



There They Go

# The CALIFORNIA Tech

Here They Come

Volume LXXX

Marci

Pasadena, California, Friday, December 8, 1978

Marci

Number 11

## MacCready and the Albatross Try the Channel

by R. Willson

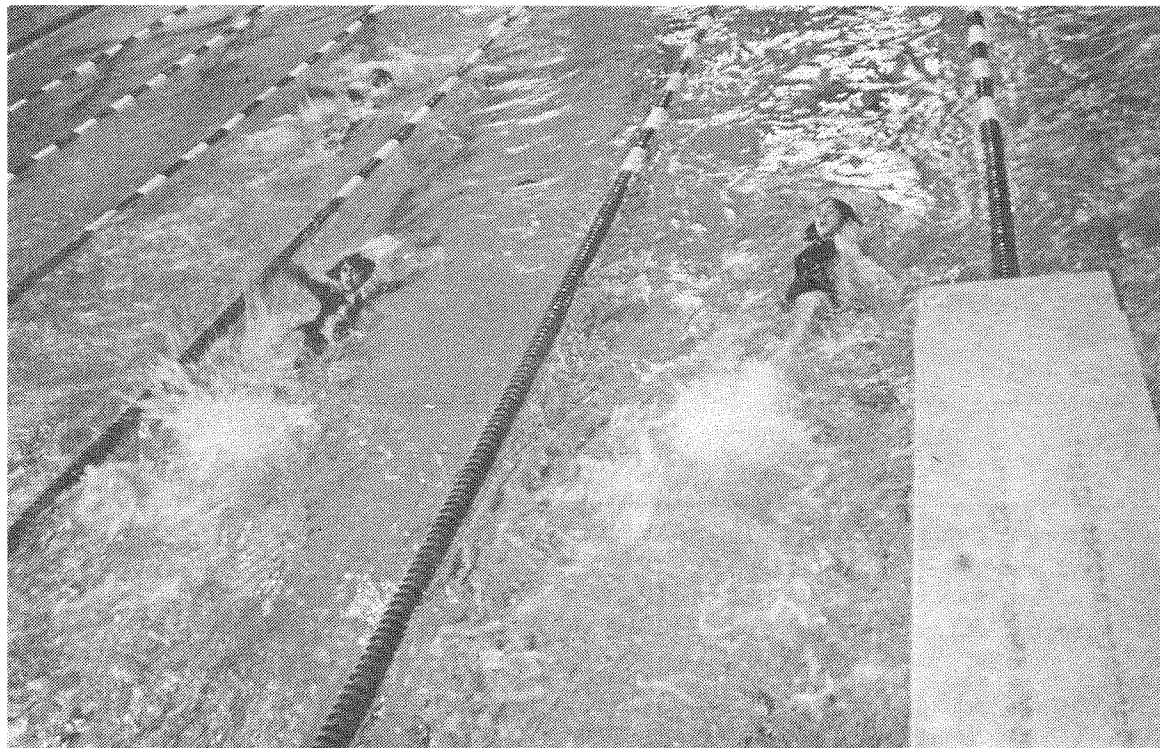
"A man-powered flight across the English Channel should be a lead pipe cinch," claimed Dr. Paul MacCready, a Caltech alumnus (PhD '52) and president of Aeroenvironment, Inc., who spoke in Ramo Auditorium Tuesday night on the latest developments in his pursuit of man-powered flight. Dr. MacCready is best known as father of the Gossamer Condor, a man-powered craft which last year met the conditions of the 50,000 pound sterling Kramer prize. The prize, which required that the winning plane cover a 1.5 mile figure-8 course with ten foot obstacles at each end, had gone unclaimed for 18 years before the successful flight of the Gossamer Condor. That magnificent specimen of obscure aerodynamics is now on display in the Smithsonian, alongside the Wright brothers' plane and Lindbergh's 'Spirit of St. Louis'.

