

Tau Ceti Reprints

Number Two

THE TIME MACHINE

Hotel Chicagoan, Chicago, Illinois, Sept. 1 & 2, 1940

Dramatis Personae

Mark Reinsberg, Chairman of the Convention Committee
Erle Korshak, Corresponding Secretary-Treasurer
William L. Hamling, Editor-Publisher, Program Booklet
Richard I. Meyer, Chairman of the Program Committee
Bob Tucker, Director of the Illini Fantasy Fictioneers
Sully Roberds, Editor, The Fantasy Fictioneer
Edward E. Smith, Convention Guest of Honor

THE FIRST CHICCON

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THE PROGRAM BOOKLET consisted of sixteen pages, including covers. It was printed in black, blue, and silver ink, on heavy white semi-gloss paperstock. The program (not necessarily presented to the fans in correct order) was as follows:

Sunday, Sept. 1st. Morning Session: 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon

1. Informal gathering at Convention Hall.
2. Acceptance of Resolutions Petitions.
3. Sale of Official Convention Fan Publications.
4. Luncheon Recess.

Afternoon Session: 1:00 to 6:00 P.M.

1. Registration in Foyer. (a) Sale of Chicon Program Booklet
(b) Distribution of Chicon souvenirs
2. Formal Opening of Chicon by Temporary Chairman.
3. Address of Welcome, by Bob Tucker.
4. Report of Program Committee; Richard I. Meyer, Chairman.
5. Installment of Mark Reinsberg as Permanent Chairman.
6. "One Year of Fan Progress," by Mark Reinsberg.
7. Report of Resolutions Committee; Erle Korshak, Chairman.
8. "What Does This Convention Mean?" by E.E. Smith, Ph.D.
9. Motion Picture - Premiere showing of "Monsters of the Moon,"
a scientific fantasy of the future. Introductory remarks
by Forrest J Ackerman.
10. Recess for Refreshments (30 minutes).
11. "What Science Fiction Really Is," by Raymond A. Palmer.
12. This is Fandom! Introductions of:
(a) The Convention Committee
(b) The Fans and Pros of Chicago; the Nation.
13. Supper Recess -- preparation for costume party.

Evening Session: 8:00 P.M. to Midnight.

1. The Science Fiction Masquerade Party;
Speer & Rothman, co-Masters of Ceremony.
2. The Science Fiction Auction; Erle Korshak, Auctioneer.
3. Adjournment to Monday Sept. 2nd.

Monday, Sept. 2nd. Morning Session: 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon.
(Closed)

1. Business Meeting of the Illini Fantasy Fictioneers --
IFF members only.

Afternoon Session: 1:00 to 6:00 P.M.

1. Call to order.
2. Reading of the Minutes of previous day; George Tullis,
Recording Secretary.
3. Director's Report on the IFF.
4. Report of the Resolutions Committee.
5. Individual presentation of proposed Resolutions by sponsors
(a) Individual debate
(b) Assembly votes for or against adoption of individual
proposed Resolutions in Chicon Platform.
6. Reading of Chicon Platform for Fandom.

7. New or unfinished business.
8. Dinner Recess.

Evening Session: 8:00 P.M. to Midnight.

1. The E.E. Smith Honor Banquet. Celebrating the Chicon's Guest of Honor, the Colossus of all writers of Science Fiction -- Edward E. ("Skylark") Smith, Ph.D.
2. After-dinner talks and general discussion.
3. Final adjournment and--Farewell.

Special Events (Tuesday, Sept. 3rd.)

1. The Science Fiction Softball Game. Two select All-Fan Teams battle for the Championship.
2. General Open House. Chicago fans "fling wide the portals" of their homes for visiting fans.
3. General Tours of Chicago. Escorted trips to Chicago's points of interest, in and out of the fan world.

OF COURSE that program failed to follow the time schedule, failed to be presented in the given order, but you know how conventions are. The inside front cover of the program booklet listed the names of 108 "boosters," people who had contributed a dime each to help defray \$~~4~~ and to see their name in print. Several questionable names appear on the roster, such as: Prof. Gooseberry, Chantelle Covington, Alaska the Gnome, Ivar Towers, Claire Voyant, Anton Yoike, Adolph Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Joseph Stalin, Jaime Cardenas, and Samson Delilah Gottesman. Whether or not each of those characters paid a dime is open to question. Meanwhile, the third page listed still more names, 28 in all; these were people who managed to crowd onto every conceivable kind of con committee, including a "National Advisory Board."

The remaining pages contained advertisements, ranging in size from an eighth to a full page. Individual well-wishers were Forry Ackerman (four times), Reinsberg, Donald Gledhill, Sam E. Brown, Mike Frisby, Clifford Conklin, Charles Hornig, Morojo, and Lillian Conway with Julian Krupa. People offering services or fanzines were: Julius Unger (dealer), M. Korshak (dealer), Robert Lowndes (author's agent), Ray Palmer (himself), Reinsberg (Ad Astra), Sully Roberds (Foto-Fan), William Hamling (Stardust), and somebody peddling Le Zombie. The Futurian Society of New York, and the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society were the two clubs represented. The Rosicrucians took a full page to promote the Secret Unseen Powers, and each of the following magazines enriched the convention coffers with advertisements: Weird Tales, Amazing Stories, Fantastic Adventures, South Sea Stories, Astounding Science Fiction, Unknown Fantasy Fiction, Thrilling Wonder Stories, Startling Stories, Captain Future, Fantastic Novels, and Famous Fantastic Mysteries. The latter two magazines plugged "The Snake Mother" and "The Face in the Abyss."

The inside double-page spread, containing the program, was topped by a cartoon-logo drawn by "Buck Rogers" and contributed by the John F. Dille Co. All the Buck Rogers characters were present in the cartoon, traveling to the Chicago convention.

