

DIB DIB DIB



Welcome to the 56th issue of Dib Dab Dib - a much rushed and rather down to basics issue. The cost is a fixed rate of 45p per issue in the UK and 28p + postage overseas. Send money, to Tom Tweedy, 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks., HP7 9BD. Tel. 02403 4513

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### EDITORIAL

Well, not really an editorial, just a space to explain why this issue is so sparse. Sparse, you say? Yes, no editorial, no articles, and a 'small' letter column. The reason being is that everything seemed to come in all at once 1 week before the deadline. I just couldn't have the time to type it all up - sorry. So, a lot of stuff is being held over, hopefully, for next time.

Just a brief bit to mention all the hobby news I can remember off the top of my head, er... Richard Downes will carry on producing Back to the Dark Ages, but as his duplicator is really knackered now (the ink drum has had it) he will be producing the main zine on a monthly basis. What he'll be doing is printing everything up on stencils and sending it to me with address labels where I'll print it up, collate it, stick the stamps and address labels on and post it. Well, I won't, Jan will, I'll force her. Hah!, women's rights indeed!

What other... Steve Norledge's Rapscallion has folded so I hear. I don't know what will be happening about the 'Gladys Awards' now, but with all the mucking about that they've had I doubt whether anyone will really even be interested. I liked to support them at one time, but even I'm not too bothered about them now. If someone is to resurrect them, it'll need a powerful personality to get them off the ground.

The other piece of news of note, is the worthwhile ZINE POLL. As you know John Piggott has now taken it over, and at the moment there's a war of words over what zines to include and what zines not to include. John wants only Diplomacy zines (zines having at least two Diplomacy games) whilst others want the 'fairy' zines and European zines included. Personally I don't give a jot for the arguments, the Zine Poll was originally called the DIPLOMACY ZINE POLL and was run to find the best Diplomacy magazine. If others want their poll, let them (the Gladys Awards might accomodate them), but don't let them get on their high horses and start dictating what should be run or not run in Richard/John's 'Diplomacy Zine Poll'. John has made his decision and if the fairy gamers have a gripe (and remember I like some fairy games) they should remember that by NOT including Diplomacy games in their lists editors have deliberately chosen to stay out of the Diplomacy Poll themselves, so there should be no comeback. It is simple, if editors really want to take part in the most 'interesting' poll in the hobby (a well chosen sentence to jibe), they must make a choice. No-one will force them either way.

Amazingly Chris Tringham's Megalomania turned up again the other day. Chris had the cheek to ask once again whether I'd like to trade with him. I wasn't going to but as he suggested it should be on a one-to-one bases I eventually agreed. Well, after all Chris' jottings can make for fairly interesting reading. For those who don't know it Chris is notoriously bad at getting Meg out on time, so much so that people now come to expect it once in a blue moon. Anyway, he has given official notification that MIDCON has now been fixed for the weekend of 7th - 9th November 1986 at the Royal Angus Hotel. Single rooms will be £21.95 twins £17.50, both per person per night including English breakfast. Registration will be the same as last year (£5), but only until 31st July. Thereafter it will be £6. Registrations to Brian Williams, 30 Rydding Lane, Millfields Estate, West Bromwich, West Midlands, B71 2HA. Cheques made out to 'National Diplomacy Championship'.

CASTLECON is also on. It's to be held at Shelwick Court, near Hereford, on 21 - 28 June 1986. There's a deposit of £5. I've forgotten who has the details.

JOTTO Turn 5

Ah, a couple of newcomers. As you can see so far the prize is £4.50. If anyone forgets, or loses, their words or their results, feel free to contact me for a check. It's no problem (if it is, I'll get you to ring back, won't I?). Unusual for Rosie to NMR - could it be she's lost without her computer?

ROSIE ROBERTS : 5TH NMR	MIKE CLOSE : 1ST 112122
ULF JIRETORN : 5TH 432112	2ND 100111
KATH COLLMAN : 5TH 221321	3RD 212111
MICHELE MORRIS: 5TH 422312	4TH 103221
BRIAN MOORE : 5TH 220220	BILL HAYGARTH : 1ST 001112
MATTHEW WRIGHT: 5TH 331212	2ND 312221
DENISE SMITH : 5TH 211230	3RD 213011
	4TH 130122
	5TH 212311



LETTERS

ALAN FROST: "Glad you've put up the price of Dib. It will keep teachers out."

