

# MORE RIPPING YARNS

## THE GF PATENT TIME MACHINE

*... a time-traveller's log*

*or alternately ...*

**It's life Jim, but not as we know it – Dr. Spock**

**When you're in love with a beautiful woman – Dr. Hook**

**Aw braw brecht wee beesty och the noo Janet – Dr. Findlay**

**You are about to die, Mister Bond – Dr. No**

Although perhaps better remembered as one of the most remarkable spelling mistakes in recorded history, King Cnut did leave us with the legacy of his seaside discovery that time and tide really doth wait for no man.

Or does it ? The thought of time travel intrigued me since childhood. I actually won the Young Scientist of The Year once. He was a smashing little chap, but that's another tale. What no-one knows except you, dear friends, is that I subsequently invented a tiny time machine, about the size of a matchbox. Round the back of the pub I furtively showed my best mate. *'This is a time machine. By pressing this button here I can make time go backwards. Beep! Backwards go time make can I here button this pressing by. Machine time a is this'*.

Blimey, it works, I thought, accidentally catching the button again. Beep! Again button the catching accidentally, thought I, works it, Blimey.

Anyway, that was years ago and I wanted a bigger and better time machine now. I browsed the classifieds section of my Headbanger's Monthly and my eye caught the advertisement. 'Bigger and Better time machine plans. Box 69'.

A couple of days later I received my plans in the post. The instructions weren't easy but I wasn't going to let that spoil my day. It spoiled my day. My task approaching completion I sat astride the monstrous device as I pushed the final multi-functional stick into the multi-functional hole and tugged it backwards.

My head was filled with a thousand flashing lights as I found myself in a field by a beer tent in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A man in white leather garb was adjusting the after burner on the rocket strapped to his motorcycle. *'Hi, I'm Evel'* he said cheerily. *'I'm going to jump across the Grand Canyon on this here motor-sickle and float back to ground on a parachute.* I resisted the urge to shake my head in disbelief and instead humoured him despite no evident signs of a Headbanger's Monthly.

I pushed the lever forward and my head spun once more. I glanced down at my yearometer. It was in the year 2525. Curiously I felt a song coming on. Strange people-carriers like motorbikes with no wheels hovered above ground as if by magic. I gazed across a vast field to see a group of people in denim shirts and leathers digging furiously. Leader Man approached me. *'We are the Motorway Action Discovery Group Investigating Tarmac Surfaces'* he told me. Hmm, MAD GITS eh? To a man, I thought.

Leader man continued, his eyes almost popping out of his skull with fire-and-brimstone passion. *We, the Madgits believe in preserving our ancient transport heritage and are actively restoring vast sections of abandoned motorway for us to ride up and down on. See there as we uncover yet another section of tarmac and a stucco brick building next to a large river that we think was probably part of the M16.'*

I suspected he was confusing it with a certain Ministry of Intelligence but the moment was lost as a crimson-throated roar erupted from the exhaust of a mighty articulated lorry. Beautifully painted in original colours, the gold lettering on the shiny green livery looked eerily familiar though the legend 'Eddie Trabots Ltd.' suggested someone hadn't been too careful in their historical research. *'Today the M16, tomorrow the M25'* cackled Leader Man triumphantly as a copy of Headbanger's Monthly slipped from his anorak pocket.

Terrified by my vision of what may be to come in the dim and distant future I hastily yanked the control lever backwards on my machine, only relaxing my grip when it had whisked me to the safety of the here and now. It went on the bonfire immediately. I stirred a dash of carbolic soap into my Earl Grey as I put the final shine on my gleaming petrol tank before giving grandma's favourite wooden leg a quick burnish. *'No more time travel for me'* I muttered to the whoosh of flames erupting from the moribund apparatus out in the garden. *'Thank goodness I'm back in my own normal world'*.

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**February 2005**