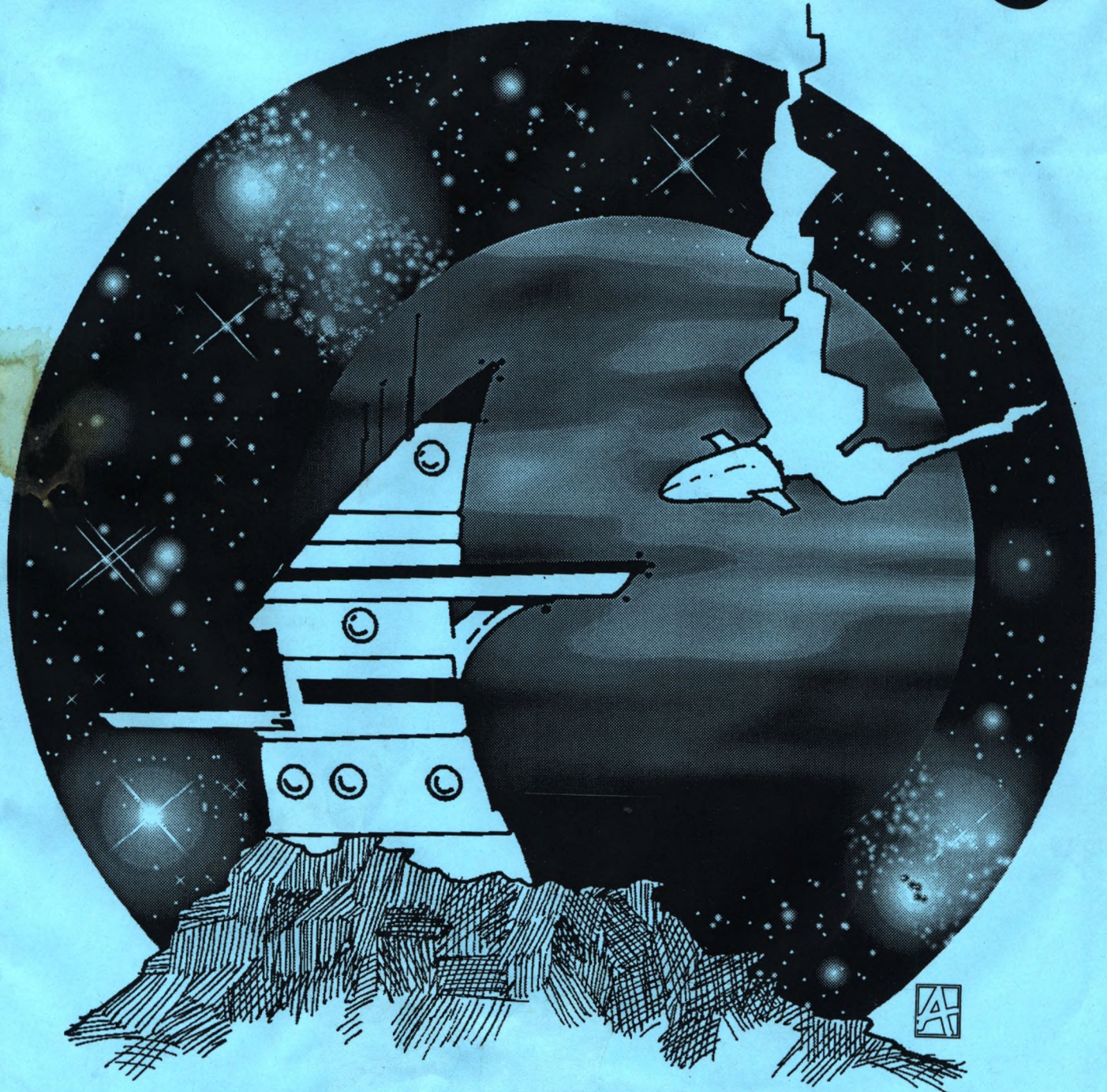


FILE 110



Brave, New Worldcon Bids

At Long Last, Japan!

"Japanese fandom is going to bid for the Worldcon for 2005 or 2006!" Takumi Shibano writes excitedly. "The official announcement is yet to come.... I just want to report this to you now!"

"The chairman of the bidding committee will be Mr. Hiraoki Inoue, one of my best friends. He was born in 1958, has been a science fiction fan since his boyhood, and was among the founders of a fan group named Space Force in 1977. This has been one of the most active groups here, and he was its chairman for several years. He attended the Worldcon several times, and you may remember the anime *Lensman* he brought to L.A.con II where it had its premier show.

"He is a professional in the animation field. After working at several anime studios, he founded Oniro, his own office, in 1989, and produced many TV and theatrical anime works including *Memories*, *Macross II*, *Tenchimuyo*, etc. In 1998, he closed his office and joined AIC (Anime International Company) as a general producer.

"The nickname, the con site, the exact date, and our liaison officer have not been determined yet. My wife and I and our daughter are going to attend Conolulu this coming July, and I expect I will have more details to talk about there. If everything goes well, the formal bidding will start at Millennium Philcon."

Boston Launches 2004 Bid

If the Worldcon-sized meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR) can find affordable hotel rooms in Boston, why not smofs? And right on cue, Massachusetts Convention Fandom, Inc./The Galactic Patrol has announced a bid to hold the Worldcon on the

traditional Labor Day weekend in 2004. An interesting coincidence is that AAR held its annual conference in consecutive years at facilities MCFI has proposed for consecutive Worldcon bids, Orlando's Dolphin and Swan in 1998, and downtown Boston in 1999. Boston hotels hurt their own business with high prices, and are now offering saner rates.

MCFI's proposed facilities include the Sheraton Boston Hotel and Towers, the Copley Marriott, and the Hynes Convention Center, a more compact version of the very successful site used by Noreascon 3 in 1989.

Their press release assures us, "Facilities directors have been extremely enthusiastic about the potential of a Worldcon in Boston and have offered excellent room blocks, meeting space arrangements, and the full Hynes Convention Center."

There are now three bidders for 2004, Boston, Charlotte, and Nieuw Amsterdam (New York).

Boston in 2004 is offered by the same group which ran Noreascons 2 and 3 and which has recently hosted fans in such diverse conventions as Smofcon 15 (1997), Ditto 11 (1998), and the 25th World Fantasy Convention (1999).

MCFI/The Galactic Patrol opened the Boston in 2004 bid with gala parties at Arisia (Boston) and Chattacon (Chattanooga) on January 15, 2000. Fans interested in finding out about upcoming convention parties may feel free to write Boston in 2004, P.O. Box 1010, Framingham, MA 01701, email info@mcfi.org, or visit us at our Web pages at <http://www.mcfi.org>.

Presupporting memberships in the Galactic Patrol are available for \$12; Intergalactic Friends memberships are \$75.

With fandom's support, the Galactic Patrol can protect the galaxy from zwilniks.



File 770 134

File 770:134 is edited by Mike Glyer at 705 Valley View Ave., Monrovia CA 91016. No animals were harmed in the making of this fanzine.

