

## **RPGaDay 2019**

### **#RPGaDay 2019 - Day 1: First.**

Let's see first RPG I encountered was Basic D&D which a friend had when we were in high school. We didn't play it mind you but we read the heck out of it.

First game I bought was TSR's Gamma World. Again, never played it but still have it.

First game I actually played in was Tunnels and Trolls. This was in high school but I didn't play that much.

First game I played a lot (first year university) was SPI's Universe, thanks Craig!

First game I ran, again first year university was Call of Cthulhu with a scenario set in Bisset, Manitoba which just showed how little I knew of Manitoba outside of Winnipeg:-). There wouldn't have been any sheep with or without tentacles if I knew it was a mining town in the woods.

### **#RPGaDay 2019 Day 2 Unique.**

Unique? Um, I guess you could call the scenarios I ran first at Wingames (our University Gaming Club convention) and later at Prairiecon unique. Their genesis was my having committed to running a Call of Cthulhu game and then leaving the prep work until the last minute. I decided that it didn't matter if the players all ran the same character as the dice rolling and the role-playing were the important bits. Cannot for the life of me remember what the scenario was about but it didn't bomb so the next year I decided to do something similar again except this time it was going to be intentionally very silly. So enlisting the help of my friend Doug Sh. I prepared a two party scenario involving a group of cannibal hillbillies on one side and a party of Mi-go masquerading as humans on the other side. Again, cannot remember what it was about or what happened, I believe the Mi-go at one point tried to liberate their larva from the prison tank in fancy restaurant but that's about it. I do recall a lot of laughter though and that's what I was going for.

The following year official game rules were dumped altogether and the party now christened Drelbs for some reason, and I don't remember who came up with the name or the Drelb salute which involves making a fist, turning it upside down and pressing it against the side of your head came from. There was time travel involved from a distant future and some emergency but again details escape me. At this point the Drelbs were literally identical in all aspects.

The next year the Drelbs travelled back to what they expected to be the mythical 1970's flare pants and trusty ginourmous boombox in tow trying to recruit people to travel to the future with them and rejuvenate the human race only to find themselves not in 1975 but 1916 on the Lusitania! Again, much hilarity ensued.

The next scenario found the Drelbs pursuing the same idea but aboard the Hindenburg. That one was called Seven brides for seven Herr Schmidts. At this point Wingames died and nothing Drelbish occurred until Prairiecon a few years later where equally inspired by generational starships ala Metamorphosis

Alpha, clones in aerosol cans and a cookbook owned by the selfsame Doug Sh. The Drelbs engaged in a scavenger hunt of the Thomas Wang and enormous phallic generational starship encased in aspic for some reason.

Pretty much the last Drelb game (so far) also involved a scavenger hunt with two teams of 3 Drelbs apiece sent back in time and embedded as tiny control chips on cats and dogs that were the pets of a Canadian family in the 70's. They were tasked with very silly jobs like determining who put the bomb in the bombshbomb and so forth. This used the Fate rules (sort of) and at the end of the scenario the Drelbs got to stay in the past inhabiting their pet bodies, Big Moggy the Battle Cat, Princess and Rufus who though he was a wolf but was really a Shi-poo and the rest of them. This was always meant to be part 1 of a trilogy, but I've not gotten around to writing the rest yet. Maybe next year in Brandon...

### **#RPGaDay 2019, Day 3: Engage**

So I've been playing RPGs on a more or less regular basis since first year university waaay back in the fall of 1981. At first I was mostly a player (Champions, Universe, Dragonquest, a little D&D, some RQ and Call of Cthulhu) but as time went by I took on the role of gamemaster (RQ, Call of Cthulhu, Elfquest, Stormbringer/Elric, Paranoia, Powers & Perils, Torg, etc.) and haven't played myself much but in the last decade or so the zest seemed to be gone. I ran a bit, The Laundry, Amazing Swordsman and Sorcerers of Hyperborea, 13<sup>th</sup> Age, but nothing lasted very long and nothing really engaged me. (They may have engaged my players but I couldn't say).

But then the new edition of RuneQuest came out and I decided to restart the campaign I'd initially started back in 1993 (it might have been a bit earlier) and had run with a short break of a year or so up to 2000. I would update the characters so they'd have passions and runes and made sure they had the skills they should have for the new system. I gave them a bunch of experience and POW checks to roll for and ended up with 3 rune lords and 1 rune priest plus a powerful sorcerer and my son, who hadn't even been born when the campaign started playing a pivotal character. And poof there was engagement! The players are engaged and I'm getting the chance to go through the high level adventures like Snakepipe Hollow and the Old Sun Dome Temple. It's fun again, it's got legs and I think we're all having fun. Lots of arguing and a fair bit of laughing, which works for me at least.