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The Illini Fantasy Fictioneers

The IFF was an Illinois fan club organized in the autumn of 1939, solely to sponsor the convention, and then go out of business. It actually consisted of seven or eight fans in Chicago, and Bloomington; with Reinsberg and Korshak, of Chicago, maintaining a tight control so as to hold a similar control over the convention itself. Memberships were sold to fandom at large, at fifty cents each, and this sum was also the convention membership fee --- although actually, the con was open to anyone who wandered in, and many did.

Reinsberg and Korshak had attended the 1939 convention in New York, and returned home fired with the ambition to have one of their very own. A correspondance and (feeble) publicity campaign was begun. In November 1939, five of us in Illinois traveled to the Philadelphia Conference to make our pitch, and to convince the fifty or sixty fans gathered there Chicago would be bigger and better. Politicking was rife, because of the bitter rivalrys following an unpleasant incident at the New York con: six Futurians, and friends, had been denied admission there. Reinsberg didn't want me to sit with the Futurians at Philadelphia (Wollheim, Pohl, Lowndes, et al) for fear the New Fandom group (Moskowitz, Taurasi, et al) would read it as a sign of partisanship and withhold support from the Chicon. For better or worse, we were awarded the convention and the headaches began -- or intensified.

Reinsberg drew up a flowery, long-winded constitution for the IFF which practically pledged us to honor the flag, mother, the Bill of Rights, and the government's foreign policy. In an effort to please all feuding factions, we probably satisfied none. His next act was to secure for himself the position of Executive Officer in charge of just about everything; entirely without malice, but with some amusement, I can say that he was determined to be the convention. Korshak, his longtime friend, was to be the Number Two Boy, with other friends Meyer and Hamling trailing close behind. Again without malice, let me state that I was used merely as window dressing; in 1939-40 I had a BNF reputation, and Reinsberg wanted that reputation to ensure the success of his convention. I was made Director of the IFF, and given an impressive but harmless place on the program opening day.

Sully Roberds, the only other Bloomington member, was appointed editor of the Fantasy Fictioneer, and together we cranked out four issues of that journal (plus other convention publicity) on my mimeo. Progress Reports, per se, had not yet appeared in fandom, and so the Fictioneer was only another fanzine to the uninformed eye. Each issue presented a progress report from Reinsberg (which read precisely like the similar reports published today), plus the usual fanzine ephemera: fan fiction by Ted Carnell, poetry by Robert Lowndes, a Nycon report by Leslie Perri, controversy by Wollheim, Carnell, Roberds, & others, pun pieces by Ackerman, hotel information and propaganda by all of us, and large slices of infantile humor by Pong.

That worthy discovered that Mars was short of oxygen, and published an open letter to his congressman, begging for foreign aid. His plan was to encourage farmers to grow more oxygen for shipment to the destitute planet. In another issue, 44 Calibre Science Fiction Stories was introduced to fandom, and to the surprise of the perpetrators, the magazine wormed its way into the Evans-Pavlat Fanzine Index.

The IFF, and the Fictioneer rocked along their perilous ways as the convention approached. One or more Chicago members made several hitch-hiking trips to Bloomington to consult on this or that, or to lay on the smooth butter, or to gather private support as the Chicago faction split down the middle. A sorry case of anti-Semitism divided their ranks and for awhile threatened to deprive the convention of its program booklet, but in the end matters were patched to an extent that all parties agreed to work together for the con -- and after that, the devil could take the hindermost. (A repercussion of that old problem arose again about 20 years later, at a Chicago party attended by most of the Chicon officers. One faction heatedly denied the problem ever existed; the opposing faction was willing to let dead dogs lie. Peace was finally restored by an officer of Chicon 2 -- brave girl!) Meanwhile, Sully Roberds found himself full to the ears with the bickering and quit, with the fourth and final issue of the Fictioneer. He refused to attend the convention, and washed his hands of the lot of us.

That final issue offered some quaint hotel information:

Chicon Headquarters: Hotel Chicagoan. Located on Madison St., between Dearborn and Clark streets. The convention hall is on the second floor. Rates at this hotel begin at \$2.50 and climb.

Hotel Atlantic: on Clark Street, between Jackson and Van Buren streets. Rates begin at \$1.50 and go up.

YMCA Hotel: located at Eighth and Wabash streets. This is the ideal place for a fan on a budget. First, it is just 4 blocks north of the Union Bus Terminal, on the way downtown towards the Chicon. Second, its rates begin at 75¢ (for 18 year olds and under) and \$1 for adults, and climb to \$3.50 for the best. This Y does not have a pool. Showers, typewriters, and other privileges available. Altho it is a YMCA, this hotel has floors set aside for families and women.

And it may be noted that most incoming fans stayed at the YMCA, walking the dozen blocks each day to the convention. In 1940, lacked the great wealth displayed by fans of today. Two women from Los Angeles, Myrtle Douglas and Patti Gray (Morojo and Pogo), took a room at the Chicagoan at the last minute, and the rest of us used that room for changing clothes, getting into costumes, taking baths, etc.

The IFF went out of existence at the close of the convention, to the best of my knowledge now. At that closed business meeting (see page 2) we gave an accounting to the membership, tallied the funds as they stood at that moment, and asked them what to do with the profits. I'd like to report here that I was dumbfounded when the membership voted to give the funds to us -- the committeemen -- in recognition of the hard work the preceding ten or twelve months, but that would be cheating. Oh, they voted the profits to us well enough (something rare in convention annals) but they did so only after one of the officers cried on their collective shoulders, nudging them in the desired direction. His powers of persuasion were mighty, and they gave us the loot -- I think my cut was about twenty dollars. That was more than it cost me to spend the weekend at the con.

