



SMURF COLLECTORS' CLUB
INTERNATIONAL
24 CABOT ROAD WEST
MASSAPEQUA, NEW YORK

11758

THIRD YEAR
NEWSLETTER 10
FALL 1988

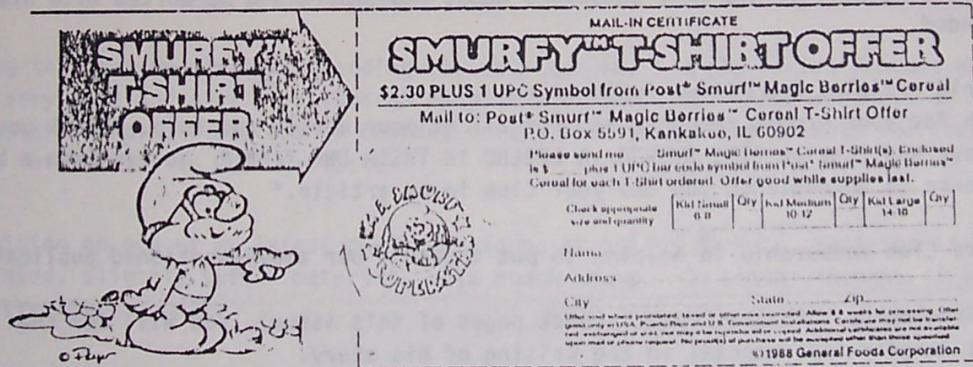
Dear Smurf Collectors;

Last April the Club announced, in it's News Release to numerous Collectors' Publications, that the Club was embarking on it's third-year-membership-drive and that we would be introducing an INTERNATIONAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN. We are thrilled to report that on June 13th, 1988, the Club officially became the SMURF COLLECTORS CLUB INTERNATIONAL. We extend a very SPECIAL WELCOME to all new members overseas and, of course, Canada.

Many Foreign language articles have been received at Club Headquarters and we would like to share them with all Club members. If any of you can translate articles, etc., from French, Italian, German etc. into English, please let us know. We would appreciate any help you can give us!

We have received word that there will be an AVON video available (sales "Tool") this coming Holiday Season which will include a Smurf segment. Track down your nearest Avon Representative!

In our last Newsletter we reported that General Food Corp., the manufacturer of Post Cereal, was marketing New Smurf Magic Berries Cereal. They now have a NEW board game appearing on the box: "THE SMURF CHASE." Check your local supermarkets for this new box. The company has also issued store coupons for this cereal. A nice item to add to your Smurf paper collectibles. Last, but not least, Post is offering the Smurfy T-Shirt featured below.



In Newsletter #5, Summer 1987, we discussed Schleich's financial problems, the regrouping of the company, and the fact that the Managers of Schleich were given the opportunity to bring the company out of the red.

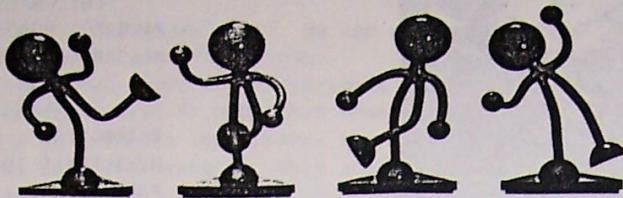
On May 30th, 1988, these Managers officially purchased the company known as SCHLEICH-SPIELZEUG-VERTRIEBS. As one era ends and another begins, we would like to acquaint you with a brief history of:

SCHLEICH 1935-1982

When Fredrich Schleich founded his company in the Spring 1935, the last thing on his mind were TOYS! In it's first 20 years, the Schleich company produced technical items and protective clothes for which Fredrich Schleich owned more than 100 patents. Only after the war, in 1951 to be exact, the first bendable figure was created. It was very successful and soon the line of the figures became colorful and a wide variety were offered. Then, in 1965, the small white and blue figures with white caps and blue tails were added: The Smurfs! At this time,

Smurfs were relatively unknown. Today they are the favorites of COLLECTORS in 56 countries around the globe. It has been a long and successful road from the first bendable figure!!!!

The photo below features one of Schleich's early bendable figures :



EXAMPLE OF FOUR DIFFERENT POSES!

This bendable figure was used for Schleich's old Copyright. Featured below is the Trademark used by Schleich on their figurines until approximately 1971.



As always, we will keep all members up-to-date on the News and Happenings from the Schleich-Spielzeug-Vertriebs factory.

On June 29th the 15th Annual Daytime Emmy Awards were televised. Once again, the Saturday morning Smurf Cartoon was nominated in the category of "Outstanding Animation." For a second year the "Muppet Babies" won the Emmy. The Smurfs are still in the TOP FIVE!!!!!!

Last May, the Club was contacted by Mr. Bob Miller. He was researching the Smurfs for his 16-part series of articles on Hanna-Barbera's 30th Anniversary (for COMIC BUYERS GUIDE WEEKLY and, perhaps, other publications). His series of articles may also, eventually, appear in book form.