We'd already been playing for a while with one of my old gaming friends in Singapore but we've since added a friend in Edmonton and one in Tokyo. It's not the same as face-to-face mind you and the connection isn't always that great but it's fantastic to be playing with these people again. Engaged!

### **#RPGaDay 2019, Day 4: Share**

Hmm, I'm not much of a sharer. It took me years before I started playing RPGs with either of my kids and I tend to direct things in games. This is sharing though I guess.

### **#RPGaDay 2019, Day 5: Space**

The final frontier, oh sorry force of habit. Not a huge sci-fi fan, much prefer fantasy. Have played sci-fi games, Universe quite a bit, a little Ringworld, spent a memorable evening with Grant M. and Doug Sh.

once rolling up Space Opera characters. I think Doug ended up with a rear fleet admiral with an entire space fleet at his command who then died in a freak accident before the game would have even started.

How about spaces as in where you play? Since I really started playing at university it was mostly classrooms back then. Even the con I attend, Prairiecon is normally at Assiniboine Community College in Brandon so classrooms. It's also been at Brandon University so classrooms. For at least a couple of years it was at an Anglican church hall which was partly a school I think so classrooms. Next year the con may partner with the Brandon Summer Fair so it may not be in classrooms which may be weird. We shall see.

But now the bi-weekly\* RPGing has migrated back to its natural North American environment, the basement. It was never for me anyway in my parent's basement, though we did play in Jeff's parents basement once or twice if I recall even back in the university days but now it's pretty much just my basement.



\*Eh, more or less.

Some friends reminded me: We played for quite a while at Waters Edge and Doug's place (the famous whose dog is peeing on my foot incident).

Ah man, crap memory or what. Waters Edge, Doug and Jackie's place, the other Doug's place, Henry's place, lots of dining room tables. Good times.



## #RPGaDay 2019, Day 6: Ancient

What could it but the RPG I think does the best job of representing the milieu it's made for, Call of Cthulhu. Here you go up against unspeakable horrors and ancient evils that can swat you like the bugs you are. Through every edition, except maybe the one with hit locations, CofC has done an excellent job of representing human insignificance and helplessness against truly ancient evils. The SAN mechanism alone is brilliant and puts fear in every investigator's heart. I was dubious at first about the 7th edition but the rules have convinced me. If you want a truly excellent RPG that does its job well with pizzazz Call of Cthulhu is your game! First truly great game I ever bought, first game I ever ran. It has a special place in my heart.

## #RPGaDay 2019, Day 7: Familiar

So this would be Runequest or to use the full title Runequest: Roleplaying in Glorantha. Back again in a new but familiar fourth edition for 2018 forty years after the first edition Runequest! I missed the first edition so I wasn't in on the initial excitement (Get it? Excitement? Because of the exclamation point in the name?) but I have run the game using the 2nd edition, the 3rd edition and even the Mongoose Publishing versions 1 and 2 which aren't official editions. The game has changed somewhat over the years. I probably used the 3rd, Avalon Hill edition the most but I wasn't really a fan of the fatigue system, too tiring so I usually ignored it.

I ran a campaign from 1992 or 1993 until 2000 using the 3rd edition rules. I stopped running the campaign at the point where the party had just rescued the Dog Boy from being perverted by evil Lunar ways so he could grow up to be prophesized uniter of the Balazaring and Votanki people so they could drive the Lunars out of Balazar. Dog Boy was the soul of one of the original PCs, one Dorian Tavish who was a Zola Fel fisherfolk who had been the son of an ogre and a human mother. He had tried to attune a crystal despite strong hints from the GM that this might not be a good idea and had ended up with 12 point aluminum armour from the Chaos feature the crystal gave him. Unfortunately, this happened in the visitor barracks at the Sun Dome Temple so Solanthos Ironpike condemned him to a fiery death.

His father and the Lunar Provincial Survey turned up and offered to take him away but he decided he'd rather die. (It had been a running theme in the campaign that the ogre father had been trying to get his son to join him but he'd always refused). Later in the campaign the party discovered that Dorian's soul