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Art Credits

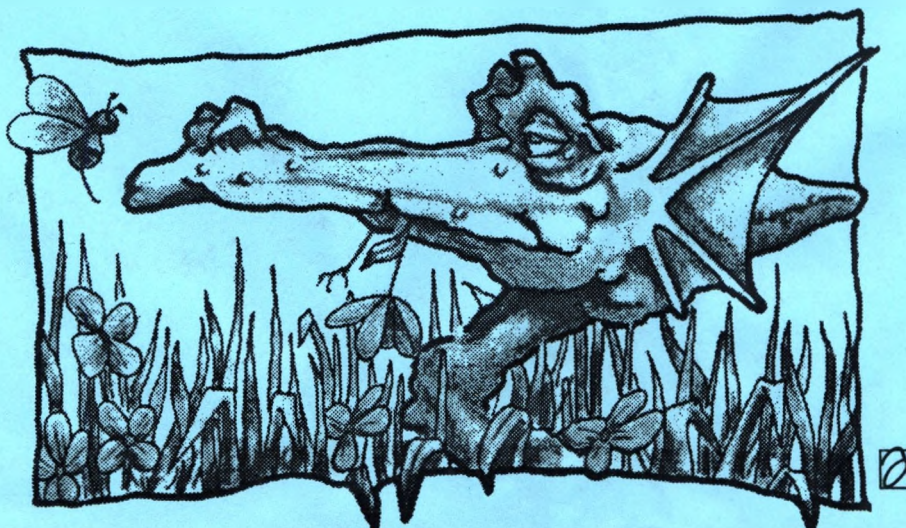
Alan White: Cover, 2, 5, 8, 19, 20, 21, 26, 29

Joe Mayhew: 3, 4, 22, 23, 25

Marc Schirmeister: 6, 14

Grant Canfield: 10, 13

Art Editor's Note: Grant Canfield copied dozens of drawings and cartoons from his sketchbook and sent them along to be shared with faneditors. Some have been published before, some have not. Drop me a note if you want several for your zine.



Corflatch!

Potlatch 9

February 24-28, 2000 - Seattle, WA

Report by David Bratman

Potlatch, which an easterner might call the west coast version of Readercon (but I'm not an easterner, so I won't), returned to Seattle again this year, in its usual venue of the University Plaza Hotel, alias "Tudor Nightmare Villa." The program followed the customary Potlatch tradition of a sequence of meaty panels about books on Saturday, each one featuring a group of people who were actually interested in the topic and who discussed it over before hand: there is no "I don't know why I'm on this panel" at Potlatch. And there's always lots of comments from the floor, with the audience often functioning as an additional panelist, or even several.

The opening panel was particularly bouncy: five panelists had each compiled a list of 20 essential books for understanding SF of the last 20 years, and while a handout was provided to the audience, some of the panelists brought last-minute revised versions with them as they arrived. The lists were highly diverse with little overlap, and each person interpreted "essential" a bit differently. None of them simply listed their favorite books. Tom Whitmore listed books that seemed to most excite, as a group, his customers at The Other Change of Hobbit. Ron Drummond turned in a wildly eclectic list going as far afield as a study of Beethoven's string quartets, all of which (he said) showed something about writing or storytelling or literary exposition. Jerry Kaufman's list was mostly of books that have stuck with him over the years and seemed to him to exemplify where the field is going overall, and Kate Schaefer and Paul Kincaid did much the same, with natural emphases in their cases on female and British writers, respectively.

Con chair Ian Hagemann, fresh from the WTO protests, had wanted a Potlatch program with a political air to it, and we got this in Ian's own panel on social and economic class power in SF (which I missed), and one discussing Suzy McKee Charnas's "Holdfast" series, which unusually for such a panel included the author. The panel was most interesting for the observations on how *Walk to the End of the World* began as a satire, with the books slowly evolving into more serious examinations of feminist principles. Despite the promise of the program book blurb, it didn't seem that the panel devoted much attention to the fourth book, *The Conqueror's Child*.

Another panel, "Is the Lens Opening or Closing?" compared the dividing line between optimistic and pessimistic SF with that between positive and negative content. They're not at all the same thing. Paul Williams pointed out that while Phil Dick's futures are usually negative, his readers often put down the book with an optimistic feeling, if only because their worst fears have been confirmed. For an example of a book with a positive storyline that leaves many readers feeling pessimistic, a couple people suggested Clarke's *Childhood's End*. Orwell's 1984 won the prize as the most consistently depressing by both measures. Debbie Notkin moderated this panel.

Of the two remaining panels, one compared SF with the romance genre, finding a lot of overlap; the other examined the role of writers as their own worst enemies, discussing habits that interfere with doing one's best work.

Sunday's activities at Potlatch included the banquet, highlighted by the always exciting question of which table gets to visit the buffet line

I think we may have found
the Dalai Smof: he picked
the beanie of Sam Moskowitz.



first, and the Clarion West fundraising auction. Perennial auctioneer Ellen Klages wasn't present this year, and even though I had to leave before the auction began, her absence left the con feeling somewhat less bubbly than usual. I have mixed feelings about that.

But that still left about a hundred talkative attendees from four countries (a sprinkling from Canada, Britain, and Australia), with plenty of good conversation during the do-it-yourself programming, in the con suite, around Jane Hawkins's chocolate party, at the dance, and in the dealers' room and the "toy room" at registration. The youngest attendee got a lot of attention in the con suite: Amy Thomson and Edd Vick's newly-adopted daughter, who celebrated her first birthday this weekend. Kate Yule and David Levine handed out a new *Bento*, always a treat.

Next year's Potlatch will be in the San Francisco area: details will emerge later.

Corflu 2000

March 3-5, 2000 - Seattle, WA

Notes by Janice Gelb

Janice Gelb was at work on a full Corflu report destined for her *SFPazine* as File 770 went to press. She generously offered part of the work-in-progress for publication here, a sideline view of Corflu's test of fannish prowess:

Iron Faned: "The Saturday night program item was called Iron Faned: a takeoff on the Iron Chef cult television show that features a challenger taking on the 'iron chef' and having to make dishes that feature a secret ingredient. The 'iron faneds' in the competition were an American team consisting of Ulrika O'Brien, Jae Leslie Adams, Bill Bodden, Mark Manning, and Stu Shiffman. The challengers were

members of the *Plokta* cabal: Pam Wells, Alison Scott, Mike Scott, Steven Cain, Marianne Cain, and an inflatable Wisconsin dairy cow.

"The secret ingredient was 'salmon.' Both teams managed to produce impressive 6-page fanzines in just one hour, with running color commentary during the process by Paul Kincaid, Maureen Kincaid Speller, Geri Sullivan, and Lucy Huntzinger. The amazing David Levine was the host, complete with a baroque outfit like the host of the real show wears, and comedy bios of all the participants.

"The defending American team produced a very good fanzine given the time limit, with a really great title: *Roe vs. Wabe*. The British contingent had prepared some material ahead of time, including guest articles, and their zine had better production values as a result. (It featured, among other things, parody book titles including 'The Immortal Spawn by Salmon Moskowitz') The British team won the challenge."

FAAn Awards: Winners of the Faan awards are:

Best Fanzine: *Trapdoor*, Robert Lichtman

Best New Fanzine Fan: Yvonne Rowse

Best Fan Artist: D West

Best Letterhack: Lloyd Penney

Best Fan Writer: Christina Lake

Most Total Votes (Fan Face of 1999 or 2000 or something): Christina Lake

fwa Officers: Geri Sullivan is fwa Past President for 1999. Walt Willis was elected fwa Past President for 1952.

Fanthology: The Seattle Corflu committee reportedly published a collection of the best fannish articles of 1994. Bill Rotsler's "A Life Synopsis" from *File 770:104* is among them.

Fan Funds

DUFF 2000 Race Is On!

The DUFF (Down Under Fan Fund) 2000 race is on! Australian fans Susan Batho and Cathy Cupitt are standing for DUFF. The winner goes to Chicon 2000. Download your ballot and the latest DUFF newsletter from the DUFF 2000 web site at <http://home.pacbell.net/jgelb/duff2k.html>

Susan Batho, formerly Susan Smith Clarke, is a past Ditmar winner for services to Australian fandom, who has also chaired five Medtrek conventions and published over 400 fanzines. This is Susan's third run for DUFF: one of Aussiefandom's first three DUFF contenders in 1974, she lost to Leigh Edmonds. Then, she ran again in 1998, and lost to Terry Frost. Susan has visited America four times – a trip in 1988 to Nolacon II as a bidder for Sydney in '91, trips to MediaWest*Con in 1989 and 1991, and to Disneyland in 1999.