The original Kramer prize has been replaced by an offer of 100,000 pounds (about \$195,000) for the first man-powered flight across the English Channel. To meet the challenge, MacCready is working on a modified version of the Condor, which he calls the Gossamer Albatross. This craft is similar in design to its predecessor in that it has a large wingspan (about 90 feet), is very light (about 70 lbs.), uses wire-braced construction, and is mylar-covered, but its more advanced design makes it much easier to fly. The Albatross, which uses carbon-filament tubing in-

stead of the original aluminum, and has wing stiffeners to provide a smoother surface, requires roughly ¼ horsepower to fly and is expected to have a flight time of several hours, compared to the Condor's 8-minute times.

The Albatross, like the Condor before it, moves quite slowly in order to reduce drag, and so the 21-mile crossing is expected to take over 2 hours. The flight will probably be made after dusk in order to avoid wind, so the plane is equipped with a sonar altimeter adapted by the Polaroid company from their recently introduced self-focusing cameras. The altitude is not expected to reach more than about 20 feet, so that the dangers of a possible fall will be minimal, but at this low level one major hazard will be posed by air turbulence caused by the passage of large ships, of which 300 traverse the Channel each day. MacCready likened the situation to that of "a turtle crossing a freeway."

The Albatross team had thought to make an attempt at the new prize during the good weather of this past summer, but just as time was running short a control line malfunction caused a major crash. A new prize attempt is expected sometime next summer, (Dr. MacCready preferred not to say just when in order to avoid being pre-empted by competitors) and the expenses of development and the logistics of the attempt are expected to be at least as much as the value of the prize.



Photos by Alan Loh

### Beausoleil's is too Big

I suppose I don't have to tell you what time of year (or term) it is. Finals week manifests itself in some rather unusual ways, and a smaller *Tech* is merely one of them. [I decided to start my vacation early. —ed.] Unfortunately, I had last week promised a commentary on undergraduate life in general and the survey in particular. But size won't permit it just yet: my prose got so lengthy I had to divvy it up into several installments (when I see a soapbox, I sometimes get verbose), and the first one wouldn't fit into the space available in this *Tech*. You wouldn't have time to read it anyway; you have tests to take. Enjoy.

—Ray Beausoleil

### Get Out of your Rut

## Dr. David Burchmore

### Medievalist at Tech

by Donald Korycansky

Amidst the current proliferation of "heroic fantasy" writing, Dr. David Burchmore, of the department of Humanities and Social Sciences, prefers to deal with the poems that helped to spawn these modern works. Dr. Burchmore joined the Humanities this fall as an instructor. His range of study is medieval and Renaissance poetry, which ranges from Old English epic poetry to Milton. This is a larger field than is studied by scholars of later literature. In general, medievalists study a very broad range of works, including those in languages such as Latin, Old French, Old Norse, and Italian.

His interest in literature growing out of childhood, and such books as *The Lord of the Rings*, Burchmore did his undergraduate work at Princeton University. He studied the work of Chaucer, and Old French literature with recognized scholars in the field such as D. W. Robinson and Carl Uitti. These men interested him in professional work in literature.

His graduate studies were done at the University of Virginia with his Ph.D. dissertation on the use of classical mythology by Chaucer and Spenser, who incorporated it as it had been interpreted by various earlier writers. Dr. Burchmore is now working on publishing sections of his dissertation.