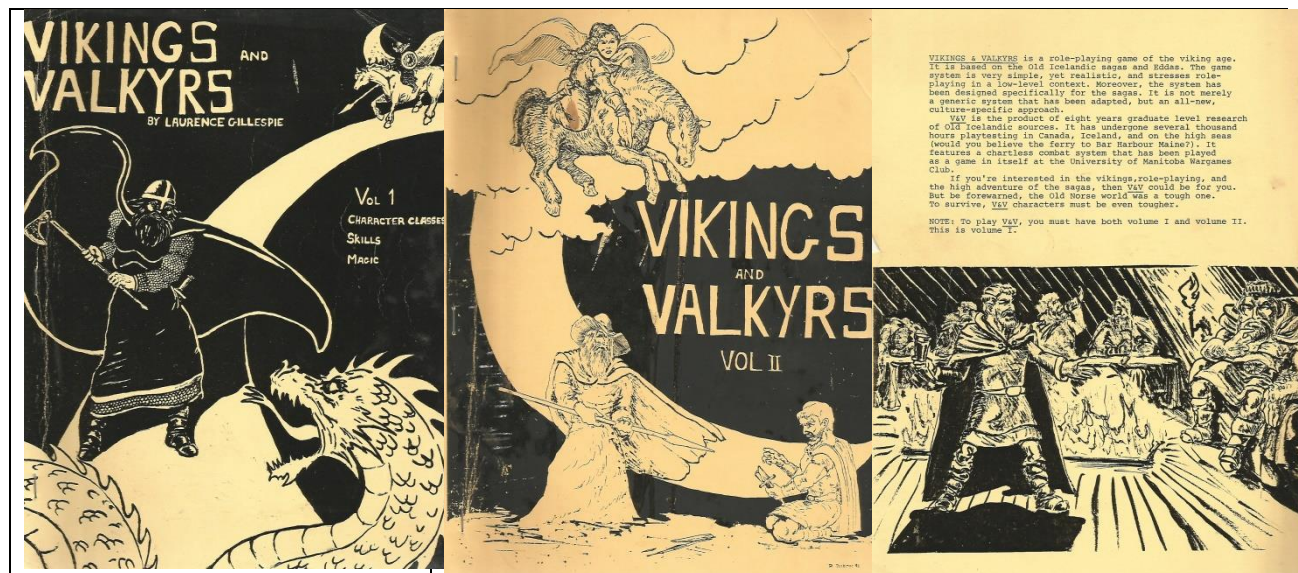
had been bound into a terrier and they'd rescued him. Later on that same terrier, and the rest of the party joined Barack Monsterslayer in his eel hunt and ended up transferred to Balazar. There the Babeester Gor axe maiden Hallelujah Harnsdottir discovered that she had become pregnant with the soul of Dorian Tavish, terrier and she was the prophesized Dog Mother who would birth the savior of the Balazarings. Good times.

So familiar, the old characters readily converted to the new rules and away we go again. I don't like all the rules but if I don't like them I ignore them or check the older rulesets for better versions. But damn familiar.

### #RPGaDay Day 8 Obscure

Vikings & Valkyrs the RPG. Published in 1985 & 1986 by my friend Laurence Gillespie. He had been working on it for eight years before this. The rules were expressly created to play games in the Norse sagas. Sadly I have never played it but I do own a copy of the rules. Laurence was a masters student in Icelandic studies at the University of Manitoba and extremely knowledgeable about Norse mythology and culture. It is a level based system and has character classes but it also has a skill system that any character can know. There was supposed to be a volume 3 with gods and monsters but I have idea whether it was ever published. You can find a review online here:

<https://rpggeek.com/thread/818932/thorough-and-objective-review-vikings-and-valkyrs?fbclid=IwAR0XtGPe7B3cdHYHg8-QWJqKhyAi2kMrdg5pg-Aohvz7RrDbLHgXo3LFx5c>



### #RPGaDay 2019, Day 9 Critical

Oh the criticals I could discuss that saved the party just when things looked their bleakest! But never mind that. What's critical to a really enjoyable RPG session?

A familiar system: The new RuneQuest is a very familiar system for the most part. There's a few pinchy bits which is why we have house rules. The shoes fit but they're a little tight in some places and too loose in others. But overall a good fit.

A comfortable place to play: Okay, the basement may be a bit lacking in creature comforts but there's enough chairs for all, a big enough table for dice rolling and snacks. (A floor for Darryl to stretch out on, the man can sleep anywhere. Lucky bastard. My nifty new side table laden down with decades of RQ & Glorantha books for handy reference. A big white board for drawing out maps. A full-sized fridge full of Coke Zero and the occasional beer, Could the broadband be a little more robust for our three virtual players? Definitely, but still a pretty comfortable place.

A good group: Check and double check. I've been playing with these guys for almost four decades now and we get along. Are there arguments? Hell yeah. Are there too many stupid song references? Yes, but we still love them. Do they put up with my despotic tendencies? Yes. Can I be reasoned with? Usually. Are we having fun? I think so.

A good campaign: Definitely. It's got legs like Usain Bolt and oodles of accumulated history and it's engaged the lot of us.

Can you have fun without these elements? Of course but these are all critical.

And of course some fresh blood in the form of my 22 year old son Owen who fits surprisingly well with our group of geezers. He reminds me of me in my younger crazy gaming days. I wonder if he'd make a tentacled robot god and demand human sacrifices whenever the sun was at its highest because he was bored. (I meant at the summer solstice not every noon hour).

