Tastic

IN RETROSPECT

A FANVARIETY ENTERPRISES PUBLICATION

TASFIC IN RETROSPECT

CONTENTS:

Fanvariety Enterprises proudly presents its first publication executed as a joint project of the active membership of FVE. This booklet is the first in a series of FVE joint publications, and we hope a long series. It is our hope that TASFIC IN RETROSPECT will give you much pleasure and enjoyment, and, if you were one of the fortunate many who attended the Tenth Anniversary Science Fiction Convention, bring back many pleasant memories.

Special credit for helping in the compilation and publication of this book goes to:

John L. Magnus and Nancy Gerding who published part of the book.

Hal Shapiro and Ben R. Jason, who contributed the photographs, which were in part taken by Bob Farnham and Martin Alger.

Mrs. Dirce Archer, who typed stencil.

Jack Harness and Donald Susan, who drew and stencilled a large part of the illustrations, and helped design the format.

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FRANK M. DIETZ, JR.: AT THE CHICAGO CONVENTION —A REVIEW

ALTHOUGH IN PAST YEARS the various convention reports have been considered numerous for one event, one comment was recently made that (in keeping with a growing trend) convention reports seem to be getting fewer; due, no doubt, to the fact that many potential reporters, figuring that others are already covering the convention, feel that their own reports would become only one of too many. Thus the reports giving full coverage become fewer each year. Believing, however, that the Tenth Anniversary Science Fiction Convention was outstanding above its predecessors in many respects, and that this anthology of accounts and memories has a chance of being more than just "one more convention report," we offer it here to you.

In many respects this convention provided ideal conditions for the average fan attending, in others just the contrary. The convention committee worked to make this convention a success as no other has done previously. Julian May, the Chairman, quit her job four months previous to the convention to devote her full time to the job. The services of professional agencies were used to make the affair the success it was. And I believe there is hardly a fan who is a convention veteran who considered this convention too formal in nature, for it was actually a fan convention, put on by fans who had many of the same problems previous conventions have had.

The Terrace Casino, an exotic convention hall, to give it full credit due, featured a private lobby, where exhibitions and other accomodations kept discussions out of the convention hall, whereas at previous conventions such groups at the rear of a convention hall often interrupted a speech in progress. The committee reserved a suite of rooms, and whenever it was open house it was crowded with fans (too crowded, many times), such as the evening when they held an official open house. A masquerade party, sponsored by the Elves, Gnomes and Little Mens' Chowder Marching and Science Fiction Society, was held in another meeting hall upstairs, and although many were

present in costume and otherwise, little entertainment was provided, so it didn't appear too successful, except as a forming area for groups searching for parties.

The Little Men had obtained the penthouse over the weekend, in which they had an excellent, by-invitation-only party the last night of the convention, very different from the wild mob which invaded the place the first evening. And, for the other parties which were held, it was a hide-and-seek game with the hotel management, who took a very dim view of such activities. Very surprising for a convention hotel, which should be used to such, but more surprising was the discussion on this in the convention hall, where those bidding for the next convention spoke as if they never heard of such things, never attended such parties, and didn't approve of them. One party was broken up about 4:00 A.M., some later reassembled in the lobby and found seclusion in an empty hall upstairs, where they continued until dawn.

On the convention program itself, two musical numbers rate a mention: Ted Sturgeon, who entertained all too briefly with guitar and voice, and the first science fiction ballet, presented under ultraviolet light, which was quite successful, utilizing original music (previously recorded) and a combination of amatuer and professional dancers.

Hugo Gernsback, the Father of Science Fiction, was present as Guest of Honor, and the convention very adequately expressed its sentiments in the standing applause given him. But to attempt any sort of report on who was there is almost impossible; even Mel Korshak, long famous for his convention introduction sessions, was at a loss, with the total registration announced as over 1,100.

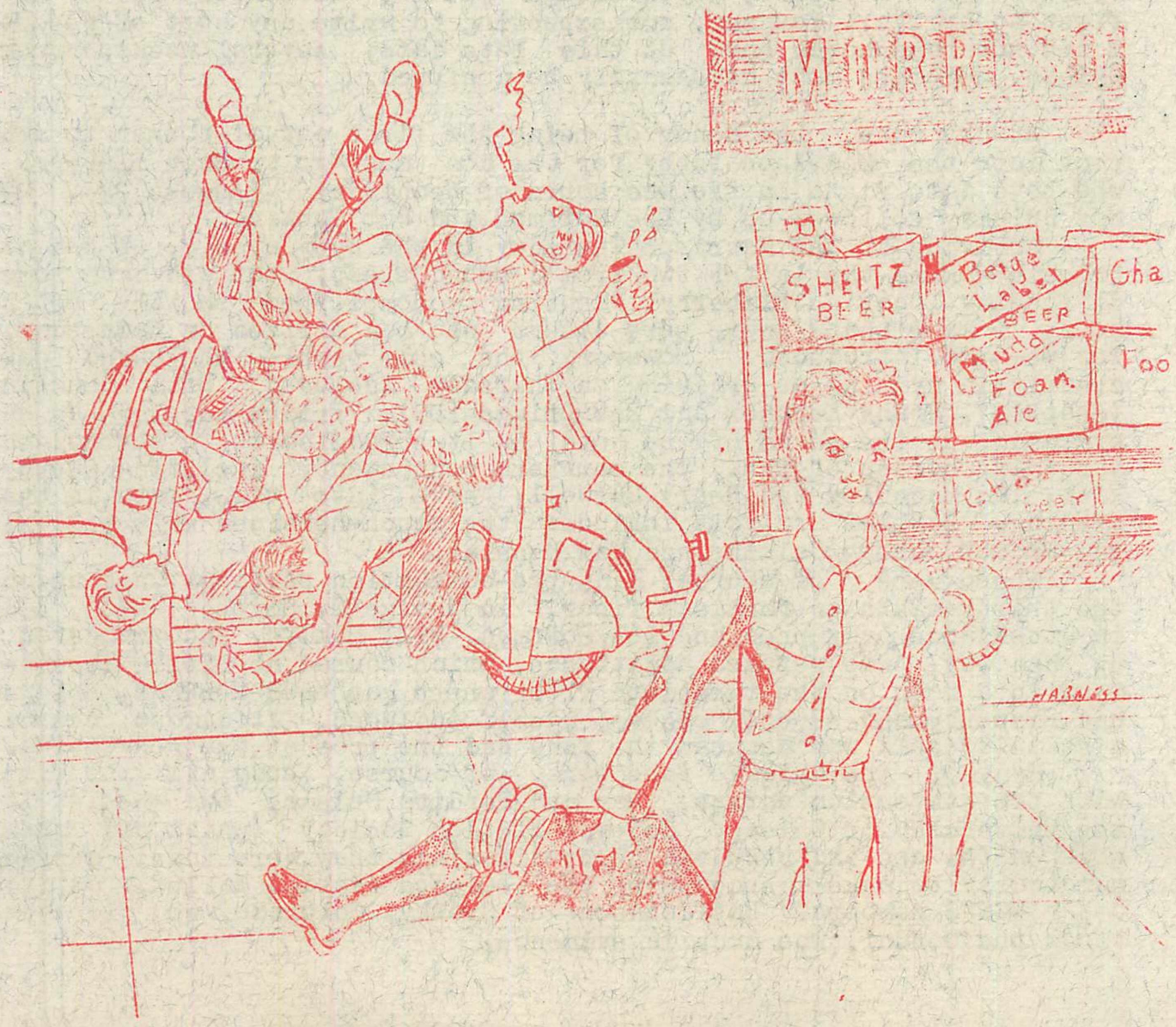
Voting for next year's convention site was the only real business transacted on the convention floor, with the business meeting being held in an upstairs meeting hall while a convention session was in progress. It required three ballots to decide on next year's site, which turned out to give Philadelphia the chance to hold their second world convention in 6 years, despite the bids of other cities within a hundred miles of there who have never had the honor of a world convention. But even more dramatically surprising was the victory of Philadelphia over San Francisco, who had proved themselves most prepared and adequately capable of putting on the 1953 convention.

The lack of movies this year did not prove any inadequacy in the program; rather, such a crowded program was presented that one is surprised everything was able to be done without running overtime any more seriously than was done. The only films were two programs lifted from the Tales of Tomorrow series on TV, which were presented as the last item on the program. The second film was shown only after a good deal of protest from the audience, as the hour was then late.

After which followed a general rush for railroad and bus stations, which left few out-of-town fans in the city by the end of the next day.

If it is possible to present a world science fiction convention in a capsule, there you have it. Such a presentation is, of course, hardly the aim of a 50-odd page convention report, but may be considered on the same plane as a preliminary road-map---a relatively objective guide to introduce the personalized and lively reminiscences which give you a more complete picture of TASFIC IN RETROSPECT.

PRE CONVENTION VIEWS



HAL SHAPIRO:

PRE-CONVENTION DAYS

REALIZING even before writing this that there are some people who are bound to feel slighted, I must offer an explanation and partial excuse as the reason why YOUR name may not be in this section of the con report, even though you may have been one of the first to arrive. You see, not expecting to write any sort of report I did not take notes and, at this late date, several weeks after Chicon, memories must necessarily be confused.

At any rate, the honor of being the first out-of-towner to set foot into the Morrison lobby for the con must go to Rich Elsberry, who hove into sight in the wee hours of Wednesday (August 24). He was quickly followed up by Lee Hoffman and Bob Tucker.

Arriving at the Morrison Thursday in the ayem myself, I had no trouble waking the latter two from a sound sleep, but did have some difficulty locating Elsberry. Meeting accomplished shortly after noon, I know that there were others who had arrived on Wednesday, for we were introduced. However, the only people who stand out clearly in my mind as arriving on Thursday included Bill Hamlin (Seattle), Frank Kerkhof and Bob Briggs (DC). Friday morning saw an expansion at the seams of the hotel as it struggled to accomodate screaming hordes of fen. The southern contingent, including Shelby Vick, Ian Macauley and Henry Burwell, hove into view late in the evening. Earlier arrivals included the much-heralded Walt Willis, Lee Jacobs, Gregg Calkins and Max Keasler.

There were, of course, many pre-convention parties. One, up on the thirty-ninth or fortieth floor, in George O. Smith's suite, had in attendance many pros and Lee Hoffman. Bill Hamlin, who wandered up that way, was refused admittance, which caused no little resentment in a room on the twentieth floor where gathered Kerkhof, Briggs and Elsberry and several others, myself included. It almost caused a state of cold war between the fans and the pros at the convention.

Many of the Chicago fans were, of course, busy all the time with pre-convention antics. Ray and Perdita Nelson, two wheels in the University of Chicago Science Fiction Society (which did much work on the con and received no credit since they were fans) strove heroically to make a success of the science fiction ballet, as did other UCSFS members. Bob Johnson of Greely, Colorado, who also attends the UofChi, was much in evidence,

One evening, as Bob Briggs, Rich Elsberry and myself stepped out of a room to await an elevator, a house detective bore down on us accusing Briggs of having molested several young women in the hall. Seemingly lacking in common courtesy and common sense, he couldn't be made to understand that (1) Briggs wasn't the type to molest young ladies unless they requested molestation, (2) He hadn't been out of the room for many, many minutes. We were warned to quit roaming the hallways and to stop molesting young women. A plan was tentatively contemplated to call the house dick before moving from room to room, but was subsequently dropped.

The convention committee was succesful in seizing Walt Willis and keeping him from associating with mere fans until Shelby Vick arrived, told Walt what the score was, and established him in a room in Burwell's suite. However, when the convention opened, all was in order.

Late Friday afternoon, Gregg Calkins hung a wooden plaque around Bob Tucker's neck, with an old tire chain. The plaque read: "Little Gem Dandy Hucksters Badge," and had Tucker's name stamped on it to prevent him from selling it to Bloch, Evans, Eshbach or Korshak.

A convention of Catholic youths who were waging a campaign for Modesty was finishing a meet as the Stfcon opened. The reluctance of the girls at that convention to pull down their window shades assured standing room only at strategically placed windows in various fans' rooms throughout the hotel.

There were other people and other happenings before the convention proper opened. However, in just skimming over a portion of the highlights of the three days preceding Chicon II, I have tried to give you an inkling of what went on and still leave space in TASFIC IN RETROSPECT for others to give a complete picture of the business and social activities which took place during the con.

Here then end these disjointed memories.

—HAL SHAPIRO

BILL VENABLE:

TO CHICAGO VIA THE OVERLAND ROUTE:

THE JOURNEY

AT FIVE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING I managed to wake enough to hear Don Susan whistling softly, upstairs in the living room. Outside the air was grey with that peculiar tangible fogginess that comes just before sunrise. The birds were making a hell of a racket in the fallow field next to our house. I roused myself out of the battered old rocking chair---a relic which had long ago been consigned to the damp mold of the cellar---and yawned for a good minute. Then I ascended as noiselessly as possible to the first floor and greeted Donald in a low whisper.

No one else in the house was awake yet, and the house was quite quiet and peaceful in the mammoth silence of early dawn. Dick Clarkson was snoring softly upstairs in my room, where he was bunked with Harlan Ellison and Bill Zufall. Outside, the grey fog hung around the house and the birds did their damnedest to signal the coming of sunrise. Donald put aside his styli and shading plates (he had been cutting stencils for PENDULUM) and we went outside to enjoy the morning while it lasted. A window in the car had been left open all night, where it had been parked outside in the driveway. It looked like it was quietly resting for the coming 20-hour drive to Chicago and the Tenth Annual Science Fiction Convention.

We went back inside, after the red disc of the sun had just cleared the horizon and started to disperse the mists, and took a look in the cellar to see how the painting job on the props for our projected play at the Chicon (which we had just finished at 2:00 in the A.M. that morning) looked. It looked fine. So did the sunrise, which was now spreading glories of red fire on the clouds that hung in the clearing sky. My watch said 6:30 A.M., and it was time to wake the rest of the group.

While Ellison, Clarkson, Zufall, Bea Venable & Company were waking up and getting dressed for the day's drive, we began to load the luggage into the trunk of the car, together with assorted other items such as play-props and stacks of fanzines. By the time the group came downstairs, bleary-eyed and sleepy, for a leisurely but spiritless breakfast, we were pretty well squared away and ready to start.