((Actually I hadn't thought of that, now that you mention it though it seems a jolly good idea. On the whole you've all been very understanding about the price rise - thanks - so much so in fact perhaps I may well get away with putting it up another £1, what do you think?))

KRIS MORRIS: "Re the letter column, what do all these references to chameleons, Angel Dolls and rubber ducks mean. We obviously missed something of national importance by not joining Dib sooner, please let us in on it."

((These subjects cropped up in Dib when the loonies ruled the world. Back in the dark ages when the likes of North, Close and Clifton ranged unchecked through this hapless hobby. Chameleons started off through the seemingly harmless letter from Richard Hucknall about man being able to change and adapt to his environment. Blow-up Angel Dolls came from a naughty George North letter concerning a cartoon strip I had called 'Angel' (this cartoon strip was drawn for me by Chris Sandow). Rubber ducks are just things Clifton fantasizes about. I had hoped that these things would be long forgotten by now; an episode in Dib's shameful past that I've long tried to live down (talk about the written word coming back to haunt you!). But the ghouls are still out there, waiting. I'm winning though - I AM winning!

Hope you got well over your 'spots', Kris - Michele certainly sounded sympathetic to your case. I wish someone was sympathetic to mine because next I have...))

GEORGE NORTH: "On the front cover of Dib, Dib, Dib is a bloke holding a copy of Dib, Dib, Dib, and on the cover of that Dib, Dib, Dib, is a bloke holding a copy of Dib, Dib, Dib, and on the cover of that Dib, Dib, Dib, is a bloke holding a copy of Dib, Dib, Dib, and on the cover of that Dib, Dib, Dib, ...etc, etc. ((Er, um...))

It is rather like when you are in the barber's chair and there is a mirror in front and the barber holds up a glass so you can see the back of your head. You see the back of your head and the front of your face and the back of your head and the front of your face and the back of your head ad infer-nitum... ((Yes I know but...))

On the other hand it is a little bit different because in the mirror your right side is your left side and your left side is your right side and all that, but what I can't figure out is why your head is not where your feet should be and your feet not where your head should be. It is all very baffling. ((I...))

Which reminds me of a funny question. You see Tweedy, old thing, if you stand on your head the blood rushes to your head so why is it the blood never rushes to your feet when you stand up normal? Is it because your feet ain't empty? ((muffle...))

And finally a word about Mike Close on stockings and suspender belts - does the latter hold the former up or stop them falling down?

And finally finally why do they call flats flats when they are many stories high, and when they are fed up building ordinary houses is that when they bungalow one up?

My brain hurts..."

((Yes, so does mine. (You see, Kris, this is the sort of thing I had to put up with in the old days! I thought I'd better print it to show you. But I am in control.) I AM WINNING! I am, I am...))

MIKE CLOSE: "Re. 'Blue Max' Only £11.95? Where have you been living recently? That's cheap! Take a look at an Avalon Hill price list. Most of the games start at £20.00! As I said Blue Max is value for money, I can't think of any other game that has given us so much fun for such little outlay. We now play with aircraft miniatures and we have drawn up height rules!"

((Alright, you've convinced me, I'll get Jan to put it on my Birthday or Christmas list. Where do you get the aircraft miniatures from? Anyway, what about a review for Dib?))

CATHY OZOG: "I feel like Close (awful thought eh?) ((Yeh, I agree - I wouldn't feel like having him if they were giving him away with free issues of 'Playboy' girls... the REAL ones.)) I get to be mentioned even if I don't write. I shouldn't mention Close should I? He'll just write again and we should keep him locked away.

I have played in all female games before. Three in fact and one is still going, but it is 6 females and a Duck. (This could lead to interesting discussions about ducks and how they play Diplomacy. But I'll leave that for sicker people than me - you know, that Close creature again.) The main problem was many of the females were guided by their husbands in the game and lost interest after a time. In the States there are probably three Big female players (and I don't mean size). They are Kathy Byrne, Melinda Ann Holley and myself. We all three run zines and play in over 5 games. Melinda plays in over 40, but Kathy and I think she's an alien from another planet. I wouldn't mind trying another all female game. I mean, Mike Close won't be in it and so it shouldn't be too bad."

((That is very true, he tried though. The problem of some females being guided by their husbands is a problem I can well understand, but can this really be true for you, Kath and Michele? I can just see you all taking orders from your own respective husbands, oh my yes. My difficulty is in understanding WHY some women like to play postal/ftf boardgames and the majority don't. What makes girls like you so special? There must be others like you out there. If there are I'm still interested in running a Diplomacy game for them.))