Mr. Miller turned to us because of his many questions about the Smurfs and we worked with him to help obtain the answers he needed.

Upon completion of his article, Mr. Miller wrote to us:

"Thank you very much for your prompt response and for all of your advice and help. Thank you also for that wonderful copy of your publication "THE SMURFS: A LEGEND IN THEIR OWN TIME." You've been a big help in my research. I will be sure to acknowledge you and your Club in my article."

THREE CHEERS to the entire Club membership in helping to put together our above-mentioned publication!

As you read Bob's "Growing Up With The Smurfs" (back pages of this issue), you will see that the Club's Portfolio of articles was largely instrumental in the writing of his story.

Our Portfolio will be available to members while supplies last. We are in our third and final printing. To order "THE SMURFS: A LEGEND IN THEIR OWN TIME" SUBMIT PAYMENT OF \$6.00 + \$2.00 postage, to the Club. Further details will be found in the letter sent to all members announcing this publication.

FROM THE EDITORS DESK.....

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members who have taken me up on my offer to visit with me here in New York.

It has often been hectic at Club headquarters this Summer, but I am sure fun was had by all! It is always fun showing off my collection and helping fellow collectors. I hope you all keep us in mind when visiting N.Y.

I would also like to thank our Co-Editor, Susan, and her charming husband for taking that long six-hour drive down to Headquarters to visit with our members.

Seungju

We would like to share the following letters that were received from our visiting members:

"After twenty-four years of marriage ("Couples Who Smurf Together, Stay Together"), we decided to take our first vacation. Our choice was Long Island, N.Y. (Massapequa) Why? To meet our Smurfette Suzanne, Headquarters of the Smurf Collectors Club.

Well, it was the BEST choice we could have made! We had a very enjoyable three day stay. To our delight, Susan even came down to help boggle our collectors minds.

We felt like two kids that were let loose in a department store featuring only Smurfy things, it was great! It was really fun Smurfing and chatting with friends that understand the same Smurfy language. As Club members in our third year there is no one in our area that shares the same interest. Only a member would appreciate markings, rare pieces, variations and mold changes. What about those infamous PAINT DOTS, seeing is believing! What a difference the country of painting will make in the finished figurine.

Thanks to our Smurfette Suzanne who educated us with all this interesting information. Talk about a rare find! Thanks for a very pleasurable visit with you and your family.

Besides being a member of the Club, we found a real friend in Suzanne and her family.

Tom & Pearl from R.I."

"I wanted to say that it was a real pleasure meeting you and your husband, and to thank you for having us and showing us such a wonderful time. I'm still trying to comprehend all that you told us, and of course, am completely in awe of your extensive collection. As you know, my interests are mainly in the figurine's and so of course, I find your collection to be outstanding. The variations when seen in person are so interesting. They really do change the piece quite dramatically and of course, make me really want them.

Elyne from N.J.

Barbara & Chick from N.J."

"My obsession for Smurfs got me down to Massapequa to see, Suzanne our favorite "Smurf Lady", and her fabulous collection. Well, it was a dream come true. It was so much fun, and she is so interesting. You can spend hours talking and would never run out of stuff to talk about. Great experience, and I shall return, because you need to spend more and more time to have a complete idea of "ALL" the pieces your missing in your collection.

Great-fun packed day spent with Suzanne and her Smurfy Castle! Thanks so much.

Hélène P. from Quebec

COLLECTOR'S COMMENTS.....

Dear Suzanne,

After receiving the last Newsletter regarding the Ice Capades, I wrote to Ice Capades here in my area. The Vice President was very nice and sent me a 1984-85 program with three full page pictures of the Smurfs and also a 1982 advertising poster. What a find, and of course, we all plan to get our tickets for the Ice Capades next October.

Thanks for the information in OUR Newsletter!

S.M. from Ca.

Dear Suzanne,

I need your opinion on one of my latest purchases found at a Flea Market. Enclosed is a listing of 24 Smurfs, they are poorly painted, slightly softer material, with rough seams. On second thought, I am submitting these pieces for your observation as well.

Jerry from Pa.

ALL MEMBERS PLEASE BEWARE!!!!!! There were a number of companies which made copies of Smurfs. This was ILLEGAL!!!! They were not originals, nor were they approved by "PEYO," they were labeled by Schleich as "PIRATED SMURFS." We also refer to them as "KNOCK OFFS" (counterfeits).

A knowledgeable collector will spot these in a moment!!! They are clearly COPIES!!! We, the Club, have received numerous reports of members finding these pieces at Flea Markets, lately, all over the U.S. and Europe. We are publishing this only to make our members aware. The Club does not deal with, or write about, any Smurf item that is NOT LICENSED BY "PEYO."

NEW RELEASES ON THE EUROPEAN MARKET.....