Cupitt is part of the 2001 Natcon (Aussie national convention) committee and publisher of a fanzine called *The Rhizome Factor*. She has not been to America before.

Anyone active in fandom on or before January 1, 1999 may vote. The deadline for sending ballots to an administrator is April 30, 2000.

The North American DUFF administrator is Janice Gelb (1070 Mercedes Avenue #2, Los Altos, CA 94022, j_gelb@yahoo.com); Australasian administrator is Terry Frost (4/8 Walker Street, West Brunswick, Victoria 3055, hlector@netspace.net.au

TAFF

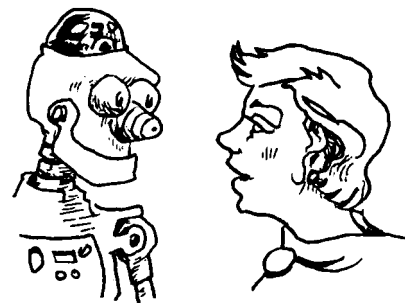
Fans have until May 6 to choose **Tommy Ferguson**, **Sue Mason**, or **Tobes Valois** as TAFF's delegate to Chicon 2000. Their platforms dangle three different carrots before the voters. Ferguson promises to write a trip report by the end of the year 2000. Artist Mason says she would leave fillos fluttering in her wake, like confetti. Valois simply promises he'll have fun ("I've done bugger all fanac except party and consume unfeasibly large quantities of booze.")

Send ballots and donations to the administrators. Ulrika O'Brien stays on as North American administrator for this race, although Vijay Bowen is the previous North American TAFF winner. Ulrika's address is 123 Melody Lane #C, Costa Mesa, CA 92627. European administrator is Maureen Kincaid Speller, 60 Bournemouth Rd., Folkestone, Kent, CT19 5AZ, U.K.

GUFF

Eric Lindsay and Jean Weber are running for GUFF in 2001. Eric writes, "Jean has never been to the UK, and I was there only once, in 1976, so we thought it might be an idea to stand. Now [that] we are retired and don't have an income, we don't feel as constrained about standing back and letting impoverished fans have a go. Especially since, so far, we don't seem to have any competition – and we did encourage several people to run against us, since having a competition is much better for the fan fund. Mind you, given the tradition of UK fans gathering in smoky pubs, I hope we can stand the smoke for long enough to talk to some of them."

GUFF's most recent winner, Paul Kincaid, has published *GUFFaw #3*, which includes details on the 2001 race, part ten of Irwin Hirsh's GUFF report, Bruce Gillespie's Aussiecon Three GoH Speech and Part One of Paul's own trip report.



Other Fan Funds

CUFF administrator Garth Spencer says the Canadian Unity Fan Fund is gearing up for nominations and voting in 2000. The next CUFF winner will go to TT2000 (a con formerly titled Toronto Trek, and this year's Convention), which will be held in Toronto in July.

This year CUFF is open to Western Canadians first, but if a fan is not nominated by February 20th, 2000 by three Eastern and three Western Canadian fans, then competition for the fund will be open to any Canadian fan.

Garth's 1999 CUFF trip report, a list of sale items for the benefit of the fund, and back numbers of his CUFF newsletter *Or Something* can be found at <http://www.vcn.bc.ca/~hrothgar>

FFANZ: The 2000 FFANZ ballot is now available. Voters in this year Fan Fund of Australia/New Zealand race can choose to send either Paul Ewins, Justin Semmel or Little Ted and his humans Julian Warner and Lucy Sussex to Con d'Or, the 2000 New Zealand NatCon. The voting deadline is March 31. *[Source: Australian SF Bullsheet 136]]*



Ferry Fights Monstrous Injustice!

On April 4 you'll find them there: director John Landis, rock-n'-roller Gene Simmons, writer Ray Bradbury, *Detroit Rock City* associate producer Tim Sullivan, and Sara Karloff, daughter of horror icon Boris Karloff. Where, you ask, at a Los Angeles media convention? No, at the Van Nuys courthouse, ready to testify in Ferry Ackerman's lawsuit against Ray Ferry, current owner of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. And the trial will be carried on Court TV.

Ferry is quoted in the March 10 issue of *Daily Variety* calling the case "a vendetta to bankrupt the magazine by somebody with a tremendous ego."

According to the complaint, Ferry and Ackerman joined forces in 1993, when Ferry proposed to revive *Famous Monsters*, last published in 1982. Ackerman also signed an agreement giving Ferry the option to purchase for \$2,500 a portion of his collection. (Ferry said the agreement gives him only the option to buy several reference works after Ackerman dies.)

Ackerman's name and photo were to be displayed on the cover of each issue of *Famous Monsters*. He resigned from the magazine in 1995 because of disputes over money. *Famous Monsters* has carried on without input from Ackerman. The lawsuit alleges that Ferry defamed Ackerman with letters and web site messages stating that Ackerman's only connection with *Famous Monsters* was as a hired hand and that Ferry had to be let go because he didn't do any writing or editing for the magazine.

Ferry told the reporter that he brought Ackerman back to the magazine as a figurehead. When he refused to publish an article of Ackerman's because it was "dull reading," Ackerman walked out in a huff and demanded that his name be removed from the magazine.

Ackerman's suit asks for about \$1 million in damages and rescission of the purchase agreement so that he is free to sell his collection. Ackerman also seeks clear title to the nickname Dr. Acula, which he began using in 1939 to sign messages, "Beast Wishes from Dr. Acula." Ferry claims he now owns the Dr. Acula title and has threatened legal action against merchandisers at web sites. Ferry also filed a \$25 million counterclaim, alleging that he fears bodily harm because Ackerman has posted messages on the Internet inciting his fans to seek revenge on Ferry.

Ferry sent Bill Warren the following



statement to share with those who are interested in the case:

"Years ago when I offered my entire collection FREE to the City of Los Angeles and was seen on TV shaking hands with the Mayor thanking me for this generous gesture, five years went by and even with the clout of City Hall all they got were 'Dear John' letters from Spielberg & Lucas who in effect said yes, I was a nice guy and they wd vote for me for Mayor....but they never came through with financing for the Museum. Now that I'm thousands of dollars behind the hate-ball with legal fees for a forthcoming jury trial, Joe Dante, John Landis, Rich Correll, a collector/fan to the tune of \$4000 and Hugh Hefner (!) with a 5 figure check (bless him) have contributed to my legal defense fund. I still need thousands of dollars, even offering from 4% to 10% for loans. Anyone who can help, even with as little as \$5, will receive my blessings, for whatever they're worth. Forrest J Ackerman, 2495 Glendower Ave, Hollywood, CA 90027-1110, Dr. Acula since 1939 but even that pun-name is being pirated from me. Anyone having a letter from me calling myself Dr. Acula or seeing me calling myself that in some fanzine or prozine, I'd appreciate a xopy (Xerox copy). Frustrated Ferry, approaching 84 and hoping to last another 17 years and become the Geo. Burns of the fantasy field and celebrate my 100th birthday with thousands of you fans."

Babylon Won

The California primary is over, and the voters rejected all but their last, best hope to elect science fiction personalities to office.

Jerry Doyle, *Babylon 5*'s Security Chief Garibaldi, received 29% of the Republican vote and will be his party's candidate for the US Congressional seat now held by Rep. Brad Sherman (D-Calif). Doyle outpolled Jewish Defense League founder Irv Rubin and others in the March 7 primary.

However, Libertarian presidential candidate and SF writer L. Neil Smith received less than 10% of the votes cast for the party's five candidates. He fared generally worse than other

authors in California's Presidential Preference primary, best-sellers Donald Trump (Reform) and John McCain (Republican), and dark fantasy author Lyndon Larouche (Democratic).