LUKE CLUTTERBUCK: "I must chastise you most sternly Tomi ((Oh good)) Not only do you accuse a former Londoner of being an Aussie, but you compound your error by alledging she plays Diplomacy. Denise LOATHES Diplomacy with a passion usually reserved by a snail for the rain! However, one of my subscribers, Marion Ashworth, is very interested in the all-women game Michele Morris suggested last issue. The South Australian zine Austral View (with which Rumplestiltskin may merge later this year) also has a woman player who is another possible. Should this all-woman game look like a possibility then I'd be more than happy to do the organisation at this end, such as it is. Marion is prepared to subscribe to Dib and I have explained to her the added costs and differences. An event such as

an 'All-woman international' would be a sight to see so I hope it comes off."

((So then, we tentatively have: Michele, Kath, Cathy, Marion and another 'possible' for the game - we only need another two. Yes, you could spread the word if you wanted, Luke, but you must further spread the costs and differences (though anyone not wanting Dib can just pay postage for a games sheet). As you know I've tried producing a service by sending you (and Cathy) an 'air mail' games sheet 1st class postage and following Dib on 2nd class, but in the end it worked out just as expensive when adding the two postages together. As long as people realise that I have to send Dib 1st class to get it there in time. Mind you I'll offset this by not charging a gamefee for the game (which I've put in the Waiting List in the 'Dibs and Drabs' section.) This game is on then if I can find another two willing players.))

JIMMY COWIE: "Thanks for Dib 55 most enjoyable. I'm a bit worried about your standards though - they do seem to be slipping ever so slightly. Why is there so much politics in the letter col? We've got MP's, to take care of that. Let's leave them to it, that's what I say - after all that's what the lying, cheating swines get overpaid for. I'm all in favour of sex and perversion in a zine. Where have all your disgusting, perverted subscribers gone too? The only distasteful vermin to creep out of the woodwork regularly is the bold, daring, honest and loyal Mike Close."

((You mean that isn't enough! Typical gutter press mentality - you'll be wanting page 3 nudes next! And no, I won't get Mike Close to pose....))

ROBERTO DELLA-SALA: "Many thanks for sending the sample issue of Dib Dib Dib - I read it from cover to cover during a double free period at school on Friday morning in the library and was warned for laughing too loud! - I assure you though it was worth it! Anyway as I mentioned before, there was and is no doubt in my mind that Dib Dib Dib should take its place amongst such notable zines as MP, D, CMag, BR, V, Life, and BD on my book shelves, so I include some money towards my subscription.

What individualises Dib Dib Dib (what's its abbreviation Tom?) ((Dib, DDD, or Dib x 3)) from the other zine are two main features. Firstly the lettercol is completely different from those of all the other zines I receive, apart from BR because it is up-to-date and is composed of articles that are in the main non-diplomacy orientated, which is a welcome break from lettercols such as that of MP where the 'zine poll debate' still ensues!!

Also the 'debatable parts' seem to attract letters of higher standards because the issues being discussed affect many individuals themselves, so contributors seem to speak from the heart, rather than other parts of the anatomy! ((I wouldn't say that, see letter above!))

The second point is your truly 'world' attraction! Of course I refer to your subbers from Australia, America and West Germany, as well as Sweden! I imagine letter writing in games with the above people in must be both interesting and enjoyable, especially if there are language barriers to overcome - perhaps my schoolboy French will come in useful after all - who knows?

Also the ideas and enthusiasm of your subbers is abundantly clear from their letters and willingness to try new options, for example, diploming by tape, as the subber concerned can speak better English than he can write.

Anyway I won't continue to flatter you with my comments - I wouldn't want you to become a 'swell-headed, ego-maniac' like a certain editor of Vienna (issue 18).

However I will bore you a little bit with a history of myself and description etcetera, as it occurred to me that you know nothing or very little about me!

Well as you know my name is Roberto Della-Sala, not a typical British surname so I had better explain! Some 18 years ago (18-12-67 to

be precise - early presents very, very welcome, as one would say as a 'typical' subber to Dib Dib Dib) I was born in a small hospital in Kings Street, Watford, the first son of two Italian parents - my parents have lived in England for almost 25 years now. I have been born and thoroughly bred in Watford and attended Central Primary School till I reached the tender age of 11 years, whereupon I then continued with my education at Watford Boy's Grammar School. I am doing two 'A' levels, Biology and Economics and in September I hope to go off to do a BSc in Sociology for 4 years.