By 7:30 or thereabouts we were ready to leave, and leave we did amidst a chorus of hails and farewells and "did you forget anything?"

First stop was downtown Pittsburgh where we were to pick up yet another passenger, Phil Castora, who had elected to spend the night at his own home. Phil had only one suitcase, but unfortunately the trunk was full, and so we stuck it in the back seat and the riders--including myself---took turns sitting on it for the duration of the drive. We crossed over the Point Bridge, which spans the Monongehela where it joins the Allegheny to become the broad Ohio, and headed West on Route 19.

The drivers with us---Zufall, Clarkson and myself---agreed to take turns, and so as soom as we had gotten clear of the tangle of Pittsburgh traffic I turned the wheel over to Clarkson and relaxed in the front seat. It was turning out to be a cloudy morning, but the air was crisp and clean-smelling and we all felt, by this time, fully awake and in high spirits. With six of us in the car---myself, Clarkson, Ellison, Susan, Zufall, Castora and Bea---gad! that's seven!---we found a lot to talk about and the ride was rarely dull or quiet.

We crossed over the West Virginia panhandle and into beautiful Ohio (cheers from Ellison) and it was nice to feel the rhythm of the road flowing out from beneath our wheels. We held the speed down to a cool fifty and made a good average all the way. Conversation---on books, authors, magazines, Ray Palmer, fans, fandom, fanzines, the convention, and assorted other subjects---never languished and as the morning wore on our spirits soared. We made one stop for gas in Ohio, had a stretch and a cool drink to refresh ourselves, and then once more the pavement stretched out ahead and thrummed under the wheels of the car.

Harlan's quips and remarks kept us all in a lively state of good humour and laughter, except for Don Susan, whose reaction to puns is generally nausea and swift anger. Harlan fell to systematically insulting Donald, and narrowly escaped being thrown from the speeding car several times. Don's nerves were raw at the time anyway from seeing me let go of the wheel and turn around to talk to him---an act which invariably caused him to turn green and threaten to throttle me.

A short time after crossing into Indiana we spotted a sign, advertising the Morrison Hotel in Chicago. Several members of the group immediately decided that we had a duty to add a reference to the Chicon II to the sign, and proposed utilizing a "Chicon or Bust" sign that I had sticking on the front of the car. We turned around and drove back to the Morrison poster, and while I turned the car around once more Ellison and Castora scrambled out and decorated the Morrison's stately advertisement. We went on our way.

We hit Chicago early in the evening, just after dark. I remember an impression of massive buildings shrouded in cloude of pouring brown smoke, and a beautiful four-lane highway along the lakeside. We pulled up in front of the Morrison at about 9 PM, tired but triumphant. It was Friday night, and the 10th World Science Fiction Convention was about to begin.

—BILL VENABLE

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Twas the night before Chicon, and through the hotel
Not a fan was a-stirring, we were all drunk as hell;
Burwell was hung by the chimney with care
In hopes he'd revive in the downdraft of air.

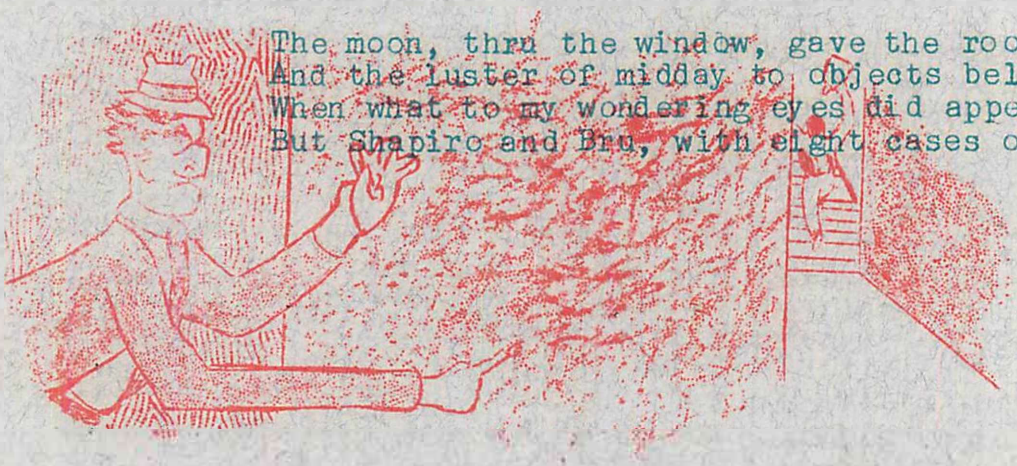
DICK CLARKSON:

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHICON

The neofans nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of egoboo danced in their heads,
But Vick with his whiskey, and I with sloe gin,
Had searched for the room that Macauley was in.

When out in the hall there arose such a clatter
That the house dicks came up to see what was the matter;
With our bottles in hand, then, we charged up the stairs---
When the house dicks arrived, not a person was there.

The moon, thru the window, gave the room quite a glow,
And the luster of midday to objects below---
When what to my wondering eyes did appear
But Shapiro and Bru, with eight cases of beer.

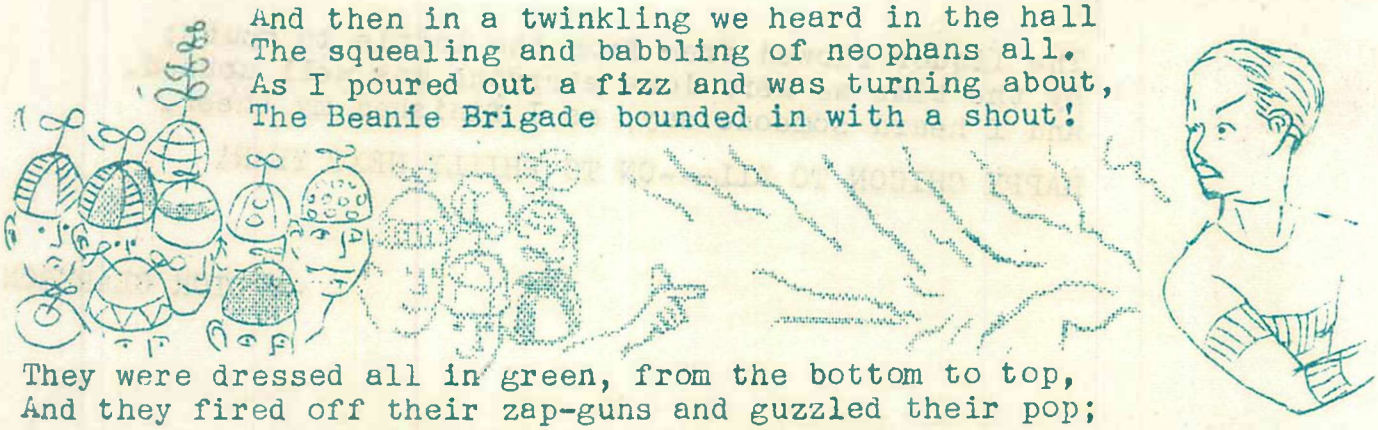


Then in came the manager, so lively and quick
That I knew in a moment he'd recalled the dicks.
More rapid than eagles, his detectives they came,
And he shouted and bellowed and called us by name:

"Now, Willis! Now, Hoffman! Now, Burwell! Now, Vick!
Out, Ian! Out, Harlan! Out, Maxie and Dick!
To the top of the hotel, to the Little Mens' Hall---
Now, dash away, get the hell out of here, all!!"

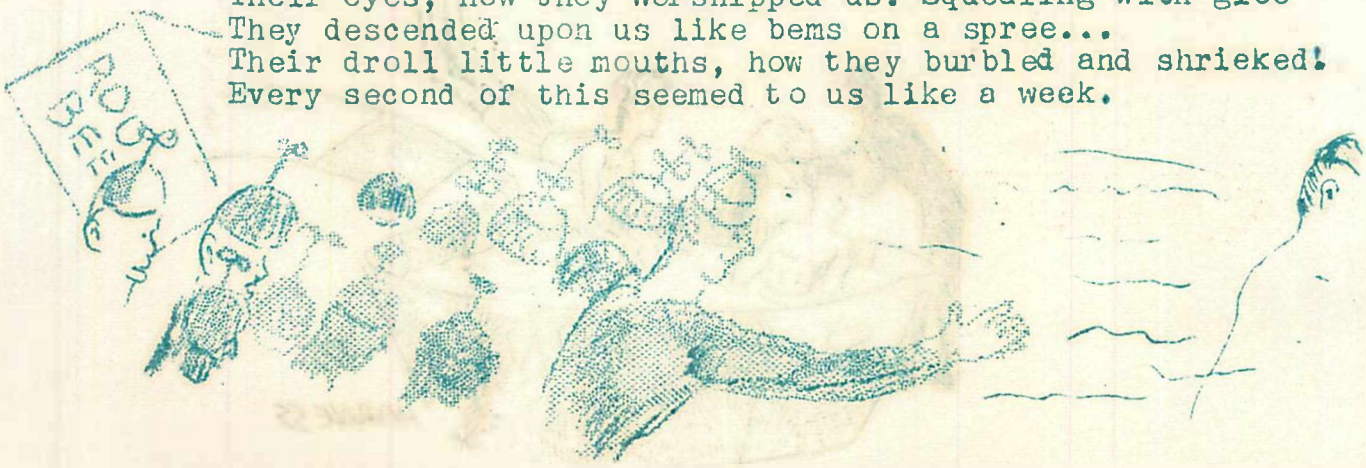
As fans that before the wild manager fly
When they meet the detectives, mount up to the sky,
So up to the penthouse the BNFs flew---
With the cases of beer and the harder stuff too.

And then in a twinkling we heard in the hall
The squealing and babbling of neophans all.
As I poured out a fizz and was turning about,
The Beanie Brigade bounded in with a shout!

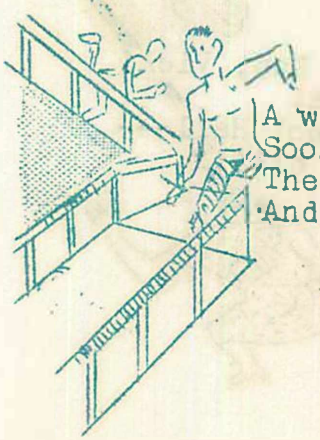


They were dressed all in green, from the bottom to top,
And they fired off their zap-guns and guzzled their pop;
A large case of root beer was opened and bled,
While the dismal Big Name Fans wished that they were all dead.

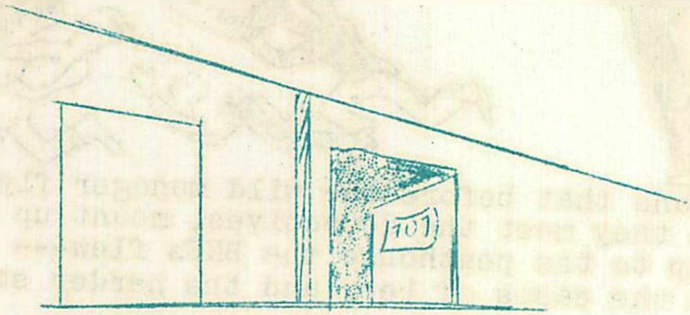
Their eyes, how they worshipped us! Squealing with glee
They descended upon us like bems on a spree...
Their droll little mouths, how they burbled and shrieked!
Every second of this seemed to us like a week.



We spoke not a word, but dashed out of the place:
What began as a party was now a mad race.
We shot down a hall and dashed in through a door,
Then resolved that we'd drink til there wasn't no more.



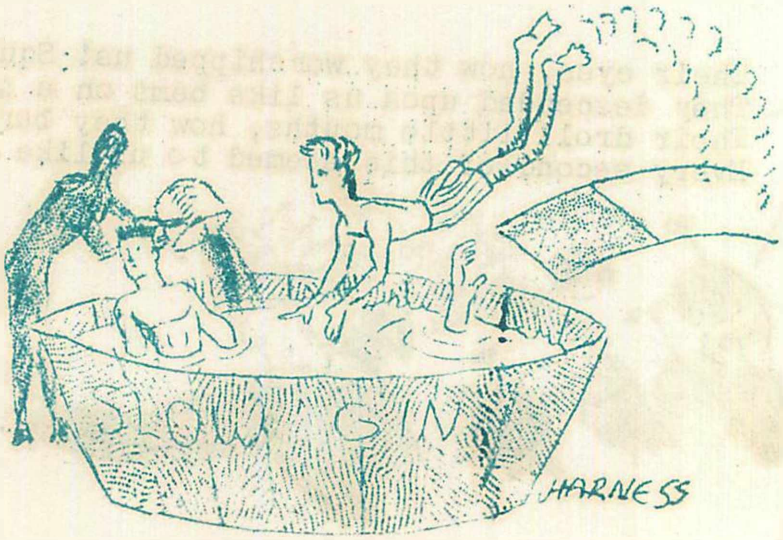
A wink of Vick's eye and a nod of his head
Soon told me the party was not at all dead.
The tinkle of ice and the gurgle of gin,
And the room was soon filled with one hell of a din.