A partial, and unofficial accounting of funds follows. I don't believe an exact record was kept -- certainly I saw none.

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Money? What Money?

<u>Income</u>		(with explanatory notes)
The Futurians:	\$.40	(fans were charged 10% of their sales for
Ted Dikty:	.30	peddling fanzines in the convention hall)
FJ Ackerman:	2.73	
Costume income:	5.50	(participants were taxed 10¢, onlookers 15¢, to defray costs of the prizes)
Banquet tickets:	63.00	(at one dollar per plate)
The auction:	90.40	(for individual items from 5¢ to \$5.10)
Fanzine sale:	19.30	(fans donated special convention issues to the committee; same sold in the hall)
Advertising:	23.35	(collected from the program booklet ads)

Income outstanding (and overdue):

Advertising:	51.88	(some promags were slow in paying)
Booklets:	20.00	(program books sold to outsiders, etc)

Expenses:

Picture projector	7.50	(for "Monsters of the Moon")
Program booklet:	37.00	(Hamling found us a bargain printer)
Banquet dinners:	66.20	
Guest's dinner:	1.00	(Doc Smith ate too)
Smith newspaper:	.50	(a phony newspaper -- see elsewhere)
Tips:	7.00	(well, this was 1940, remember)
Refreshments:	10.00	(soft drinks at the masquerade)
Miscellaneous:	5.00	(what lurks here?)
Kornbluth bribe:	.01	(K was bribed a penny to <u>not</u> give me the hotfoot)

Draw your own totals and laugh quietly in your sleeve.

In addition, sixty trusting fans mailed to Chicago their sticky half-dollars for membership in the IFF. It may be blackmail, but the names will be found later in this issue. Also, 108 dimes must have been collected (probably by Sully Roberds, or myself) for those 108 booster ads printed on the inside front cover of the program booklet. The above figures (income and expenses) are my own, based on transactions known to me. (Ah, granddaughter, cons have changed, I say.)

The Chicon was the second "world" convention, so called, but it was at least the sixth American con, and at that time no provisions were made for forwarding sums of money to the next convention to help it defray initial expenses. Each city, each con, started cold on its own nerve. Twenty-six IFF members and/or Chicon attendees are still active in fandom today, or hanging around on the professional fringes: a startling number to me. Ten others are dead.

To my knowledge, the Chicon was the first appearance of three new fans: Walt Liebscher, E.E. Evans, and Claude Degler. Other new faces were there, of course, but disappeared when the week-end was over.

Buck Coulson may skip the next seven pages.



The Time Machine : Chicon Revisited

(Selected and abridged commentaries on the convention, from various sources. Editorial liberties have been taken with regards to identification of fans, erroneous assumptions, and the like.)

The Bright Beginnings:

(*) As far as this reporter could ascertain, Olon F. Wiggins and Lew Martin of Denver were the first in town. They came by boxcar, for a long and cold miserable thirty-hour journey during which time, I understand, they witnessed one of those horrible accidents so common to boxcar transportation. And after them, fans came by droves in about every means of transportation except the airplane. Undoubtedly the longest journey was made by Paul Freehafer, Ackerman, Morojo and Pogo, who Santa Fe'd in, the only representatives of the West Coast. From New York City came Hyman Tiger and Julius Unger, representing the Queens Science Fiction League; while all the Futurians and their pals were there except Fred Pohl and Leslie Perri. Amidst cheering approval and thundering applause, Doc Lowndes of the Futurians, and Tiger, of the Queensies, shook hands in grinning comradeship, burying the well-known hatchet. (-Tucker, in Spaceways #16.)

(*) I arrived in Chicago early Saturday morning and about ten dropped around to the Hotel Chicagoan, to see what was going on. Nothing. I went back down to the lobby wondering whether the Chicago boys had forgotten to hold the Chicon, and there I met Ted Dikty, Wiggins, Martin, and Fred Shroyer. I had only time to say a few words to them and then I was off to the bus station to meet authors Ross Rocklyne and Charles Tanner, who were coming in from Cincinnati. The three of us checked in at the YMCA, and then rushed off to the Field Museum of Natural History, where we spent the afternoon seeing just enough to whet our desires to see the rest of that gigantic storehouse. Around six, we went back to the Y and there met Art Widner Jr, Earl Singleton and someone else whose identity I can't be sure of. They were just starting for the hotel, so we all went together. Morojo, Pogo, and Gertrude Kuslan had taken a room there. (-Dale Tarr, Le Zombie #33.)

(*) On the other side of the picture, near-tragedy occurred. Near Cairo, N.Y., the car carrying five Futurians overturned, smashing the windows and the body of the car somewhat, and giving Lowndes a nasty cut over one eye. Elsie Balter, the driver, became confused by a sudden shouting of contradictory advice on which way to turn, and whipped the car into a short curve, upsetting it. Passersby set the auto back on its wheels, an examination proved it still seaworthy, and the Futurians climbed in to drive on. Perhaps half the group came in this car, and the remainder followed in Dick Wilson's car. Later, fun was added by a driving rainstorm coming in thru the non-windows.