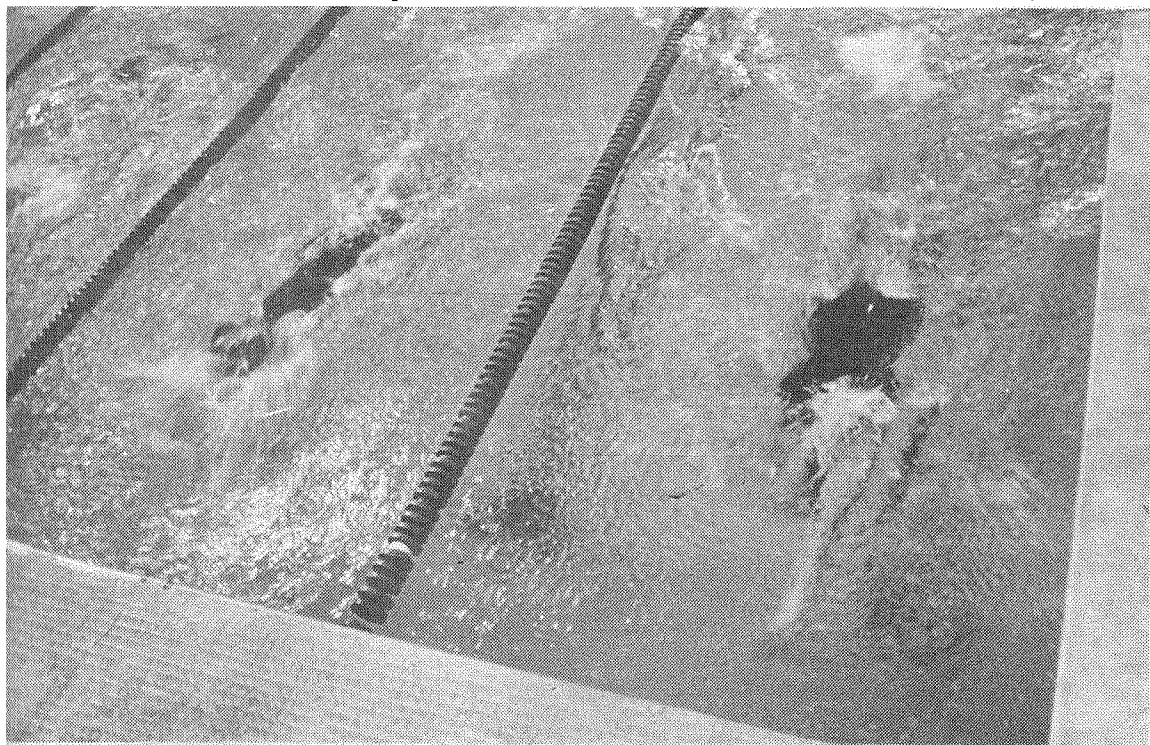
While at the University of Virginia, Dr. Burchmore taught a literature course for non-literature majors, especially those in science

and engineering. He says he enjoyed doing this, as his students had a different perspective towards the subject. It got him out of his "intellectual rut." He feels that it has also prepared him for teaching at Caltech.

As far as his teaching here is concerned, Dr. Burchmore has found that students here were fairly interested in literature, but in a manner different from what he expected. The literature that he has discussed this term has been mostly old sagas and poetry, like *Beowulf*. He expected that his students would find their interest in it stemming from interest in fantasy and epic, such as Tolkien's works. Instead he has found that the students are more inclined to treat the literature as such—in terms of theme and plot and character. Another advantage of Tech is the relatively small number of students, freeing him to do a greater amount of work on his own.

Dr. Burchmore feels that the humanities play a unique role, especially at a place like Caltech. He views this role as getting people out of their own "intellectual ruts"—to broaden their thinking and remind them of their cultural heritage. He feels that subjects such as literature counterbalance the specialization that is increasing in many of the sciences today.

He is one of the instructors for the freshman literature course, "Literature Past and Present." Next term he will also teach a course entitled "English and Continental Medieval Literature."



# When is an RF not an RF & When is Enough Enough?

Well, those evil, nasty Flems have been punished for their malicious acts—a victory for the Good Guys, right? Now peace and tranquility will return to campus, right? Wrong.

The Flems are not solely to blame for the shit that has been going down this term, despite what a lot of people make themselves think, and unless a large number of people, in *all* the Houses can manage to disinvolve themselves from their convenient self-delusions, the situation is going to get a lot worse before it gets any better.

And let there be no cries of "We're only doing an RF, they're the ones who aren't playing fair!" An RF is a well-thought out, imaginative, devious prank, harmless to both people and objects involved. Few, if any, of the acts involved in the current conflict even come near being an RF. A car carefully placed in a House lounge is an RF. Slashing that car's tires is not.