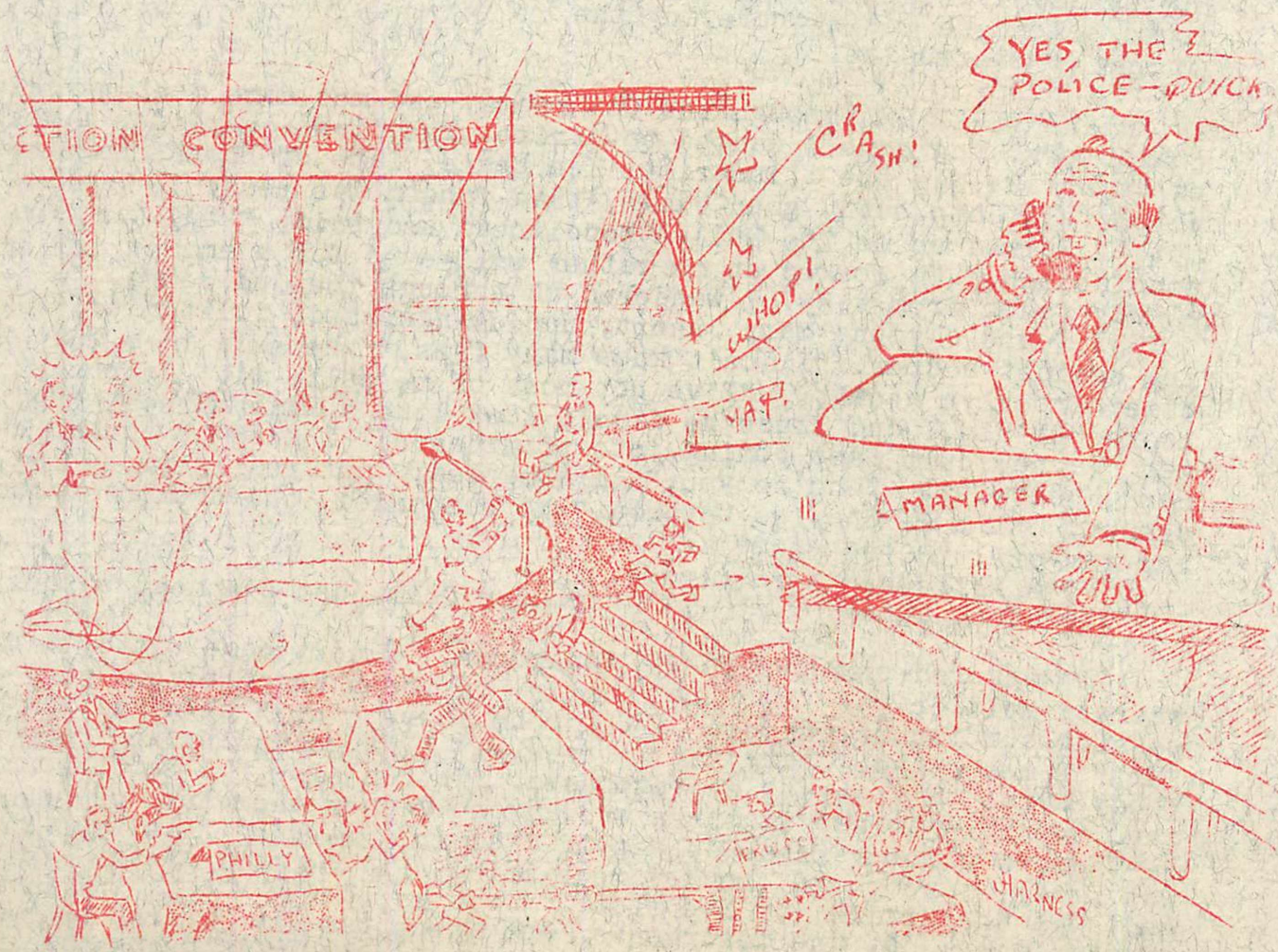
The liquor flowed free from the bottle to mouth;
By the time we were done everyone was well soused.
And I heard someone say, as I finished my bheer,

HAPPY CHICON TO ALL---ON TO PHILLY NEXT YEAR!

—DICK CLARKSON



CONERAMA



HARLAN ELLISON: BIRDBATH'S EYE VIEW OF AN XCON

WE SHOOK HANDS and he grudgingly admitted that he was Walt Willis. Of course I was stunned, but for what little vestige of BNFness I had about me, I had to drown my awe.

"Oh," I commented and smiled.

A most tall and pleasant fellow wearing (naturally) tweeds, he spoke to me briefly and lucidly before a Rebel Whirlwind swept him off somewhere. I've never heard of him again. For all we know he perished somewhere down there in the swamps of Okefenokee.

I WANDERED ON through the Con rooms, and met some most striking characters. And some I wanted to strike. The first character I wished to strike was the illustrious Ken Beāle, late of BEWARE magazine, which fell into such good times that fandom was ready to run Beāle out. I walked up to the Null-A Noodlehead and said, "You, sir, are a sonofabitch." He looked at me rather wall-eyed for a moment and then slowly faded from view. I wandered on through the Con rooms.

I found a young man, short, undistinguished, illiterate, leaning against a door. "I don't know many fans," he said in a most decided Brooklyn accent, "I've got most of me pull wit' da pros." I looked at him, and since he didn't look like a Bixby-Mines worshipper (a new cult fast coming into prominence) I knew he couldn't be Hank Moskowitz. "Who're you," I demanded, not really expecting an answer. "I'm A. Charles Catania," he responded, the trumpets sounding far-off. "OO're you?"

"I'm Ellison," I responded.

Funniest thing. That hall had been full just a moment before.

I wandered on through the Con rooms. I next came into a room where a soldier was slapping people on their respective backs and passing out liquor through a bathroom door. "Hi," he waved at me. "Hi," I responded, parrying cleverly. "I'm going by the name of Woody Ayres this week," he responded. "That's nice," I said, looking into the room to see if there was anyone I knew therein. Sure enough ---there was Bob Farnham asleep in a chair, wheezing noisily, there was Dewey Scarborough loudly declaiming all members of the Insurgents in the middle of the floor. That is, Dewey was in the middle of the floor, not the Insurgents. And there was Jim Harmon, bubbling gin through his gills with a large green sign on his chest saying

YES, YES, I'M SORRY, BUT LET ME LIE HERE! And there was the greatest fellow of them all, Hank Burwell, standing nonchalantly in a corner, the inevitable glass of Southern comfort in his hand, a benevolent smile on his face.

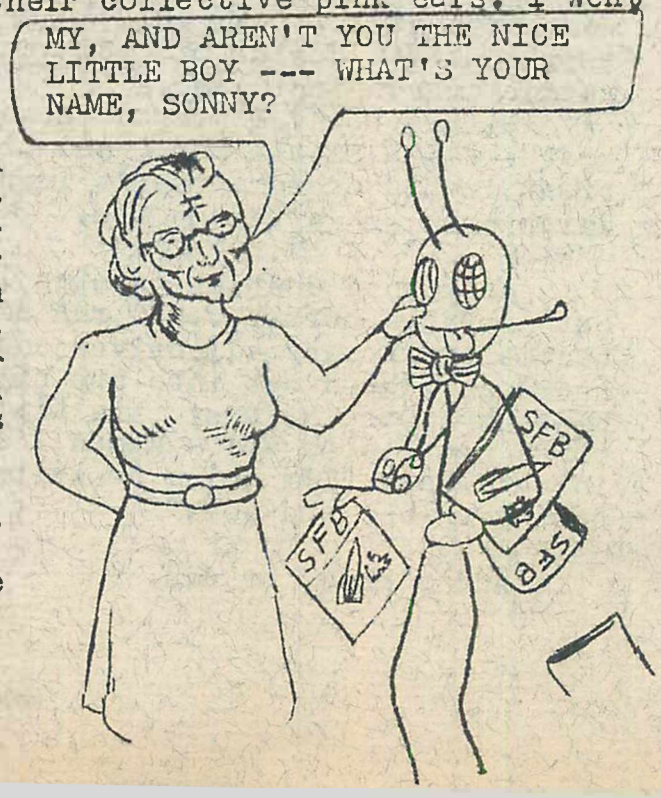
I wandered on through the con rooms. Somewhere or other Dave Ish (Quote: "The irrepressible brat of fandom." Unquote) and I picked each other up and as we walked down the hall I glanced into an open grillwork on a door. "Hey, look at that," I whispered to Ish, who had trundled on down the corridor a bit. Dave came back...looked in...and froze to the grill. "Gaaa-aaaah," he said, to which I replied, "How right you are." Dave lit off down the hall screaming at the top of his voice, "Orgy, orgy, see the orgy, only 25¢!" In a few moments there were about twenty fans peering in through the inadvertently left-open grill. This proved a good thing until the fellow inside (poor-sport type) slammed the grill.

We wandered on through the con rooms.

We cleverly sidestepped any contact with pros, riposting a counter by Campbell to dig secrets of fanzine publishing from us, for use in aSF, dodging a ploy by del Rey for material from us for SPACE SF, and eluding Greno Gashbuck with a snide remark as to his eating habits, we trotted off to find more of the elite. The faaans!

We ran up against ShelVy, who complained loudly because Ish and I had run up against him while he was warming a piece of toast on a radiator. Man, was Daddy-O ShelVy burned up! Burned up, get it? Burned up!

I kept running into Venable too. You see he decided that our room should be a picnic ground for all and sundry and at no matter what time I happened to wander in, there were fifteen thousand odd characters inhabiting the room. I mentioned caustically, "Don't you think it's about time to knock off, Bill," this at 4:00 in the A.M. "Why, no," he responded, "We're all living it up, join in, don't be a spoil sport." Oh no, I wasn't a spoil sport, I just threw the whole damned bunch of 'em out on their collective pink ears. I went to bed.



I woke up to find thirteen people staring at me. Just a moment I said and reached for the telephone. I inquired from the operator if she had the room number of Rich Elsberry, whom I wanted to insult. She seemed to be afraid of an argument so she said that she would connect me but wouldn't tell me his room number. "I want to see you, Elsberry, you cow-headed fugghead, you," spake I into the phone. "Where are you?"

"Across the hall from you," he said..

I wandered down the con hall.

The thirteen fans followed. I suddenly stopped and turned on them. "What do you want?" I inquired. They all withdrew printed forms and pencils from under their clothes and screamed in unison, "You haven't paid your 1953 NFFF dues!"

I ran like all holy hell!

After managing to elude Higgs, Carr, Firestone and company I managed to get into a hall where a number of shifty-looking characters were stealthily wandering back and forth whispering, "It's Philly on the third." I got out of there as fast as I could. I ran down another hall, but there was Elsberry with a typewriter, so I lit out in another direction. I ran up a flight of stairs and came out on an airshaft. I was about to sit down on the fire escape for a rest when suddenly a paper airplane came whistling over my head and then another followed suit. I looked up and saw Hoffman and Keasler and Tucker in a window alternately leering at the girls undressing across the way, and throwing paper airplanes into the airshaft. "Hi!" I called. They looked down to see who it was. I guess they couldn't tell it was me, though, because they screamed and slammed the window shut.

There wasn't much going on out there, so I went inside and went up in an elevator to the penthouse. Funny thing about that elevator. There was some guy in there pinching the elevator girl and practicing saying, "Sure and buh gollee...cushlamarochee...be gorry..." and other Gaellic phrases. I couldn't tell who he was, however.

I got up there and someone was screaming, "Don't touch me! Take your filthy hands off me!" I looked in but it was just Bea, so I wandered out and stopped for a minute to listen to a fellow named Embers or something who was talking to a guy named Bullrusches or some such. "Howinhell can we get rid of these leeches," he was saying. "Try roach powder," I suggested amiably, but they seemed to take offence for they opened a window and wanted to shove me out. I wouldn't have minded except there wasn't any fire escape out there.

I heard someone screaming in a high, keening whine as I rounded a bend, the two Little Men in close pursuit, and slowed to see what was happening. It was only George O. and John W. clubbing each other to death with copies of "Science and Sanity" and "Interstellar Communications: First Year."

With a bound I jumped between them, in my haste to escape the wrath of the Little Men, and in the ensuing tangle belted John W. right in his engram. Can't imagine why he was so mad. But he and Smith took out after me too.

As I sped down the stairs I saw the N3Fers coming up, so I lit out around a corner,..and ran smack into Elsberry. We went down in a tangle of flowery adjectives and purple phrases and the last thing I heard as I sped out into the night air, away from the Morrison, with Elsberry, the N3Fers, the Little Men, Ish, George O. and John W. three hotel cops and a woman I'd never seen before accusing me of incest, was: "I'm going to write nasty things about you in SNUL[illegible] just you wait and see."

And y'know, he did.

—HARLAN ELLISON

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THE 1952 CHICAGO CONVENTION...

AS THE NEOPHAN SAW IT

BY

NORMAN G. BROWNE

Goshwowboyoboy. So this is the convention. Gee, what a big hotel; and look at all the people. I wonder why they are all lining up. I know, maybe it's to register for the convention. I'll go and see. Excuse me; pardon me--Boy, these people are sure piled thick--excuse me. Ah, there's the man there. I'll ask him.

Well, he didn't need to be so huffy about it. How was I to know that was the key desk? Let's see now.....he said the information desk was over here someplace. This must be the fellow here. I'll ask him. Maybe he knows.

What convention? Great Ghu! Is there more than one convention going on here? Why I thought.....but, but.....Gee! This must be a big hotel! Up these stairs he said. On the mezzinine. Oh, I see it now. That table over there with those men beside it with those funny hats on. Say, maybe they are big names..... Hummm. I'll ask the guy if he's John W. Campbell Jr. Just for the heck of it. Sort of show them I'm a fan and know what's going on.

They've got their nerve talking to me like that. Heck. Just because I'm only thirteen is no reason..... How was I to know that was the wrong convention? Jeepers. They should put up more signs around here. What a way to run a convention. Poor planning on someone's part. Gee! I wonder if I've got the right hotel?

Let's see, he said to sign my name in this book and this o n e. Boy! Is this keen----imagine me having my name down along with all these famous people. Gosh! Here's somebody that I know; he had a letter published in FUTURE. Say, I've heard of this guy too. Sam Merwin, editor of STARTLING, is mad at him. Here's another guy and, ...okay, okay, stop pushing. I'll get my name signed in time. Boy. Some people sure think they're big. Probably some snivvling neofan, too. I'll see what name he signs. Ha! Les Cole. Never heard of him.

Boy. Look at this convention booklet will you. Jeepers, and look at the space they leave for autographs. WOW! I'm going to hunt myself up a few fen and get some. That man standing over by the elevators looks important. I'll ask him if he'll be the first to sign my book. Gosh. He asked me if I wanted his full title. Boyoboy. I sure picked a big one this time. Thanks very much sir. Now, to see what he wrote. Hmmmmmmm. Joe Brubinski, chief of detectives, Hotel Morrison. Maybe the guy's pulling my leg. Or maybe the htoel detective is a fan attending the convention too. Gee. He could be a big name signing his pen name. WOW! Wait 'till I show the guys back home this.

Let's see now. Down these stairs and through the door at the bottom. Right in here should be it. Gosh, it's dark in here. Not very big either. Really plus though. I wonder if this is the right place? I'll ask this man coming over; maybe even get his autograph, too.