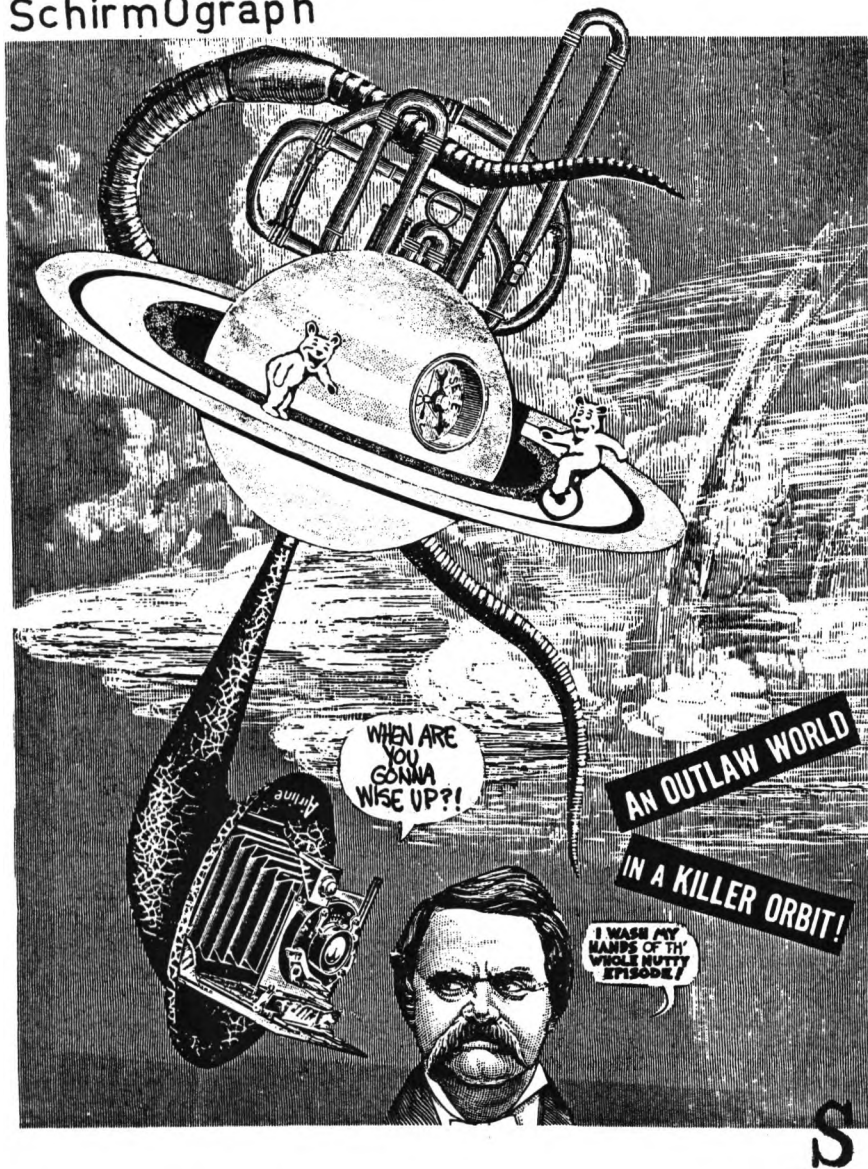
In January, Alyson L. Abramowitz campaigned to be elected a Delegate to the National Democratic Convention from California's 14th Congressional District (Anna Eshoo's district from Cupertino through Redwood City). The results of the election are as yet unlearned by *File 770*'s worldwide network of reporters.

Fan Face in the News

Minneapolis fan Susan Levy Haskell made the front page of *USA Today* on Thursday, March 9. She was featured in an article as a system administrator who was one of the first to be affected by a version of the recent internet Denial of Service hacking attacks.

The article begins, "Susan Levy Haskell arrived at her office at the University of Minnesota as usual before 8 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 16, 1999, where she watched at first curiously, then later in horror, as the university computer system came under attack from a massive yet anonymous Internet adversary. Haskell, the university's computer security coordinator, says that as hours passed the volume of incoming malicious traffic rose from a mere annoyance to an all-consuming electronic dissonance. The Inter-

SchirmOgraph



net connection grew ever less responsive, degrading steadily until the university was cut off from the world...."

The Stars My Destination

Jim and Chere Belknap just missed joining the unscheduled urban renewal in their Barnhart, Missouri neighborhood this February:

"A house behind us left the planet at 3:05 p.m. with the aid of a lot of natural gas. Five other homes were condemned and as many as eight additional sustained serious but repairable damage. Only one fatality, pretty good considering that the elementary school was to let out at 3:15!"

Their own home sustained a few cracks in the ceiling and a 5-foot dent up near the peak of the roof. They live only 600 feet from the crater. The blast was felt for sev-

eral miles.

Jim and Chere are in surprisingly good humor: "The house left the planet at 3:05. Tuesday I raked his house out of my back yard. The dog will probably not have to go to the bathroom for quite awhile. A structural engineer is coming to check out [our] house..." [[Source: *Chronicles of the Dawn Patrol*]]

Y2K

The year 2000 began with fireworks everywhere but fandom, where it was celebrated by the sound of alternate universes collapsing. **Harry Warner, Jr.** wrote in the *NASFA Shuttle*:

"This suddenly reminds me that I'll apparently cause one of Bill Rotsler's novels to become obsolete. He put me in Times Square for the New Year's Eve celebration

of either 2000 or 2001, I forget which. There's as much chance of fulfilling this prophecy as there is for me to run up to Mars and investigate what has caused the disappearance of all those NASA vehicles.

Poor **Joseph T. Mayhew** spent the Christmas and New Year's holidays in the hospital. He didn't say for what, but came out in January perky enough to notice: "I was admitted in one odometer cycle (if not millennium) and discharged in another. According to some historians, Jesus of Nazareth was born around 3 BC, and thus the millennium was 1997. So, I stick with the odometer. When it changes, there is a new digit in the first row."

The dreaded Y2K bug took a few notable bites out of the science fiction field. **Tom Veal** told the ChiconTalk e-mail list "According to *The Wall Street Journal*, as soon as January 1 arrived, the official *Star Trek* Web site began posting the dates of future TV shows as 'Voyager, 1/1/1900,' etc. Good to know that there will still be job opportunities for Cobol programmers in the 14th century!"

Heavy Duty

Watch for St. Louis fan **Jenny Overkamp's** son pumping iron on his way to the 2004 Olympics. Ben is the youngest boy ever to lift over 300 lbs. above his head in the history of Missouri weightlifting. He recently competed against the finest lifters in the country at the Jr. National Weightlifting Championships. He qualified for the Jr. Squad on his first lift for the Clean and Jerk (142.5K, about 314 lbs.). Then Ben went on to lift 145K (about 320 lbs.) to take third place in his class, 13 of the strongest boys in the country, including six who are already on the Jr. Squad.

Qualifying for the Jr. Squad means Ben will start training at the Olympic training camp in Denver this summer. He has to register with the Olympic committee for the random drug testing program and be on it for a year before he can start competing at the world level. [[Source: *Chronicles of the Dawn Patrol*]]

February Made Me Shiver

February's heavy winter storms didn't reach Meade and Penny Frierson, but they dropped hints about being uprooted in this e-mail to a Nashville clubzine: "Storm? What storm? Penny and I cleaned the Birmingham house so the landlord could show it and put 57 contractor bags of trash and old fanzines, apas, etc on the street. It was foggy and 50ish but a great day for 'spring' cleaning. To all, our fondest greetings and why not

move south(-er than you are now)?" [[Source: *Kronos*, 2/00]]

Floating Along

Fandom's involvement with the annual Rose Parade continued on New Year's Day, 2000. Last year, the South Pasadena float was designed by Marc Schirmeister. This year, the Sierra Madre float was adorned by maidens in costumes that Bjo Trimble and helpers had colored with natural vegetable dye. Her helpers included a troop of Brownies earning merit badges.

