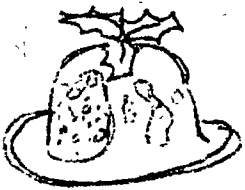


DIB DIB DIB

35¢



"Are you sure you're under 16 Peter?"



Welcome to issue 35½ of Dib Dib Dib - strange of number maybe, but easily identified as the (hopefully) festive and merry December issue leading up to Christmas. A hint to all those who haven't already sent me cards. As with other issues it will cost you 35p, and comes to you from a very merry Tom Tweedy (bin testing the Xmas Johnnie Walker ain't I) of 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 9BD. Tel. 02403 4513.

EDITORIAL

Yes I know, I know, I made a mistake with Dib's issue number last time, but it wasn't my fault was it, I had too many pressures all at once. It was my 35th birthday (many thanks to those who sent best wishes, and the card) for one thing (35, get it?); then I got confused when I couldn't remember if I charged 34p or 35p for the zine (see, 35 again!); and on top of all that, now having one foot in death's door, I was also under the threat of an impending visit from Martin Allen - who rang up a few days before to invite himself over. It was all too much for me. I started to panic. And a genuine mistake was inevitable.

Consequently there is no truth in the rumour that I'm trying to reach the magic Century before Walkerdine. Neither am I trying to pull the wool over the eyes of my subscribers just because they can't count - I know many can count, and I firmly disbelieve the rumours other editors are spreading about you. So if I were you I'd ignore the letters going on about it in the lettercolumn - Nick Hoyle and Terry Dibden are both troublemakers and were probably put up to it. There, see, I knew I could explain.

Actually, talking of cards (well, I was earlier, sort of) - many thanks to all those that sent Christmas Best Wishes and Christmas cards. Great it is - it's only the 12th December and already we have 36 cards! Gee it's great to be loved... Hands up those who still haven't sent any!

To tell you the truth we (The Tweedys) do like to make a big thing of Christmas. I haven't grown up, and Jan likes spoiling us by buying lots of presents. cooking big eight-course dinners with mince pies and Christmas cake as snacky-pcos in between; manhandling a nine foot pine tree (I like the smell of pine) into the lounge, playing non-stop Christmas music, and putting up old and new decorations all over the place. We tried to change the position of the Christmas tree last year (well I tried to) - Jan and Stuart nearly had a fit! I could see I was going to have a fight on my hands to get my way, and firmly took a stand: "Okay, you can have the blasted thing in the normal place this year, but I want it in my place next year!" It took two days for them to start talking to me again for even considering it. I'm wondering if I should take a firmer stand this year, or whether I was being too harsh on them in the first place. Ah hell, I suppose it makes the kids memories, eh? Roll on Christmas Eve - I wonder what Santa's bringing me?

Well, I suppose after all this harping on about me I might as well start talking about hobby matters eh. So what's new... Ah, once again Tweedy walks around with both feet in his mouth. After my tirade about Richard Sharp last issue, it was finally left up to me to check and find out just what he was actually going to do about the novice names he'd acquired. It turns out that Richard is going to put right all debts incurred by the fold after all; by starting up exactly where he left off, publishing the old Dolchstoss zine and sending it out to all those who already had a subscription with him before he folded. Richard says all credits will be honoured. Well you can't have fairer than that, can you.

Anyway. for those others that wish to subscribe (and if it's anything like the old Dolchstoss I can recommend it) it's printed by a double-sided plain paper photocopier (not litho as it used to be), and is due out in a couple of weeks costing 40p an issue. I haven't seen a copy yet so can't tell you what it will contain in the way of games, apart from the fact that he'll be running Diplomacy. Richard says that this time he'll be keeping more of a low profile in the hobby this time. Hah! we heard that same thing from Walkerdine when he started, and look at him now - finger in every pie. If Clive Booth couldn't

still the Sharp tongue what the hell else can? Is the hobby picking up again after its dreary slump? All we need now is John Piggott to pick up the traces then we would really be in for it - Dib would receive a serious setback to its certainty of winning next year's Zine Poll.

Richard Sharp, 27 Elm Close, Amersham, Bucks.

[[I dunno, just because I try and get the editorial out of the way early, things keep happening to balls things up. Dolchstoss has just turned up. I can't be bothered to re-write the above, so I'll be content with slipping this in here.

It seems as though I misunderstood my conversation with Richard over the phone. According to the Dolchstoss editorial the full amount of the subs won't be returned to each individual subscriber - all original subscribers will be getting just 3 issues free. It's all been worked out apparently - Richard says:-

".... Dolchstoss is free to former subbers until further notice. This I will guarantee to mean at least 3 issues, since the balance of subs outstanding I do know to have been £228, or fractionally over £1.20 per subber."