### **#RPGaDay 2019, Day 10: Focus.**

Focus, yes. In my younger gaming days I could focus like a laser.<sup>1</sup> Now, Wait, where was I? Oh yes, focus. MY roleplaying games are known for their focus! We never<sup>2</sup> lose focus and wander off on obscure tangents. We are there to game, not eat junk and drink drinks. Ah, the important thing anyway is to just be together, focus be damned!

1. A bald-faced lie. In my younger gaming days I was well known for my mood swings. Broken weather vanes had nothing on me. And can lasers focus?

2. Another bald-faced lie.

### **#RPGaDay 2019, Day 11 Examine**

So there's a thread in a RuneQuest discussion group where people wonder if it's better to have an area well detailed or left blank as it were to allow for creativity. I work at a provincial library where we collect local histories on communities in Manitoba, among other things, and it's my experience from working with these and all the Gloranthan materials I've stockpiled over the years that the smallest, most remote place in Manitoba is probably better explored and detailed than anywhere in Glorantha.

And the thing is that even with these local histories there's always room for more examination, more exploration. You can always dig deeper, explore a different space, a different family, look at things from a different perspective.

Glorantha's the same, there's lots of room for exploration and discovery. What's been written may be a particular perspective or may just be wrong. It's amazing how even with the written record and modern storage and archives/libraries how inaccuracies and mistakes can be repeated as facts just because the authority who originated the mistake/inaccuracy just didn't bother checking their facts.

There's always throwaway sentences and references you can examine and hang your own beautiful interpretation on. There's never a need to feel that anything's been fully detailed. Have a closer look, a more thorough examination and you'll probably find room for the new.

### **#RPGaDay 2019, Day 12 Friendship**

Not being by nature a gregarious person I would not have many friends if it wasn't for gaming, both role and board. Thank goodness!

### **#RPGaDay 2019, Day 14 Guide**

My first foray into the world of crowdfunding was the Guide to Glorantha. Two friends (Doug Sh. and Henry S.) and I went in together on a pledge whose level name I can't remember, mostly as a means of avoiding shipping for three separate pledges. Sadly, my friend Doug passed away before we got the Guides so he never got to see them. This has not been my only crowdfunded RPG, I've also supported the Fate basic book, 13<sup>th</sup> Age in Glorantha, and a game called Alas Vegas. Honestly, I prefer the old store model of buying/supporting games.

### **#RPGaDay 2019, Day 15 Door**

Two amusing door anecdotes from past games. The first was from a game of Stormbringer! from way back when. One of the player characters had found a demon imprisoned in a cell behind a barred door. The cell was one of several in a larger room with a main door. Feeling cocky he kept going in and out of the main room singing, "I can go in, and I can go out." He did this a few times to taunt the demon and that's when the demon demonstrated his stretching ability.

The second anecdote is from Call of Cthulhu. The party were exploring the second floor of a deserted house when one of the characters opened a door setting off the double barrelled 10 gauge shotgun trap in the closet. His body hadn't even gotten the chance to cool off when one of the other players somewhat insensitively shouted, "I loot the body." I took another look at the map and realized I'd made a mistake. The would be looter was the one who'd actually set off the trap. So the looter became the lootee.

Three battle cries from the good old days:

1) Loot the bodies!

- 2) EP on the hoof!
- 3) BFI! (brute force and ignorance).

#### #RPGaDay 16 Dream

I've used a few dreams in various campaigns. Here's one from the old RuneQuest campaign that restarted it after a break.

In the dream the character stands beneath a tall column of rock on the edge of the Zola Fel. Below them the water runs pure and undisturbed. Riverfolk, animals and Praxians alike all use and benefit from the river. Then the character feels a sense of growing unease and notices that a tiny shadow is spreading from the base of the column. It looks like a horned skull and it slowly grows until it overshadows the whole river and people, plants and animals start dying of disease and famine. Then the character awakes.

#### #RPGaDay 17 One

Ah, the dreaded/beloved critical hit or crit in D100 games like RuneQuest! It giveth (and maketh anti-climatic) the finale as in the giant eel is coming in for the attack. Oh the Light Sun rolls a one with his composite bow attack and hits it in the head killing it dead. Bummer for the GM.

And it taketh away. While exploring the Old Sun Dome temple in Sun County the party comes across 25 skeletons armed with self-bows. Something that gives pause to the bravest company. They all had a 55% chance to hit. The same Light Son takes a peek over the parapet to see where the skeletons are and one (that's all you ever need) of the skellies rolls a one and a 20 for location. Bam, arrow in the eye, dead as the proverbial doorknob. Quick DI and the Light Son is alive and he and the other Yelmalio in the party are out of the temple safe and sound.

One's are annoying and great.



I have plenty of reference/support/inspiration works to support my RuneQuest Glorantha campaign.