Happy Birthday!

Steve and Sue Francis report their second great grandson was born Nov 27, 1999. Steven Lynn Smith weighed 9 lb. 8 oz. Mother and child are doing well, in Bude, Mississippi. [[Source: *Kronos* 2/00]]

Medical Updates

Arthur Hlavaty was changing a lightbulb last December 28 when the ladder he was on collapsed. He fell and broke a bone in his left shoulder.

Arthur's holiday letter added, "The good news is that my right arm is OK, and I do almost everything right-handed, so I can still write, read, eat, etc. (And for those of you with minds like mine, that too.)"

"There were three breaks in the left humerus. The doctor put pins in the bone to fix it and stapled the incision shut. It will probably be 4-6 weeks before I can go out other than to the doctor's office, but I should be able to do some work at home."

Richard E. Geis has suffered severe damage to his lower spine and is unable to walk. He notified everyone on his mailing list that he has terminated *The Geis Letter* and instructed publishers to stop sending review copies.

Fundraising for Jim Bearcloud

Jon Gustafson, Vickie Mitchell and Bjo Trimble began fundraising last October for Jim Bearcloud, long-time friend and companion of Hugo-winning science fiction artist George Barr, after he was hospitalized for several weeks. Auctions and donations brought in several thousand dollars.

Bearcloud is doing much better and is even back at work. "He spent some considerable time doing physically 'easier' work," writes Gustafson, "but is now mostly back to his old job of repairing and maintaining photo equipment."

Gustafson says they are still seeking funds to pay medical bills. However, Bjo is aware that "George feels very strange about taking any more money. I'll be seeing them

in person at the last part of this month (March), and will discuss it in detail, and then decide what to do."

Bjo mentions Jon Gustafson's idea for fandom to have an Artists Relief Fund for just such emergencies. "I like the idea, but see many hazards in it, including hanky-panky with the funds. Also trouble with the ever-lovin' IRS (ahem!) if it's not done right. ... I do agree that artists need something; they get into trouble and drift out of fandom, for the most part. We never hear from them again."

Ringin' in the Millennium

When the Lunarians received only one nomination for the Asimov Award by the deadline, and that one was for radio personality Art Bell, they extended the nominations another month. Although Robert Forward, Charles Sheffield and Charlie Pelligrino were added to the ballot at the January 23 meeting, Ira "The" Donewitz was not reassured; he moved to take Bell's name off the ballot.

The minutes say there ensued "Much discussion about the merits of Art Bell being a nominee followed, with various people talking about how they think that the study of paranormal activity and UFOs is not really a science, which is a major part of the so-called strange phenomena discussed on [Bell's] show. It was also noted that he has had a number of respected scientists and other experts, such as Michio Kaku, on his show." The motion failed, 2-4.

The sound and fury of the debate has not gone unnoticed by non-Lunarians. Mark Olson, on SMOFS, suggested selecting the winner through trial by combat. Neil Rest got it, replying that hardly seemed the way to choose the winner of an award named after Asimov.

Predator

I thought the traditional New England dinner was beef and potatoes. But if you hang around outside a NESFA meeting in winter, you might find others have a different idea. Clerk Pam Fremon says at the end of the January 23 meeting:

"We stole away into the night, mindful of the wolves.

"Through the years, many creatures have, of course, chased NESFAns on the way to Other Meetings -- such a common occurrence that it has never seen mention in *Instant Message*....until now.

"Wolves are fairly typical predators for winter meetings, but going a little further north (say, Andover, MA), polar bears are not uncommon, though they don't usually

appear until January (in December they're too busy with Coca-Cola commercials.) In most of the rest of the year the chasers vary: moose, snakes, coyotes, pigeons. In one notably hot day when even cars were so hot that they could manage just 15 mph, members were chased by turtles."

Holy flaming O, Batman!

Mythlore a Myth No More

How overdue was the new issue of the Mythopoeic Society's journal, *Mythlore*? Here's a hint: At about the same time that the last "quarterly" issue of *Mythlore* appeared, fans were diving for plastic doubloons in Baltimore. That *Mythlore* failed to appear for over a year was a Society embarrassment that has lately been cured by a change in editor. Now, Ted Sherman's first issue, *Mythlore* 85, is officially in the mail.

Ted's also actively looking for articles about the work of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams. Contact him for submission guidelines: Dr. Theodore James Sherman, Editor, *Mythlore*, Box X041, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN 37132; E-mail: tsherman@mtsu.edu

Short Waves

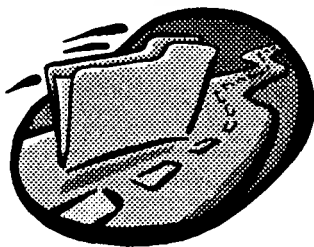
Lee Uba had a one-person art show at the Arlington Central Library in September. Alexis Gilliland wrote in the family's holiday letter that it "was a critical and financial success; people told her they liked her stuff, and even bought some of it. There was a little party to celebrate her coming out as an artist." That must have been Lee's mundane debut, since she was already displaying and selling art at sf conventions.

Georges Giguere sends picturesque postcard of quonset huts at Canol Pump Station #3 at Mile 745 on the Canol Road in the Northwest Territories, and pens this note:

"Finally finishing my tour here in Norman Wells, as an inspector for fire and safety systems. Long days, amazing scenery, -24C with noon sunrise and 4 p.m. sunset. Found a metal sculpture made by Franklyn Johnson, who builds the Canadian Aurora awards. Got mooched by a local red fox, and saw a grizzly bear a couple of weeks ago. Hopefully, back to civilization soon, but if Esso Oil has work, I'm easy, or is that sleazy? Ha. Baby needs a new well pump for the house I bought recently."

Joy V. Smith was a runner up in the 1999 Scavenger's Newsletter Killer Frog Contest for humorous/outrageous horror.

Laura Resnick will be doing a monthly opinion column for the Romance Writer's of America, titled "The Comely Curmudgeon." [[Source: *Kronos*, 2/00]]



The Faanish Side of the World Wide Web!

Bill Bowers' directory of faanish web pages, *Fan Basic 101*, anchors an Internet-focused section in this issue of *File 770*. Thanks to Bill for suggesting the list see print here, and sending the text file he used for a hand-out at Orycon. The current version, with hyperlinks, can always be found on Victor Gonzalez' web page. Its address is in John Hancock-sized type at the end of Bill's directory. The confessions of a web page megalomaniac begin this section, followed by all the web-based news that's fit to transmit.

When You Fall Off the Internet, You Have to Get Right Back On by Mike Glycer

If you have to write your own HTML code, designing a web page is a lot like being forced to solve one of those word problems that starts "if a train leaves Baltimore at 50 miles per hour." On the other hand, I've always used Microsoft Publisher and I feel the experience combines the best features of building blocks and finger-painting, with no tidying afterwards.

I started out like an Internet neo, searching for free icons, copying blinky lights, culling through hundreds of animated GIFs, and thieving other pages' colorful backgrounds. Naturally, I also spent hours selecting a free hit counter.

A link on CompuServe's Ourworld (which hosts my web page) led me to a suite of icons created from photographs of the nine planets as seen from space. They are very well crafted, and float beautifully on a mottled gray background reminiscent of a lunar landscape. I made them the thematic elements of my main page.

Somewhere else I found three sets of animated red, yellow and green console lights that blink at slow, frequent, and rapid speeds. Every article about web page design warns against loading a page with too many animated files and blinking lights. Because "too many" is not a numerical limit, I am free to assume that the ten or twelve blinky lights I've used as hyperlinks to news stories

is not "too many."