We met trains and busses for incoming fans. Any number from 3 to a dozen fans, carrying printed welcome signs, would be on hand at every station where a fan was expected. Many were the interested and amused glances at the committee and their signs as they rushed into a station and waited noisily for a fan. A number were escorted out of

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Chicago after the convention in the same manner. About 50 saw Milty Rothman to his Washington DC train, starting at the Y to walk fifteen blocks in a college snake-line to the station. There, as his train pulled out, they sang and shouted to him. (-Tucker, *ibid.*)

(*) I met no one who didn't call the Chicon far and away the best of the conventions. As one entered the hotel, a poster, by Krupa, I think, announcing the Chicon, was the first thing he saw. The convention itself was held in absolute privacy on the second floor, in a luxurious hall of exactly the right size. Virtually everyone present was a person familiar to us all --a total of 125 attended at one time or another, and they came from everywhere-- Futurians, LASFSers, Tiger (Director of the QSFL), Wiggins and Martin from Denver, Jack Chapman Miske, Tanner, Tarr and Rocklynne from Ohio, Shroyer, Dikty and Marvis Manning & wife from Indiana, Richard Frank & wife (on their honeymoon) and Bob Madle from Pennsylvania, Doc Smith from Michigan, Donn Brazier from Wisconsin, Singleton and Widner from Massachusetts, Julius Unger and Abe Oshinsky from New York City, Jack Speer, Elmer Perdue and Rothman from D.C., and dozens more. Ralph Milne Farley, Eando Binder, Ray Palmer, Don Wilcox, David Wright O'Brien, Mort Weisinger, Robert Moore Williams, Julian Krupa, Jerry Siegel, and many more pros were present.

Proof that real fans made up the attendees lies in the fact that practically the same number were present the second day as were the first -- whereas last year, at NYC, about 50 of the 100 returned! And so much for the bare facts. (-"The Star Treader," Spaceways #16.)

(*) Saturday night, about a dozen fans in costume trooped down to the Herald-American where group photographs were taken. The theme of these pictures as posed by a Her-Am photographer was cheesecake. Doc Smith in his "Northwest Smith" regalia was posed shooting Morojo full of ray gun holes; Morojo in her short, red futuristic outfit providing the cheesecake. In addition, a representative from Time spent many hours at the convention, interviewing fans, taking notes, and leaving with a copy of Dikty's Who's Who in Fandom. (-Tucker, *ibid.*)

(*) Reinsberg came in as Buck Rogers. EE Smith was dressed in gray, the shirt having the design of a compass on the back with the needle pointing northwest, from the CL Moore stories. He carried a gun with two silver buttons on the side; pressing one caused a beam of light to flash from the barrel. "The other button," EE remarked, "works my death ray. But it's disconnected now."

Ackerman was in futuristic garb: shorts, shirt, and a yard-long scarf or cape hanging down his back. Morojo was similarly clad, with feminine differences, and Pogo had on an ankle-length pink skirt coupled with an abbreviated top which shows skin on both sides. Clarissa MacDougall Smith (EE's daughter) was garbed as Nurse MacDougall of the Gray Lensman stories. (-Tarr, *ibid.*)

(*) The march thru Chicago: Reinsberg stands on top of a garbage box outside the hotel shouting things to the public. The populace gazes on with much amusement, and I sadly set up my tripod in the middle of the pavement, and set off my flash. "This is not an invasion from Mars!" Reinsberg howls. "This is a science fiction convention!" Whereupon I fold up and go back to the hotel. (-Milty Rothman, in Milty's Mag, FAPA, Fall 1940 issue.)

Ungloomy Sunday:

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(*) Around eleven o'clock they called the first day to order, and people quit milling around the fanmags and convention booklets to sit down. The registration for that first day totalled 160 odd names --- right, Bob? ((No. 129 registered.)) Tucker opened the session, and then handed the gavel to Reinsberg who was supposed to make a speech. Reinsberg hadn't been getting a great deal of sleep and he promptly got sick, calling on Korshak to take over. Korshak did an admirable job altho he had to cover up quickly a few times when he said something that had an unconscious edge to it. He read from the register, and each person stood up to let everyone see him or her. I might say that practically all of the Amazing writers were present, as were Smith and Farley. During the day Farley made a talk, Palmer said a few words, and Smith gave a speech on fantasy. Farley has a nice clipped voice, and Smith's oratory is excellent. Smith lent prestige to the stand that science fiction is not escape literature. ((Also present and speaking were Weisinger, Binder, and Julius Schwartz, Helen Weinbaum was present but did not speak.)) (-Tarr, ibid.)

(*) One highlight of the first day was the movie swept up off a cutting room floor and stuck together by Roberds and myself. ("Monsters of the Moon," consisting of scores of very short clips of experimental film, made by Mike Frisby and donated by Ackerman.) Even Ackerman didn't recognize the picture when we were finished with it. A title reads: "The earthmen find they are not the first to conquer space," and is followed by a strip showing cowboys galloping across the plains with shooting irons smoking --- a strip borrowed from a western epic. In another scene, Earthmen and Martians are staring at a round television screen mounted on a wall, and this is followed by a girl doing a strip-tease as seen in a round mirror on the wall --- this was borrowed from a sex epic and worked into the continuity. (-Tucker, ibid)

(*) At the party, the costumes were colorful but not so plentiful as had been hoped. Dave Kyle won first prize as Emperor Ming of Mongolia, Doc Lowndes took second prize in a pale orange robe (but the character he represented is still a mystery to me), and Ackerman copped third with a modernized version of his last year's futuristic costume. George Tullis made a hit as Johnny Black, several fans later copping the bear head to prance about. Speer, Korshak and Reinsberg were 3 editions of Buck Rogers. Honey Smith in nurse's uniform, while Rothman was the average scientist in long white smock and mad expression. Morojo in crimson futuristic dress plus cheesecake, Pogo in flowing lavender robes more befitting a Greek princess than a girl of the future, Elmer Perdue as Jurgen, plus wild hair, Doc Smith as Northwest Smith, with a tiny compass fastened on the rear of his belt. Tanner was simply "Ali ben Yogi" in red turban and crystal ball -- the latter a blue balloon. Cyril Kornbluth making a visible impression as The Invisible Man, concealing bandages and all, and as for myself, a brown Chinese coolie outfit with Pong in orange written across the back.