In 1987, when Schleich issued the Smurflings, Puppy, Grandpa, Table Tennis and Accordian, we were informed that TEN new pieces were scheduled for production in 1987. Naturally, we were puzzled; why did we learn about only EIGHT new Smurfs in 1987? The mystery of the missing two figures has been solved. Number 20136, Smurf Holding Pumpkin, and #20170, Quarterback, had never been released in Europe. These Smurfs were originally designed strictly for the U.S. Market. Schleich decided to fill the gaps in '87 by producing them for the European market. The Smurf Holding Pumpkin is a NEW brighter shade of BLUE. The Quarterback appears not to have changed.

ANY MEMBERS INTERESTED IN PURCHASING # 20136, in the NEW BLUE PAINT SHADE, please submit a S.A.S.E. for ordering details. "PUMPKIN" will be specially ordered for those desiring this COLOR VARIATION.

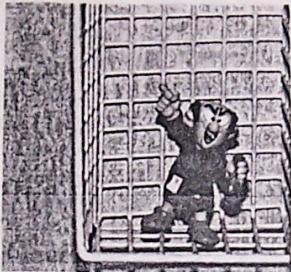
A FOURTH RARE OLD MOLD VARIATION SURFACES.....

A BULLYLAND POSTER ("BULLY") published in the mid '70's shows a version of GARGAMEL which is completely different from the figurine produced by Schleich. Gargamel appears on this poster as an INDIVIDUAL figure (without Azreal). Super Smurfs were never produced by "BULLY." Super Gargamel, produced by Schleich, came with his sidekick, Azreal.

Upon careful investigation, thanks to our European staff, we are certain that we can now add to our list of RARE OLD BULLY FIGURINES "GARGAMEL, WITH ONE LAB GLASS, POINTING."

The following are the differences we find in the OLD BULLY MOLD:

- 1 Gargamel's right arm is held up, with his finger pointing up.
- 2 His left arm is held out, in front of him, away from his body. He is holding a Green Lab Glass. (Variations of the lab glass color might be found in the future.)
- 3 His Head is facing forwards; not tilted upward as Schleich's mold is.
- 4 There is NO LAB GLASS in his right hand.
- 5 He has white patches painted on his coat.
- 6 His shoes are red but his legs, between the tops of his shoes and his coat, are flesh tone.



PLEASE ADD GARGAMEL TO YOUR
BULLY LISTS!

IF ANYONE HAS THIS FIGURINE, PLEASE WRITE AND LET US KNOW!!!!!!

The Club's search has begun; we hope to locate some of these figures. YOU WILL BE KEPT INFORMED!

ATTENTION: ALL MEMBERS INTERESTED IN BIDDING ON THIS QUARTER'S AUCTION BLOCK: PLEASE SEND A SELF- ADDRESSED- STAMPED-ENVELOPE, WITH YOUR REQUEST, TO THE CLUB.

JOIN IN THE FUN!!! PARTICIPATE!!! BID ON THAT SPECIAL RARE MOLD OR VARIATION!!!

SPECIAL REMINDER: OUR NEXT ISSUE WILL NOT ARRIVE UNTIL AFTER THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS. PURCHASE YOUR SMURFY HOLIDAY GIFTS FROM THIS ISSUE. THE CLUB WILL GLADLY SET ASIDE ANY 2" SMURF, SUPER, ETC. THAT WE HAVE IN STOCK. SIMPLY DROP US A NOTE AND WE WILL RESERVE YOUR PIECES FOR YOU.

BUY - SELL - TRADE

HOW TO RESPOND TO AN AD: Send your request to the Club with a Self-Addressed-Stamped-Envelope. Refer to AD NUMBER.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN AD: ALL ADS ARE FREE OF CHARGE TO COLLECTOR MEMBERS. Send your ad to the Club. Give all information about the item you are seeking. Items FOR SALE must have all information such as: Item, Description, Condition, Asking Price etc.

AD #

92 FOR SALE "HAVE A SMURFY DAY!" HOT AIR BALLOON CERAMIC PLATE BY WALLACE BERRIE DATED 1982.

BEAUTIFUL PASTEL COLORS FEATURING SMURFETTE AND SMURF IN A HOT AIR BALLOON.

93 FOR SALE FROM ITALY PUFFI STAINED GLASS MAKE-IT-YOURSELF KIT. ALL INSTRUCTIONS IN ITALIAN.

Cont.

Ad #

94 WANTED DRUMMER FIGURINE (#20009) AS FEATURED IN NEWSLETTER 9. MUST HAVE SEPARATE DRUM AS DESCRIBED IN THE ARTICLE. PLEASE SUBMIT ASKING PRICE IN FIRST LETTER.

95 FOR SALE "I LOVE N.Y. MUG. WALLACE BERRIE 1982 FROM THE SMURF TRAVEL AMERICA SERIES: 8106 #15.

96 FOR SALE SMURF CARTOON SCENE POSTCARDS FROM GERMANY. FOUR DIFFERENT POSTCARDS. MINT CONDITION.

97 WANTED 1988 LIMITED EDITION CLUB PIECE, "GOOD LUCK SMURF", WITH LETTER OF AUTHENTICITY. PLEASE SUBMIT ASKING PRICE IN FIRST LETTER. (OWNERSHIP WILL BE TRANSFERRED BY THE CLUB.)