Once I had my web page set up, I wanted it to be easy for you to read and use. My first concern was the address:

[Http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/mglyer/f770/index.html](http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/mglyer/f770/index.html)

Try getting anyone to type a 55-character address! One solution is getting other web pages to link to mine. Then, the only person who ever has to type the address correctly is the other webmaster. Chaz Boston Baden and the Chicon 2000 page have sent some of you my way. I'd like to set up reciprocal links with more faanish web pages.

I've also thought about how to get a shorter URL. The obvious way is to register my own domain and pay to have it hosted on a server. Domain registration costs about \$70 for the first two years. At that price I have to ask, for the number of hits I'm going to get, does it make more sense to pay for my own domain, or just send each of you a dollar bill with a polite request to look at the site?

Another way to get a shorter URL is by going through someone else's domain. Charlie, how about — www.locusmag.com/file770....?

Or maybe I can go in with a local group. SCIFI wants to set up a web page to get some good publicity. Shaun Lyon offered to handle the whole thing for us through Network Solutions. His own "Dr. Who" pages are getting 12,000 hits a day. Hearing that, I darned near left the meeting to drive home and add some "Dr. Who" stuff to my site.

But no. If the sole object was to reach the maximum number of people, it would have

made the most sense to convert *File 770* to an e-mailed zine. The medium's practically free. The audience is still there — most, if by no means all, fans get e-mail. Best of all, fans will immediately read something delivered to them, whereas many will never get around to browsing a faanish web page, or necessarily look at one more than once. Despite the advantages I'm not going to do that. Developing layouts that flow text and art together is something I enjoy too much to give up editing a paper fanzine. Designing a web page involves the same pleasures, and adds new dimensions of color, animation, sound and mutability.

As yet, a fanned can't use e-mail to achieve all he can do on a web page. The culture of e-mail use, more than technology, is the main barrier to distributing documents with the same level of design complexity found on a web page. Any use of graphics rapidly increases a document's size, and fans don't seem to appreciate receiving unsolicited 400K e-mails. (Bill Bowers handles this by sending a notice that his e-zine is available for you to request.) There are also some technical limits. A document's layout is unlikely to remain stable if it is read by a different program than created it. And megabyte-sized files will be rejected by the filters on some services.

So for the time being, I'm investing my energy in a web page, and keeping it consistent with the purpose of the paper *File 770*, not adding any Doctor Who stuff. Of course, I want more people to read it. I assume that





Visit The File 770 Web Page
[Http://ourworld.compuServe.com/homepages/mglyer/f770/index.html](http://ourworld.compuServe.com/homepages/mglyer/f770/index.html)

when I mail out 325 copies of *File 770*, 325 people read it. What if I actually knew the truth, the way I know how many readers access my web page? In fact, the number on my hit counter hasn't changed since last Thursday. Odd how that little counter subverts everything. Suddenly, I don't need LoCs, I don't need contributions -- I need a big number! I want to win! How can I tap the power of the Internet to draw an audience and shift my counter into overdrive?

I heard there were free services that promote web pages. A search on Altavista promptly retrieved a list of 14. The first one I looked at -- SelfPromotion.com -- worked so satisfactorily I've made no comparisons. SelfPromotion.com is an easy-to-use, free site with extensive and intelligent coverage of search engines and indexes.

It's even fun to use. SelfPromotion.com's designer believes -- correctly -- that users will disdain the simplest instructions and blunder ahead, filling in blanks on the computerized forms with their unenlightened best guesses. So the designer steers us to a tutorial cleverly written as a dialogue between himself and his 6-year-old son. The tutorial proceeds as if we adults were looking over little James Ueki's shoulder as he learns how to make Dad's site promote his first web page:

"At first, James wants to use the account name 'Anakin Skywalker,' but after Dad explains who Anakin grows up to be, James (unimaginatively) decides to use his name as his account name, and his nickname ('jkun' is Japanese for 'jimmy') as his password. Dad will have to talk to him about choosing an unguessable password later!"

Fellows like Dad and I are too grown-up to need instructions ourselves, of course, but I closely watch little Jimmy's progress so that I won't be embarrassed by making any errors he's managed to avoid. Along the way I pick up a lot of good information about the differences between a search engine and an index, what they're looking for and strate-

gies to optimize a page for selection.

He makes Yahoo sound like the grail for anyone trying to increase traffic on their website. He says that Yahoo is selective and it helps a page get listed if it has won some legitimate awards. So my first thought was to go back to the ISP that hosts my page, CompuServe's "Ourworld," and apply

for consideration as Ourworld's Site-of-the-Day.

Within hours of getting my e-mail, they notified me that my page had been "suspended." They sternly reminded me about the three cardinal rules Ourworld homepages must obey: (1) they can't violate copyright, (2) they can't post pornography, and (3) they can't carry on a business. I hadn't done (1) or (2). That left (3). I knew this was about the subscription rates in the colophons. So I spent a couple of hours finding and deleting the subscription info and re-loading the page. The authorities did not trouble me again.

I may never get listed on Yahoo, but I did become CompuServe Out-of-Sight for a day.

Meantime, the SelfPromotion.com robots are doing their work. I've been listed on at least one search engine. Where? I'll give you a hint.

People on the island of Vanuatu can't brag very often about having something North America lacks. Now added to that very short list is getting the *File 770* web page indexed on Matilda, their local Internet portal. The Matilda search engine has a series of portal pages tailored for users throughout the South Pacific, including Vanuatu, though Australia and New Zealand probably account for most of their traffic. Matilda added *File 770*'s page to its index within two days of submission, a decision encouraged by the frequent mention of "Australia" in stories about the latest Worldcon. Until Altavista, Excite, and perhaps the big prize, Yahoo, catch up with Matilda's leadership, fan(s) on Vanuatu will have a lot easier time searching for the *File 770* web page than most of you.

But please keep trying!

Clipping Service

"The announcement on a *Dr. Who* feature film scheduled for November 19, 1999 didn't take place. Rumors say that *Impact Films* wanted to make it into an action film with Will Smith as The Doctor, with an American director and writer. The *BBC*, however, wanted to keep true to the original series with a British actor (like Patrick Stewart) as The Doctor, along with a British director and writer. It was all down hill from there...." *[Source: BCFSazine 1/2000]*

Harry Warner: "One thing worries me about the idea of refurbishing the Tardis with Victorian items. I know there is plenty of space in the interior of the Tardis for even the largest Victoria pieces of furniture, but I am not sure that it would be possible to squeeze it through the rather narrow front doors." *[Source: BCFSazine 1/2000]*

Internet Gold!

What's new at Collectingchannel.com? In case you haven't scanned the page lately, Ted White answers, "In December I took over the Movies and TV/Radio microchannels in addition to Music and Comics (and in the process acquired Bhub Stewart as an assistant), and I've been managing four channels since then. (I write only for the Music channel and occasionally for Comics. But I do plenty of editing.)

"Right now we're undergoing a transition to a new design and organization of the Collectingchannel.com, the results of which will be seen March 1st. At that time my four channels will become one channel, Entertainment, and we will be formatting our articles differently. We're also working much more closely with our TV show, *Treasures In Your Home*, with cross-referenced content."

And I asked if Arnie Katz has hired any more BNFs. He replied, "No, no more fans have come to suckle at the virtual teat that is Collectingchannel.com. That doesn't mean we won't hire more, when appropriate, but right now most of the job candidates are decidedly nonfannish."

Other Channels: The generational trend to cash in on collectibles bit another Las Vegas fan, unconnected to Collectingchannel. Alan White writes, "VH1 did a rock and roll collectibles show at the MGM Grand awhile back for their weekly TV show. Since I am a big collector of Fillmore posters, I brought a few samples to be appraised. I was delighted to hear the posters are upwards of \$1200 apiece these days. Since I have about 30 of them, I guess this is my retirement. Already received several e-mails from fans around the country like

Sandy Cohen who saw the show."

