable. Quality was far more important.

(10) Common faults. It was felt that a section on this subject would be of some use not so much for recognising bad chips, which is simple enough, but for pin-pointing precisely why they were bad.

- (a) Overhot fat - burns the chips and makes the fat dirty.
- (b) Dirty fat - leaves a brown deposit (not to be confused with 'bits', which are fragments of fish batter and were described as 'rather tasty').
- (c) Underheated fat - produces greasy chips.
- (d) Thin chips - are too crisp.
- (e) Fat chips - are hard and uncooked in the middle.
- (f) Greasy and conglomerated chips - usually result from keeping too long and re-heating.

(11) Crinkly chips. Because of the crinkles, these have a larger surface area than the common chip and are

therefore crisp. This was much appreciated by some, but it was stressed that we were dealing primarily with the commercial and not the domestic chip. Crinkly chips have not yet found their way into chip shops in large numbers, and it was generally agreed that this was a good thing. Continental in inspiration, the crinkly chip was considered a needless refinement. It was felt that chips were essentially earthy, plain and simple.

(12) The Standard Chip. Without wishing to be rigid about what is basically a fairly fluid concept, it was thought useful to give the ideal chip a readily identifiable name. Various suggestions were put forward: the 'British Standard Chip', the 'British Quality Chip', and the 'British Imperial Chip' seemed the most promising. Indeed, the thought was so inspiring that one member of the group immediately put pen to paper and began to compose a 'British Chip Anthem', but was regrettably deterred by the unsatisfactory nature of rhymes for 'chip'. The first title is perhaps the most acceptable, being the freest from grandiose overtones.

Forking out

Chinese choice

'GOURMET'

WHEN CHINESE RESTAURANTS first arrived in the Provinces in the late fifties, they had three advantages: you could get lots of food, for not much money, at almost any hour of the day. Since very few people were familiar with how Chinese food ought to taste, we mostly accepted what we were given without complaint.

Splinter decided to visit two local Chinese restaurants to see how the situation is today in Nottingham.

The Hong Kong in Arkwright Street is worth a visit simply for the décor. There is plenty of space, and the staff were very willing to make seating arrangements for a largish party and to wait patiently while the rather complicated question of what to order was debated and settled.

We decided to try a set menu. Chinese restaurants usually have a range of menus which enable a number of people to share a wide variety of dishes, sometimes much more cheaply than they could by ordering them individually.

We were rather disappointed by our choice. The soup, elegantly served in large bowls, was cold by the time the last of us got to it. There was no provision for keeping other dishes hot either. The food was well cooked and tasty, but the selection of dishes was unimaginative. To achieve

continued overleaf

The search

DERRICK BUTTRESS

He tried to form his name
but his breath was a dry wind
and his name died there.

He reached out
but his name took wing
and whistled over the rooftops.

He began to search
through his draughty mind:
'Who am I?'

He groped through his reflection
through mirrors that reflected
mirrors
then slithered to the floor

Through laughter he couldn't locate
and still he cried:
'Who am I?'

Through his past he searched
and found only a crushed cigarette
a cheap coin and a pinch of dust.

He grew blind in his search
clung to that which would not yield
stone, steel, bone of his house.

On his knees at last
he reached the edge of the world
and his name answered:

Assembler, grinder, corpse,
scaffold erector, fool,
all of these and more

Until it is nothing
but the shadow of a wing
crossing the silent hills.

EYESORES continued

registered. When it was, the outcry amply justified the Trustees' and the Corporation's desire to conceal their plans until it was too late to stop them. Protests appeared not only in the local press but also in the Daily Telegraph and the Spectator. Demolition was temporarily halted, but in spite of demands by the Architectural Review that the Corporation should be forced to rebuild, the site was duly cleared and, after the Corporation had acquired part of it, was developed by Town and City Properties (who, with the Corporation, are also responsible for the present Broad Marsh development).

City House stands on the corner of Friar Lane and the new inner ring road (Maid Marian Way), another monument to that same remarkable era of disinterested and enlightened planning.

CINEMA continued

"2001" does proclaim itself as a spectacle, and so we do want to be convinced. The first time I saw it was on a wet, quiet afternoon in Dublin. The theatre was equipped with Cinerama, and Richard Strauss's music was blasted out at full wick. The total effect was breathtaking - you were pinned to your seat by both the huge 180° image and the strident sound, really knocked out. My second viewing was at the Savoy on Derby Road in the mini-theatre. The image was very small, the sound volume low, and the film fell flat as a pancake. If this had been my first viewing, I would have been extremely

disappointed, and would not have wished to repeat it (the feeling of being in outer space was not helped at the Savoy by sawing at the back of the auditorium and two workmen in overalls passing in front of the screen with lengths of wood).

Film is a medium where the person at the receiving end can if he wishes be entirely intellectually passive. The time scale of the cinema gives film a compelling and logical impetus, from the first minute to the final one. Unlike literature, where the reader chooses his own pace and needs to be able to interpret the meaning of words as he goes along, film presents a glossy, convincing world where the obvious visual conclusion can seem to be the correct one. "Play Misty for Me" capitalizes on this aspect, so that the less you think, the better the film appears.

"2001", on the other hand, capitalizes on the ability of the cinema to create compelling illusion in such a way that the viewer is encouraged to speculate, to indulge in both subjective and objective situations. One can wonder at the rational dehumanization of the astronauts on the trip to Jupiter, and later be almost drawn bodily into the film during the surging "Beyond the Infinite" sequence. I think that it is the very fact that "2001" often encourages one to think by using long passages without fast cutting and visual hokey-pokey that makes the person who would have appreciated "Play Misty" dislike it. As always, "damnant quod non intelligunt" - "dogs make meals of rancid meat".

CHINESE CHOICE continued

wider variety at a reasonable price, half-portions of some dishes were included - and a half-portion shared among four amounts to a dessertspoonful apiece. Surprisingly we didn't get much rice.

If you go to the Hong Kong, you might do better to avoid the set menu. If you want soup, rice and a reasonable quantity of each of say four other dishes, followed by a sweet and tea, you'll probably end up paying about £2.05.

The Nan Kok in Clumber Street is smaller and newer than the Hong Kong. The décor is less lavish but equally attractive. Here hot-plates are brought to the table - even if you're having only one dish - and this does make the food much more enjoyable. We sampled set menus for two and four. All dishes were excellently prepared and one, the Prawn Foo Yung, was quite outstanding. The dishes included in the set menus are carefully chosen, and you can count on getting an interesting contrast of flavours, colours and smells. However, if everyone is desperately hungry, you may find there isn't really enough food. The best thing to do is probably to choose the cheapest menu for your party and add an extra dish from the à la carte. This will come to something like £1.95 a head, which is marginally cheaper than the Hong Kong and in our opinion much better value.

One black mark to the Nan Kok - some of the dishes listed on the menu are not always available, and customers aren't told about this when the menu is handed to them.

Our experiences lead us to conclude that Chinese restaurants are no longer particularly cheap and no longer particularly generous with their portions. But they do provide food of good quality. Oh, and they're still open long after the pubs shut.

THE INCREDIBLE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD

BY LOU MOORE. ASSISTED BY SEAN FEENEY + BROWN ALE.