I sure wouldn't want his signature. Not after talking to me like that. What does he mean, I'm too young to drink? Oh. That must have been the bar. Through this other door must be it. Yep. This is it. Jeepers,look at all the books there are on these tables. Boy! I wonder if they are sample copies? Hmmmmm. I don't see anyone around looking after them. They are probably meant as sample copies for convention delegates. Heck. Anybody knows these book publishers are making fortunes right and left. If Galaxy publishes it for 35¢ and they publish it for $3.00; they must make a lot o f money on it. I wonder which book I should take.....?

There's a guy heading this way. I'll ask him. Hmmmm. I guess they aren't free after all. I don't know why they should charge for them. Dirty Hucksters. Say, here comes a big, tall important-looking fellow. I'll ask him for his autograph. Gee. I hope he isn't a hotel detective. He couldn't be;they wouldn't be down here at the convention. I'll ask him anyways.

Heck. He didn't need to laugh at me like that. After all; I just asked a simple question. Let's see what name he signed. John W. Campbell Jr.??????? Nuts. Who does he think he's trying to kid. Heck, anybody knows Campbell is 7 feet tall. That guy was only six feet tall. Hey! Here comes a kid with a booklet open in his hands. Maybe he's looking for autographs too. I'll stand here and maybe he will notice me and ask me for my signature. WOW! He's heading my way.

Leaping Lizzards, but that guy had a lot of autographs. He's certainly got more than I have. But I sure pulled off a good deal with him. In return for my signature, I made him let me copy a whole bunch of names that he's got. And I was smart; I copied the Big names only. Let him keep all those names of unknowns. I don't want them. Who ever heard of Walter A. Willis anyways?

The convention's starting; so I'd better go in and start look-for a place to sit. Say, right down in that corner by the stage/ing looks good. I'll sit down here by these machines on the table. Hmm. I wonder what these machines are for? They sort of look like movie projection machines; what with all that film running off of one reel and onto another. The only trouble is that they are on their side.

Say, this button here looks interesting. I wonder what would happen if I.....oops, naw the tape is running in reverse. Oh well, it couldn't have.....say, I wonder why that guy is giving me a dirty look? Well,I'll sit up here then. Maybe those guys'll be happy now. Heck. Who ever heard of bringing a tape-recorder to a S-F Convention anyways? What's science fictional about a tape-recorder? Nuts. The guy must be looney. Well, if I sit up here I shouldn't get into any mischief. Though what the heck they mean by that I don't know. Any one knows you can't get into mischief at a science fiction convention.

Gosh, this is boring. I'll look around and see if I can spot any big names. Then later I can get their signatures. There's a man who looks important. That woman up there looks...say, I wonder what that guy at the next table is doing? My gosh. He's climbing around under the table. Must be looking for something. I'll ask him if he needs any help.

He's looking for copy???? Copy? Oh, I get it. He must be a fanzine editor. Gee! Maybe he'll let me look for some too; then I'll have my name in his fanzine. I'll ask him. WOWGOSH! He says I can! He says I can look under all the tables in this tier for copy. OH, BOY! Is this Keen! I'll get down on my hands and knees and start here and work over towards the wall.

Well, that's four tables I've looked under. Say, I wonder why everybody's laughing? Must be something funny on the program. I wonder if I should .....no, I'll keep looking for copy. A chance like this is too good to miss. Heck. There's only two guys on the stage talking about flying saucers. Who wants to listen to them? I read Frank Scully's book and he says....say, this looks like it might be what I'm looking for. Oh. It's a woman's shoe. Sorry, lady.

Well, I've reached the end of the tier. I wonder if I should go down to the next one? No, I'd better not. I'll go back to that fan's table and work back the other way to the other wall.Those guys talking about flying saucers sure must be funny. Everybody near here is laughing their heads off. Oh, well. Maybe I'll find some copy on the other side of the tier. Hey, wait a minute. Those guys never even told me what copy looked like. I'll go over and ask them; maybe they'll.....say, they're gone. And here's a note on the table. It says if I find any copy to bring it up to room 4718. Oh, the heck with it. I think I'll sit still and watch the rest of the program.

Well, that's over. I guess everybody's going for supper now. I think I'll go and hunt up some more autographs. Hey! There's a whole bunch over there; and a bunch of other guys asking for their names.

I'll go over and get in on the fun. Say, that's Sam.....oops, somebody wants to use my back to sign a booklet. I'll turn around for a minute. There. Now then, I'll ask this...oops, somebody else wants to steady their writing on my back. There, I guess I can turn around now. I'll.....oops, another one. Heck. I might as well just stand here and wait until everybody else has finished getting autographs. Then I can get all I want myself.

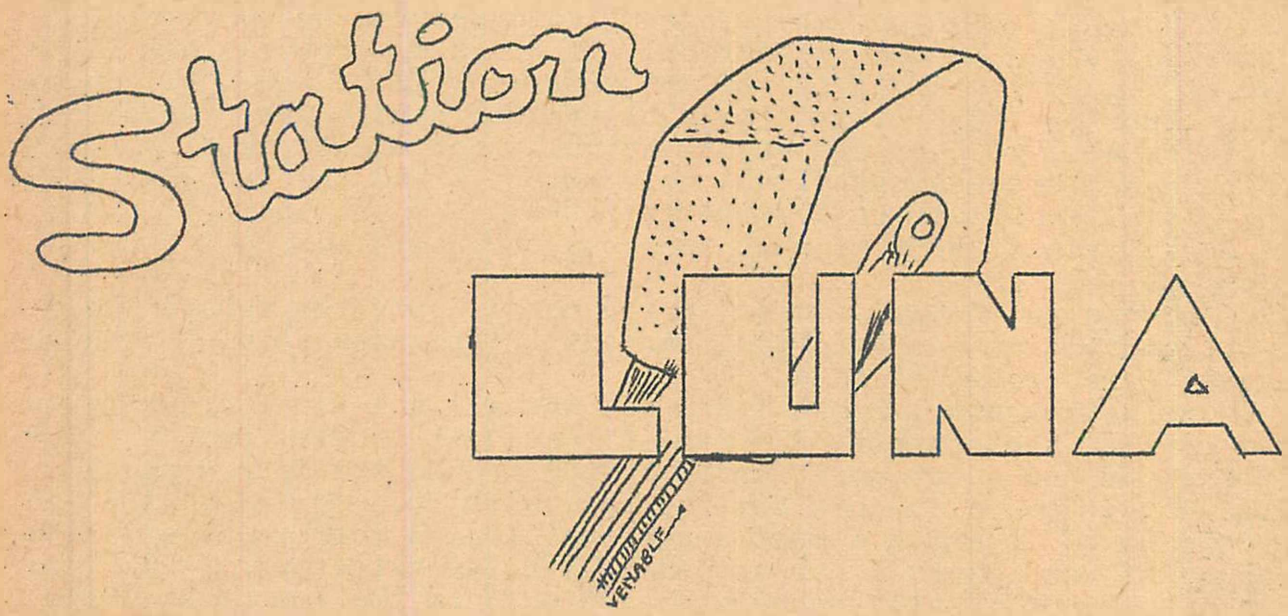
Gosh! It seems like I've been standing here for an hour. I guess I can turn around now. Why they're all gone..... They must have..... Why the dirty lousy.... What a way to treat a.... Booo, hoooo. And I never got even one autograph. They all sneaked out to supper on me. What a dirty bunch of pro's. We fans should ban together and throw the pro's out of Fandom. I never got any supper either. Oh, well, I guess I'll go back into the evening session.

Now that it's all over, I think I'll follow a group of fans up on the elevator and find myself a party. There's a bunch going up now. I'll just follow them off the elevator to the party. They won't even notice me. HEY! They're all breaking up. One's going to one room and another's going to another room. You could have fooled me. I thought they were going to a party. I know, I'll go back to the convention party on the thirteenth floor. I should be able to have some fun there.

Jeepers: look at the line-up. I'll just get on the end here; they seem to be moving pretty fast. I wonder what they're doing up ahead there? Why it looks like they're giving out something to drink. Now it's my turn. I'll see what they're... ....what? Spiked or plain? Oh. He must mean some of it's got liquor in it and some hasn't. Hmmmmmm. My mother said I shouldn't drink.....maybe I'd better.....nope. It's a convention. You're supposed to have fun at conventions. I think I'll take the...no. Maybe I'd better not. My mother might smell it on my....oh, heck. I'll take the spiked drink. She couldn't.....no, maybe I'd better not do it. Some of my pals here might squeal on me. Then on second thought they might not.....who does he think he's pushing around? I don't care if the line is back to the second elevators, I've got my rights. I paid my dollar just the same as everybody else. Okay, okay. They don't have to push like that. What.....? I don't care if there is a house detective out there. I've got just as much right as he has. Tell him to come back for his punch later. There's lots here. Uh?? Oh. No, I don't think I'll have any thanks. In fact, I'm feeling a little dizzy. High altitude I guess. Think I'll go down to the lobby and get a malted...now where's the elevators. Oh, yes. Here they are. Jeepers, they sure are slow. I think I'll walk down a couple of flights. This must be the stairs over here. Gosh, but they are dark. You'd think they'd put lights in here. What! Why they don't even have regular stairs--just some metal ones--must have rained today. Steps are wet--slippery too, I.....HELP....I'M FAAAAAALLLLLLLLLLIIIIIIINNNNNGGGGGGG.

.....Norman G. Browne

Franklin M. Dietz:



After working to satisfy the editor's request once, and finding that winding up as an introduction, again here we will try to give you what he was originally looking for, a discussion by a recordist at the convention.

Fans by the dozins may have visited the recordists section of the convention hall, making all sorts of comments which would make interesting material, maybe they did, but if so I saw few of them, between running out to eat during the recesses and working to be ready for the next session I had little time to see who was passing by. Also such visitors had to pass other recordists, as I was not sitting on the aisle, so I was aware of little of the assumed activity around our section.

Our problems were several, and complicated. To be ready when the convention opened, we had to get all the equipment back stage even before the Catholic convention was finished in the Casino. Then we had perhaps the worse trouble in getting things ready in the short time we had that first afternoon. Julian May wasn't around, so it was a matter of guessing where she wanted to put us. So when she did arrive we found we had chosen the wrong spot, and so had to move everything. There was the problem of power for the equipment, with only D.C. throughout the hotel, which caused Bob Tucker for one to burn out a control in his machine when he tried it on the D.C. current earlier. The hotel management had to run us a special power line, which barely arrived in time for equipment check. Then the job to connect 8 or more different units onto that one line, it was amazing that the line handled the power we used.

And the problems of microphones, not having the powerful facilities of the P.A. amplifier, setting them up gave us troubles, and I'm still not sure how some of the recordings will sound. Eventually

almost every recordist made the recordings from the P.A. speaker system, rather than the podium. The worse job we had however, was because the Casino could not be locked up for the night, as previous convention halls have. So we had to lug everything backstage to a dressing room each night, and lug it all out again the next morning to set it up.

But despite all the difficulties, all of the formal program of the convention was recorded. Some of it I didn't record, a couple parts of the program that were of no general interest outside the convention hall. Some of the program I did record, but will not keep, because it could be of interest only if a motion picture had been made of it. But the majority of the program will be kept. A couple months from now, when I get new equipment to handle the recordings, I will be able to hear and enjoy, actually for the first time, the speeches and discussions of the convention. I had the problem of using special equipment on a jury-rig set-up, and the unexpected trouble I had with it kept me much too busy to really hear and enjoy everything.

And due to the D.C. power in the hotel, only the formal program of the convention was recorded, many of the planned special recordings we were unable to make.

One well-known fan has asked me, was all the work and trouble of recording the convention worth it; wouldn't I have been by far happier and had a lot more fun if I hadn't done the recording; don't I think next year I'l just say the heck with it, and leave the recorders home? To which I must answer no. I am a confirmed fan, but because of conditions I can attend only 2 fan gatherings per year, of any sort. So it will be very pleasurable in the months and years to come to sit at home, imagine myself in a crowded convention hall and listen to the many speeches. I don't see that I missed very much of the fun of the convention, and, except once, it only required a half hour before and after the day's program to take care of all the equipment. And next year I will be back, with better equipment and improved accessories, the experiences of this convention have shown me what I need so next year after beginning the recording of a session everything will be completely automatic, so I can sit and listne to what goes on, or even be outside the convention hall.

Lastley here I have saved perhaps the most humorous part of the convention, which was an unseen part of the program all the way thru. The 'actors' were Merrill and Peggy Gwosdof, who someone nick-named at the New Orleans convention 'The Gold Dust Twins'. Merrill was one of the recordists, both are very good friends of mine, so I hope an account of them doesn't make the friendship less secure. But very frequently during the convention the two would get into cat-fights, which were so often so amusing we had a hard time from laughing out loud during somebody's speech. They usually resulted from Peggy toying with the equipment, and after a while she would sulk, while Merril sighed with relief. Another humorous part was Merrill's interest in making like a radio commentator on his recordings of the convention. He had a well-designed control board, but which was built into a Royal Crown Cola case, which enabled him to hook up two microphones and two record players into the circuit. So he sat at his table mike, giving the most amusing-sounding commentaries on the proceedings whenever there was a pause or intermission, and usually during these intermissions he got out a stack of records and played them onto his tapes between sessions. Much of the amusement of these situations kept the work of recording the convention from seeming like as much as it was.

Orville Mosher:

2 ENCOUNTERS WITH CON MEN

Doug. Mitchell

After I checked into the hotel and went up to my room for a short nap and shower (I had had to spend a day on the train without any sleep), I phoned Dick Clarkson's room. A sleepy voice on the other end answered: "Hullooo (a yawned 'Hello'), this is Doug."

"Is Dick Clarkson there?"

"He's out. Can you get me out of here?---I'm locked in."

"What room are you in? I'll see what I can do."

Doug gave me the room number. I asked him when he thought Dick would return, and he said it wouldn't be long. I told him I would be right up.

Upon arriving, it took me a while to find the right room. Finally, I located it, and Doug repeated that he was locked in. I found a maid down the hall, and she came over to the door with me. I explained what had happened, and she solved the problem in a few short words: "Just turn that little knob over the door handle."

That did it. Doug opened the door, and invited me in.