My main hobby is photography and train spotting, as well as 'steam railways' and I have been on several steam hauled trips across the 'Settle Carlisle' line.

Travelling also plays a major part in my life - I have been on two P+O cruises on board the school ship, the SS Uganda and visited Israel, Bulgaria, Rumania, Greece, Turkey, Malta, Yugoslavia, Italy, France and more recently spent 4 weeks in America on an exchange with the school.

I am returning to the States in July for seven weeks and then I'm not sure what I'll be doing! Well that's the 18 years of my life summarised in less than one side - an achievement in itself!"

((Welcome to Dib Roberto, I'm glad you liked the zine enough to contribute those few kind words. Modesty forbids me to point out how true they were, but it's obvious of course that mere money is more than a fair exchange for my priceless offerings. (Perhaps I SHOULD put the price up again...?) A threat of becoming swell headed, ME? Never....

It's alright for some innit, travelling around to God knows where - you middle class grammar schools boys are all alike. Actually, if you're interested in Railways, you should get in touch with Richard Bairstow, editor of Gazfinc. He's interested in trains enough to own his own carriage (which he's doing up). Mind you he's absolutely nuts because he also collects milk bottles. How the two interests connect I have no idea. Perhaps he uses the carriage to store all the crates!))

ROBERTO (LATER): "As you know I'm off to the good ol' USA this summer but things are not quite as I hoped they would be, nor as cheap! My flight to New York is going to be about £350+ which is okay, but I was planning to then fly down to Little Rock (Arkansas) and onto Phoenix (Arizona) vis Dallas then back to New York. These internal flights look as though they are going to cost me a further \$500 which is more than I budgeted for. Without going into details I'll have to fork that out if nothing else crops up but perhaps our American friends could help by letting me know whether it's going to be cheaper to purchase my internal flights, once I'm out there, or whether they know how I can get in touch with the 'Grey Hand Coach' company. ((Shouldn't that be 'Greyhound'??)) The American Embassy in London didn't know that such a company existed, so you can see I'm making progress here.

Any information I can get which will help me save money is very very welcome and especially if I can widen my options by getting in touch with the bus company. I'm leaving any time after July 10th and coming back September 6th."

((Cathy Ozog might be able to help you here, she actually nails from Phoenix, but now lives in Chicago. (Cathy, can you help?) If there's anyone can help Roberto, either send a letter to me, or, write directly to Roberto at 1 Farraline Road, Watford, Herts, WD1 8DQ. There, how was that?))

MIKE CLOSE: "A comment for your letter column, serious for once (is he sick, you scream!). Part of your lettercol has been concerned with jobs etc for a while, so I'm going to add my two-pennyworth. It occurs to me that the chronic employment shortage in this country (and others) is due to two factors:-

1) The increase in the number of women who now work. I'm not trying to be chauvinist or anything, but it is fair to say that it is now the

prevalent attitude in society that both the husband and wife should be in employment - indeed, with present expectation of lifestyle, it is often a necessity. Over the last twenty or thirty years, therefore, the workforce has exploded in proportion to the number of jobs available. Actually, the economy hasn't done too badly, growing steadily over this time, but it isn't capable of coping with such a surge. Consider that we've added 10-15 million to the workforce over the last 20 years - an unemployment level of only 3 million is quite a success!

- 2) The nature of employment available has changed greatly over the last 20 years, and will continue to change in the next 20 years. I refer to the ubiquitous automation and computers, of course. The days of the labour intensive heavy (and light) industries have gone. (And for those of you who say "smash the machinery" I suggest you read the history of the Luddites in the late 18th century....!)

What is the solution? Now that's a hard one....! ((as the actress said to the...))

Finally a suggestion to those of you who are short of money. You have in your possession an item which is soaking up somewhere between £100 - £200 of your money each month. It's called a motor car.

I recently considered buying one, and found that, in addition to the repayments of the £2,000 loan, the cost of tax, insurance and petrol (+ repairs) was going to cost me about £150 a month, I dropped the idea. I'll continue to walk to the shops, and get the train to work."

((Wait till you're married, Mike, then try and get £60 worth of food etc onto the bus/train, in various boxes and bags, no can do old chum! Actually there was some good points there, Mike (see, some of you thought he was brainless!), point 1 in particular. It's not often that argument is put forward, and of course it is true.))

KATH COLLMAN: "Three cheers for John Colledge and his wife for taking such a responsible attitude towards having children. Although I'm a parent myself, and can't imagine life without the little beasts - and yes, it is fun - it was a hell of a big decision to take at the time. So many couples seem to start a family because 'it's the thing to do', without devoting much thought to the realities of parenthood.

