

fed-up profile

Gordon Bennet's new venture into broadcasting targets a niche market, writes **Gerry Orchard**.

In a gesture of goodwill, fed-up mag's long-standing pal Gordon Bennet, through his publicist Max Clifford, arranged to have his own personal satellite TV station, Gordonvision, beamed into the fed-up house from space.

Chav-up me banger is Gordon's version of the type of programme so popular among the new-money brigade where sycophantic viewers have loud exhasts, tinted windows and other ostentatious accessories added to their cars. The daytime coverage of board games includes Scrabble matches where contestants take a quarter of an hour to come up with such words as "to."



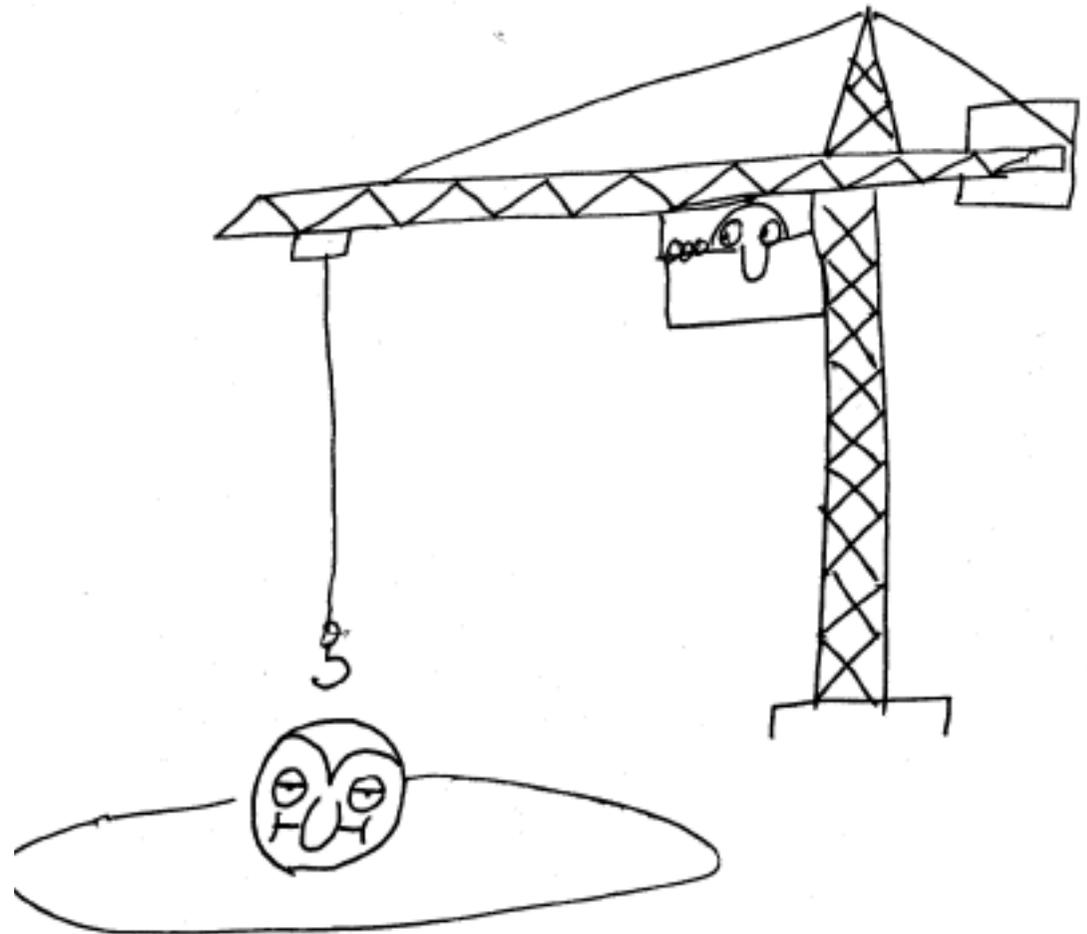
Ten Years Older is a makeover show with a difference. It quickly becomes apparent that this is nothing more than a production-line where the hapless candidates are kitted out with predictable accessories and sent out as Gordon Bennet lookalikes in various shapes and sizes, favouring as he does large spectacles, pony-tails ("think how much you'll save on haircuts") and Cuban heels. It remains to be seen how it will, as Gordon proudly proclaims, prolong your life by a decade.