Doug explained that he was just using Dick's room, and that when he went to sleep, Dick went out and locked the door. Over his shoulder on the dresser I saw a bottle with a greenish liquid in it. Doug asked me to make myself comfortable on one of the beds and excused himself for a moment. A short time later I heard the toilet flush.

After Doug came in, he still looked a little sick, but he was not too sick to try and sell me a fantasy classification system. About a half hour later, he finally got around to telling me where to register for the con. Then he casually mentioned the Dick and Bill Venable were down holding a sub-con for FEDERATED WORLD FANCLUBS... called Federated Metropolitan Fanclubs of America at that time.

I might pause to mention that I was supposed to take part in that meeting and that I was especially asked to attend.I had brought up to Dick's room all of my PROJECT FAN CLUB materials to show Dick, and have on hand for that meeting. I excused myself immediately and was preparing to leave when Doug said: "Buy me a tooth brush, will you? I'll pay you back." For some reason, I forgot completely about that tooth brush. *

---

* As a footnote, I've been corresponding with Doug, and we had a good laugh about the tooth brush. Doug is a hell of a nice guy.

Andrew Harris

The last night of the con, I located one of the "smoke filled rooms", and wandered in (another fan was with me, but that's a different story). After some introductions, a man came over to me with a big smile on his face: "Do you know who I am?"

After a number of guesses from 'Dave Hammond' to 'Clifton Webb' (I might mention that his long lanky figure combined with his mustache reminded me of "Mr. Belvedere", in "Mr. Belvedere Goes to College"), he told me he was Andrew Harris.

Andrew Harris and I had corresponded for some time. We had promised to look each other up at the Chicon.

Andy told me how Shelby Vick and he had been trying to locate me. His explanation went something like this (and I'm quoting from a letter from him in October--it goes like the explanation he gave that night): "...but that well known needle and haystack deal was easy compared to finding anyone at the Chicon. I was in Chicago six days altogether and never did find some of the people I had expected to see. I soon found out it wasn't a bit of use asking at the desk for room numbers as they didn't seem to know their own names. The girl in the credit office referred me to a Mr. Fries, downstairs, and when I asked at the desk, they insisted no such person worked there." Andy said he had been asking all over the place if anyone had seen me (as well as Shelby). Quite a reunion!

Andy put a glass in my hand and poured a little liquid refreshment in it after the bellhop came up. One of the women in the room read some poetry from a book which she picked up at a library (an amusing poem, by the way. A sheet was tied up over the door, and some movies were shown of some German Rocket experiments (which were taken by some professor while Germany was at war--showed one of the rockets falling over and catching fire in one of the scenes) and followed by another silent film (probably the first SF production) of Lost Worlds. I believe Mr. William D. Grant was the gentleman who showed the film.*

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* The last film was not completely shown. One girl who said that she was going to get thoroughly 'stinko' did. She was sitting in someone's lap and managed to swing her foot in such a way that the motion picture projector hit me in the head. That put an end to the picture as the film roll was dented out of shape. The party broke up after that. The amusing thing was that the girl had spent most of the night sober and trying to get drunk. Then she finally managed it just as the party broke up.

Another aspect of the party was--believe it or not--a hot science fiction discussion going on while "Lost Worlds" was being shown. Between the movie and the discussion, I didn't get to enjoy both to the fullest--the discussion was behind me, so I turned that way....some interesting commentary was mentioned about the movie, so I turned that way.

JOE GIBSON: ONE -AND DIRTY PRO THE CHICON TOO

I CLIMBED on a bus with Walt Willis, of someplace called Ireland, in New Yawk Citty---whereupon 3 buses broke down in succession. But we arrived. Got into Chicago the Thursday afternoon before the Lost Weekend, which was somewhat early, and I turned WW over to Bob Hoffman and Lee Tucker. Or was it Bob Lee and Hoffman Tucker?

Anyway, taxiing to the Morrison, Tucker tells me a group of early arrivals are holding a Wake up in some hotel room or other--- he is somewhat vague about the hotel room. But I am half dead from the trip, and I have little interest. And we get to the hotel, and I register---being early, I did get a $5.50 room---and I retire to my slot upstairs to freshen up. And I am somewhat ill. So for medicinal purposes, I waddle down the elevator and nose out the cocktail bar. But I just touch the door---when it hits me. Real bad---delayed action effects of the trip. I staggered back to my room and crawled in bed to die.

So it's along about 9:30 that nite, and I'm sprawled like a dishrag with belly cramps so bad I can hardly wiggle my toes. So I'm craving company, and sympathetic condolences from somebody---and a stiff shot of booze would've helped, too. So I derrick up the phone and make calls. Info gives me Tucker's number: no answer. Also WW's number: no answer. Then Hoffman's number. Naturally, a man answers.

And there are merriment sounds in the background. So I ask what is going on there? And he replies who wants to know? And I sez Joe Gibson. A mistake. He tells somebody else it's Joe Gibson, and some babe across the room yells, "THAT JERK?" And she rustles over for whispered consultations. Then this guy starts giving me the business.

I feel fine. I feel so good, I start giving him the business. Me, sprawled there---I'm coming down and bust their damn' party side open! This guy gets flustered; another takes over, using a high falsetto and pulling the old "call us back in five minutes" routine. Disgustedly, I agree, and hang up, and count three, and start burning the wires again.

Eventually, it gets to be three ayem. I know, as I'm awake listening for it. Awake. Sick. With sore guts and a split head. So there's no rest for the wicked; maybe fresh air? I crawl from bed---

fumble into my clothes, and stagger out.

The Chicago loop is pitch-black. Drugstores, even bars, are closed. The sun comes up over Michigan Avenue at 5:34 ayem.

I make contact with Lee Hoffman---ah, now I got the names set straight. She sez uh-huh (yawn) there was q-u-i-t-e a party. Wuz I the one who called? They just said it was some character. Well-l-l..

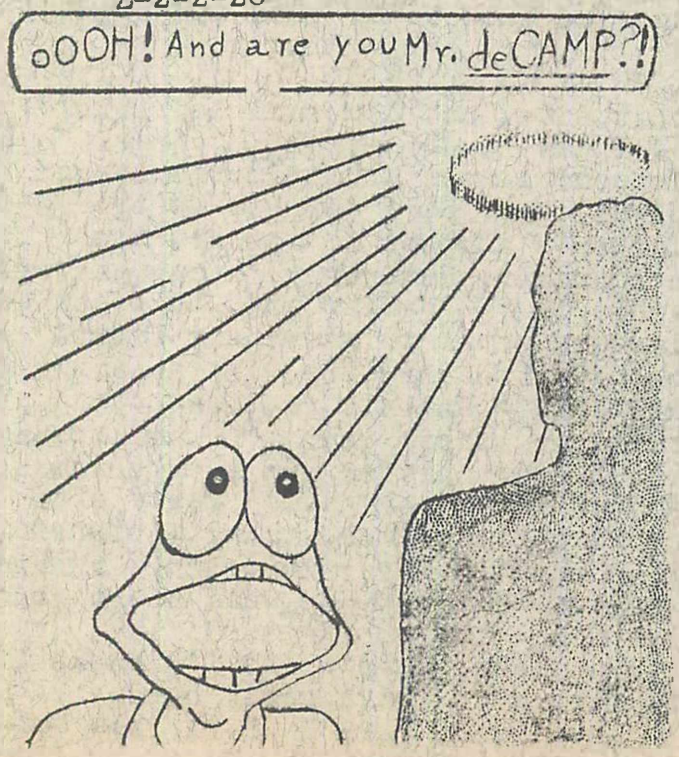
It's always better to know. So I have coffee. Tried toast, but couldn't get it down. Climbed on the Chicago el and roamed out to look at Evanston. Had a phone chat with Bill Hamling, arranged to see him later on business. Reached the Morrison by evening, revived enuff to keep whiskey down. And there was. More arrivals had arrived ---including those true gentlemen of Georgia, with a roomful of fans and booze. Even Shelby Vick was there. I took out my wallet and joined up. The convention had begun.

Roaming down to Con HQ, I met more arrivals. And I learned about the party in Hoffman's---who was there, what, and whyfore---and that after I'd called, they packed up and scrambled off to another room. And me...laying up there ... I commenced to grin. I chuckled with Bea Mahaffey. I chortled with Forry and Wendayne. I was rolling in the aisles when Gerry and Helen de la Ree walked in.

Helen is built like Marilyn Monroe should hope to be. She looks at me. I look at her. "Same trick?" "I'm game." And not a word was spoken! Gerry sighs, takes out his automatic, and inserts a loaded clip. We'd done this before.

Show me any guy's wife who doesn't want to prove she can still make other males jump through a hoop! Of course, it's undignified to be the hoop-jumper---and for all I know, maybe Gerry can hit something with that .38! But a number of fans must have somewhat lewd suspicions about all that. They'd come wandering past, stare with shocked disbelief as Helen nestled in my arms, gaze dumfoundedly at Gerry sitting off nearby, and walk away with a dazed look on their faces. Gad, we were scandalous! Unfortunately, Helen knows a little judo.

Z-z-z-zo



Somehow, the weekend passed. I was somewhere. Trading insults with the Georgia bhoys. Drinking. Clinching happily with Helen. Joining Sam Moskowitz to take Bea Mahaffey across the street for a buttermilk. Joining Dave Kyle in the deep, dark, mysterious plot (which was neither deep, dark nor mysterious---but why spoil it) which got Philly the con this year. Shooting my mouth off at a meeting of the S-F Writers of America. Horseplay with Stu Byrne, Rog Phillips, and Ray Palmer. Serious words with Willy Ley, de Camp, and EESmith. Hell, I had me a ffffine convention!

I mean, this could go on and on. Crashing the penthouse party, the last nite of the Con, doing a snake dance thru the place---Gerry in the lead with a bottle of whiskey in one fist and a bottle

of mix in the other, then me with Helen, then the Don Fords, then Ken Beale stumbling half-asleep, then li'l David Ish clutching a coke bottle! We were firmly, but gently, ousted---and all we wanted was some ice!

And (shudder) the wench with the purple hair. And (sugh) the girl in the leopard skin. And the cutest li'l gal about (this) tall and built like t-h-i-s, up on the stage warbling high, sweet notes while some disreputable character played the piano. Ah, yes----- Bea Venable!

I ended up on some distant planet, marooned, with her. Then her brother let her find out about it---and she didn't mind! And then---then, WEEKS later---somebody finally tells me she's just 16 years old. Ah, well. That's bad?

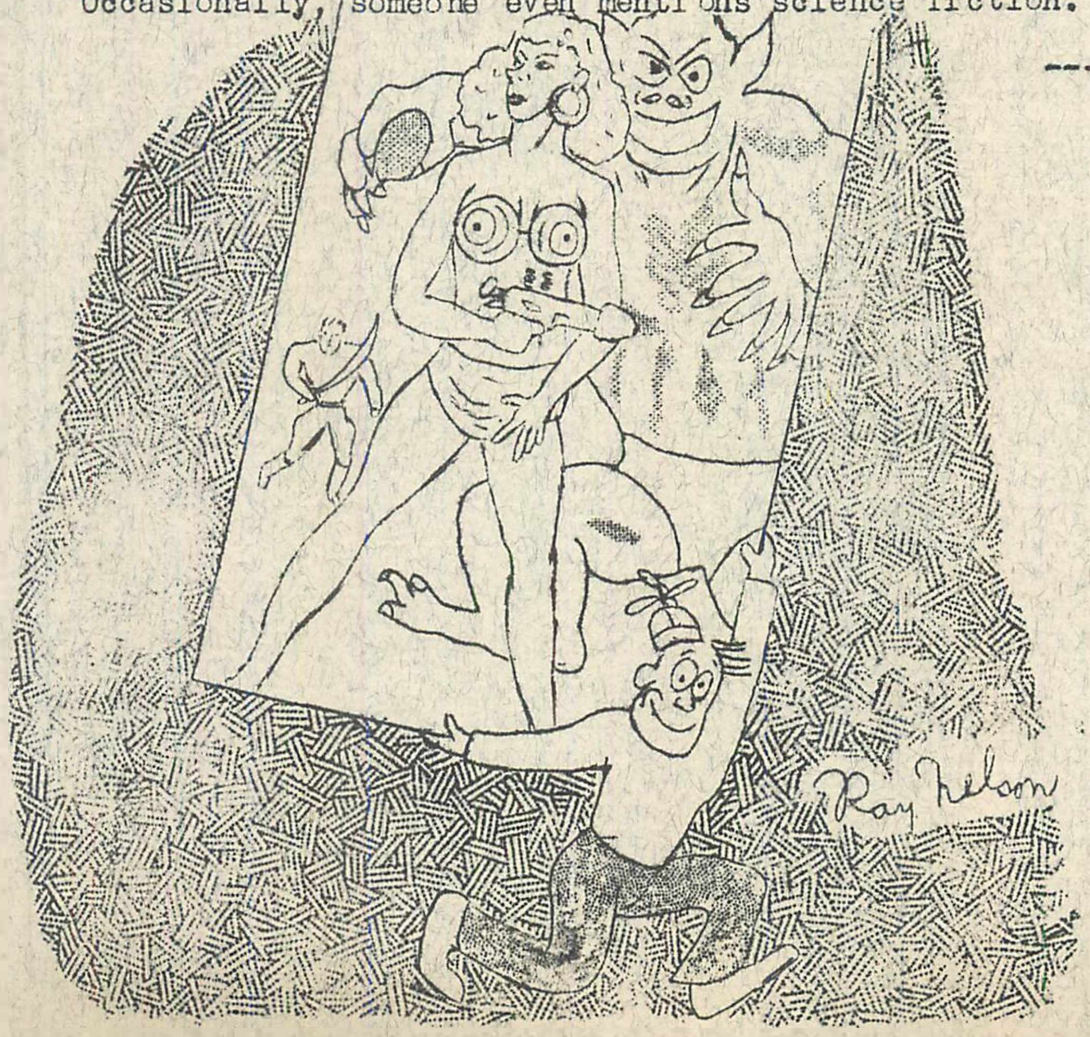
But every man to his own convention. Some pros---and some fans ---get stinking drunk. 'Tis rumoured some also take in bedmates. And there are "exclusive" groups, 5 or 6 dozen of "one's own kind"--well lah-de-dah!