98 FOR SALE FROM AUSTRIA, SMURF PEZ, THREE DIFFERENT STYLES: SMURF, SMURFETTE AND PAPA. ALL THREE HAVE FEET. MINT CONDITION IN PACKAGING.

99 WANTED I AM DECORATING MY VAN! NEED 7" OR 8" PAPA SMURF DECAL. SUBMIT ASKING PRICE IN FIRST LETTER.

100 FOR SALE COMPLETE 19-PIECE ANNIVERSARY SET AS FEATURED IN NEWSLETTER I. "JUBILEE ISSUE" 1965-1985. PACKAGED, WITH STAMPS, IN MINT CONDITION.

101 FOR SALE FROM GERMANY PENCIL SHARPENER WITH SMURFETTE MERMAID FIGURINE.

102 WANTED OFFICIAL SMURF FUN CLUB T-SHIRT AS FEATURED IN "SMURFIN" ISSUE #7. ANY SIZE OKAY. MINT, NEVER WORN OR WASHED. PLEASE SUBMIT ASKING PRICE IN FIRST LETTER.

103 FOR SALE FOR THE PAPER COLLECTOR: PROMO POSTER FROM EUROPE, 3 LANGUAGES, PRETTY PIECE IN GOOD CONDITION.

104 FOR SALE LARGE SMURF WATCH, TO HANG ON WALL, WITH BAND. BY BRADLEY. FEATURES A SMURF ON A HALF MOON.

105 FOR SALE PORCELAIN SMURFETTE NUMBER FIGURINES. BY WALLACE BERRIE, 1983 BIRTHDAY CERAMICS SERIES.

106 FOR SALE DIE SCHLUMPF CASSETTE IN GERMAN BY KARUSSELL.

107 FOR SALE SET OF FOUR SMALL SMURF SHIRTS FOR SMURF DOLLS FITS 14" PLUSH. MINT IN PACKAGES.

108 TRADE LOADS OF SUPER SMURF BOXES, U.S. AND GERMAN. STORE DISPLAY BOXES FOR HOLIDAY FIGUIRES. CARDBOARD DISPLAY FOR LIMITED EDITION SERIES. JUST INTERESTED IN FINDING A GOOD HOME FOR THESE ITEMS.

109 FOR SALE PACKAGES OF BEAUTIFUL SMURF STICKERS FROM GERMANY.

110 FOR SALE COMPLETE SET OF SOCCER SMURFAGRAMS FEATURED IN NEWSLETTER III, REPRESENTING SIX WEST GERMAN SOCCER TEAMS WITH "TEAM CHEER" VERY RARE SET!

111 FOR SALE SUPER SMURFS, WEST GERMAN VARIATIONS ONLY. ALL MINT IN BOX.

112 FOR SALE I HAVE SEVERAL # 20027 THINKER, EARLY MOLD VARIATION. SMURF SITTING WITH FEET UPWARD, HAND ON TOE. THE NEWER VERSION HAS FEET DOWNWARD WITH HAND ON LEG. CHECK YOUR PIECE OUT! IF YOU NEED THE SMALLER OLDER VERSION CONTACT ME THROUGH THE CLUB. WILL CONSIDER A TRADE, SEND LIST OF WHAT YOU HAVE TO TRADE. LET'S MAKE A DEAL!

113 TRADE WILL TRADE 1983 LIMITED EDITION SMURF CHRISTMAS PLATE BY WALLACE BERRIE FOR 1982 SMURF CHRISTMAS PLATE.

114 FOR SALE SMURF SUSPENDERS FROM EUROPE, ALL SIZES AND COLORS. GREAT HOLIDAY FUN GIFT!

115 FOR SALE FROM FRANCE, COLORING AND ACTIVITY BOOKS 1983.

116 FOR SALE FROM FRANCE, SMURF TRANSFERS, MANY TO SELECT FROM.

117 FOR SALE FROM FRANCE, SET OF SIX ACTIVITY BOOKS "AUTOCOLLANTS" DATED 1983 "A LA FETE", "LE PIQUE-NIQUE", "LES GOURMANDS", "A LA MER", "LES SPORTS", "A LA CAMPAGNE".

VARIATIONS.....

20064 TOOTHBRUSH THREE DIFFERENT BLUE SHADE COLORS HAVE BEEN NOTED.
HONG KONG MOLD IS SLIGHTLY LARGER THAN THE WEST GERMAN MOLD.

20065 RUGBY 1. YELLOW SHIRT, RED PANTS. 8. BLUE SHIRT, BLUE PANTS.
2. RED SHIRT, WHITE PANTS. 9. RED SHIRT, RED PANTS.
3. GREEN SHIRT, WHITE PANTS.
4. BLUE SHIRT, WHITE PANTS.
5. BLACK SHIRT, BLACK PANTS.
6. LIGHT BLUE SHIRT, WHITE PANTS.
7. WHITE SHIRT, WHITE PANTS.