## #RPGaDay 2019, Day 19 Scary

I love scaring my players. Case in point this incident from last Saturday's sessions. They were on their way back to Corflu from the Sea Caves when the fisher folk and the Storm Voice, one of the PCs, told them a big storm was on the way. They just managed to get to Corflu and hunker down when the storm hit. It lasted a day and a half and they then started on their way upriver back to Pavis. As they headed through the much mangled delta they came across a stranded wooden galley which had been uncovered by the storm. A variety of detects were cast, Enemy, Undead, and Gold, senses were utilised, Detect Chaos and Ambush. Of these only the Detect Gold got any positive results revealing a slender gold source about 30 CM long within the craft. Aerial reconnaissance by allied spirits noted that the hull was full of silt. The Sword of Humakt was all for leaving the ship as found and continuing on their way but the two Yelmalian and the Storm Voice were interested in the gold. They were particularly worried about spirits since they'd had bad experiences with them in the past. They decided to proceed and the sorcerer released his earth elemental to excavate the ship. The four river folk who were manning their ship on its way north were content to stop for a snack and a rest while they dealt with the craft.

The elemental built a ramp so it could enter the ship and started throwing silt and muck over the side. It had been instructed to start on one end and excavate down to the hull. As it neared the bottom it started tossing bones over the side which were readily identified as human. Then there was a sharp discordant note and the connection between the elemental and the sorcerer was cut. This gave the party a scare and they started hemming and hawing about continuing. A few of them ventured as near as the top of the earth ramp and looked in but they couldn't see anything. There was talk of using a long spear to stir up the bones but they decided to hold off on that.

First they thought about summoning another earth elemental and continuing the work but then they remembered the air elemental the sorcerer had after some debate about the wisdom of continuing they decided to keep trying to clear the ship.

The elemental was instructed to remove a layer of 15 cm or so at a time along the entire length and it kept at this for quite some time until it hit a layer containing bones when it stopped. It was then instructed to start throwing the bones out of the ship and it hadn't gotten very far when there was another discordant note and the air elemental disappeared. More aerial reconnaissance revealed that there was a harp tangled in with the bones, itself made of bone and bearing one golden string among the others. The Sword and Dog Boy actually entered the ship and tried to pick the harp up so they could wrap it up in blankets. I asked them for luck rolls (5 x POW) fully expecting Dog Boy with his POW of 5 to fail but not expecting the Sword with his POW of 21 to fail. A careless stroke and a discordant note and they both dropped. Careful examination determined they were asleep rather than dead. The Storm Voice entered the craft and carefully wrapped the harp up making multiple rolls.

A few days later as they headed north the harp started playing itself and everyone could hear it through the blankets. The river folk and half the party sang along all day, even engaging in rounds to some unfamiliar melody in wordless vocalizations. Even the Rubble Runner familiar of the sorcerer was singing along. When they reached Pavis they took the harp and all the loot they'd found in Snake Pipe

Hollow. As the Light Son was unwrapping the harp he failed his luck roll 95% chance and struck a note. The female Lhankhor Mhy he was dealing with grabbed him from across the table and kissed him passionately. Then she stopped shocked and smacked him across the face. When she'd recovered she looked at the harp went pale and said, "I know that harp. It's..." And that's where we ended the session. Scary magic items = fun!

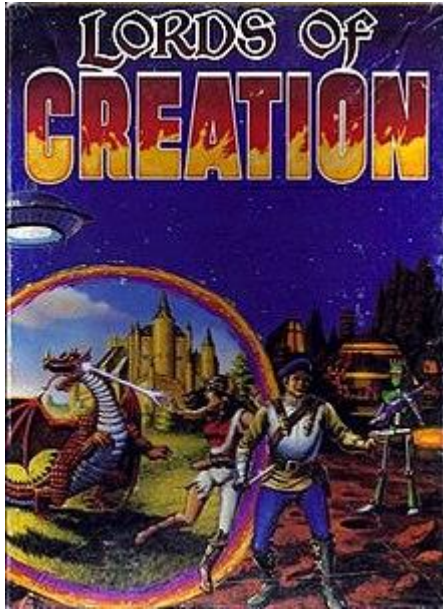
## **#RPGaDay 20 Noble**

The oldest character in my on-going RuneQuest campaign started off as the youngest one back in 1993 or thereabouts. He was originally called Durnfal Slipspear, son of bronzesmiths/jewellers but went on to become a noble.