Great eh? Now if I've understood this right (and there's no guarantee that I have this time either) some of us that had £5 or more credit, will subsidise those who had perhaps only 50p or so. Somefink wrong somewhere methinks. But, regardless of all this drivel, I still stick to what I said above about recommending this zine to the new subber.

Actually Richard has put something in D along the lines of CALLING FORMER DOLCHSTOSS SUBSCRIBERS trying to find 200 subscribers for unclaimed credit. So if you were one of them I suggest you contact him right away at the above address.]]

But enough of these depressing thoughts. What a month I've had. Cathy Cunning really made a resounding effect with her letter about bringing sex, violence and drugs to the next Diplomcy game. It seems like everyone and his mother wanted the last slot in the game. Blast that girl, doesn't she realise us British (especially MY subscribers) are a timid, and much protected lot; and not used to this outrageous colonial permissiveness? Why, the extent of Mike Close's carnal knowledge is that he thinks sex is the big bags that posh people get their coal delivered in. Yes, an old saying I know, but in Mike's case I'm sorry to say, very true. So, be off with you Cathy, and no more of these depraved promises - I feel I'm not alone in this (I'm sure they all agree) when I say: keep our lads pure!

(And all those who still want their names put on the Waiting List, please confirm, so I can get the next three games sorted out.)

I notice in the latest Rapscallion that Steve Norledge is getting outside GM Graham Staplehurst to run a new RPG game based on 'The Prisoner'. I must say I was sorely tempted to try this myself as it looks quite good - but hell, I never get the time. However I do urge you all to write to Steve and have a look. Each player takes on the role of an agent trying to escape or cause mayhem in the village. A series of No.2's are selected to run the village for short periods, getting full rein to gain any information they can from the other players. Seems to run similar to the 'En Garde' system of a diary, or timesheet detailing activities. There's more interesting details than that though which I don't wish to go into now ('cos I don't really have the time).

Steve Norledge, 75 Hawkhurst Way, W. Wickham, Kent, BR4 9PE.

I was going to publish the fact that Richard Hucknall has (had) his duplicator up for sale - but it's too late as it has just been snapped up by Niall Litton. Yes folks, it seems another of Dib's subscribers is thinking of starting up a zine. Welcome to the madhouse Niall - and the best of luck to you. Let me know when you start, eh?

Right, that's it. In case I don't get the space on the back page A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL FROM THE TWEEDYS - see you in the New Year!

LETTERS

A collection of light-hearted letters this time thank goodness - just right for a festive issue. But we'll start with a couple of troublemakers who I'll be keeping a careful watch on from now on...

NICK HOYLE:

"Whatever happened to Dib 34? This could be construed as a devious way of reaching the century before you're entitled to!"

((And...))

TERRY DIBDEN:

"Issue 35? What on earth happened to issue 34! Was I blacklisted from it, and so did not receive it, or are you unable to count any more when you run out of fingers and toes?"

Look, I understand you want to reach the magic 50 issues mark, but there are more subtle ways of reaching it early."

((Run out of fingers and toes indeed... I think I explained myself enough in the editorial. How could you both even think that this was a subtle plot to reach the 50 and century mark early, I just don't know. Surely there can't be editors really like that, can there?))

oo000oo

JOHN BYCROFT:

"In your 'CREDIT WARNING' letter you state that there may be 'good reasons' why I may have let my credit go so low - I would very much appreciate a list of 'Tom Tweedy's acceptable excuses' for my future use, and possibly for commercial sale. Would you oblige?"

((This is easy. First on the list is: Those who seek an early retirement from life; those totally bankrupt and living on a starvation diet; wifey has run off with the wallet; World War III; amnesia (though this is not that good an excuse); in hospital with food poisoning/broken neck/heart-attack/piles/etc; so on and suchlike. Fair enough?))

oo000oo

MARTIN ALLEN:

"Dear Mr. Tweedy,

It has been brought to my attention that you as an editor through your notorious and defamatory publication 'Rub a dub dub' have been publicising slanderous and libelous material pertaining to the plaintiff, of such magnitude that he can no longer stand idly by and see his courageous and upright personality undermined by such actions.

Not only were the entire representation of the 'Martin Allen and Chameleon Appreciation Society' (i.e. Cathy Cunning) ruthlessly attacked by your devious self but his all but brilliant GMing was also subjected to cruel inquisition. In order to prevent the humiliation of a court action you must pay the following.

1. £500 in used postage stamps;
2. A blow-up chameleon hang-glider;
3. A promise to refrain from Martin Allen based jokes e.g. "How about a Martin Allen look-alike competition: the winner gets plastic surgery. (actually that one's quite good.) ((Yes, I wish I had thought of it.))
4. A written apology in your zine.

Failure to comply with these conditions will result in a recurrence of the lethal 'Martin Allen' letters! (Ah ha, I knew that'd get you).