The latest actions (the shaving of a Lloydie frosh's head, and the placing of tacks in the Fleming showers) that brought this situation to a head, are only skirmishes in a virtual war that has gone on for the past few years. The interlocking actions of many members of many Houses, largely under the guise of RF's, have created an environment of action, reaction and escalation. Unless everyone involved will stop their "we're reasonable, but they aren't" moans, the situation will continue to feed off itself, and will continue to degenerate.

—ed. Bielecki

## Random Numbers

Why is this so short? Because I overslept this morning, that's why. I hear there's a lot of that going on this time of year. The thought of Christmas almost makes having to go through finals worthwhile.

I must say that I was very impressed by the responses to the survey. I feel that most people have a pretty good idea what the basic problems around here are. I just hope that the effects that the survey produces will more than justify the great amount of work that I'm sure went into it. I think that we must also remember that the administration can and will do only so much. In the end, we will have to do the bulk of the work ourselves. We have more control over our situation than students in most other colleges have over theirs. The academic pressures just cause us to forget that every now and then. Our small size allows us to change fairly quickly but any change will not be easy. The attitudes of several thousand peo-

ple will not change overnight. We will have to commit ourselves to making improvements that we may not get any benefits from. The situation is always better the year after you leave.

But enough of that. In case you haven't been out of your room or Jorgensen in the last few weeks, it is now finals time. If you're sitting in your room burned out by the latest test, just remember that at no other time are there more opportunities for flicking. So go crazy and keep what little bit of sanity you may still have. Just don't forget to take your finals and when you go home, don't let yourself be arrested for smuggling intracranial jello across state lines. Finally, for those of you who still insist on being profoundly depressed, just think of this: 2 glorious weeks without Food Service! And to all of you a very special, very merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

—Duncan G. Mahoney

## A Native Reply

To the Editor:

While I appreciate Mr. D. Korycansky's article on Asian culture, I would like to point out some mistakes that crept in while reporting. As a person whose mother tongue is Tamil I have the responsibility to correct them.

Tamil is a language spoken in one state of India, and in part of Srilanka, Malasia and Singapore. It has its own script and a well defined grammar. The people who spoke the language are classified as Dravidians and they are the natives and not as reported earlier. The structure of Tamil is the same for both written and spoken parts.

After talking to Dr. Dirks I understand that there was a complete misunderstanding between Dr. Dirks and the reporter.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,  
M. Mullainathan

### Friend Klingon?

Starship captains are needed for this Saturday's Alien Space game. The battle will begin at 7:30 pm in Dabney Hall Lounge. Beginners and other warmongers welcome. Another production of the Caltech Gamers.

### Winthrop?

Nominations for garage chairman, little t editors and business manager, class officers and Winthrop close today at 5 pm. Sign up on Flora's door if you're interested in getting into the political arena from the ground floor.

### Play Tickets

A limited number of tickets (about 25) to the December 17 performance of the play, "Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act," are being made available through the Pasadena chapter of Amnesty International. In this play, South African playwright Athol Fugard deals with the desperation of an interracial couple whose love is defined as a crime against the state. Of the \$5 ticket cost, \$3 goes to support Amnesty International, the Nobel peace-prize winning human rights organization. The play begins at 7:30 pm, Sunday Dec. 17 (opening night!) at the L.A. Actors' Theatre, 1089 N. Oxford Ave. You must provide your own transportation. To obtain tickets, contact Randy Morse at Caltech extension 2522. First come, first served!

## Thuncan by P.M.



## BOC is Concerned

The Board of Control would like to express its concern over the recent behavior of some members of the Caltech undergraduate student body. We would like to remind the students that the Honor System requires a great deal of self-restraint and the exercise of personal judgement. It demands that each individual take responsibility for his or her own actions. Mature consideration of the consequences of one's own actions is essential for the maintenance of, and the benefits which accrue from, mutual trust and respect.