A hilarious skit was presented, a travesty on the movie plots witnessed so often: Morojo, as the sweet young heroine, was seated before a mirror making-up, when crawling leeringly through the window came monster Ackerman bent on attack (we presume). Horrendous cries. Off in the distance her screams of terror are heard by Buck Rogers Reinsberg, who comes galloping to the rescue on his rocket horse. Many

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are the difficulties he encounters en route, such as losing his ray-guns, becoming entangled in his own trappings, falling over chairs and generally getting lost. In desperation, the heroine finally downs the leering monster and is busily engaged in kicking him to death as Buck Reinsberg gallops thru the bedroom window, to place a triumphant foot on the fallen chest and emit a Tarzanic cry. During this horse-play, Buck Speer (who was not in the script) sneaked into the action and began shooting up the play, heroine, monster, hero and spectators, to the mirthful confusion of all. (-Tucker, *ibid.*)

(*) Sunday night was the masquerade and there were too few in costume. Besides those already mentioned was Widner, as Giles Habibula, with a pillow under his shirt and bottle in hand. (-Tarr, *ibid.*)

(*) After the masque Sunday night, Pogo and I left the hall to take some things up to her room. Included was the pillow which Art Widner had used in simulating the stomach of ol' Giles Habibula. I was holding the pillow as we went up the elevator, and Pogo of course was in her rather futuristic garb. There was quite a crowd in the lift, and they began grinning and laughing as we got on. Pogo got just a little red. As we stepped off, someone said, "Good luck, fellow."
(-Tarr, in LeZ #34.)

(*) Afterward came the auction and it moved forward into the wee hours of the morning, the highest prices being paid for a Paul cover (\$5.10), and another going at \$4.80. Interior illustrations went for anywhere from a dime, to better than a dollar, including Cartiers, Boks, and Finlays. Finally, a lot of illustrations were given away, there being two or more for everyone there. (-Tarr, LeZ #33.)

Talky Monday:

(*) On the second day, the IFF was being dissolved as a national organization, and as non-members, Singleton, Hamling, Brazier and I were ousted, so we decided to retire for refreshments. In the lobby we met Smith, who promptly offered to treat us all. We spoke at length of Weinbaum, and Doc mentioned how Palmer angered him by writing a sequel ("Black World") to "The Red Peri," which he thinks is one of SGW's worse yarns. He then went on--- "and published his worst story, "The New Adam." That's where the battle began. Because, of course, I think it's Weinbaum's best story. For two hours the fighting raged, with Singleton aiding me usually, supporting Doc occasionally, and with Hamling offering a point now and then -- I'd like to describe the fray but it would take thousands of words. I think I can say Doc agreed his feelings related to his opinions (about the possibilities of observing a superman) rather than literary worth.

During the first day I was with Doc and Farley, and Farley spoke of semi-invisible bombing planes used by the British, and the wholly invisible U.S. planes. Remember the Farley story (under the name of Lt. Pease) in Amazing two years ago which dealt with invisible bombers? (-"The Star-Treader," *ibid.*)

(*) Monday was perhaps the most interesting day of all because of the discussions. With Reinsberg as chairman and Pong jotting down the actions, we got underway almost immediately with a confab over the scene of the 1941 convention. Miske arose to say that he would try to hold it in Cleveland, if no one else made an offer. Then there was quite a

discussion over whether to hold one next year, or not. This was decided as it should have been, in the affirmative.

The issue was clouded for a while as Dave Kyle -- who perhaps did more talking than anyone except EE -- rose to ask that the '41 be held in New York for a second time. Opposition arose because the LA group didn't feel that they could come East every year, and at the same time they did not want to miss a convention. Wiggins had previously offered to hold the '41 in Denver, and the LASFL endorsed this location. The discussion became quite heated with many points coming up and finally a short recess was called, and thereafter a vote gave 1941 to Denver by a large majority.

Someone then introduced a motion to bar the future issuance of any subscription fanmags. Everyone was astonished at this infringement of democratic fandom, and Kyle stood up to demand that the last word be stricken from the motion. This was ridiculous and made no sense, leaving the motion to read "...bar the further issuance of any subscription fan." At this juncture EE Smith left the hall, not, as he later said, because he was irritated or disgusted, but as a strategic move designed to halt any further silliness. A introduced a motion thanking the motion picture studios for their fantasy productions, and asking that they try for better stories in the future. This was passed with an amendment as to manner of submission, and soon thereafter the session came to a close. (-Tarr, *ibid.*)

(*) "FOLLOWING FANNY" -- the Latest Parlor Game. Direct quotation from Fantasy News, Nov 17, 1940: (quote) "During the last recess, and thru-out the entire 1940 Philadelphia Conference, unofficial reports were circulated that the leaders of the Illini Fantasy Fictioneers, Bob Tucker, Mark Reinsberg, and Erle Korshak, publicly announced from the Chicon platform and in Fantasy Fictioneer, that all profits from the Chicon would go into their own private pockets. Wherever mentioned, this report met with indignant condemnation." (unquote)

Now frankly fellers, that item had the boys in the South Kalamazoo Fantasy Society stumped for some time. It was almost thirty minutes before someone remembered that he had been to the Chicon, and no such announcement was made from any platform. He remembered that the members of the IFF, in special session, and with all voting, had voted to give the Chicon profits to the officers named. Then another bright lad in the club popped up with the information that the Fanny statement couldn't have been true, because the coming issue of the Fictioneer carrying the Chicon report had yet to appear. Merrily, they all chalked up one for Billy Sykora and his (quote) news (unquote) sheet! For Billy had "Sykorized" the news to such an extent that he'd found an announcement in a magazine that wasn't yet published. One or two of the younger members of the club wondered out loud if that "indignant condemnation" line didn't carry a double meaning, but they were quickly hushed up. (-Tucker, in LeZ #36.)