Yours faithfully,

Wally Pratt

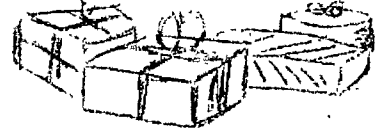
(BILL SMITH) acting solicitor."

(Cont'd over...)



((How Cathy Cunning can even like a man like this, I'll never know - this wimp that hides behind woman's skirts (sometimes in them) and "acting solicitors" why, I ask myself, is it that he can't he get a REAL solicitor to do the job!))

oo000oo



CATHY CUNNING:

"About DDD and Konrad - the hottest thing from Germany - how does he do it? I would hate to think what he would have to say about the States and Grenada. I was against that, but what can I do? As for the Falklands I think that is completely different. I was pissed at the U.S. when they couldn't decide from the word go whose side we should be on. I didn't think there could be a question. But then Britain slaps us in the face with Grenada. But don't want to talk politics. And so he asks her, well why did you bring it up? Hey I didn't bring it up - Konrad did!

Oh I'm sleepy - OK - what is wrong with Martin Allen? He can't be any worse than me!"

((Yeah, you may have a point there - but you're a nice safe distance away probably locked up in some asylum in the States, Martin Allen on the other hand is on the loose over here - far too close for comfort!

As for the Grenada incident, don't worry about it, the British government got a bit sore because they were left out in the cold. It was bad form for the Yanks to invade a Sovereign state without taking us (the British government) into their confidence. How would you like it if you woke up one morning to find Maggie Thatcher had sent a few thousand paratroopers over to Alaska and imposed marshall law there? Nevertheless, I think you'll find most of us over here would agree with the final result the Americans gained on that island - if not their over-zealous attitude of diving into trouble spots before they are asked.))

oo000oo

GEORGE NORTH:

"I am slightly appalled at the prediction in your letter column that a new zine could not succeed using a hand printer and out of date methods. I am very near to starting a new zine with the hand printer and already the damper on everything. Mind you, whoever said that never took into consideration the raving loony who can't type properly, doesn't understand the rules of any games and doesnt give a monkeys anyway. Give it six or eight months and Spanner will hit the streets and spread like a prairie fire. You have been warned. ((Yes, I'm already heading for the bunker, George))

I am halfway pleased that Richard Sharp is back and in circulation. I think his heart was in the right place and without those notes in the Diplomacy Game I would never have heard of the Games Club. It doesn't say a lot for the rest of us if we still have Richard's address in the boxes, now does it? Give the man credit also for a period of excitement whereby some were for running by committee and others were for running zines independently. Mind you, the last I heard from Richard was in Bellicus all those years ago, when he reckoned I was as thick as two short planks. I was so proud to think the great man of 'Bedbug Island' should notice me. Instant fame, eh?"

((Well done, George, trust you to hit the right spot. Yes, you have to give the man his due, he did cut a wide trail through the hobby. Can he bring the same sort of excitement back into the hobby though? I dunno. He is knocking on a bit now you know.

Mind you, it's correct what you say about the flyers in the Diplomacy boxes. When I first started doing the Diplomacy CGS I noticed that people had some difficulty in printing and paying for the flyers and that now and again this problem (sometimes causing arguments) kept cropping up. This was one of the main reasons why I decided to charge the £1 fee for a CGS game - so that I might be able to collect some HOBBY money to pay for more to be put in the boxes. Also one of the reasons why I went along with the Hobby Development Fund idea. Now I have the money, no-one seems to want the flyers done. Anyone out there know what

can be done about it?))

oo000oo



BRIAN MOORE:

"It may interest you to know, whilst Richard Sharp is being talked about again, that when I first sought entrance into the Postal Hobby, I answered Richard's ad in the ex G&P to join the National Games Club, and sent a pound. A few weeks later I received the £1 back again with an explanation from Steve Doubleday along with a short flyer of recommended postal zines among them was Chimaera, which I duly subbed to. Even more suprising, was that his zine should be on the list as he had had a long running 'feud' with Richard Sharp over how he was running things. I take it that the feeling is mutual with you also. I didn't get to see a Dolchstoss until a friend in the hobby passed on to me some old copies of zines he was discarding, among them was some Dolchstoss'. I then realised what Clive had meant by the 'hard-core' of the hobby."

((No, the feeling isn't mutual. I enjoyed reading about the Sharp v Booth feuds (I enjoy reading of most feuds), but don't/didn't want to get personally involved. You know, dirty my hands, so to speak. If I needed things like that I can easily start my own feuds. *On yer bike, Tamlyn!* See?))

oo000oo

ANDREW SMITH:

"Thanks for Dib 35. A most enjoyable time was spent perusing it. Perhaps you should enter some media award competition? Not Oscars, Emmys or anything like that. I feel an entirely new category of prize is called for here, but perhaps there are enough of those already - however not that many serious ones. I can see it all now. The place - The Savoy Hotel, the dining room. The atmosphere, tense and electric. The people: the Rich and Famous from the world's Jet-Set, wearing nothing but the best-tailored suits The occasion: no-one's really sure, but it has been rumoured that George North is about to tell a joke.