Recently, the seemingly irresponsible actions of certain individuals in connection with interhouse rivalries have caused many to question the judgement of these individuals. The lack of respect for and trust in one another which results from these actions should not exist while the Honor System is in effect. We suggest, therefore, that you take into account the basic premises of the Honor System and weigh your actions accordingly.

The Board of Control  
12/3/78



Warning: Asking the Tech editor about your name in the paper can be hazardous.

## The CALIFORNIA Tech

Volume LXXX Number 11  
Friday, December 8, 1978  
Published weekly except during examination and vacation periods by the Associated Students of the California Institute of Technology, Inc. The opinions expressed in all articles are strictly those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or of the corporation. All articles submitted become the property of the Tech. © 1978 by the Associated Students of the California Institute of Technology, Incorporated.

Editor-in-Chief  
ed. Bielecki

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The California Tech  
Publications Office: 115 Winnett Center 107-51, California Institute of Technology, 1201 East California Boulevard, Pasadena, California 91125. Telephone: 795-6811, Editor-ext. 2153, Business Manager-ext. 2154. Printed by News-Type Service, Glendale, California. Second-Class postage paid at Pasadena, California.

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Next Term ANNIE HALL



**Bakshi's**

**Lord of the Rings— Brings the Tale to Life**

*Lord of the Rings*, a film by Ralph Bakshi. Showing at the Regent in Westwood and the Bristol Cinema in Costa Mesa.

It is only fair to say at the outset that the enjoyment of this film is very dependent upon the attitude that the viewer takes before entering the theatre. If the viewer expects to see Tolkien's book of Middle Earth come to life, with all of its detail, subtleties, and complex character development, he will probably be greatly disappointed. For even with a two and a half hour movie (which only covers the first half of the Trilogy) one could not hope to convey all of the imagination and imagery present in the book.

What Bakshi has accomplished, however, is to make not the book, but the story come to life. He has taken the major events and characters from the book and shaped them into an animated epic. He performs the task with a style and movement quite worthy of the original book.

The animated characters have a very simple style to them, yet they have enough detail to allow perhaps the greatest variety of facial expressions and moods yet seen in full length animation. The expressiveness of the characters in both the script and the animation allow them to react with one another with the full range of expression and emotion. This is of utmost importance in a story like *Lord of the Rings* where emotion plays a great part.

The story of the Lord of the Rings is one of adventure and courage. It tells the story of how the friendly Hobbits came into possession of the One Ring of Sauron. This ring, if brought back into Sauron's hands, would allow him to rule all of Middle Earth. The story then shows the adventures of how a group known as the Fellowship of the Ring attempts to destroy the Ring before Sauron can reclaim it. Unfortunately, the Ring can only be destroyed by throwing it into the Crack of Doom, deep within Sauron's dark land of Mordor. Before the film's end they have held battles with many

an evil creature, such as Orcs, Nazgul, and a Balrog. The story, however, does not lead to a climax as this is only part one. It therefore becomes a succession of larger battles and more suspense.

The large battle scenes were accomplished using the same technique that Bakshi used in *Wizards*. It is a process by which both live-action and animation are used, with the contrast and color tones of the live-action changed to match that of the animation. His technique has greatly improved since *Wizards*, and the matching of the two styles works much better now, but is hardly perfect.

The background scenes are beautifully styled, closely resembling water color paintings. The shading and contrast of the colors used set the moods of the scenes with exquisite perfection. Of special note for the moods obtained are the night scenes (with stars and a crisp full moon) and the scenes where Frodo, the bearer of the Ring, enters the world of the Nazgul.

But the movie is not perfect. The live action is overused and completely incongruous in a couple of spots. Some of the characters seem quite misrepresented, such as Treebeard, the ent, who ends up looking like Foghorn Leghorn with leaves. Even the script, though fast paced and not wasting a scene, is flawed. It

lacks continuity at some points, and at others assumes a knowledge of the Trilogy, thus leaving those who have yet to read it a little confused.

But overall the film is an animation masterwork, highly enjoyable as long as one doesn't expect it to be a miracle come true.