(*) (I've searched in vain for a comment on Claude Degler, who first appeared to fandom at the Chicon business session. A nondescript and colorless individual then, he was apparently overlooked or ignored by the commentators of the day. Gaining the floor Monday afternoon, Degler began reading from a long, long paper, and quickly bored everyone to tears. Memory is hazy, but I think the paper was an expose, or a

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warning, that Martians were about to invade the earth, and that fans were the only people capable of spotting or combatting them. The paper was read in dead-pan style and Degler gave every appearance of utter seriousness; I thought then, and still believe now, that he believed what he was reading. Two years later, fans received in their mail a "Cosmic Circle Announcement" from Newcastle, Indiana, and the silly season began in earnest. -Tucker, 1965.)

(*) EE Evans of Battle Creek introduced a motion, which was passed, asking Campbell to write and accept more of his (Campbell's) stories. -Tarr, in LeZ #34.

(*) Jerry Siegel, who writes Superman, attended the meeting and said he was coming to all subsequent conventions. Someone asked him why he wasn't dressed in a Superman outfit? He looked pained and patiently explained we should know it was beneath his clothes. Chalk up one for Siegel! (-"The Star-Treader," Spaceways #16.)

(*) Before the honor banquet started that night we milled around the hall. The Smiths were seated at the head of the U-shaped table, with some of the Chicagoans on their right and one on the left. Directly across from them, seats were held for the Los Angeles group. The dinner began with what someone told me was a cocktail: it consisted of different varieties of chopped melon. I forgot whether we had soup. ((No zoop.)) Then came meat and vegetables, nice meat, followed by pie and coffee, EE then made the after-dinner speech, and professed his belief that such talks should not be on a serious subject, as laughter was an aid to life. Fifty-eight were in attendance by my count. ((This is correct; 63 tickets sold, 58 used them.)) Each person stood up to tell how glad he was that he had attended the Chicon, and any other item he happened to think of. The banquet closed with everyone joining hands around the table and singing "Auld Lang Syne." It was a never-to-be-forgotten moment. (-Tarr, LeZ #33.)

(*) The banquet proved to be the most popular session of the entire convention. There were nearly sixty present, grouped around a U-shaped table. After dinner, many were the stale jokes dragged out and re-polished. Wilson worked in a plug for his fanmag, Escape, Walt Lieb-scher was mistakenly introduced as "Leap-year," Philip Morris sent up a hundred small packages of cigarettes, someone ordered Reinsberg a glass of milk and a bottle of red pop, silent respect was paid to authors who have passed on, Doc Smith was introduced as the creator of "Adam Link," and one of those print-your-own-headline phony newspapers was given him, autographed by all present. (-Tucker, Spaceways #16.)

The Aftermath:

(*) E. Everett Evans, an old-timer in every sense: perhaps 50, he was sent down to the con by his son, who could not attend, and he knows his onions about science fiction. He stumped Smith on a few points of behaviour of the Grey Lensman.

Ray Palmer, who turned out to be human after all, and not a robot. He could only repeat Margulies' words: "I didn't know you could be so damn sincere!"

Earl Singleton, the fan poet and lady-killer from the Texas pan-handle, now attending MIT in Boston. Earl grabbed off pretty Trudy

Kuslan early in the game and only Rocklyne was able to win her away. Robert Thompson, known as "the jeep," Thompson hit town in the midst of things, with all hotels full, and demanded a room. None were to be found. Korshak finally locked him in the convention hall overnight, so the bellboys wouldn't find him and toss him out.

A popular subject for snapshots was "Oscar." This bony gentleman (assuming of course that it once was male) is the skeleton belonging to the Literature, Science & Hobbies Club of Decker, Indiana. At the request of the committee, The Decker Dillies brought along Oscar as a delegate, and placed him in a chair on the platform, profoundly reading a copy of Amazing Stories. (-Tucker, in Spaceways #16.)

(*) Kornbluth to Rocklyne: "I give everybody the hotfoot but you and EE Smith."

Ray Palmer: "Campbell has given the fans what they wanted and made a go of it. I don't see how he did it."

Clarissa Smith, as Nurse MacDougall, to her audience: "Kinnison's head was partly blown away, both his arms were blown off, and both his legs. Pretty soon he didn't have anything left but his personality."

Walt Liebscher pounding the piano behind the makeshift bar in the corridor. Walt played part of an original composition inspired by thoughts of the future. The piano was only five octaves in length.

Charles Tanner amazing everyone by getting a Paul Cover, a nice one, for only a buck. Seems as if everyone was looking the other way when it went on the block. (-Tarr, in LeZ #34.)

(*) Amazing Stories, Ziff-Davis, and RAP have caught nine kinds of hell on their policies in publishing these past few years. It strikes us as being an oddity, that some of the fans who have raised the most stink on the subject, were among the most eager to obtain the priceless Paul originals, which the above-mentioned were so gracious to furnish for the auction. (-Editorial in Pluto, Sept. 1940 issue.)

(*) At the moment of my leaving Chicago, there seemed to be a strange peace reigning in fandom. Everyone seemed to be fair and above-board, desiring only to have a good time, so dozens of petty feuds were forgotten, forever. Taurasi and Sykora seem to have left fandom, and a merger of the QSFL and the Futurians will probably occur soon. Even I have no one bent on murdering me -- Tarr, Reinsberg, Korshak, Lowndes Michel, and all the rest of them, pals, one and all. Possibly.

(-"The Star-Treader," Spaceways 16.)



Notes: thirty issues of Spaceways were published by Harry Warner jr., from November 1938 through September 1942.

"The Star-Treader" was Jack Chapman Miske, a vitriolic columnist for Spaceways from March 1939 through January 1941.