And I wasn't too surprised when a few teenage fans approached me like I was some kind of Ghod---but when another pro sauntered over and started talking to me like we were two Ghods conversing, I wanted to set his pants on fire.

But generally, I found the convention I wanted at the Chicon. Fans talking about fanzines, pros talking about story-ideas, girls who didn't need to say a word---but who said plenty! And the more of that, and the greater variety of it, the better I like it.

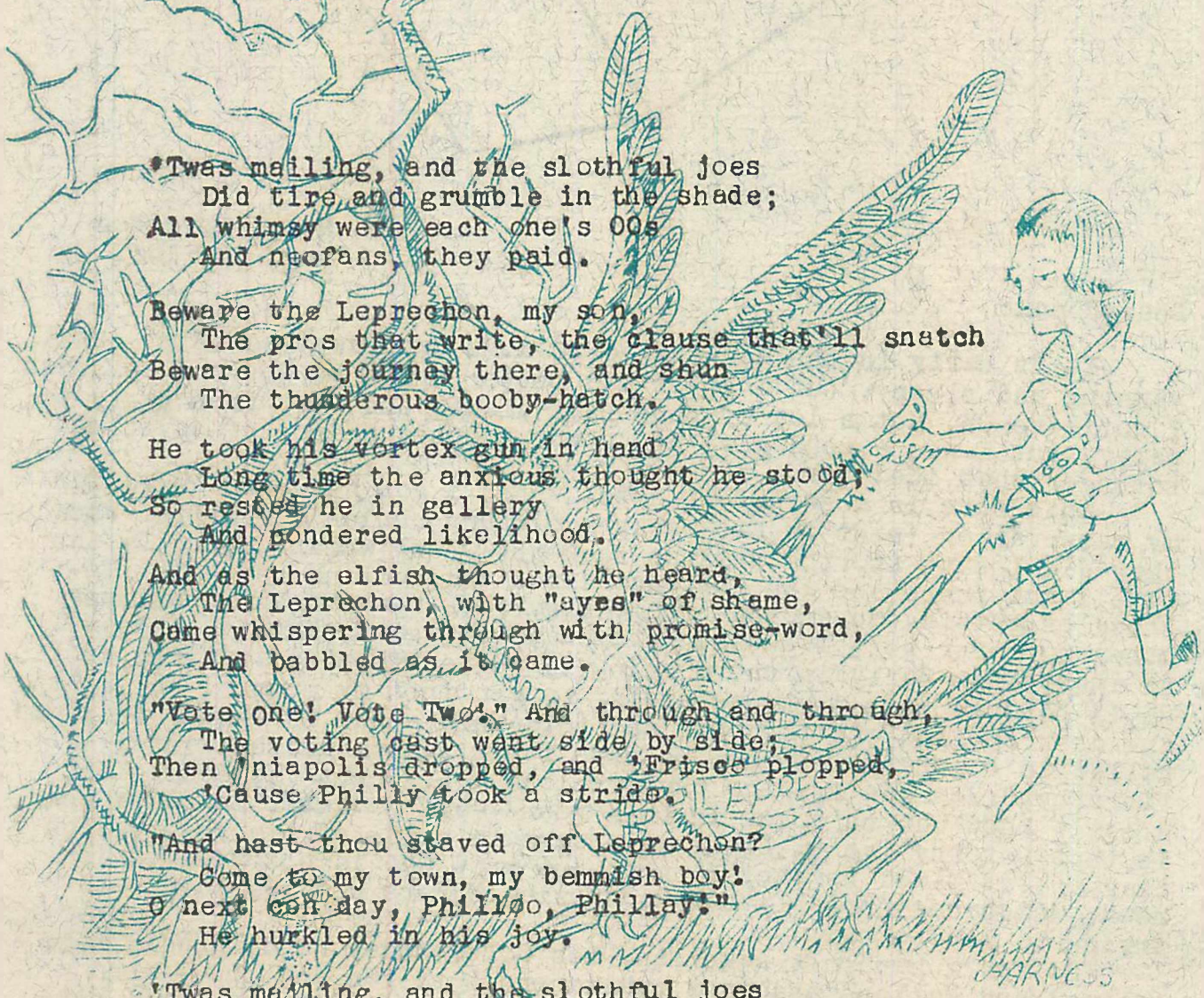
Occasionally, someone even mentions science fiction.

---JOE GIBSON



JACK HARNESS:

LEPRECHON COMPOLITICS



'Twas mailing, and the slothful joes
  Did tire and grumble in the shade;
All whimsy were each one's OOs
  And neofans, they paid.

Beware the Leprechon, my son,
  The pros that write, the clause that'll snatch
Beware the journey there, and shun
  The thunderous booby-hatch.

He took his vortex gun in hand
  Long time the anxious thought he stood;
So rested he in gallery
  And pondered likelihood.

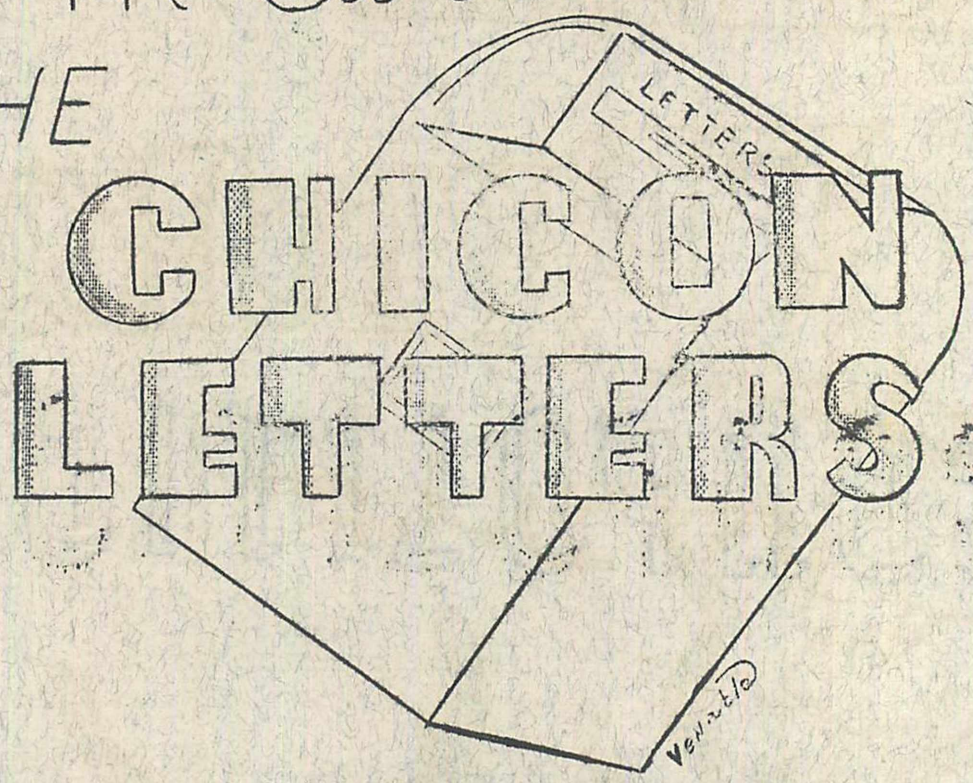
And as the elfish thought he heard,
  The Leprechon, with "ayes" of shame,
Came whispering through with promise-word,
  And babbled as it came.

"Vote one! Vote Two!" And through and through,
  The voting cast went side by side;
Then 'niapolis dropped, and 'Frisco plopped,
  'Cause Philly took a stride.

"And hast thou staved off Leprechon?
  Come to my town, my bemmish boy!
O next con day, Phillyo, Phillay!"
  He hurkled in his joy.

'Twas mailing, and the slothful joes
  Did tire and grumble in the shade;
All whimsy were each one's OOs
  And neofans, they paid.

G. M. Carr: THE CHICON LETTERS



Hotel Morrison
Aug. 30, 1952

Dear Frank:

It is early in the morning (6:30 A.M. Saturday) and I'm still yawning and sleepy, but I guess I'd better write to you and tell you I got here OK. Met a lot of fans last night, and went from party to party, but I was a good girl and never touched a drop of anything stronger than iced tea.

This sure is a screwball hotel. When I got here and asked for my reservation (sent in two weeks ago) they couldn't find it. When they did locate it, the bellhop took the wrong woman up, so by the time I got there she was half-undressed and combing her hair. Instead of getting me another room, they took her out and found another room for her, I guess. Never saw her again, but the reason I am awake this early in the morning in spite of being as tired as I am is because some jerk was trying to get into my room. I called up the desk to find out the time and told them about it---then this guy called in on the telephone. He says its his room and he wanted "Dorothy." You can imagine the growl he got. Seems the desk clerk doesn't know who he's got in this room---all he knows for sure now is that Dorothy isn't. Looks as though in spite of the reservation they are so mixed up they do not even know who is occupying this room, which has probably been confusing N3Fers who may have been trying to locate me.

So far I have met Ackerman, Les Cole, Honey Wood, RZWard (the artist) and various assorted publishers both fan and pro---also Walt Willis and Lee Hoffman. Walt was very friendly and would have liked to converse, but Lee Hoffman had him in tow and she seems

an OK fan, but it will have to wait until we see the crop of fanzines before we know.

I saw Willis again and had a brief chat with him before Lee located him. He seemed a little put out by it, but too polite to do anything but submit. He did manage to escape her once in a while and seemed really pleased to speak to me. He mentioned me in the list of those who worked to get him over. I did so little I was ashamed to be thanked for a mere mention or two and a contribution---but I certainly enjoyed the egoboo! He is a very nice-mannered, bashful-looking, gentle sort of guy---very much younger-looking than those pictures we have.

We took in about 50 new members for N3F. We all took turns standing at the table and grabbing the passing fans (like the Ancient Mariner) and hypnotizing them into signing on the dotted line. It was not hard to do, because we have such a nice display of material that N3F has distributed as benefits. And, most attractive of all, Racy brought a surprise for the N3F and mimeographed up the Redd Boggs ASTOUNDING STORY KEY and FANSPEAK stencils that we have been angling with Redd and Lee to get. They were beautiful jobs, looked just exactly like the ones Redd and Lee distributed through FAPA. I congratulated Racy on getting such a nice clean job with used stencils. He told us that he had them almost ready to distribute and would have them in the mail in a couple of months, so I guess it will be all right to stress them as a sales point. They surely are a feather in the N3F cap!

I wasn't sure whether there would be a masquerade when I left home, so I didn't bring a costume. I finally made myself up as a monster with three heads---Martin Alger took a picture of it, hope I didn't break his camera. Sure was a messy masquerade, drinks spilled all over the floor and goonies in wierd and rather ugly costumes wandering around trying to keep their feet from getting wet. Rather cool in there, so Harlan Ellison (who hasn't got much fat on his bones to keep him warm) was rather goose-pimply in his swim-shorts, headband and lipstick insignia. He came as something from an aSF cover. I didn't stay for the dancing, it was too darned crowded to dance anyway. On the other hand, I felt sorry for a couple of heavily-garbed BEMS...never did find out what they were supposed to be. One couple had a gallon jug of wine supposed to be blood...gaah.

Tomorrow I make my arrangements to come home. I have only spent about $10.00---$3.50 for pictures and a book, the rest for food and the costume---and my room will be about $25 ($5.50 per night plus extras) so I didn't do so badly...In fact, I was downright heroic in resisting temptation at the auction. I didn't dare bid on anything for fear I couldn't stop once I got started. If I check out before 3 PM it may be less---the biggest expense of a convention is travel.

Jerry Frahm, Bob Rosling and Lee Bishop are here. Jerry sends his regards. I saw August Derleth. Gosh, whatta man! Wow! Eva Firestone is a quivery little woman like a bird without feathers. Honey Wood is beautiful and sweet as her name. Has a nice-looking husband, too. He kind of stands around tolerantly in the background and watches her fanning around knee-deep in fans and activity, with an amused expression. Reminds me of you.

Hotel Morrison
Sept. 1, 1953
(Monday morning)

Dear Frank:

(cont'd on page 42)

definitely hostile to females (in a polite way, of course). I left her last night sitting with Walt (him looking very silly in a Confederate cap and an embarrassed grin) in Henry Burwell's room with a row of half-stewed fans looking hungrily at her. There were several other women in the suite of rooms to begin with, including a very young girl (later I found out her name is Su Rosen---very pretty but oh, so adolescent!) and her mother, also very nice---and very patient. Mrs. Ackerman was there as well as a couple of other women whose names I didn't catch. Rich Elsberry sat scowling in one corner of the room, but aside from that everybody was chatting happily until Lee H. came in towing Walt on an invisible leash. She kind of froze the jollity momentarily until she passed through into the inner bedroom where the flashbulbs started popping and gales of merriment burst out. The other women glanced at each other, Mrs. Rosen gathered up Su (who evidently hadn't noticed anything) and they all started drifting out. I drifted out with them after one farewell peek to see what the laughter was all about. That was when I saw Walt sitting on the edge of the bed looking as though he wished he could crawl under it.

I met Stu Hoffman (the N3F mailer), he's an awfully nice fellow ---older than I had thought. The N3F gang are certainly nice people, Bill Venable is an awfully nice kid who will make a swell president if he only gets good support from the Directors. But if he doesn't, he'll be hamstrung before he starts, ---I'm going to try typing up those SAPS stencils on my typer this morning. Between the 3-shift machine and my shiftless eyelids---I'm so sleepy---I don't know how they'll turn out. But if I don't do them here, I may not get a chance after I get home. In time for the mailing, that is...