—Stan Cohn

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Photo by Yin Shih

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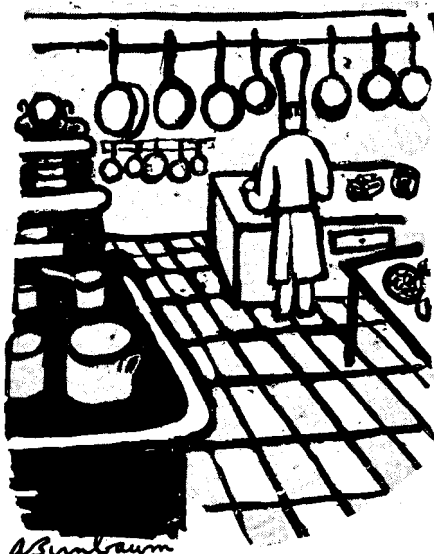
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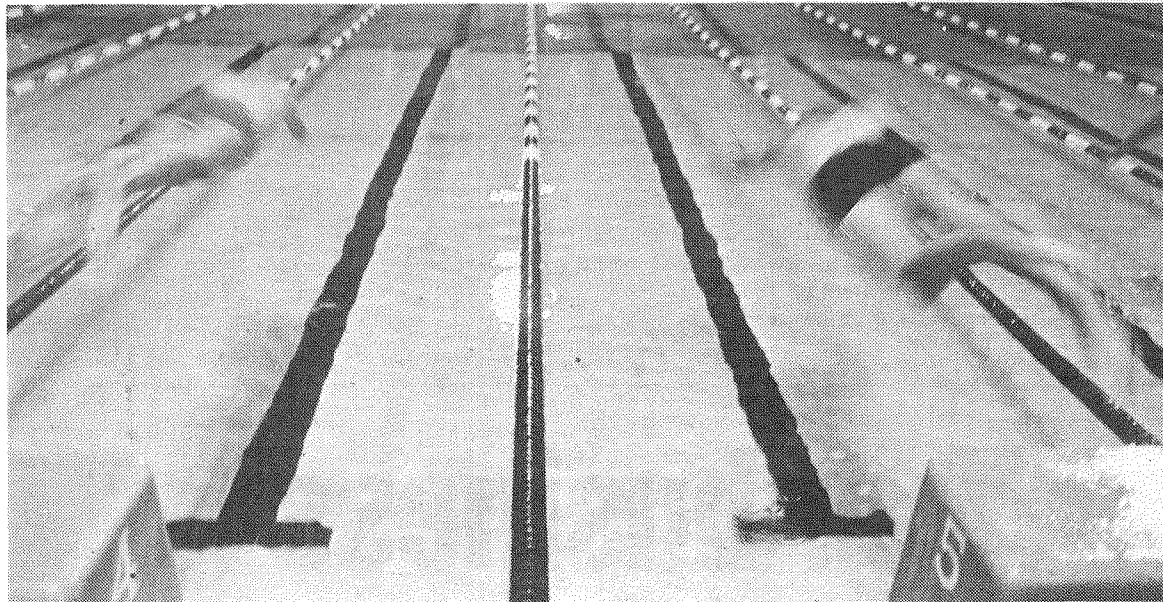


Photo by Alan Loh

Only the penguins were happy with the weather during Interhouse Swimming, and they didn't like the chlorine either.

Photo by Yin Shih

Marci Marci



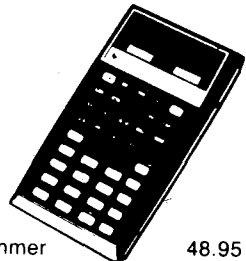
Postage paid at Pasadena, California. *The California Tech* is published weekly except during examination and vacation periods by the Associated Students of the California Institute of Technology, Inc., Winnett Student Center, Caltech 107-51, Pasadena California 91125.

Correction: The student investment funds at Oxy, and Scripps were set up by Mary Johnson and an anonymous donor respectively, not by Stan Johnson, as the last *Tech* said.

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