If I Can Just Get a Word In Edgeways is loosely based on Ronnie Corbett's *Two Ronnies* slot, where Gordon sits perched in a large leather armchair, telling his interminable anecdotes while getting hopelessly sidetracked.

Gordon's About is a hoax-reality-based TV show about Gordon in which he dons a set of prominent teeth, enormous glasses and elbow patches and sets about fooling unsuspecting members of the public, by filming them while he grins and says nothing. Overnight, the schedule is padded out with repeats of *Desperate Celebrities* and *Celebrity Housewives*. Most of the ads on Gordonvision are aimed at people up to their necks in debt. Is Mr. Gordon trying to insinuate something? ■

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free zine #7



fed-up lifestyle

Common sense a thing of the past

Self-styled lifestyle guru Gerry ventures out in public yet again.

I wake to the time signal on radio 4 longwave then after walking the dog I will potter about the house or if I need any provisions I will make my way through the war zone over to Crumlin shopping centre while non-chalantly smoking my pipe. It's such a convenient place, not like town, not as many beggars and easy to get around. The other advantage is it's not a real famous popular centre like Liffey Valley. It has no burger joints or cinemas. It's just for the basics, the kind of place where dogs sit outside waiting for their humans (my own dog refuses ever to be left alone in public).

But the first obstacle you have to negotiate is finding yourself on collision course with a hyperactive kid repeatedly hurling himself, bowling-ball-like, at the automatic doors.

Inside it's all people ducking and diving, weaving and darting about. The gals are all obsessed with their ghastly loud children and the business of raising them. Some of the kids have spectacles and are eerily reminiscent of the new cartoon character, Chicken Little.

"Shouldn't feed him on so many E-numbers, missus."

There is a Tesco there but it's too

overcrowded and it's home to the trolley-rage brigade, so I go to the Dunnes because it's a proper Irish-run chain. The Dunnes in Crumlin is poorly stocked and is divided into 4 or 5 premises, ensuring that I always have to queue up multiple times to pay. For this reason, it is shunned by the trolley-rage brigade, who mostly take their custom elsewhere.

It's so embarrassing queueing up, I always panic on the queue and I usually drop tiny coins on the floor, adding to my awkwardness. So worthless are they that it is not worth picking them up, since it would mean losing my place in the queue. All the other customers have huge trolleys and are buying everything in the shop. The single gent with his basket has to wait. I always feel as if I'm snooping on whoever is in front of me. There should be some sort of "fast" lane for baskets, staffed by the prettiest checkout girls. I find it's the same person in front of me everywhere I go, jostling me in every queue. It's uncanny because the Dunnes is spread over 4 separate shops. "Oh good grief, *you* again!" If you look at something in a shop someone else will always come over and gawk at it too. See it's because they can't think for themselves.

I believe that all hell breaks loose wherever I go. If I queue up in the supermarket to pay for my provisions, the queue I'm on will always move the slowest.

I never get a day when just one thing goes wrong, no, it's everything. I'm always confused and I always get out of my depth when I go shopping. Yet the majority are able to skip through life without any aggro. It's always me that gets picked on. It's the same with the traffic lights going against me. They are never green when I get to them, how is that possible? It *must* be choreographed. "That just *had* to happen." The weather, too, always goes against me. I can never get a bus, I wait an hour like a fool and nothing, yet I see them going around in threes when I don't want them. As soon as I stick me nose outside the door, something goes wrong.