SOCK COLOR VARIATIONS WILL BE FOUND.
VARIATIONS ON THE STAND WILL BE FOUND.

20066 CRICKET TWO DIFFERENT SHADE VARIATIONS WILL BE FOUND ON THE BAT.
BROWN HANDLE.
RED HANDLE.

20067 CONGRATULATIONS TWO DIFFERENT MOLD VARIATIONS OF THE HANDS WERE MADE.
1. HANDS AND FINGERS ARE FULLY FORMED.
2. HANDS ARE SMOOTH AND FLAT INSIDE TO FORM A SLOT.

20068 FOOTBALLER MOLD VARIATIONS WILL BE FOUND ON THE BALL.
BLACK AREAS ON BALLS VARY IN POSITION.

20069 JUNGLE 1. BRIGHT ORANGE.
2. DARK ORANGE.
3. BROWNISH ORANGE.
AT LEAST THREE SHADE VARIATIONS HAVE BEEN VERIFIED ON THIS FIGURE .
THE SPEARS ALSO VARY IN SHADES.

20070 HARP 1. YELLOW HARP.
2. YELLOW/GOLD HARP.
3. RED HARP.
SLIGHT MOLD SIZE DIFFERENCE CAN BE FOUND.

20072 TRUMPET SHADE VARIATIONS ON THE TRUMPET WILL BE FOUND.

20073 COOK SHADE VARIATIONS ON THE SPOON AND FOOD IN THE POT WILL BE FOUND.
1. WHITE BOW TIE UNDER CHIN.
2. RED BOW TIE PAINTED UNDER CHIN AND AROUND NECK.

20074 KING 1. MUSTARD COLOR PANTS AND HAT.
2. ORANGY/GOLD PANTS AND HAT.
3. YELLOW PANTS AND HAT.

20075 QUACK 1. FLAT BLACK PAINT.
2. HIGH GLOSS BLACK PAINT.

DO YOU OWN VARIATIONS ON THE ABOVE THAT ARE NOT LISTED? IF YOU DO, PLEASE SHARE YOUR INFORMATION. SEND THE CLUB A PHOTO. WE WILL NOT PUBLISH ANY VARIATIONS THAT CANNOT BE VERIFIED BY THEIR OWNERS AND THE CLUB!!

FROM OUR CO-EDITOR.....

On the last page of this issue, you will note the Smurf characters as they originally appeared in 1957. Appearances have certainly changed. Another example of this, compare W. Disney's earliest Mickey Mouse with the one you're familiar with now.

The Smurfs evolved in the same fashion; the rough-cut version giving way to the current "polished" Smurf that is well-known today. A vast improvement, I think! Smurf Art-work is gorgeous and that's why I also collect Paper items.

SUSAN

PROMOTIONAL SMURF.....

THE NAME OF THE PARK IS SCHLUMPFHAUSEN located in a small town in West Germany. It is a delightful little Smurf Park that boasts:

"WELCOME INTO SMURF PLAYLAND, THIS TOWN WITH SMURFS.

TAKE A ROUND ABOUT RIDE ALONG THIS SMURF RAILWAY.

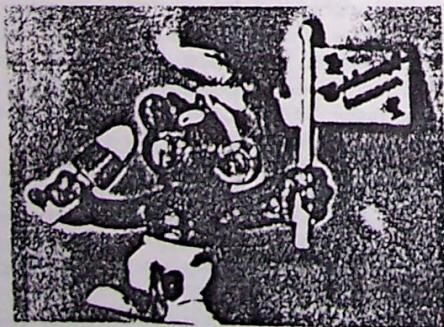
AWAITING YOU IS PAPA SMURF WITH HIS SMURFS.

GARGAMEL WITH HIS CAT AZREAL.

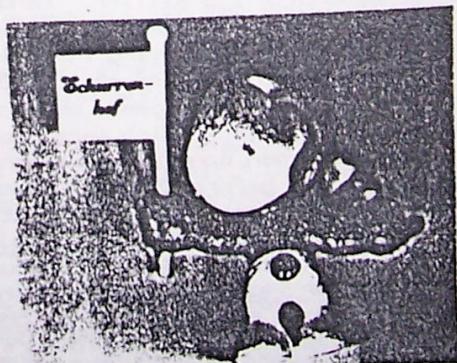
AN ADVENTURE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY."



TO OUR COLLECTORS' DELIGHT, this park has it's very own PROMOTIONAL SMURF. See photo below! The flag is YELLOW with BLUE. We are hoping to get enough of these pieces (our first West German Promotional Smurf) for our entire membership. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN OBTAINING THIS PIECE PLEASE SUBMIT A S.A.S.E. TO THE CLUB WITH THE WORD "PROMO" ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE ENVELOPE. IF WE ARE SUCCESSFUL IN OBTAINING THIS PIECE FOR YOU WE WILL SEND YOU ALL ORDERING DETAILS. ORDERS WILL BE FILLED ON A FIRST-COME BASIS. Our buyers will be unable to purchase large quantities of this PROMOTIONAL SMURF. We are doing our best but, unfortunately, we can make you no promises. SORRY!