He's achieved the following:

- Became a River Voice.
- Won the Ladies Choice contest of Melisande's hand.
- Joined the Solar Provincial Survey.
- Was friend to the ill-fated Dorian Tavish who attuned the wrong crystal.
- Killed by a friend who had been possessed by a lamia at Black Rock. He got better.
- Gained the Yemalian artefact known as Strongsphear there and the fief of Rabbit Hat Farm and title of Baron Golden Ears.
- Criticaled the Avatar of Chaos at the Eternal Battle killing it. Unfortunately the Avatar d.i'd and kicked his head off. He got better before the Eternal Battle left.
- Killed Muriah.
- Fell out with the party over the Torches of Everburning but they all made up.
- Helped kill the giant eel Barok Monsterslayer was after and ended up in Balazar with the rest of the party.
- Helped kill Warren's Favourite Giant but lost 10 POW healing Svart Ulfsson only to see him killed right away for good.
- Quested to the Green Age to prevent the Lunars from corrupting the prophesied Dog Boy.
- Helped to return two of the Everburning Torches to the Sun Dome in Sartar.
- Got married and had four kids.
- Almost died during the first year of the Great Winter.
- Almost died during the opening phases of the civil war in Sun County.
- Almost died after being driven mad by Lunar demons at the Fall of Pavis.
- Did die at the Old Sun Dome temple after he was shot in the head by a skeleton. He got better.
- Became a go-between for Argrath and Vega Goldbreath.
- Went into Snakepipe Hollow to rescue an old friend, helped kill another giant, and helped restore a godling.
- Rode an earthen chariot and a dinosaur.
- Helped his friends and the Zola Fel through a Cleansed One Quest.
- Killed a giant eel with a single shot to the head.

## #RPGaDay 21 Vast



Although I've most successfully run RuneQuest and Call of Cthulhu I have a soft spot for games with vast genre spanning potential. I ran all the modules published for Avalon Hill's Lords of Creation and I remember them as being fun. It looked like the system might crash under its own weight but we never went past the three modules. [Review](#)

I also tried to run a Torg campaign but that was not particularly successful. Not sure why but it just didn't have legs. Still like the thought behind the game and have many of the first edition sourcebooks. (I think as far as volume counts go, it's RuneQuest, Call of Cthulhu and then Torg). I understand it has a new edition but I know nothing about that.



## #RPGaDay 22 Lost

This is a tough one and I'm not sure what to write about. To copy the inestimable Nick Brooke I'll write about losing instead. Except with a slightly different slant. My players never seem to lose. In the 38 years I've been running RPG sessions I cannot think of a single time when my players have not pulled off a win, no matter how dire the odds against them have seemed to be. Some recent examples:

- It looked bad in the fight against the giant in Snakepipe Hollow with the Babeester Gor axe maiden having been knocked down and the giant laughing off their mightiest attacks. That is until the sorcerer and his familiar both cast Drain Soul on him and he was knocked unconscious.
- The big finale monster in the Cleansing Chaos quest went down with a single arrow wound to the head.
- Earlier in the quest they had to fight a fiend summoned by an ogre worshipper of Cacodaemon. It looked dire for a while there too but eventually they whittled him down and sent him back where he belonged.

They might pay a heavy cost in POW for divine interventions but they haven't lost yet.

## #RPGaDay 23 Surprise

My biggest surprise gaming-wise right now is the longevity of the RuneQuest campaign I'm running right now. It's my second campaign set in Glorantha and started back in 1993 or thereabouts using the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the rules. (There was an older, fairly short campaign in the 80's that used the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition but I

recall next to nothing about it). There was a break to play other games and such for a bit as I get easily bored and distracted by different systems. No idea how long the break was for because while I faithfully put the Gloranthan dates on the campaign chronicles it was only recently that I put real world dates in too.

Even when I called a halt in 2000 there were still players who would mention the campaign and wonder if we'd play again. I did try running a Second Age RuneQuest campaign using the rules published by Mongoose but that didn't seem to click with anyone, especially me. But the new edition of RuneQuest, despite its flaws seems to have clicked again, or maybe it was just the draw of playing in that campaign again because my players have been surprisingly keen. Virtually all of them have bought the PDF version of the rules and they really seem to be enjoying themselves.

Since I'd figured out a good way to convert the characters to the new rules as well as a way to give them seven years worth of experience (basically I gave them half the experience rolls the rules suggest for gaining experience per season) the older party members are all rune levels. Except the sorcerer of course. So now we can use all those old scenarios that were a little too high level to use in the past. And that's fun for me anyway.

So surprisingly it's been almost a year, the first session was last September 14, and I'm playing again with friends I haven't played with in years and unsurprisingly that's good fun.

### **#RPGaDay 24 Triumph**

Triumphs? Um, I thought my "Call of Cthulhu/Scooby –Doo mash-up at the 2018 Prairiecon was a bit of a triumph. My son suggested the mash-up, "Geez Shaggy, it was awful nice of your great-uncle to lend us his Antarctic research base". Well I didn't stage it at an Antarctic research base but rather the Starry Wisdom Golf and Country Club during the late 20's. Instead of the present day Scooby gang it was their grandparents:

- Teddy Rogers
- Creusa "DuMaurier" Blake –Creusa was the mother of Daphne the nymph in Greek mythology.
- Orville Rogers
- Zelma Dinkley
- 23 Ski-doo (my favourite of the names)

The Mystification Inc. group travelled around busting Bolsheviks and anarchists. despite the fact that Teddy was from old money and a staunch traditionalist and capitalist.