I buy some Yop drinks from the chiller. I also load up with dog biscuits. One thing I never buy is newspapers. In my day, they were perhaps only 16 pages, now they are hundreds of pages. It's too much of a burden on the environment, too awkward to carry and there's nothing worth reading in them — it's all filler. So quickly do they throw these weekend supplements together that they are always full of DTP errors and bogus alternative health articles.

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If I want to read the news I can see it on the teletext.

Sometimes in a shopping centre (not Crumlin) they will have a shiny BMW on display and they will be trying to sell raffle tickets for it for charity. But if they ask me, I always reply that I don't believe anyone ever wins these things.

I procure some soap powder. The mainstream washing powders are too harsh for my needs, being formulated to remove such stains as baked-in gravy, mashed-in kebabs, dried-in egg-yoke and burnt-in tomato ketchup. True enough, after eating his meal, with its attendant food-fights, the typical pleb will have these stains down the front of his garment, whereas the sophisticated gent will not.

These 'shell-suit' powders are far too vigorous, destroying normal clothes and reducing them to lint. The fed-up dubliner will only get a bit of mud perhaps on the hem of his garment, easily dissolved in soap and water. For the fed-up dubliner, a mild detergent and a gentle wash will suffice.

Ireland goes to extremes too much. there's no in-between. It's totally polarised: feast or famine. In my day, in the 80s and 90s, Dublin was full of derelict buildings falling down. They gradually replaced them with apartments but now it's all apartments to the exclusion of everything else. They are now knocking down hospi-

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tals, filling stations, factories and other workplaces to build these monstrosities.

I think I can safely say without fear of contradiction, that the ordinary Dubliner is fed-up with apartment buildings.

Now, as we are constantly being told by the D4 media, the middleclass are all, *en masse*, investing in apartments in Bucharest (or is it Budapest?) Also we are all sick hearing about the middleclass SSIsAs (self-satisfied investment accounts) which are maturing now.

I return home with my few meagre purchases. I transfer the Yops to the back of the fridge where they huddle together. I grab a couple of them for lunch and head in to the dreaded "work."

It's funny how the very people who are in charge of nothing whatsoever, think they're in charge of everything. Now, we could all self-importantly power-walk up and down the corridors all day and yes it would be a good way to meet the girls but you wear out your welcome and surely you are not making a good impression with that bad breath and overpowering aftershave? I prefer to have an air of mystique. The "air of mystique" doesn't register with most Irish girls. There is no place for subtlety, no, they don't know you exist.

I like to be understated and not flaunt any overpowering cheap fragrances, just the scent of clean clothes, all the stuff I use is unscented and I do not ingest pungent foods.

The elite, for want of a better word, instinctively know each other. It's something unspoken, good breeding, the absence of halitosis. The elite doesn't make a song-and-dance about everything. What the masses will never comprehend is that true class is more to do with absence rather than ostentatiousness. We don't put ourselves about too much, everything is understated, always cool and quiet. It's like the way the stuff that is always getting advertised is stuff you don't want. You just know that an ad break will always be irrelevant and corny. The good stuff doesn't need to be advertised.

But I see the same people haring up and down the corridors all the time. They're around every corner.

Then I return home and I will sit down at the electric typewriter in my timber-panelled office to work on my writing, my dog curled up beside my desk. My work done, I will retire to my favourite chair at the fire and while away a pleasant hour, logs crackling as I smoke my pipe with my humble hound lying close by. I never liked those chairs that I disappear into — too hard to get out of. I prefer a more

firm chair, not one that cuts off the circulation but one that strikes the right balance. I have no time for those chairs that I sink right through to the hard wooden base.

It's all very well for someone to phone and say, "do you want to go to the pub?" Why do they always ask at the last moment? It's just too much work so I always decline. Then the pubs are too noisy, too expensive and I probably wouldn't get past the bouncers. I always get picked-on. Also if I came up with some idea for a get-together everyone would have prior arrangements.

