In accepting the 2020 *Munsey Award*, Mike Ashley shared the following words with us:

It's really great to win this award, and I must thank everyone who voted for me. Especially as I feel such a long way from the epicentre of the pulp world, tucked away as I am in North Kent in England. Britain had its pulps, but nothing like those that appeared in the United States. In the early 1960s, when I started researching and collecting them, not only had the heyday of the pulps long passed, but it wasn't easy to track them down in Britain.

Sure we had some dreadful British editions of American pulps that had appeared during the War and continued afterwards for some years, but these were often abridged versions and always looked second rate. If I was going to collect and understand the pulps properly, I had to collect the originals. However, in those long-ago, pre-internet days, doing so wasn't that easy.

I now forget all of the dealers who helped me. There were some in Britain who had US pulps for sale — Ken Slater and Ken Chapman in particular. In the States, I was helped by Bob Madle, Bob Weinberg, and others. And bit by bit my collection grew.

However, my fascination was not just collecting pulps, but understanding their history. And it wasn't just the science fiction or weird pulps that intrigued me. I suppose I have to thank or blame Sam Moskowitz for really setting my interest on fire, though it wasn't just him. Tom Cockcroft in New Zealand was always enticing me with references to obscure magazines. Billy Pettitt said to me once that I was wasting my time researching the primary science fiction and fantasy magazines because they had already been covered. He told me that I ought to turn my attention to the rare British pulps like HUTCHINSON'S MYSTERY-STORY or the obscure PAN.

This was in the mid-sixties, and there was one small fanzine in particular that drove my collecting bug. That was LORE. Produced by Jerry Page and Jerry Burge, it made references to all kinds of lesser-known

magazines — both British and American — and pushed for resources not only to index them, but to reprint them.

These days, with the wonderful work achieved by Adventure House, Black Dog Books, Steeger Books, and so many others, it's relatively easy to acquire facsimile or reprinted issues of the old pulps. I never believed back in 1965 that I would have a complete reprint of THE THRILL BOOK – admittedly not as pulps in their original format — but no matter. It was so legendary that I doubted I'd ever see them. I remember trying to check out these early pulps at the British Library only to have my submission card returned time and again with the notation, 'Destroyed in the War.'

In some ways, the comparative ease with which — thanks to the internet and reprint sources — you can now find so many of these early pulps has perhaps tainted some of that thrill of the chase. But for research purposes it's brilliant. However, there is still so much that is not readily available. I wonder whether I'll ever assemble a complete run of the British magazine, YES OR NO – not a pulp in looks, but definitely in content. This was another destroyed in the War, but in this case, very few seemed to have bothered to collect it. I may well have the biggest run of that magazine of anyone. However, I still have only 237 of its 798 issues, which is less than a third. It's that kind of research that drives me on. The delight in discovering, reading, and researching such early magazines is still as vibrant in me now as it was almost sixty years ago.

Now I have another thrill, with the Munsey Award. How wonderful.

Many thanks.

Mike Ashley