Willie Siros said at Loscon his online book business is booming. It's mostly sf, but not always. In the course of buying someone's sf collection, he became the owner of a cache of UFO books and offered them for sale on his web page. The sales were brisk, to customers all over the world. There only seemed to be one catch. When the buyers called to make arrangements, they all wanted to tell Siros their life stories at great length. Not entirely willingly, Siros learned, "Alien abduction stories in the Czech republic are much different than over here."

While surprisingly many fans have stories to tell about the profits they made selling their science fictional heirlooms online, not everyone has struck paydirt. Sheryl Birkhead wrote in the January *NASFA Shuttle*, "When I put my *Galaxies* – plus slipcases – on sale on eBay I wanted to sell the batch at about 50 cents each – totaled \$50 or so. Anyhow, no bids at all." She succeeded in selling some unnamed other things, though.

Cincinnati Fantasy Group

Roy Tackett warns, "Be careful what you write. Scott Street just added a con report I wrote a half century ago to the CFG history page." The URL is:

<http://www.cfg.org/history/cinvention/mb/mb13.htm>

Roy – your warning comes to late! Scott Street has added all kinds of conreports and fanhistory to his excellent Cincinnati Fantasy Group web page – <http://www.cfg.org>

You can also look up Stephen Leigh's report of the 1977 Midwestcon, called by Bill Bowers "One of the best con reports I've read," at:

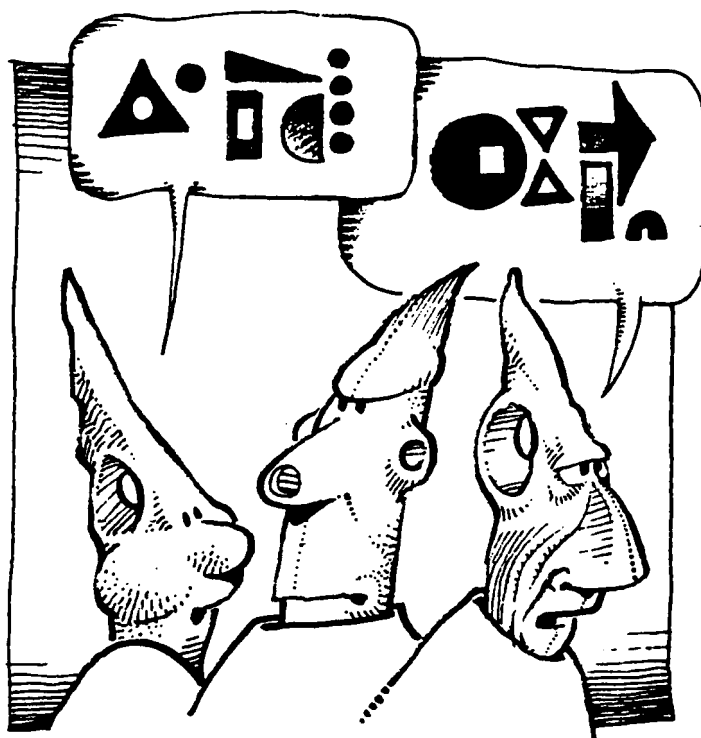
<http://www.cfg.org/history/retro/passages/1stleigh.htm>

Bowers also recommends a section titled "Our Back Pages," devoted to articles by or about CFG members. The first entry is an reminiscence of Lou Tabakow, by Mike Resnick.

The Readme File

Clocktower Fiction is the place to go on the Internet to find fiction by fans you know.

Gene Stewart's latest fiction, "King of the



Sacred Lagoon," can be read in *Deep Outside*, the oldest paying SF e-zine, at:

<http://outside.cloctowerfiction.com/Fiction/sacredlagoon.shtml>

Gene calls it "a homage of sorts to Gerald Kersh, most of whose fiction is sadly forgotten and out of print these days."

A.L. Siros, once best-known as a fanartist, is telling the world, "I all of a sudden have a bunch of e-books available on the web, and I sure would like it if you checked 'em out. If you go to my web site, <http://www.w3pg.com/jazzpolice/>, and follow the links for my journal or to the page that lists my publications – and I promise you, the links won't be hard to find."

Clocktower Fiction – <http://www.cloctowerfiction.com> – has published two books by Siros: *Blind Ambitions* and *The Beginnings of Forever*. Both are available for the RocketBook reading device from the dot-com versions of Barnes and Noble and Powell's.

Al's own page hypes his other writings, including a collection of short works called *The Beginnings of Forever*, and a children's chapter book, *Penguin Island*. "Yes, I even did all the artwork for these books. Am I making a million dollars? Hell, no! But I'm having fun. I've been drawing more of late, my band is getting work, and I'm doing children's books with my wife. I still have to work for a living, so I am not quite at the point where I am able to make my full livelihood by doing what I have been doing for so

many years, but I am closer than I used to be."

Al's latest short story, "Across the Wind," is available in *Neverworlds 7* at <http://www.neverworlds.com/> – he also illustrated the piece.

Burning Ambitions

Lloyd Penney almost audibly sighed in the December *Knarley Knews* lettercolumn when he wrote, "I wished I had been able to see Joe Mayhew accept his Best Fan Artist Hugo in 1998 and now I wish I had been in Australia to see the ovation Ian [Gunn] must have received with his Hugo, and the reception for Karen when she accepted it."

Since video recordings are commonly made of major Worldcon events, I look forward to a time in the near future when Lloyd's wish comes true.

Aussiecon Three broadcast video of many portions of the convention on the Internet, though I had virtually (pun not intended) no success at receiving their feed. The head of their video operation announced her intention to "burn some CD's" of this material, but she had not made copies available by the time the listserve was shut down. I look forward to the day when more cons do the same with their archival videos.

Dot's Not Nice!

NESFA has been using nesfa.org for awhile, and thought about registering nesfa.com and using it to redirect people who are looking for them at the wrong net address. They discovered a cybersquatter had beaten them to it, registering nesfa.com and a lot of other random letters combinations. The squatter wanted \$200 to surrender the rights. *Instant Message 658* quoted Michael Burstein calling it "moral blackmail." Deb Geisler seemed less bothered, willing to compare it with a concierge reserving something for them.

Millions for defense but not one cent for tribute? Not these days. According to *Instant Message 660*, the NESFA has purchased nesfa.com. It doesn't link to anything yet.

Dave Langford dealt with the same problem by opening a new website, ansible.co.uk. "Vile interlopers had already seized ansible.com and ansible.org. The cheek of it," he informed *The Paper Snarl*. [[Source: *Brum Group News*, 1/2000]]

FanBasic 101

"...so many Trees in The Enchanted e-Jungle" | Release 3.0 | 11/05/99

...a work in continual progress from **Bill Bowers** at <BBowers@Earthling.net>
...aimed at providing a concise entry point for fannish fans newly on line.