I don't go pubbing because I can never hear what anyone is saying. Talking is an annoyance. What I always get is the "you-should-do-something-else" type advice.

If anyone (who knows nothing about photography) finds out you're interested in photography they tell you you should join a camera club. I have to then explain that it is unnecessary to join such a club but it just doesn't register with them so I'm supposed to join some stuffy middleclass club on their insistence. They have everyone pigeonholed with instant annoying advice Got a computer? Join a computer club. Oh, you're interested in walking. Join a walking club. In today's world, it all seems a bit pre-historic. There is also a tendency to

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equate an interest in photography with membership of the paparazzi.

From my perch, I contemplate the lessons of the day, making mental notes about why everything went wrong and how to avoid these pitfalls in future.

I retire to bed, disconnecting my bakelite telephone from the wall because sleep is something to be enjoyed, not just endured. I always keep a pair of earplugs by my bed in case of emergency. As far as I'm concerned, reality exists to facilitate sleep and everyday life is an irrelevance.

Morning noon and night, we are forever being told that we should grab life with both hands and live every day as if it is our last. Why do I associate this outlook with gullibility and the suspension of critical faculties? I prefer to exercise caution. The person who is too enthusiastic and positive is easy prey for con-men, we should all maintain a healthy cynicism. Rushing head-first into things would run contrary to my approach of a life of quiet contemplation.

What has happened to just "being yourself"? Now it's all the happy clappy "up-for-it" brigade. Tell them to jump and they say, "how high?"



fed-up cycling

Comrades, we are today living in the dark age of cycling. Dublin, once at the forefront of cycle commuting, is ruined by far too much traffic.

There is a bike lane on the promenade along the coast of north Dublin and yet, the fed-up cyclist is endangered by power-walkers on this lane, their arms swinging maniacally about with huge bottles of

Cycling gone to hell

Hilarious speech delivered to the fed-up bicycle commuters by captain commuter

designer water. Their footpath is right beside the bike lane. The diagram of a bicycle painted on the lane doesn't register with them. In fact I always use the Howth Road instead. Before I discovered cycling I used to walk everywhere but the true walker doesn't draw attention to the fact that he is walking. It's just a way of getting from A to B. The ostentatious power-walker is the sort of character who normally drives everywhere, hence their incomprehension of bike lanes. In addition, the power-walker will be infinitely more strident than the bicy-

cle commuter (it goes with the territory), hence they will always force the bicycle out of its rightful lane and it never dawns on them. And how over-assertiveness jars with our native culture. Bike lanes on the path are no use anyway, only a muppet cycles on the path. I have this impatient habit of cycling fast and so I tend to overtake all these down-and-outs with no brakes, no lights and a bike that

makes a terrible grating sound (my own runs silently). They also cycle so perilously close to the kerb that their left pedal keeps striking it. Then when I come to the lights I always get caught and they sail past me. Then the lights change and I overtake them only to get caught at the next lights. And then probably get a flat tyre for my trouble. You would think there would be some advantage like sometimes getting to the lights *before* they go red but no way. I really must pace myself. That's why city cycling is so

exhausting, all this constant braking. Just imagine on a decent open road I could leave all these clowns behind.

The problem with waiting for the lights is that the typical pedestrian will always run across like a headless chicken at the very moment when the lights go green. We are always being told that we should cycle everywhere but if you cycle anywhere you just get aggro. Ghastly kids everywhere, undesirables trying to draw attention. It's pure snobbery. And the new-money brigade would consider it too lower class to cycle anywhere and too outlandish. If you drive around, you never get anyone in your face, you have your privacy.

