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# The C3i FORUM

Happy 30th Birthday tribute to Fire & Movement Magazine

by Al Bisasky

July, 1976, was the second year of the *Origins* Wargamers' Convention sponsored by The Avalon Hill Game Company in Baltimore. I can still remember the typical hot, muggy Maryland weather and the classrooms and halls on the campus of Johns Hopkins University where the convention was held. My attendance as a rabid wargamer was second to my *assignment*. The main reason for my being there was to distribute copies of the very first issue of **Fire & Movement** to the designers and publishers present and to act as a photojournalist for a convention report in a future issue of **F&M**.

That was 30 years and 140+ issues ago. I would say that that is pretty damned good for a wargaming magazine that some said would not last beyond its first year. Founded by Rodger MacGowan, who was also its first Editor-in-Chief along with everything else from Art Director to the guy that took out the trash, its list of Contributing Editors came to read like a *Who's Who* of Wargamingdom's greats and near greats (this author being the notable exception): Mark Saha, Jim Dunnigan, Frank Chadwick, Mark Herman, John Hill, Jack Greene, Nicky Palmer, Stephen Newberg, John Edwards, Stephen Peek, Tom Oleson, John Prados, Shelby Stanton, Craig Taylor, Marc Miller, Kevin Zucker, Don Greenwood, Redmond Simonsen, Rich DeBaun, Ray Lowe, Warren Williams, Hal Hock, and Fred Helfferich to name but a handful.

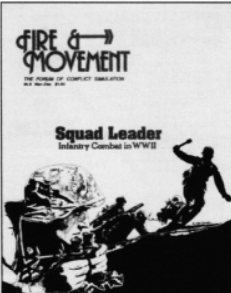
In 1976, **F&M** was a new concept in professional board wargaming magazines. It was not a *house organ* like SPI's *Strategy & Tactics* and *MOVES* or AH's *The General*—it was "independent". Rodger created **F&M** to be a magazine by wargamers, for wargamers, and about wargames. It did not include a game, nor did it try to push anyone's publications. What it provided was honest, objective and analytical perspectives on board wargames so that the players could decide for themselves if a particular game was or was not their cup of tea. It did not target only the big wargaming houses of the time like SPI, Avalon Hill, GDW, TSR, Battleline, et al, but also the lesser known designers and publishers. I can only wonder as to the number of not-so-well-known wargames that went on to become *classics*, instead of dying in anonymity, had they not been the subject of a Battle Report or Close-Up article in the pages of **F&M**.

The fact that **F&M** has lasted 30 years and managed to weather many storms as it changed editors, publishers, ownership, formats and competition from both professional and amateur wargaming magazines is a true marvel in itself. This is especially true when you consider that The Great Wargaming Pillars of All Wisdom and Knowledge have looked inside of their magic cardboard game boxes many times and predicted the eminent demise of board wargaming as a hobby and a tool for the study of historical events.

There are many people who have been responsible for the longevity and quality of **F&M**. Currently Jon Compton is doing a yeoman-like job continuing the tradition. But for me, as one of the magazine's original *Old Gang*, Rodger B. MacGowan always was and always will be the heart, soul, and spirit of **Fire & Movement**. My friend of 30 years, Rodger is the sole reason why I worked on **F&M** in the first place and is the reason why I will do whatever I can for him on **C3i Magazine**.

This writing is but a humble attempt to pay tribute to all of those dedicated wargamers who devoted themselves to and contributed to **F&M** over the years.

Congratulations, Rodger, your *baby* is 30!

<b>Fire &amp; Movement</b> The Forum of Conflict Simulation	<b>F&amp;M</b>
<b>Founder &amp; Editor:</b> Rodger B. MacGowan (1975) <b>First Issue Published:</b> May 1976; Cover: AH's <i>Tobruk</i> <b>Winner Charles Roberts (Origins) Awards:</b> 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983 (Best Pro Magazine) <b>Inducted into the Hall of Fame:</b> by the <i>Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts &amp; Design</i> in 1999 <b>F&amp;M Background History:</b> in <i>F&amp;M</i> issue Nr49 (1986)	
<b>1st F&amp;M Seminar by:</b> James F. Dunnigan at UCLA, 1 March 1977 <b>Review:</b> "In 4 issues <i>F&amp;M</i> has come from unknown to a real contender for greatness...the writing & graphics are of the highest level." <i>Signal</i> Nr112 (1977) <b>Current Publisher:</b> Decision Games	
	
<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fire_&amp;_Movement">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fire_&amp;_Movement</a>	

*Squad Leader* Series Art – ©Rodger B. MacGowan, 1977, 2006  
(Above) Cover **Fire & Movement** Nr.5, Nov-Dec 1977

