

The Easiest Way to Say Goodbye

Written by Smoke Signals

Tuesday, 01 September 2015 04:52 - Last Updated Tuesday, 01 September 2015 05:10

THE EASIEST WAY TO SAY GOODBYE SMOKE SIGNALS MAGAZINE - September 2015

The easiest way to say goodbye is when you're not really leaving.

It's been a great ride, and the good news is that the ride isn't really over - not yet, anyway.

But after 21 years of publication (making it old enough to smoke in Hawaii!), the time has come to say farewell to Smoke Signals Magazine.

Smoke Signals started as a newsletter, printed on an old Laser Jet printer, assembled on an apartment floor, and mailed to 30 of the editor's online smoking fetish friends who were crazy enough to subscribe to a fledgling publication, sight unseen.

Thanks to national publicity from - most importantly - Playboy and the New York Times, it grew into a small but glossy black-and-white magazine.

Support from the fledgling smoking video industry allowed Smoke Signals to secure distribution in Tower Records stores worldwide, and spread its wings into online publication.

Eventually the growth of Smoke Signals Online and other Internet smoking fetish sites and resources, coupled with the slow death of the magazine publishing industry (Smoke Signals almost lived longer than Newsweek!), led to the discontinuation of the print edition.

The Magazine survived for years as a feature at Smoke Signals Online, and eventually as a free publication on its own.

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And now, at the age of 21, Smoke Signals Magazine has officially passed away due to lack of interest.

However, we mentioned good news.

We're pleased to report that Smoke Signals Magazine is survived by its family: [Smoke Signals Online](#), [SmokingFetishVideo.com](#), [Smoking Flicks](#), and the [Smoking Clip Store](#).

We can't predict how long some or all of those ventures will remain; as we'll briefly lament for one last time, the nearly-universal belief that anything that can be found online is "in the public domain" and can be freely posted anywhere on a whim, has led to the death of numerous once-prolific smoking fetish companies. Like most of the survivors, we're barely breaking even with our online operations, and we know that one day, we'll be on the list of the departed.

But at least for now, we'll still be very much around and about, so we're pleased to say that "we're not really leaving." Not the online smoking fetish world, at least.

As for this site, we'll leave it as is so that everything that's been posted here will remain available to anyone who wishes to read it.

One bit of "unfinished business" is the future of perhaps our most valuable resource - and much more importantly, our dear friend - Vesperae. We can't adequately express her importance to Smoke Signals over the years, not just as a columnist, but as a sounding board and muse. We hope to be able to find a way to enable her to keep her unique voice alive in our community, and will pass along word when we come to a decision on the best way to do that.

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We want to briefly (and inadequately) thank those who have contributed so much to Smoke Signals Magazine over the years. It's dangerous to start listing people, because some always are inadvertently left out. However, we do want to acknowledge the work of people like longtime writer extraordinaire Freida Theant, unparalleled video editor C.K., our original artist Richard Mayhew, and our first darkside editor, Don Mundt; the contributions, advice and support of our advertisers like Steve of KellyMedia, Ed of CoherentLight, Adam of In Real Life, Trevor of SmokinStyle, Tony of Random Snaps, Jim of JSG Videos, Bob of Bob's Videos, Scott at Specialized, Noemie, Twink, the folks at long-gone companies like Up In Smoke and Cinesmoke; the inspiration provided from community pioneers like Fumarium, Loring, Ron Andrews, Matt Landry - and all the others to whom we now sincerely apologize in advance.

We also want to pass along sincere and eternal thanks to those 30 brave souls who invested their money in a one-year subscription to a non-existent (at first) magazine which was simply one person's bizarre idea - and the thousands of people who've been valued subscribers over the years.

We can't leave without special recognition for our longtime, tireless and valued assistant Glenn. And our sincere thanks to everyone who's been a part of this very special period in our shared lives.

Finally, a personal note.

I want to express a very heartfelt thank you to a longtime stalwart of our community who moved on to the next phase of her life quite some time ago but will never be forgotten. I don't even have words to adequately describe the importance of LadySmoker's encouragement, inspiration and love - not to mention the many, many hours she spent working side-by-side with me on Smoke Signals (from the long nights we spent during the early days, printing and assembling hundreds of copies of Smoke Signals by hand so they could be boxed, enveloped, stamped and taken to the post office - to the New York smoking fetish gathering she organized and oversaw - to the road trip we took in order to meet Ed Luisser). I know you won't see this - but thank you, Laura. You'll never know what it truly meant.

I hope that everyone reading this will someday - in their own realm and in their own way - feel the same joy, pride and feeling of having truly accomplished something important that I was privileged to experience...when the first Smoke Signals subscriptions started arriving...the first time I saw a copy of Smoke Signals on sale in a Tower Records 1500 miles away from

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home...and most importantly, when hundreds and hundreds of letters and postcards started arriving, day after day after day, after the existence of the smoking fetish and Smoke Signals were revealed in Playboy and the New York Times.

Almost every card and letter carried the same basic message: "I thought I was the only one."

Of course you did. We all did.

And then, all of a sudden, we realized how many of us there really were.

We all became members of a community.

More importantly, many of us felt better about ourselves.

We weren't freaks, or sick, or weird, or perverted. We were just people who happened to have a smoking fetish.

And we were no longer alone.

Thank you, for allowing me to be a small part of this incredible moment in time for all of us.

See you around the web!

Mike