One problem with trams or buses is that it'll pull into a stop and an entire school can just pile on *en masse*, crowding everyone out. There's times I'm glad I'm on the bike when I see 60 or 70 people at a bus stop. When I used to use the buses, someone would always sit behind me and repeatedly cough and sneeze on me. A tram is about 3 or 4 quid there and back, so everytime we nip into town on our bikes we're saving. I enjoy being out on the bike

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on me own, I get great ideas as long as there is no-one in my face. The thing about me is I like to have me space.

Contractors have the roads destroyed because they don't repair them properly after they dig their infernal holes, creating hellish conditions. The roads are in a terrible state.

What I like is when — no doubt at great expense — they scrape up all the old tarmac off the road and lay a smooth new surface but I fear it's only a matter of time before a contractor digs them up again. It seems to me that every road in the city is dug up on a regular basis. The N7 into County Kildare has been much improved lately. I tried cycling that hard shoulder last year and was jolted to bits. And don't get me started on the soul-destroying Irish weather. ■

fed-up publishing

Zines a thing of the past *Doyler on the futility of publishing*

They say zines are dead now, and some would have us believe that they've been replaced by blogging.

But much as I like blogs, they all seem to be about *Bluffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Desperate Housewives* and how “fabulous” and “awesome” everything is — nothing like the somewhat anarchic selection of zines we used to have during the home publishing boom.

Additionally, webzines are a poor substitute for the real thing. They are too confusing and the content is too dreary. Most of our local webzines have gone out of business: Bowsie, Siglamag, Inept, Pushie, Irritainment. All very much published by non-zinesters I would think.

There is a certain stuffiness and lack of vision in these sites, much like inflight magazines or the *Rt  Guide*. Defunct Irish webzines are thick on the ground. The place is riddled with ones that ran out of steam years ago. The hooray-henrys don't start webzines anymore because it's not the current internet bandwagon. Which raises the possibility that there could be a gap for a simple webzine that has good content, not commercial, and not too many options. But running a website is a mug's game anyway, no-one will look at it. The smart set don't really bother with

the net in a big way anyway and don't understand those of us who are always hare-ing around publishing things on it. And then trying to promote it gets you nowhere. Also a webzine is too inconvenient, you can't carry it round and there are too many of them.

We got aggro for slugging a mag in fed-up. It was on one of those web boards where everyone agrees with each other and gangs up on one person. But if there were some decent zines in Dublin, rivalry could fuel inventiveness rather than the complacency we are so accustomed to. I think instead of pushing for the same agenda and having the same checklist of opinions as the dublin 4 media, zines should be an alternative.

On the face if it, the web seemed like a good alternative for paper zines. Why are Irish webzines no good?

No, the only feasible option for publishing is a paper zine, photocopied and distributed by post but the problem is that almost no-one will read a paper zine either. The States is a hive of zine activity because they still have the convenient one-dollar bill, whereas the smallest denomination of banknote we have is the fiver, too much for a zine and there is no point in expecting anyone to send a 2-euro coin or a 1-euro coin in the post. ■

fed-up computing

Computers: if it isn't one thing it's another

I'm sure this computer was fine ten years ago but it is simply incompatible with everything now. Well I'm fed-up using decade-old computers. You think you're saving money but it's only frustrating because they are far too slow.

My computer, a Power Mac 7300 devotes all its processor time to itself nowadays. It's fine for DTP but when running its web-browser, for example, it grinds to a halt and ignores me, all attempts to access the drop-down menus proving fruitless. Crap computers

The computer of Satan



suit themselves and are a waste of time. Soon I hope to get me new com-

puter but I think I'll get a flatbed scanner along with it. Some of the scanners now can stand on their edge so they don't take up half your desk. The reason is that I've always had the task of scanning line-art for this zine and I'm fed up having to hare around the sleazy internet caf s trying to use scanners. The communal keyboards are too dirty, the screens are crap and the scanners don't work.

It's worth getting a scanner that's able to scan negatives and slides. Because as every lensman knows, scanning the

negative will give a better result than scanning the print.