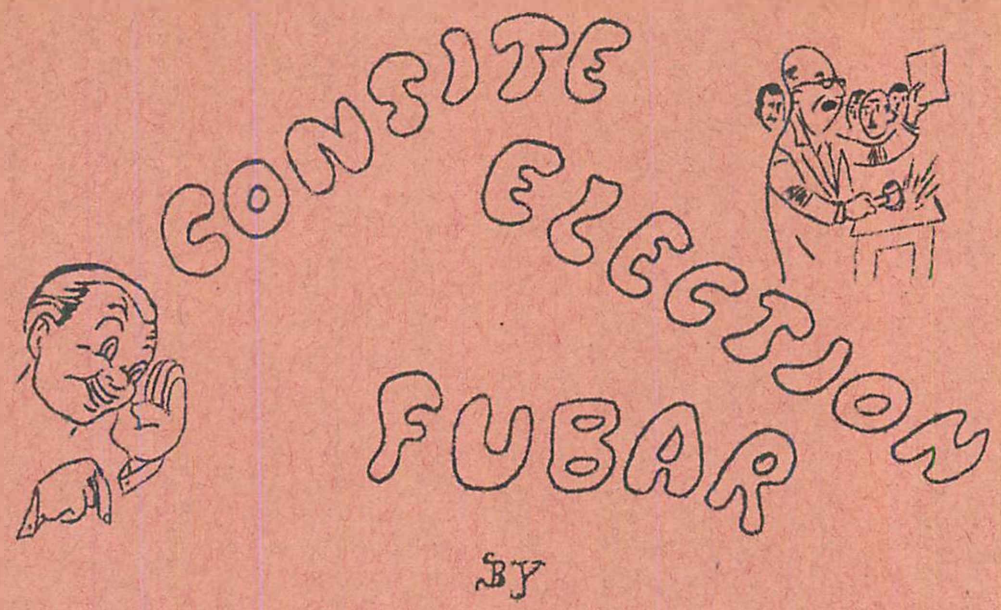
Hotel Morrison
Aug. 31, 1953
(Sunday night)

Frank, Dear:

I am having a wonderful time, but I miss you. It is fine when I am dashing around cornering new N3F members and planning strategy for handling feuders and getting autographs from BNFs and pros---but when I want to sit quietly for a few minutes and listen to what is going on, I miss your company.

I met Bob Farnham. He certainly is a nice old duck, reminds me of one of those Billikins with the sweet grin and fuzzy fringe of hair on his head. He has thick glasses and looks very wise, but he is so deaf that conversation with him is erratic. I ordered a dollar's worth of pictures from him---10 of them. He has several of me and N3F members and I am looking forward to seeing them. I also got a picture of the banquet. For a change I am visible!

I met most of my feuding partners and I think they are soothed down. The Coles turned out to be an awfully nice young couple with a young baby they brought along. I know the baby's name is Dana, but I didn't have the heart to ask them whether it is a boy or a girl--- "Dana" could be either. I saw the baby but it was asleep on its face in the crib so about all I could catch a glimpse of was two small feet and a big hump of diapered bottom! Even the "Progressive Fandom" group (which seems to be more anti-[illegible] rather than pro-anything) fell flat on its little face when I showed up. Calkins seems to be



DICK CLARKSON

During the months before the Tasfic, the only obvious bidder for the 1953 consite was San Francisco, sponsored by the Elves', Gnomes', and Little Men's Science-Fiction, Chowder, Marching and Ballot-Box Stuffing Society: The Leprecon for '53. Except for that one, nobody else seemed to know who else was to bid. Atlanta, it was rumored, would try for it but an interview with Ian Macauley, before the Con, revealed that Atlanta would not bid. The prospects seemed bad for the East.

However, a caucus was held among the Philadelphia delegation, and the upshot of it was that Philly would bid for '53. Then the two main contenders were instantly recognized as Philly and Frisco. And then came the foul up. Indianapolis, a city completely overlooked in the Power Politics, came up strong and managed to split the Eastern votes -- which, together, would have won for the East on the first ballot ---- well enough to produce a 100% stalemate in the voting.

Several fast and furious conferences with the man who proposed Indianapolis --- a man, by the way, who is in total ignorance that such a thing as fandom exists - failed to get the Indianapolis votes into the place where they belonged: Philadelphia. The man had tied up beyond repair the Eastern contingent, and managed to produce only chaos in the balloting.

Until the moment that this character nominated Indianapolis, the members of the Indianapolis group itself were in total ignorance of the fact that they were bidding! The trouble caused was definitely not due to the ISFA, but to this one man, Dr. Oscar C. Brauner, who has had a habit of making himself obnoxious at every large Con-

vention this year.

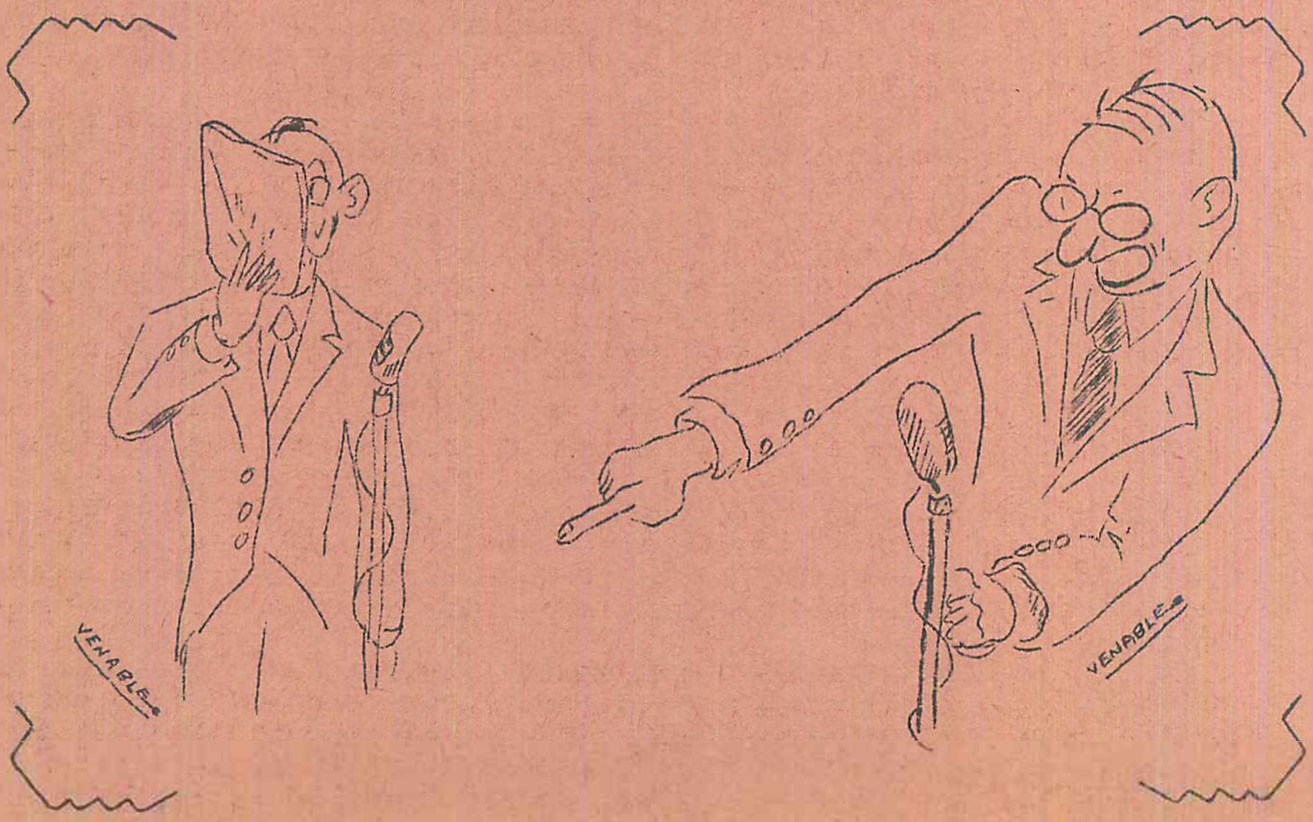
When it became obvious that Indianapolis could n o t possibly win, Brauner refused either to withdraw or to help the Philly group-which was favored by the majority of those voting for Indianapolis--to win by swinging the votes in that direction. Instead, it was not until the Chair ordered Indianapolis to withdraw (finally finishing the snafu that had been on the loose) that the Indianapolis vote was freed from the grasp of this one individual. But there was yet one more foul up to come.

When the Indianapolis group withdrew, somehow a man representing the MINORITY of the ISFA got the floor, and before anyone knew what had happened, h e had spoken and urged the Indianapolis votes to go for San Francisco. Had a spokesman for the MAJORITY of the Indianapolis voters been given preference, and he should have been,of course, he would have suggested that the votes go to Philadelphia, as witnessed by the fact that, even under the influence of the minority's speech in favor of 'Frisco, the majority of the Indianapolis votes went for Philly. That, naturally, turned the tide and decided definitely for Philadelphia.

But Brauner's impulsiveness and pure hard-headedness not only split the Eastern votes--which would have decided the issue no later than the second ballot, thus saving time and effort-----but also was a great cause of confusion all during the voting. I have conferred with at least a dozen others----all BNF----who agree with these sentiments wholeheartedly.

The prosecution rests.

.....Dick Clarkson



HAL SHAPIRO: MISCARRIAGE

IN MY OPINION, one of the greatest travesties of fairness and right thinking took place at the Chicon II when Philadelphia, aided by a coalition with certain New Yorkers, obtained the right to sponsor the 1953 Stfcon.

Let's take a look at the facts. In 1950, for the first time in five years, the West Coast sponsored a convention. They could have kept the con in the west but, in the interests of fair play and placing the good of fandom as a whole as opposed to fandom on the West Coast in the balance, they let it go to New Orleans. From Nolacon, of course, it was just one year to Chicon II.

In proper rotation, had the majority of fans attending the Chicago convention been of fair and unbiased mind, it should have gone to San Francisco. Why didn't it? There are a number of reasons.

Certain New York fans, headed by Calvin T. Beck and Ken Beale, hold to their own prejudiced beliefs that there is no fandom south of the Mason-Dixon line and west of the Mississippi. So they, with the help of many youngsters and misguided oldsters, formed what they baptised the Federated Fan Clubs of New York, or some similar name, thereby giving the incorrect impression that they represented the majority of the fans in New York. According to his letter to me, Beck and his group were solely responsible for the Philcon II.

Naturally, it is the goal of many fanclubs to sponsor a world convention and, in this case, Philadelphia allowed this goal to overshadow their sense of fair play and formed the unholy coalition. Beck's group bid for the con in New York and, at a dramatic moment, before balloting even started, withdrew in favor of Philadelphia.

Now, in any former convention, an obvious maneuver like this would not only have failed. It would have been laughed down. So why did it succeed in Chicago? The answer to this question demands deeper probing.

The Chicon II was a professionally run convention and the people behind it, in an effort to prove they could have a more successful convention than mere fans, aimed at getting the largest number of attendees. They didn't give a damn if fans couldn't be there but, as long as they had a large number of people there, the con would be a success.

This, of course, precipitated a large number of people who, before they read the Chicon ads in various prozines, probably didn't even know that such an entity as fandom existed. They came to the convention from the immediate area surrounding Chicago and the East out of curiosity. They had never attended a con before. They didn't know the history of fandom or the conventions. Naturally a majority of them came from the East for Chicago is in the East.

So, when time for balloting came around, and it was a clear-cut contest between Philly (East) and 'Frisco (West), most of the people there voted for the East out of loyalty and because they mightbe able to attend next year's con if it were in the East. The con committee didn't make any effort whatsoever to acquaint these neophytes with fandom and, therefore, aided and abetted these people in their misconception. I say misconception because these fans, for the most part, believed that there was an equal representation between various parts of the country and, in the supposed contest, were eager to support their own part.

So it went over. It is, of course, too late to change things. And I am not advocating boycotting the PennVention. I'll be there. But I am going to do my damnedest to see that the West Coast gets the convention in 1954.

It's up to fandom. Are we going to be ruled by a small, self-centered clique with headquarters in New York? Or are we going to play it fair and allow the West and the South their fair share of opportunity to put on and attend Stfcons?

P.S.: In case you're wondering, I'm from Detroit and will have as hard a time as anyone getting to Western Stfcons.

—HAL SHAPIRO

THE CHICON LETTERS (cont'd from page 39)

Well, I'm all packed up and notified the desk that I think I'll check out this afternoon. Will probably wait around til midnight, but Eva is staying on another day so I can use her room if I need to change or anything. I'm looking forward to the ballet tonight, or I'd leave on an earlier train. Guess I'll go down for a bite of breakfast now. I lingered so long in my room that I've missed out on part of the panel...

(AS MOST OF FANDOM KNOWS, this saga was ended abruptly when the elevator doors crashed together unexpectedly on GMC's cranium and knocked her prostrate on the 20th floor. That was the end of the 10th Annual Science Fiction Convention as far as she was concerned. When she came to, she was taken to her room and a couple of stitches taken in her head. The Convention Committee was notified but they sent word they didn't want to assume any responsibility, so Eva Firestone and Honey Wood sat with her until a nurse could be obtained. She stayed on at the hotel's expense until able to travel, and apparently suffered no further ill effect other than shock, pain and the loss of 1/3 of her convention.)

—G. M. CARR

LT. WILLARD WOOD AYRES, USAF

SATURDAY AFTERNOON. The lobby of the Hotel Morrison.

"Pardon me, is this where the science fiction convention is being held?"

"Oh, yes, that! You have a reservation, I suppose?"

"Oh, ah, well, that is, ah---YES, a fairly nice room with a bath, please."

"That will be ten dollars, in advance."

"Well, perhaps not quite so nice."

"Six dollars, in advance."

With the above I became a true conventioneer. A while later in the lobby I saw a strange group bearing down upon the desk. Little did I know that it was Bill Venable, Donald Susan and Company. In short order I had received seven different fanzines with appropriate sales talks, introductions to the entire group, inquiries as to what was going on, and six invitations (I think that's how many were in the group) to join the N3F.

I was at the convention representing Armed Forces Science Fiction (a group, I am sorry to say, which has just about broken up, while I have been a cadet). I had agreed to promote them at the Chicon before I received orders for cadets and this was to be my last activity before six months of isolation. So up to the convention committee's suite I went. I was impressed by what I saw.

As one went in upon the left there was a complete bar. One then proceeded into the living-drawing-sitting-or-what-have-you room, and met the great, the near-great, and the not-at-all-great of science fiction.

Spying several others in uniform, I introduced myself and we went out to stock my room with beverages, alcoholic and non, for a small gathering that evening to introduce AFSF (Armed Forces Science Fiction) to the convention.