Please tell Clive Booth I haven't laughed so much in years as when I read his letter in Dib 54. He has Danny summed up to a '1'. Actually, what destroyed my concentration in the MidCon quiz was this feeling that I was sitting next to an active volcano, which was about to erupt any second."

((You have my sympathy, Kath, I realise it must be far from easy living with Danny. As for John and children, yes, you're right, he has his say next...))

JOHN COLLEDGE: "I must confess I was a bit put out by your response to my last letter. Perhaps I didn't put myself across to well.

The point I am trying to make is, I feel it is important that those couples who are aiming to have a family should stop and think hard about why they are, and what they are letting themselves in for. Having a family because 'everyone else your age is', or 'she was fed up with work and had nothing better to do', or 'your Mum and Dad will just love having wee kiddies on the go again' are not good enough reasons. The worst remarks of all are the ones along the lines of 'When you are old it will be nice to have a family to look after you', as if the family is an insurance policy against loneliness in your dotage.

I take your point about a family adding something to a marriage and you certainly make it sound most appealing, but the fact is, a family can also screw up a perfectly happy relationship. It is vitally important, I feel, that couples don't fall into the parent trap, as they are not only affecting themselves, they are affecting the lives of their proposed family. Thanks to Michele for the moral support by the way. What a wonderful human being she must be."

((Don't get me wrong, John, I agree with what you say about children entirely. Last time you asked the question as to why parents go on about having children - I gave my opinion as to why I had them. I was not trying to 'convert' you.))

BERNARD EMBLEM: "Why print Dib on foolscap paper?"

((Simple. First, I hate changing the paper in the typewriter rack just when I'm just getting into the swing of things. Also, when I first started typing on stencils I noticed first the A4 position, then the foolscap. Why, I asked myself should I waste the bottom of the stencil when I can get more on a page and give the customer more for his/her money? It seemed ridiculous and a waste of space to stop at the A4 line. So there you have it. My only surprise is why more people don't see it that way. I've asked some people who do use A4, why, and they come up with some really pathetic reasons: "My supplier only has A4 paper", or "My computer only goes down 56 lines", or even the much better reason "I managed to get my hands on some really cheap A4 bog paper". All of which is okay, but it seemed to me they weren't in charge of their own destiny, so to speak; they weren't producing A4 zines because they wanted to, but because they had to.))

PER VON GAVEL: "Just have a mention to David Crawford, that his zine Lost Cause is brilliant when you receive it. Somehow the post hates me and I got 1 letter from the people in the Diplomacy game but I never receive LC. Can anything can be done? - as maybe David doesn't receive my letters either."

((I can't answer that - it's up to David. The post has certainly been bad around here ever since Christmas. Some letters are taking as much as 8 days to arrive.))

JOHN COLLEDGE: "In your capacity as a World War One Flying Ace of great distinction, can you offer me a few words of guidance? I recently joined a game of Sopwith in Life, and I think I have made my first mistake already by writing to the other players. Nobody has written back to me. Any assistance you can offer by way of tactics would be gratefully received."

((It's no mistake to write to other players. When I first typed up the postal rules for Sopwith including Aces, it seemed to me where there was 1 Ace in a game amongst 5 novices, the novices would stand a better chance forming an alliance to combat the Ace. To do that there was no alternative but to write. Unfortunately in some games (not only Sopwith) apathy rules, and often you may not get any replies to your letters. It's rude I know, but a fact of life. The only advice on tactics I can offer you is to get stuck in with the game, and enjoy yourself regardless of possible outcome. What I have found out is players hanging round the edge of the board sometimes survive, but become BORED, while other get stuck in and enjoy themselves (taking an active part, writing press etc) even though they might get shot down. It's entirely your choice. Well, finish we must... and who better to finish with than a little snippet from....))

KATH COLLMAN: "As I have no wish to comment on whether or not Michele should decorate those parts of her body which have recently been exposed to the sight of horrified passers-by, I'll say no more this time... TWEEDY!! was that a sigh of relief I heard??"

((It was indeed. However the mind boggled at the thought of exposed parts until I remembered that it was Michele's ears you were talking about. Pheww! I mean, I can't have one of my subscribers going around horrifying passers-by, can I? Actually, I think some (Piggott, Clifton, Close, etc) already do, but it's already too late to do anything about them!))

My thanks to all who wrote....