Increasingly, computers nowadays have the widescreen (or “shortscreen”) aspect ratio but it's only really for watching DVDs. The letterbox format is no use for computing.

I was looking into the idea of opting for this “Bluetooth” wireless which is meant to banish wires but you can only get it in mice, keyboards and mobile phones. Disappointingly, you can't get bluetooth printers or scanners so there's not much point in having it.

A webcam is something people might use once and never use again, the software is just too flakey and the picture too unflattering. They make you look like a cornered rat.

I wonder sometimes if it would be worth getting speakers (the Mac's internal speaker sounds like tinfoil) I like a decent bass sound, it's so much easier on the ears.

The online Apple store seems a bit disorganised, for example it states it will send you your scanner in 1 day, your mac in 5 days, will send the keyboard in 8 days and no doubt your speakers in 8 weeks—far from ideal. The hardware will arrive in dribs and drabs, you know the story, you dare not leave the house and so I think I'd just get the bare Mac off them and get the extra bits retail. ■

The thing about TV now is that there is nothing for, God forbid, the thinking man on tv now. The popular science programmes are all gone, along with the documentaries and serious art/design programmes. They also never show pop videos. I

Television not what it used to be
by Frank Doyle

have never seen what Sophie Ellis-Bextor, for example, Goldfrapp, the Kaiser Chiefs or the Darkness look like. The other thing is the video for Tony Christie's *Is this the way to Amarillo?* There is an assumption that everyone has seen it yet it never gets played. They never play pop vids, not even MTV. That

would, presumably, be unthinkable. They *never* show documentaries now. The only documentaries they show are fly-on-the-wall reality ones and makover shows. You also never even see a station clock any more.

TV now plays to the gallery. It talks over the thinking man, at the tabloid reader. It's all celebrities of whom I have never heard. There is far too much sport on TV. The ads come on twice as loud as the programmes. They have banished any specialist programmes and dumb-ed-down. There is more to life than celebrities. I would rather learn about the much-maligned Universe or the Solar System which get no airtime whatsoever. ■

Fed-up #6 (gerryorchard@iol.ie). 'Got sent this anonymously in the post; it's always great to get stuff in the post so thanks for that whoever-you-are. This zine reminds me of freesheets and zines that used' be knocking around before the advent of the internet, e-zines and message-boards. The writers of Fed-up seem to be out of step with the rest of society and the zine is all little rants and complaints about such things as other people's company, talking, people who wear backpacks, cycling, cds, dvds, ipods, Photoshop, radio, etc. as well as the origins of the zine. Funny read, almost a blast from the past even...
...Review from *Loserdom #14*

Welcome to the new fed-up. It's my 7th attempt at DTP. Fed up 6 was well-received, and I thought it turned out well even though it was only 11 pages because I felt I had done enough damn writing/drawing.

I dropped the 'never-have-time-to-read-it' brigade from the mailing list — who needs 'em.

The cost of sending fed-up out to the UK used to be 60 cents and 65 to North America, now it's gone up to 75 cents to both places and, I think, elsewhere.

The picture on the cover is entitled *Help is at hand after doyler walks into quicksand again*. It takes me ages to write the zine properly so I haven't rushed it. I have made the text slightly less cramped vertically so it looks better. There is always room for improvement but it's important not to over-egg the pudding.

I got fed-up 6 into a zine show in Temple Bar, presumably the only zine show ever in Ireland. This came about because I sent my zine to Loserdom zine and they sent me the details.

Wasn't summer '06 great in Ireland. Sheer luxury. Not just 5 minutes of good weather in between showers, which, to me, isn't a proper summer. We at fed-up fled to beautiful west Cork. After all, air travel has gone to hell these days with all the hoaxes.

Send any gripes to
gerryorchard@iol.ie

myspace.com/fedupmag ■

FED-UP QUOTE:

"The wicked are always surprised that the good can be clever" —Luc de Clapier de Vauvanargues