THE FRONT SIDE OF THE FLAG HAS THE NAME OF THE W.G. PARK PRINTED ON IT.



THE BACK SIDE OF THE FLAG HAS THE NAME OF THE W.G. town PRINTED ON IT.

NBC was in trouble. During the 1970's their programs languished in the ratings cellar, while most viewers tuned to ABC to watch Happy Days, Laverne and Shirley, and Charlie's Angels. ABC's programming strategy came from Fred Silverman, who joined them in June 1975, and in less than two years, he led that network from third to first place. Prior to his ABC years, he had helped make CBS the number one network.

No doubt impressed with his golden touch, NBC enticed Silverman with an annual \$1 million salary plus perks. When he joined them in January 1978, NBC's stock rose two points, while the network's parent corporation, RCA, saw their stocks rise 1-1/4 points.

But whether he worked for CBS, ABC or NBC, Silverman always heavily involved himself in Saturday morning programming. I've already detailed in this column the influence he's had on television, such as making Saturday morning a marketplace for new cartoons, reusing successful formulas like Scooby Doo's "let's get out of here!" routine, making cartoon versions of primetime hits, and using "umbrella" packaging to keep the audience from turning the channel. Even today, his strategies continue to shape what kids watch.

Alas for Silverman, his golden touch turned to lead at NBC. Such shows as Supertrain, The Misadventures of Sheriff Lobo and Speak Up America failed to grab the viewers. On Saturday morning, kids avoided Yogi's Space Race, The All-New Shmoo and Casper and the Space Angels, and the network seriously considered dumping its cartoons in favor of a Saturday edition of the Today show. The situation became so bad that Johnny Carson joked that NBC's initials stood for No Body Cares.

Silverman was forced to resign from the network in July 1981, replaced by Grant Tinker of MTM Enterprises. In Advertising Age, he blamed his downfall on poor program inventory, inept middle management, a unit manager's financial scandal, bad corporate habits, and competition against the hit shows he had developed for ABC.

Though Silverman's departure marked the end of an era, one of his last programming choices would affect Saturday morning for years to come.

One day he was walking with his nine-year-old daughter, Melissa Anne, and she wanted a certain doll. He bought one for her, and, noting her interest in the doll, telephoned Hanna-Barbera to produce a cartoon, even though NBC had earlier rejected a series based on----the Smurfs.

Back in 1957 (coincidentally, the year William Hanna and Joseph Barbera formed their studio), a Belgian cartoonist by the name of Pierre "Peyo" Culliford was at a restaurant with fellow cartoonist Franquin, the creator of the European comic strip "Gaston Lagaffe." Peyo wanted some salt so he said, "Could you please pass me the, uh, schtroumpf." He couldn't think of "salt" so he said "schtroumpf," which is Flemish for "whatchamacallit." Franquin laughed and said, "Here's your schtroumpf." Peyo said, "Thank you for schtroumpfing it and I'll schtroumpf it back to you when I'm finished."

Peyo told Thomas Kamm of The Wall Street Journal that "We had fun like kids who invented a new language, but I never had the intention of using it commercially." Peyo had been writing a comic strip called "Johan et Pirlouit" (in English, "Johan and Peewit"), a medieval fantasy that appeared in Spirou, a weekly comic circulated throughout Europe. A few months later, he introduced into the strip a tribe of 100 blue elves three apples tall. Recalling what happened at the restaurant, he decided to call them Schtroumpfs because, in his words, "If it made Franquin and me laugh maybe it will make other people laugh too."

In Italy "Schtroumpf" was translated as "Puffo"; in Spain, "Pitufos"; in Scandinavian countries, "SMOLF"; in Germany, "Schlumpfe"; in Israel, "Ha-dar-door-scann"; in Japan, "Sumafu"; and in Holland, "Smurfen." In the English language, it became "Smurf."

French and Belgian animation studios made a Smurf movie in 1975, La Flute a six schtroumpfs, a Studios Belvision-Editions Dupuis co-production. This was translated into English as The Smurfs and the Magic Flute, and released in America around Christmas 1983 by Atlantic Releasing Corp. In the story, a boy named Peewit (later renamed Pee Wee) acquires a magic flute that causes people to dance uncontrollably. A bandit named Matthew Oilycreep steals the flute and uses it in a crime spree. Pee Wee and his friend Johan pursue the bandit, but can't overcome the power of the flute. With the help of Hornibus the magician, they are transported to the land of the Smurfs, the makers of the flute. The Smurfs make them a second magic flute to combat the effects of the first. The story climaxes with a musical duel between Pee Wee and Oilycreep. In its American release, the movie grossed over \$18 million. Random House published the storybook version in English in 1983.