No, but seriously, there are all these awards and the like, but never any real 'events' to celebrate them. Any thoughts?"

((I thought MidCon was a real event? Perhaps awards could be handed out there. Trouble is who will donate/pay for the award, and what will it be given for. I don't think people worry too much about things like that.))

ANDREW (CONT.):

"...and from our music correspondent, more reviews on my activity. I must say I agree with you on the musical taste point discussed last time. It's interesting - I absolutely hate (well perhaps not quite) going to discos, but even when it comes to running the show, it's great fun. Several of the people I work with have got the same point of view. Whenever I think of going to a disco, I have the vision of that scene from the Hitch-Hiker's Guide where the smell of hot sweat gets sprayed everywhere.

So I tend to sit back and listen to my classical collection which is ever expanding. At present on the turntable there's a rather good version of the 'Messiah' which is easing me into my Sunday lunchtime."

((It seems as though there's one who doesn't agree with us, Andrew. Check next letter...))

oo000oo



LARRY TRASK:

"OK Tom I accept the challenge. Are you ready? Here goes:-

- Disco Music? - - Yecccchh!
- Rock Music? - - Ptui! ((Ptui...?))
- Pop Music? - - Bleeaaahh!

I really do loathe it all, not that I can tell the difference between one alleged variety and another - - it's all obnoxious trash as far as I'm concerned. Does that prove that I have a closed mind? ((Yes)) Possibly so, in one respect at least, but then it's not possible to keep an open mind about everything, now - - not if you want to get anything done.

Look - - if these ridiculous posturing ninnies who make up the shabby world of pop music were to be suddenly cut off from their electricity supply, how many of them would be capable of entertaining a roomful of sober adults for more than five minutes? Adults, that is, who wouldn't be equally fascinated by Les Dawson, or Bruce Forsyth, or police horses crapping in the road, for that matter?

Tell me I have a closed mind if you will, Tom Tweedy, but You'll never convince me that pop music is anything other than utter bilge.

With one exception. (This is the humiliating climbdown). A few days ago the Beeb showed a Peter, Paul and Mary concert, and that, I confess, I enjoyed. PP&M were my favourite group back in the 60's and I still like to hear them when I get the chance. But if there is any similarity between what they did and do, and what our present-day pop stars do, it has so far escaped my attention --- and my friends, and my students, while they do not entirely share my perception of PP&M's music, appear to concur wholeheartedly in finding no point of similarity."

((It was not really my intention to convince you that music - pop or otherwise - is anything other than what it is meant to be. Music like any other form of art is open to any interpretation its critics decide to heap upon it. I still stick by what I said about people poo-pooing one form of music as being narrow-minded. It's a bit like saying all Picasso's work is utter trash. To me it comes close, as I dislike most forms of abstract art anyway. But to say anything more than that would be sticking my neck out, because there have been abstract sculptures that I've liked. I think in your heart you'll know I'm right - you've said yourself that you like Peter, Paul & Mary. If nothing else it is pop music. I can't help it that it isn't today's kind of popular music - but it might be tomorrow's! This being the case, your argument merely boils down to the fact that you dislike today's 'new-wave' style of pop - hardly a case for the hard-and-fast stance that you're taking, is it?))

cc000cc



RICHARD WERNICK:

"I was very interested to read Konrad Dolata's observations on my letter and indeed agree with some of his comments about the Citizen's Initiative Groups. It would be interesting to know Konrad's views on the Berufsverbot system in the FRG, which, to the best of my knowledge is only used against left-wingers, pacifists and Trade Union militants, while, at the same time, members of far-right groups are allowed to hold fairly senior positions in the Police and judiciary.

However, Konrad, this is not an indictment of the German people, merely of a certain frame of mind that exists in the 'democracies' - the governing circles and the popular Press whip up a frenzy about 'Reds under the Beds' while realising too late that Fascists have crept beneath the sheets. One need only think of Italy and the P-2 masonic lodge scandal. A group of far-right conspirators including senior Military, Police, Intelligence Officers, Judges, Bankers, Civil Servants, Mafiosi and Christian Democrat politicians were well advanced in their plans to stage a coup before being foiled by security officers of Democratic views. At the same time hundreds of people holding left-wing views were held under anti-terrorist laws, with only some 2% ever facing charges and only 65% of those ever being convicted. What do other readers think?"

((Think I'll leave the more political minded to answer this...))

cc000cc

KONRAD DOLATA:

"The Netsroller will start it's third season with 48 managers in 4 divisions on the 7th of January. The rules have been printed by now and I'm