Orville was not so secretly a follower of Karl Marx. Only Teddy couldn't see that.

Creusa was a frustrated athlete tired of the patriarchy and its restrictions. Armed with a field hockey stick she was the muscle. She was especially mad because women were not allowed to play field hockey in the Olympics.



Zelma was a scientific brain who just wanted to be allowed to be a scientist.

23 Ski-doo was a talking Great Dane.

The setting was the somewhat cartoonish Starry Wisdom Golf and Country Club ably staffed by Mr. Crawley the maitre d'hotel, Goregood his hunchbacked aide who always seemed to be around when you needed him, or didn't need him and a staff of zombies.

At the country club the Gang was opposed by Jo Satin and his tractor salesmen from Minsk and Adolphe Hliter and his golf foursome who despite their seemingly innocent presence were up to no good.

The gang quickly realizes that these foreign nogoodniks are here looking for the Fragememicon so they can summon Cthulhu-doo and take over the world. (This is Cthulhu's nephew of course with his eerie cry of Cthulhu-hulu-doo!)

I consider this a triumph because all three groups I subjected this too had great fun playing and really got into the nonsense. One party even sacrificed DuMaurier so they could rule the world at Cthulhu-doo's side. Great fun.



### **#RPGaDay 25 Cataclysm**

O cataclysms I love you in theory. I've tried to create and run campaigns set in post-cataclysmic fantasy worlds. None of them went much past the planning stage.

### **Fourfold World**

There was The Fourfold World which used one of the Design Mechanism's RuneQuest variants.

[https://oliverbernietz.neocities.org/Fourfold\\_World/theworld.htm](https://oliverbernietz.neocities.org/Fourfold_World/theworld.htm) The premise was a world which had had a major magical war which split the world into four separate realms. It was influenced by the



writings of such luminaries as Lord Dunsany, H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Robert E. Howard, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Michael Shea, David Gemmell, Thomas Burnett Swann, James Branch Cabell, Fritz Leiber and Barry Hughart. I did start a campaign but it fizzled out.

### **Wind Pirates of Orlanth**

Another such campaign was The Wind Pirates of Orlanth set in the Fourth Age of Glorantha where the lozenge itself had been destroyed. This used Mongoose's Pirates! Supplement and Runequest for what was a pretty decent Hornblower/Scottish clearances/Gloranthan mash-up. It's not online right now because I haven't gotten around to moving it to my Neocities website but here's some background:

The basic idea I have for the world is that it's the Third Age of Glorantha advanced forwards until the technology level is approximately the same as could be found on Earth during the 18th century. The Lunars are the British Empire of the time while the Orlanthi are roughly/crudely the Scots and Irish of the time. That's why the Lunars will have English names while the Orlanthi will tend to have Scottish names. Terribly lazy but that's the framework around which the campaign will be built.

The world is a very different place than it used to be. What was once two large continents separated by a large ocean has become a myriad of islands somehow supported in space. At the centre of the "world" is the large island of Dragonsrest. High above Dragonsrest is the Red Moon which resembles a ball with an enormous bite taken out of it. The Red Moon slowly rotates so it shows a different face every night. On opposite sides of the Red Moon are the mysterious Blue and White Moons which orbit the Red Moon. Higher than the trio of moons rides the Sun known by different names to different cultures. The Sun traverses the sky from west to east in an odd orbit that seems to shift back and forth across the sky imperceptibly from day to day resulting in seasons.

Emanating from Dragonsrest is the current of air known as the Dragon's Breath. This massive jet stream arcs out from the island for hundreds of kilometres and then loops back passing the island only to arc out in the opposite direction before eventually returning. The shape of the current is that of the Infinity Rune.

The countless islands of rock and dirt that are all that remain of the landmasses of Glorantha are scattered in the aether which makes up the universe. For whatever reason they stay where they are. They are not scattered as if on a plane and some are "higher" or "lower" than others. The Lunars term the smaller islands that were blown higher the Highlands. Conversely the larger pieces that didn't travel so far are known as the Lowlands. Scholars theorize that there was a mighty explosion and pieces were hurtled various distances, perhaps due to their weight before all of the moving pieces were suddenly stopped.

