

Requiem for a friend

I'm feeling a little low right now. Sort of depressed. You see, I just said farewell to a longtime friend last week.

This friend and I had been together for years — more than a decade. We first met back in the early days, down on Main Street (as Bob Seger would sing) when the old Georgetown Independent office was located at 30 Main Street South.

Like a true friend, I could count on that welcoming look by my desk, first thing in the morning, when I dragged myself into the office after a late night.

I was a brash young news photographer at the time, ready to drop everything and rush out at a moment's notice, to cover the big story.

And after the story was covered, the film developed and the photos printed, my friend was always there, waiting when I returned, to calm my nerves, and provide me with some hot, steamy support, when I needed it the most.

My friend was there for the good times, (like payday) and propped me up for the bad times, (during the weekly editorial meetings.)

Of course, my friend was my coffee mug.

It was a unique shape, white in color, with *Coffee Drinkers Make Better Lovers* emblazoned on the side in red and black lettering. (It replaced my old *Photographers Do Their Best Work In the Dark* mug that went missing several years ago.)

Karen on the coffee truck knew my mug on sight. I could send it out with any member of the staff, and she would be sure to fill it with my personal order, simply out of habit.

But it met an untimely demise last week.

An ugly, shattering finish to such a wonderful friendship. But the worst part of the story is the way it happened. (I tend to fill up just thinking about it.)

It was one of those people in advertising.

A salesperson, no less.

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Ted Brown

Oh, I know it was innocent enough, and the mug wasn't broken intentionally. But such a waste, and, oh so quickly.

You see, she knocked it over on my desk.

Now this same mug had endured a multitude of catastrophes, like being dropped in the darkroom sink, or slipping out of my hand on the gravel driveway in front of the office. And it still kept coming back for more.

Simply stated, it was indestructible.

But all it took was one ill-fated move, and the poor thing was reduced to pieces.

And now it's gone.

My only consolation was the fact it never had to suffer. The end came quickly.

(I'm also pleased it was empty at the time.)

I'll admit my co-worker was crushed. It's not often one is responsible for destroying THE only mug of its type known to the modern journalistic world.

But she tried to make amends — she even purchased a replacement.

The "new" mug was waiting for me the following morning, sitting in a box on my desk. Complete with a sympathy card.

And it is a handsome mug to say the least.

But I'm now going through a period of adjustment with this new one. Even though it's a brightly colored, artistically designed mug, there's one shortcoming I've had to accept.

I don't think it holds as much as the old one.

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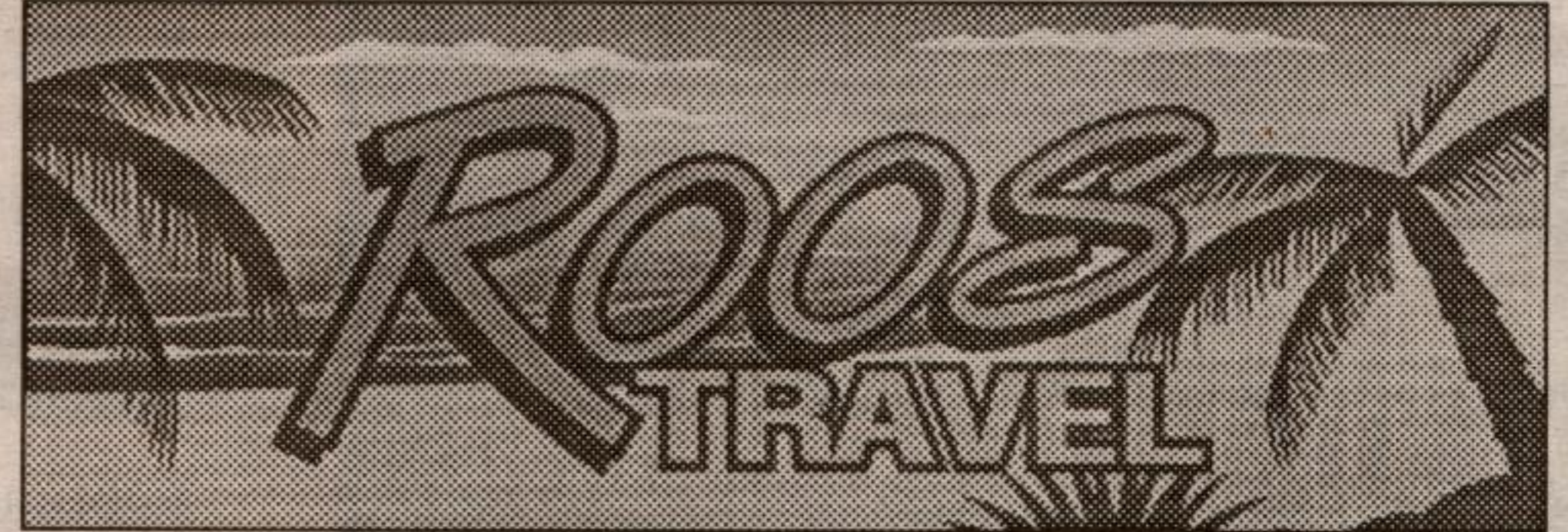


HERMA BUCHANAN

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