Saturday evening, five parties later.

It was at said small gathering (possibly two hundred during the course of the evening) that I first took real notice of the Little Men (or the Elves, Gnomes and Little Men's Science Fiction, Chowder, and Marching Society of Berkeley, California, as they like to be called.) Actually no one stayed at any one party as there were dozens going on throughout the hotel, with by far the biggest and I must add, best, in the pent-house which the Little Men had rented.

I also began to hear comments about the next convention which everyone was sure would be in California. And here and there a few dissenting voices wishing it didn't have to be. But the general opinion seemed to be that no one but the Little Men had a chance. The Little Men, of course, being one of the best-organized and biggest clubs in existence, with some of the best writers, etc., in the country for members, had been campaigning for the site for two years.

Four o'clock and to bed.

Sunday morning, registration in the Ballroom.

Rumours were flying that registration was going to top a thousand, with several hundred who were not bothering to register to boot.

I met the Atlanta delegation and most of the Solid South, who gathered in the Atlanta Suite. I heard and agreed with them (I'm from Florida myself) that it would be nice for the South to be really solid in the voting, but wondered who we could back against the Little Men.

Downstairs, by this time, the activities were beginning. Down I went to advertise AFSF. I ran into a couple of people from New York, and they told me they wished that the convention next year could be in New York, but that the several clubs in New York did not get on so well (at least there was one which was always making trouble for the others and not cooperating at all.)

I was told that the West Coast had had the convention a year or two ago and that many would be unable to make it to the next one if it was to be held on the West Coast. Also, it was the East's turn again to be host.

Sunday night, many rumours later.

The banquet was wonderful. I put up a sign advertising a meeting of all interested in Korzybskian semantics at two A.M. in my room. I thought that anyone who would come at that hour must indeed be interested. My idea was to put out a thought-provoking SF-semantics magazine.

David Kyle was kind enough to offer to handle reproduction of said mag. He is head of Prime Press, as you know, and what is more important, head of the Philadelphia group.

He mentioned that they might be able to handle the convention if they could get the support. He said I might come up to their caucus the next morning if I wished. They had enough members present for a quorum of their club and so could legally vote to enter a bid, even though they hadn't planned on it before the Chicon.

Earlier in the evening (shall I say morning?) I had seen Bill Venable in his room and he had said that the Pittsburghers couldn't possibly handle a convention. He had mentioned that I might try the Philly bunch. Also visited the Penthouse. Another fine party was in progress, which has my vote for the best private party held. Distributed copies of CONFUSION, the ill-fated fanzine of AFSF, to all sundry while up there.

Monday morning, earlier than I care to think about (approximately 10:00 A.M.)

Went down to Philly's suite. After hearing remark, "There's a spy in the hall, QUIET," the door opened a crack, I was recognized, talked about, verified and finally let in.

Someone brought up the idea of having various supporting fan groups appear to disagree and then to unite behind Philly to try to get a landslide started. We thought (rightly, as it turned out) that there would be four groups.

1. New York, most of which would back us, a part which would rebel and go West, out of spite, so to speak.
2. Pro-Little Men, who would show their full strength on the first ballot.
3. Fence-sitters.
4. Pro-Philly, including the South and AFSF.

We also guessed that the fence-sitters plus ourselves would outnumber the Little Men.

So strategy was decided. New York would probably be nominated along with one or two others. Atlanta and AFSF were to second Philly because of the N.Y. split, then New York might withdraw in favor of Philly.

Monday evening, three drinks later.

I ran into a friend and as a consequence did not go down to the Terrace Casino until after Philadelphia had been nominated and seconded, but I did get on record for AFSF as favoring Philly.

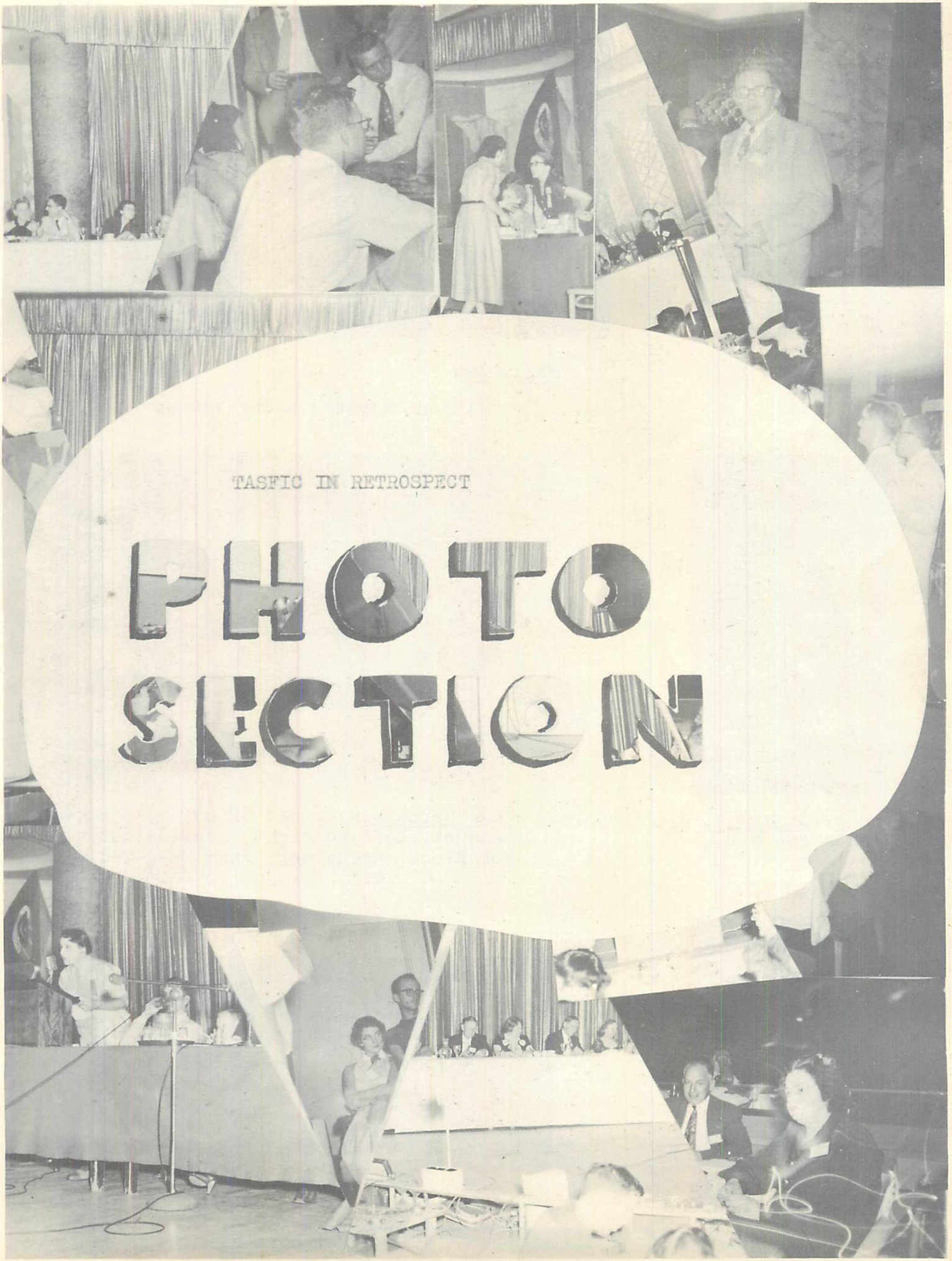
After the first ballot, lines were pretty well drawn, and just as we had thought: New York split, with most going to us.

All the Little Mens' strength came in on the first ballot.

There was a large splinter section which, after a few breath-held minutes, finally voted Philly as the next convention city.

All in all it was a lot of fun, with plenty of clean, friendly rivalry, which is as it should be since it encourages a vigorous, healthy fan movement.

—WOODY AYRES


TASFIC IN RETROSPECT
PHOTO
SECTION

THE PROGRAM

SPEAKERS, DEBATES, PANEL DISCUSSIONS & AUCTIONS HIGHLIGHT A VARIED AND INTERESTING PROGRAM

Willy Ley

Ray Palmer

Flying saucers under debate

John W. Campbell, Jr. takes the mike.

Hugo Gernsback, guest of honor, speaks at banquet. Left to right, Mrs. Gernsback, Bob Bloch, Gernsback, Judy May, Ted Dikty, & L. Sprague de Camp.

E.E. "Doc" Smith in impromptu address

Book Publishers Panel
Left to right: Lloyd Eshbach, Jim Williams, Dave Kyle, August Derleth, Marty Greensberg & Mel Korshak

Ted Dikty and Mel Korshak exhort bidders on Paul original cover painting from WONDER STORIES.

Left to right: Forrest Ackerman, Eva Gold, Mel Korshak and Mrs. Korshak supervise raffle of original black & white illos.

FANS AND PROS LIVE IT UP

PARTIES, OFF-THE-CUFF GET-TOGETHERS, DISCUSSIONS AND SMALL SCALE MEETINGS HELD BE INDEPENDENT GROUPS MADE UP THE REST OF THE CONVENTIONEER'S ACTIVITIES.

Panel of Editors

Left to right: James Quinn, John W. Campbell, Jr., Diane Reinsberg (Moderator) Wm. Hamling, Mrs. H.L. Gold, Howard Browne, Samuel Mines

Lee Hoffman (back to camera) talks to Walt Willis while Max Keasler looks on.

Gregg Calkins is reflected in door.

Roger Phillips Graham signs autograph while wife, Mari Wolf Graham, looks on.

...AND A GOOD TIME HAD BY ALL

Judy May chats with unidentified Little Men

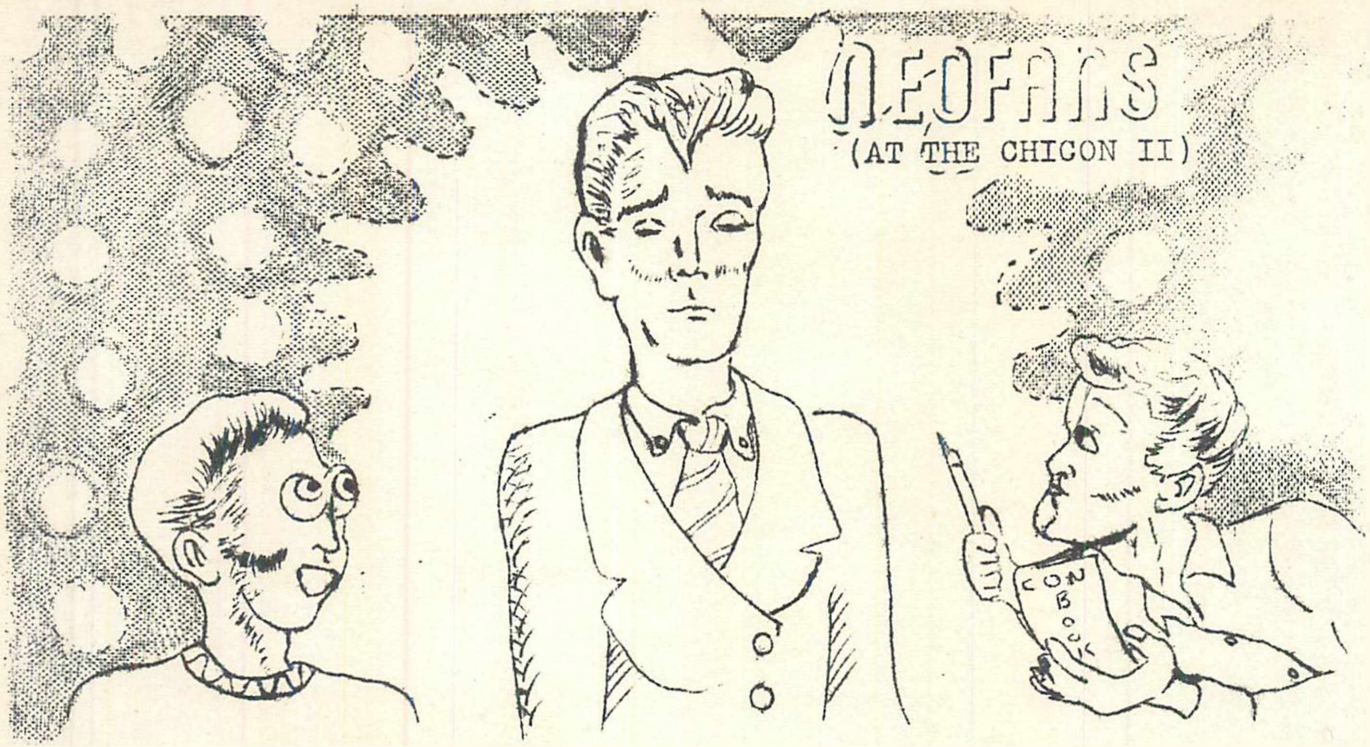
Jim Harmon laughs

Dick Clarkson and Jack Harness (left) talk with Shelby Vick (facing camera) Dave van Arnam and Ian Macauley (backs to camera). Unidentified fan watches.

Mack Reynolds challenges fan to fight

Left to right: Max Keasler, Lee Jacobs and Rich Elsberry hold a serious discussion

Hal Shapiro (left) and Martin Alger square off to fight with fanzines



A Brother to the Bem he stands, his goggle eyes agape
His restless, flutter-fumble feet catch in a curtain's drape
(That but reflects a brain not used to seeing for itself---
The people who had always been collected on a shelf.)
Unfeeling fingers humbly raise a pen, a con booklet;
Eyes ask the silent question, "Oh, but grace this small fledgelet
With but a sweep of hand sublime, and thenceforth will I be
Devotee, foll'wer, tool and horn---there'll be no Ghods but thee!
O little, little neofan, O two-edged compliment!
Who sees the blend of fandom's wine must view the sediment;
Subborting all the richer fluid, bubbles burning bright,
The Word, the Laws, the Style, the One---the Elders robed in lig
A base foundation, mortal clay, to uplift through the years
The marble pillar, golden gloss, and temples of the seers.
A sound account of reason, that? Let's take a closer look:
It's best to glimpse the other side before we close the book.
Ah, yes! Within our ointment's depths, there swims a glaring fly---
For each of us was neo once---yes, even you and I!