Six issues of Pluto were published by the Decker Dillies (the LS&H Club) of Decker, Indiana, from March 1940 through January 1941.

Twenty-one issues of Milty's Mag were published in FAPA by Milty Rothman, Philadelphia, from March 1940 through January 1946.

Sixty-five issues of Le Zombie were published by myself, December 1938 through June 1958. Some people will say that's not too many.

Dale Tarr is still active in Cincinnati fandom.

But where, o where, is that lovable Chicago mob?

(14)

Members of the Illini Fantasy Fictioneers, 1939-40
(in order of registration)

Bob Tucker, Bloomington, Ill.	Joe Gilbert, Columbia, S.X.
Richard I. Meyer, Chicago	William Schrader, Los Angeles
Mark Reinsberg, Chicago	Abe Oshinsky, Brooklyn NY
Erle Korshak, Chicago	George Tullis, Chicago
Sully Roberds, Normal, Ill.	Ted Dikty, Fort Wayne, Indiana
Forrest J Ackerman, Los Angeles	Jack Darrow, Chicago
Ray Bradbury, Los Angeles	Bob Osterman, La Grange, Ill.
Morojo, Los Angeles	Ray Sienkiewicz, Scranton, Penna.
Pogo, Los Angeles	Charles Hornig, Elizabeth, N.J.
Nancy Featherstone, Los Angeles	Milton Rothman, Washington DC
Paul Freehafer, Pasadena, Cal.	Lee Gregor, Washington DC
Russ Hodgkins, Los Angeles	Vincent Manning, Decker, Indiana
Donald Wollheim, New York City	Maurice Paul, Decker, Indiana
Robert Lowndes, New York City	Marvis Manning, Decker, Indiana
T. Bruce Yerke, Los Angeles	Claude Davis jr., Decker, Indiana
Tom Shields, Los Angeles	Earle Barr Hanson, Miami, Fla.
John Heaton, Brockville, Ont.	Donn Brazier, Milwaukee, Wisc.
Julius Unger, Brooklyn NY	Bob Madle, Philadelphia, Pa.
Tom Houget, New York City	Jack Agnew, Philadelphia, Pa.
Lloyd Esbach, Reading, Pa.	Allan Moss, Rutherford, N.J.
Sam Brown, Los Angeles	Lew Martin, Denver, Colorado
Ted Carnell, London	Harry Schmarje, Muscatine, Iowa
R.D. Swisher, Winchester, Mass.	Art Widner jr., Bryantville, Mass.
Tom Wright, Martinez, Cal.	Melvin Schmidt, Mt. Vernon, Ind.
Henry Goldman, Pittsburg, Pa.	H.C. Koenig, New York City
Tom Hinmon, Iowa City, Iowa	Gertrude Kuslan, West Haven, Conn.
Hyman Tiger, New York City	Ron Holmes, Liverpool, England
L.R. Chauvenet, Esmont, Va.	Emrys Evans, Mountain Home, Idaho.
Jack Speer, Washington DC	Charles Hansen, Woodland, Wash.
Joe Fortier, Oakland, Cal.	Fred Hurter jr., Red Rock, Ont.

Chicon attendees, in the order registered in the Guest Book.
(beware of pseudonyms)

Bob Osterman, La Grange, Ill.	H.S. Greenburg, Chicago
Hyman Tiger, New York City	Milton Latzer, Chicago
Patti Grayson (no address)	Glave S. Bunch, South Bend, Ind.
Erle Korshak, Chicago	Thelma Bunch, south Bend, Ind.
Jack Speer, Washington DC	Robt. Thompson, Manhasset, NY
Richard I. Meyer, Chicago	Morton Handler, Chicago
Bob Tucker, Bloomington, Ill.	Earl Bielfeldt, Thornton, Ill.
Mark Reinsberg, Chicago	Abe Oshinsky, Brooklyn, NY
William Hamling, Chicago	Marvis Manning, Decker, Indiana.
Ted Dikty, Fort Wayne, Ind.	Mrs. M. Manning, ditto
Mrs. Richard Frank, State College,	"Oscar" ditto
Richard Frank - ditto- Penna.	Hugh Ryan, Chicago
Hazel Shull, Millheim, Penna.	Jack Rock, Oak Park, Ill.
Jimmie Shull, Millheim, Penna.	Donn Finn, ditto
C.E. Sylvester, Chicago	Milty Rothman, Washington DC
Ann Hafner, Chicago	Earl Singleton, Boston, Mass.

Jack Chapman Miske, Cleveland, O.
 Robert Madle, Philadelphia.
 Gordon Brooks, Wabash, Indiana.
 Paul Freehafer, Pasadena, Cal.
 Edward E. Smith, Jackson, Mich.
 Walter Liebscher, Chicago
 Art Widner jr., Bryantville, Mass.
 Paul Klingbiel, West Bend, Ind.
 Donn Brazier, Milwaukee, Wisc.
 Ross Rocklynne, Cincinnati, O.
 Claude Degler, Newcastle, Ind.
 John Millard, Jackson, Mich.
 Richard Lewis, Oskaloosa, Pa.
 C. Arthur Lewis -ditto-
 B. Siegel, Cleveland, Ohio
 Jerry Siegel, -ditto-
 "Chuck" Wright, Chicago
 Chester S. Geier, Chicago
 (name unknown; accompanied Geir)
 Russ Brunkhorst, Jeff City, Mo.
 Dicken Connor, Lafayette, Ind.
 H.D. Josephson, Chicago
 Forrest J Ackerman, Los Angeles
 Johnny Michel, New York City
 Donald Wollheim, New York City
 Elsie Balter, New York City
 Robert Lowndes, Brooklyn NY
 Cyril Kornbluth, New York City
 Maurice Paul, Decker, Indiana
 Ralph Milne Farley, Milwaukee W.
 Dale Tarr, Cincinnati, Ohio
 Lew Martin, Denver, Colo.
 A.R. Steber, Brooklyn, NY
 Ray Palmer, Milwaukee, Wisc.
 Wallace Quitman, Sheboygan, Wisc.
 Henry Gade, West Allis, Wisc.
 Morris J. Steele, Milwaukee
 Edwin Benson, West Bend, Wisc.
 Joe Angstrom, Cicero, Ill.
 Pogo, Los Angeles
 Charles Tanner, Cincinnati, O.
 Joseph Millard, Chicago
 Robt. Moore Williams, Chicago
 Louis Sampliner (Chicago ??)
 Julian Krupa, Argo, Ill.
 Trudy Kuslan, West Haven, Conn.
 David Wright O'Brien, Chicago
 Roger C. Slattery, Chicago
 Clarissa MacDougal Smith,
 Jackson, Mich.
 Mrs. E.E. Smith, -ditto-
 Mort Weisinger, New York City
 Julius Schwartz, New York City
 Ione Turk (or Turek), Chicago