The Smurfs invaded America in 1979 in a tidal wave of merchandise. Wallace Berrie & Co., a San Fernando Valley marketing firm, imported Smurf dolls, books, games, you name it. According to Forbes magazine, they spent \$200,000 in promotion and received \$600,000 in sales. The Smurfs were even sold as video games, manufactured by Coleco. Given their popularity, it's surprising that only three Smurf comics were published in America (December 1982 to 1983), all by Marvel Comics.

Fred Silverman commissioned Hanna-Barbera to make the American cartoon version, but he left NBC about two months before the show premiered. When September 12, 1981 rolled around--bang! Smurfs pulverized the competition, the first show to outrace The Road Runner in 14 years. The average share of the audience tuned in to Smurfs was 39 percent, peaking 44%. They became the most popular cartoon characters introduced on Saturday morning since Scooby Doo, and their success made NBC drop their plans for Today on Saturday morning. The following season, the network expanded the show from an hour to ninety minutes, adding Johan and Pee Wee to the regular cast.

In the beginning the Smurfs were all male. Like Snow White's Seven Dwarfs, each Smurf had one-note personalities defined by their names: Brainy, Clumsy, Jokey, Harmony, Vanity and so on. They liked to sing and play and pick Smurfberrries, and spent the rest of their time thwarting a wicked wizard named Gargamel (sounds like a brand of mouthwash, doesn't it?).

Gargamel hates Smurfs. (and so does CBS and ABC). One day he created a "Smurfette" to infiltrate the Smurf village. But Papa Smurf, the 543-year-old patriarch of the clan, was handy with magic,

and he transformed her into a genuine Smurf.

By 1985, the Smurfs' ratings success prompted NBC to charge advertisers \$60,000 per 30-second spot during the pre-Christmas season, as opposed to the \$40,000 average (dropping to \$25,000 average in the spring). At the time, eight minutes per hour were available to advertisers --which meant the 90-minute Smurf raked in \$1,440,000 per week for the network!

To date, the studio has produced six holiday specials: The Smurfs Springtime Special (April 8, 1982), in which Gargamel finds that six Smurfs boiled in lead will turn into gold; Smurfs Christmas Special (December 13, 1982); My Smurfy Valentine (February 13, 1983); The Smurf Games (May 20, 1984); Smurfily Ever After (February 13, 1985); and Tis the Season to Be Smurfy (December 13, 1987), which used a new computer process that simulates multi-planing, giving some scenes three-dimensional depth.

Worldvision Home Video, Inc. has released two videocassettes: Smurfs and Smurfs Village Tales, with undoubtedly more to come.

WHAT MAKES SMURFS SO POPULAR?

Fans would point out the show's not-so-limited animation, its pleasant colors and attractive backgrounds. The show's "soft approach" of storytelling, and its use of classical music is a refreshing change-of-pace from the usual bubblegum rock. Smurfs has also addressed subject matters such as death, pride, prejudice and handicaps. If there's anything to bug the critics, it's the Smurfs' incessant use of their names substituting for grammar: "Smurf and the whole world smurfs with you," "What a Smurfy Day!" and "Oh, Smurf! Gargamel smurfed up my smurfy smurf-smurf!" (Okay, I'm exaggerating a little.)

As a rule cartoons adapted from other properties fare poorly in quality and in the ratings. Smurfs proved to be an exception, as Executive Producer Joe Barbera credits "the Charm of Peyo's original conception. Our job as adapters has been to preserve the qualities that make Peyo's Smurfs so special, while also using our abilities and experience to allow the animated Smurfs to stand on their own as cartoon stars."

In The Hollywood Reporter, Barbera noted that for an adaptation to be successful, "The animated characters must have a star power of their own. A show won't last long if it merely reflects the popularity of its source material. The stories must be involving, there's got to be humor mixed with excitement, and above all the characters must be individuals with recognizable human traits."

Barbera and producer Gerard Baldwin also credit Gargamel for making the series work. "Without the villian, the Smurfs' world would be too ideal. The children can take delight in his failure," Baldwin says.

Gargamel is voiced by Paul Winchell, also known as the voice of Dick Dastardly, Mayor Lumpkin in Trollkins, and Zummi Gummi in Disney's Adventures of the Gummi Bears, to name but a handful of his roles. Don Messick voiced Gargamel's cat, Azreal, Dreamy and Papa Smurf (and hundreds of other H-B characters. Danny Goldman voiced Brainy Smurf. Bill Callaway voiced Clumsy and Painter Smurf. Frank Welker added more characters to his lengthy resume with Hefty Smurf, Pee Wee, Puppy and Wild Smurf. June Forey--the voice of Rocky the Flying Squirrel, Witch Hazel, Nell of Dudley Do Right and Grammi Gummi--performed for Smurfs as Jokey Smurf and Mother Nature. Lucille Bliss--the voice of Snoopy of the Spce Kidettes (1966) and Crusader rabbit--spoke as the ever popular Smurfette. Alan Oppenheimer voiced Vanity Smurf. Hamilton Camp voiced Greedy and Harmony Smurf. Michael Bell voiced Lazy, Handy, Grouchy Smurf, and the boy Johann. Bob Holt--voice of the Great Grape Ape--also voiced the King, Jennifer Darling was Princess Sabina; Linda Gary was Dame Barbara; Jack Angel was Homnibus the magician; Kip King was tailor; Marshall Efrom was Sloppy Smurf. Alan Young voiced Farmer, Scaredy, and Father Time but he's better known as the voice of Scrooge McDuck and Wilbur Post, Mr. Ed's favorite human.