Most islands are within sight of another but travel between was impossible until the rediscovery of boats and ships. Men watched birds fly between islands with jealousy for years without solution. It was possible to "swim" between islands but they had to be relatively close together. It is possible to build bridges between islands and this has occurred wherever the islands are close enough and the resources exist to do this. (Some islands that are resource rich even have stone bridges between them!) In many

places people eventually discovered that you can paddle logs or rafts between islands with large paddles that would resemble fans to us. This allowed people to carry enough food and water with them to survive longer voyages. You couldn't travel against the Dragon's Breath in this fashion. You could make one way trips easily enough and there are many islands that are not in the Dragon's Breath.

It was the Lunars that rediscovered sailing. They had early on discovered that their Moon Boats could float down the Moon River that flows from the Red Moon. This allowed them to conquer Dragon's Rest fairly early in the 4th age. The Moon Boats are relatively flimsy

craft made of reeds and ill-suited to inter-island travel. Dragon's Rest had a large population and many rich resources and once it was under Lunar control it allowed them to build larger inter-island craft which made it possible for them to start adding the neighbouring islands to their new Empire. At first this only included nearby islands and those downstream along the Dragon's Breath but roughly 75 years after they had started expanding their empire someone rediscovered a treatise on sailing and the Age of Sail began.

The Moon River is a magical effect that occurs every seven days. The scimitar shaped Red Moon accumulates magic during the week in the bowl made by the Dragon's bite. Every seventh day this bowl overflows and the River flows down to Dragon's Rest. The Moon Boats are the only craft that can ride down this flow. This trip was one way until the rediscovery of sailing.

This went on for a while before fizzling out and it had a lovely feel to it. Sigh.

Stupid cataclysms. No match for laziness☹

### **#RPGaDay 26 Idea**

The idea is the start of any good or even great RPG session/scenario. Inspiration can come anytime, any place. I've had some of my best ideas while showering, riding the bus or walking the dog. The last session I ran I wasn't even 100% sure what direction I wanted to go until the afternoon of the session. It worked well though.

At the last Prairiecon I ran a well-received Call of Cthulhu scenario called "Seek not your fortune". (The name is a line from the song "Dark as a dungeon" by Merle Travis that I first heard on an episode of The Big Bang Theory. It was nicely evocative without giving away too much of the scenario).

The genesis of the scenario itself was a brochure I came across in our rare book collection at the Legislative Library. You can see the front cover in the photo. If you're interested you can see an electronic copy at: <http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/bibliography/3934.html>. The brochure dates to 1913 or so.

The name Penniac Reef was very evocative. A little reading and I learned it had looked promising but had been abandoned by 1917. Why Reef and why was the mine abandoned? Then I learned the mine was on a lake called Star Lake which is connected to West Hawk Lake which is the deepest lake in

Manitoba and was formed by a meteorite strike around 100 million years ago. So I decided why the mine had been closed and started digging for more facts to embellish the idea.



I came across an article from 2016 stating that freshwater jellyfish not native to North American had been found in Star Lake. Have to throw that in. The main investors in the mine are listed in the brochure and many of them are what the Manitoba Historical Society calls "Memorable Manitobans." Have to use them. It's the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike so let's set the scenario during the strike, read some histories and get a feel for the period.

Who are the investigators? Why not the Chicago Mob? It's early days for them but some quick Wikipedia based research and I've got some names and locations and colour. So the mobsters want to invest in this gold mine to launder some money so they send a group to investigate.

It all comes together and works pretty damn well. We ran out of time to finish it but I'm planning on running it again sometime in the near future. All based on an idea based on some real world

history.

#RPGaDay 27 Suspense

I suck at suspense. Suspense is a lot of work. I think I'm pretty good at adlibbing stuff and flying by the seat of my pants but I'm not so good at suspense. The cliff hanger I left my RuneQuest campaign at last session at where the Lhankor Mhy said, "I recognize that harp, it's..." is about as suspenseful as I get.

### **#RPGaDay 28 Love**

I do love running RPGs which is lucky since I run far more often than I play. I haven't played in a regular campaign in quite a while. I was in a Castles and Crusade campaign the year before last? But it ended. Prior to that the previous time was quite a while back. Decades maybe? Still love the hobby.

### **#RPGaDay 29 Evolve**

Evolve? Well I suppose the hobby has evolved. I heartily approve of its wider acceptance, more openness, less sexism (still a long ways to go) etc. Now the newer systems? Well, I like rolling dice so I guess that's why I stick to the D100 games like RuneQuest and Call of Cthulhu mostly. They work for me. I think I'm too much of a dinosaur for storytelling games though if I had access to a campaign I might do okay. Happy with what I'm doing.

### **#RPGaDay30 Connection**

The connections are part of the reason why we all play isn't it? Meeting up with old friends, making new ones and getting together either face to face or virtually to roll dice and bullshit like old times. Connections.

### **#RPGaDay 31 Last**

Last? Last words? Last thoughts? Maybe too abstract for its own good? Done at last.