Otto Binder, Chicago
 Don Wilcox, Chicago
 James Norman, Chicago
 William McGivern, Chicago
 Ad Reinsberg, Chicago
 Olon F. Wiggins, Denver, Colo.
 Morojo, Los Angeles
 Frederick Shroyer, Decatur, Ind
 George Tullis, Chicago
 Julius Unger, Brooklyn, NY
 E.E. Evans, Battle Creek, Mich.
 Elmer Perdue, Casper, Wyoming
 D. Baastuk (no address)
 Richard Banner, Chicago
 John Mickay, Chicago
 Salye Rolf, New York City
 Helen Weinbaum Kasson, NYC.
 David A. Kyle, Monticello, NY.
 Dick Wilson, New York City
 Clyde Condon, Chicago Heights
 Jack Gilliespie, New York City
 Chester Cohen, New York City
 Julius Simmons, Chicago
 Deborah Josephson, Chicago
 Mrs. Ad Reinsberg, Chicago
 C.W. Norwood, Bloomington, Ill.
 Mrs. C.W. Norwood -ditto-
 Doris Beller, Chicago
 Bertha Reinsberg, Chicago
 Helena Reinsberg, Chicago
 Mrs. Orvis Shull, Millheim, Pa.
 Dr. Thelma Shull, Evanston, Ill.
 Mrs. H.S. Greenberg, Chicago
 Anton Yoike, Calgary, Canada
 Mary Corrine Gray, Los Angeles
 Donald Bern, Chicago
 Daniel Hansen (no address)
 J.L.K. Canazly, Chicago
 E.W. S---??, Oak Park, Ill.
 H.H. Stonebach, Chicago
 Mason Knobler, Chicago
 Louis Shipley, Villa Grove, Ill
 Charles Demm, Coldwater, Mich.

(those who neglected to sign:)

Constance Meyer, Chicago
 Mr. David Meyer, Chicago
 Mrs. David Meyer, Chicago
 Billie Von Till (address ??)

There are eight known pseudonyms
 in the above list; it is anyone's
 guess how many more there be.

(16)

AND THAT is a summary of the first Chicago convention, if sixteen pages may be called a summary. Of course, there were ream upon ream of con reports published after the fact, just as there are today, and the morbidly curious may consult almost any 1939-1940 fanmag for more details. (Louis Russell Chauvenet had not yet coined the term "fan-zine" at that date.)

An agonizing amount of bickering grew up around the convention but that has been touched on only lightly here. It was mostly confined to antagonistic individuals within the Chicago group, although repercussions of the squabble spread to New York and Los Angeles, as well as Normal, Ill. The only other major conflict (or one which appeared to be major at the time) was a question of finances arising between Reinsberg-Korshak, on the one hand, and Taurasi-Moskowitz on the other. The below quote is from The Fantasy Fictioneer, March 1940:

"Contrary to statements appearing in the 95th issue of Fantasy News and the April 1940 issue of New Fandom, the IFF has not and will not "repudiate offers to help made by New Fandom" at Philadelphia, or elsewhere for that matter. Let the above editors, in whose publications these false and calculated-to-scare statements appeared, take note, and let all fandom keep our above statement in mind whenever again such information is passed out as news.

"The IFF needs the help of New Fandom just as much as it needs the help of every other organization and individual in fandom. But New Fandom must get over the notion that no convention can possibly be staged unless it has it's nose in the pudding. ... As to your generous offer to "underwrite part of the expenses of the Chicon," well, why don't you wait until we ask you for the money? It is not possible at this time to accurately estimate the Chicon expenses, but advance figures show an amount far below your 1939 figure. ..." And so on, into the cold gray dawn. I guess it came out all right. Taurasi and Moskowitz are still speaking to me, we did not have to pass the hat to leave Chicago, and the Denvention came off as scheduled in 1941. (But you see, Donoho, we had them as long as twenty-five years ago.)

If I had the convention to do over again, I wouldn't. Not even the relatively minor part I played. I enjoyed myself there, true enough, but the strain and stress isn't worth enduring again. Nor would I care to repeat the still smaller part I played in the second Chicago convention in 1952 because, as you might have guessed, the old bickering renewed itself in brand new ways. Bah.

Apologies for typing and spelling errors in these sterling pages; they were deliberately included, of course, so that Speer could have something to do in his spare time.

Bob Tucker, March 1965
Fantasy Amateur Press Assn.

(The first Tau Ceti Reprints was published for the February 1961 FAPA mailing, and reprinted Volume I, Number 1, of Science Fiction Bibliography, a one-shot published by the Science Fiction Syndicate, 1935.)