Baby Smurf joined the clan in 1983, a boy destined to become the leader of the Smurfs. Child "Smurflings" came along in 1985: Charles Adler voiced Nat; Pat Music voiced Snappy; Julie Dees (Formerly Judy Mc Whirter) voiced Sassette (in addition to Baby Smurf); Noelle North voiced Slouchy Smurf (She currently performs for Gummi Bears as Princess Calla and Cubbi.) In the 1986-87 season, they joined Grandpa Smurf, who was twice as old as Papa Smurf, and voiced Jonathan Winters. Meanwhile, Gargamel got himself an apprentice by the name of Scruple, voiced by Brenda Vaccaro.

So far Smurfs has earned two Emmy Awards for Hanna-Barbera, in 1982 and 1983, for Outstanding Children's Entertainment Series. In 1982, the series won the Golden Reel Award for Best Sound Editing in Animation. Two Smurfs specials won the Bronze Award for Best Children's Special from the International Film and TV Festival in New York: Smurfs Springtime Special in 1982 and Smurfic Games in 1984. In 1987, another Bronze Award was won by a 30-minute Smurfs story called "Lure of the Orb." This same special won the Humanitas prize for Best Animated Children's Program.

With all these accolades, H-B could afford to spoof the sock-heads, and they did so on Yogi's Treasure Hunt. In the episode "Yogi Bear on the Air," Dick Dastardly and Muttley dyed themselves in purple paint and wore white caps, and they pranced around the forest as "Smirks." Dastardly says, "I love the flowers"; Muttley says, "Love Trees." (Of course he loves trees. He's a dog.) Watching them on TV, Blabber Mouse told his detective partner, "Gosh, Snoop, they're so sweet it's sickening."

Well, Blab, the Smurfs may be sweet, but they're also highly-prized collectibles. In 1986, Suzanne Lipschitz founded the Smurf Collector's Club to meet the needs of those who collected Smurf memorabilia, with the membership growing to over 200 fans. The Club publishes a quarterly newsletter, and has available a listing of proper names and numbers of every Smurf, Super Smurf, playset, etc. ever issued in the U.S. and European market; plus other special benefits for members. For further information, write to The Smurf Collectors' Club, 24 Cabot Road West, Massapequa, New York 11758.

Meanwhile, the Smurf's adventures continue with 137 episodes in syndication, and in new episodes on Saturday morning, with their eighth year beginning this Fall (reduced to an hour-long show). Up to the 1987-88 season, a whopping 292 stories (plus the six specials) had been made. Twenty-Four years earlier, such a feat would have been unheard of. In an ABC-TV press release dated November 23, 1964, a certain television producer declared:

"Today's kids want adult comedy. Their tastes are too sophisticated. After all, today's children were weaned on television; they're used to satire and modern comedy," he said. "We offer them sharp comedy and satire and they eat it up."

"The days of showing little elves playing around a mushroom are gone forever."

The television producer happened to be Joseph Barbera.

As for Fred Silverman, he became an independent producer at the Los Angeles-based InterMedia Entertainment Company, financed by MGM/UA Television. In addition to Thicke of the Night (Alan Thicke's late-night talk show), he produced his last series for Saturday morning--Pandamonium and Meatballs & Spaghetti (1982-83) in conjunction with Marvel Productions LTD. and The Mighty Orbots (1984-85) with Tokyo Movie Shinsha of Japan--all of which lasted only one season.

Today, as head of the Fred Silverman Company, he's an executive producer of NBC's Matlock, We Got It Made, Father Dowling Mysteries and Perry Mason movies, Jake and the Fatman for CBS.

He told Diane Mermigan of Advertising Age that "I'd like to be remembered as somebody who stirred things up a bit, who generated some excitement and controversy and helped rebuild the medium."

AND SO HE HAS.

I'd like to thank Steve Kaye of Hanna-Barbera Publicity, Suzanne Lipschitz of the Smurf Collector's Club, John Cawley of Get Animated! and Saturday morning writer and story editor Paul Dini for helping me with information for this article.

The Club has added some photo's below showing how the Smurf characters first appeared in "PEYO'S" story:

"THE SMURFS AND THE MAGIC FLUTE"

As with many other OLDER cartoon characters their appearance has certainly changed. WOULDN'T YOU AGREE ?