Prime | Reference | Works | Fanzines/eZines | NewsZines | Home/PersonalPages | Clubs | General/Miscellaneous | Links | Mailing Lists/Cons | EgoSection

Prime

FANAC

<http://www.fanac.org/>
FANAC Fannish Reference
Works
<http://www.fanac.org/fannish/Reference/Works/>

TIMEBINDERS

<http://fanac.org/timebinders/>
TIMEBINDERS: Projects
<http://fanac.org/timebinders/currentprojects.html>
FanHistoriCons
<http://fanac.org/timebinders/fanhistoricons.html>

A FANNISH HOMEPAGE

<http://dpsinfo.com/sf>

Reference

FANZINES:

Australian Fanzines [print]
[Marc Ortlieb]
<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~sfzf/fanzines.htm>

British Fanzine Bibliographies
<http://www.fiawol.demon.co.uk/biblio/>

Memory Hole

<http://www.gostak.demon.co.uk/>

FANDOM DIRECTORY On-Line
<http://members.aol.com/fandata/>

Fannish E-Mail Directory

John Lorentz
<http://www.spiritone.com/~jlorentz/email> [html]
<http://www.teleport.com/~osfci/fannish.net.txt> [text; a download]

Fan funds

http://www.fanac.org/fan_funds/fan-funds.html

TAFF History and Trip Reports
<http://www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/SF-Archives/Taff/#taffreps>

FanSpeak Dictionary

<http://www.stilyagi.org/stilyagi/fanspeak.html>

Fan Terms

rich brown
<http://www.smithway.org/fstuff/termsA-B.html>

UK SF Fandom Archive

<http://www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/SF-Archives/Index.html>

Worldcons

<http://www.worldcon.org>

Works

A Sense of FAPA

Edited by Richard Eney [1962; Anthology]
http://fanac.org/fanzines/Sense_of_FAPA/index.html

The BNF of Iz

by Carl Brandon
http://fanac.org/fanzines/BNF_of_Iz/BNF_of_Iz-00.html

Egoboo For Algernon

by Terry Carr
<http://www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/SF-Archives/Misc/egoboo.html>

The Enchanted Duplicator

Bob Shaw & Walt Willis
<ftp://sflovers.rutgers.edu/pub/sf-lovers/fiction/the-enchanted-duplicator.txt>
<http://www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/SF-Archives/Misc/ed.html> [html]

Fancylopedia II

Dick Eney
<http://www.sff.net/people/Diccon/CYINDEX.HTM>

Fanthology '87

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/8720/contents.htm>

The Reaffirmation

Rob Hansen
<http://www.fiawol.demon.co.uk/rob/reaff.html>

Then

Rob Hansen
http://fanac.org/Fannish/Reference/Works/Fan_Histories/Then/

The Willis Papers

Illustrated by ATom (Arthur Thompson)
Edited by George W. Field; Published by Ted Johnstone
[August 1961 - Partial]
http://fanac.org/fanzines/Willis_Papers/index.html

Fanzines / eZines

FANAC Fanzine/Article Index
<http://fanac.org/fanzines/>

ALBEDO [Irish]

<http://homepages.iol.ie/~bobn>

APPARATCHIK

ed. Andy Hooper, Victor Gonzalez & Carl Juarez
(deceased, but back issues still on line)
<http://www.oz.net/~cjuarez/APAK>

CLOUD CHAMBER

Dave Langford
<http://www.ansible.demon.co.uk/cc/index.html>

CONCATENATION

ed. Jonathan Cowie, Tony Chester & Graham Connor
<http://www.matthewf.demon.co.uk/concatenation.html>

DYNATRON

Horrible Old Roy Tackett
<http://members.xoom.com/rsbrandt/dynindex.htm>

EMERALD CITY

ed. Cheryl Morgan
<http://www.emcit.com/>

FANS ACROSS THE WORLD

NEWSLETTER
ed. Bridget Wilkinson
<http://www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/SF-Archives/Fatw/Index.html>

GEGENSCHIEIN

ed. Eric Lindsay
http://members.tripod.com/~eric_lindsay/sf/geg.htm

GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG

<http://members.tripod.com/~IrishGötter/>

GRILLED PTERODACTYL

David R Grigg
<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~drgrigg/ptero.html>

IT GOES ON THE SHELF

Ned Brooks
<http://home.sprynet.com/sprynet/nedbrooks/>

KIMOTA

<http://freespace.virgin.net/g.hurry/kimota.htm>

MIMOSA

Richard & Nicki Lynch
<http://www.smithway.org/mimosa>

NOVA EXPRESS

ed. Lawrence Person

<http://www.delphi.com/sf/it/novaexpress/>

PIGS CAN FLY

ed. Darroll Pardoe
<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~pardos/PigsCanFly.html>

PLOKTA: the Journal of Superfluous Technology

ed. Steve Davies, Alison Scott et al
<http://www.plokta.com/plokta/>

Quipu 8

Vicki Rosenzweig
<http://www.users.interport.net/~vr/q8toc.html>

Shipyard Blues

John D. Owen
<http://www.rastus.force9.co.uk/SBHome.html>

SKUG

Gary S. Mattingly
<http://www.dnai.com/~gmatting/skug.html>

SLOW DJINN

Dave Locke's Back Road Off The Information Highway
<http://www.angelfire.com/oh/slowdjinn/>

SNUFKIN'S BUM

ed. Maureen Kincaid Speller
<http://www.acnestis.demon.co.uk/>

SQUIB

Victor Gonzalez
<http://www.galaxy-7.net/squib/>

TOMMYWORLD

ed. Tommy Ferguson
<http://www.tommyworld.freecisp.co.uk>

VIRTUAL LIGHT IN THE BUSH

Richard Brandt
<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/8720/>

WeberWoman's WREVENGE

Jean Weber
<http://www.wrevenge.com.au/wrevenge/wrevenge.htm>

NewsZines

Ansible

Dave Langford
<http://www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/SF-Archives/Ansible/>

The Australian SF Bullshead
ed. Marc Ortlieb

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~sfoz/bullsheet.htm>

File 770
<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/mglver/f770/index.html>

The Plokta News Network
<http://www.plokta.com/prn>

Home / Personal Pages

Lenny Bailes Homepage
<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~lennyb>

John Bangsund
<http://www.pipeline.com.au/users/bangsund/>

Linda Blanchard
<http://www.nowheat.com/grfx/sff/index.htm>

Life With Brian
Brian Earl Brown
<http://home.sprynet.com/sprynet/beb01/>

Ross Chamberlain
<http://www.wizard.com/~rchamber/index.htm>

Earl Cooley III, A Home Page
<http://www.io.com/~shiva/>

Bob Devney
<http://members.aol.com/~bobdevney/>

Tom Digby
<http://www.well.com/user/bubbles/>

David Dyer-Bennet
<http://www.ddb.com/~ddb/>

Dick Eney
<http://www.sff.net/people/Dicom/>

Tom Feller's Homepage
<http://hometown.aol.com/tomfeller>

Janice Gelb
<http://www.geocities.com/Area51/8018/index.html>

Dan Goodman
<http://www.visi.com/~dsgood/index.html>

KPG and Gunny presents The Eclectic Omnibus
Ian Gunn (Gunny) and Karen Pender-Gunn (KPG).
<http://www.ozramp.net.au/~fiawol/>

Rob Hansen's Original Home Page
Rob Hansen
<http://www.fiawol.demon.co.uk/rob/>

Mike Horvat
<http://www.wvi.com/~mmhorvat/>

Lucy Huntzinger
<http://www.mindspring.com/~huntzinger>

Langdon Jones
<http://members.xoom.com/langdonjones/personal.html>

Jay Klnney
<http://www.well.com/user/jay/>

Langford Home Page [Pardon]
Dave Langford

<http://www.ansible.demon.co.uk/index.html>

Joseph T Major
<http://members.iglou.com/jtmajor>

Laurie Mann
<http://dpsinfo.com/laurie>

Eric Mayer / Mary Reed
<http://home.epix.net/~maywrite>

Larrikin's Lair
Perry Middlemiss.
<http://ncc1701.apana.org.au/~larrikin/welcome.html>

Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden
<http://www.panix.com/~pnh>

Marc Ortlieb
<http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/7106/>

Patty Peters
<http://www.dnai.com/~ppeters/>

Sarah S. Prince
<http://world.std.com/~ssprince>
 in downtown Keene Valley NY approx 1020' altitude

Randy Reichardt's Home Page
<http://www.ualberta.ca/~rreichar/aar.htm>

Dave Romm
<http://www.visi.com/~romm/>

Words and Walks:
Vicki Rosenzweig's Home Page
<http://www.users.interport.net/~vr/>

Sharon Sbarsky's Home Page
<http://world.std.com/~sbarsky/>

Alison Scott
<http://www.fuggles.demon.co.uk/>

Stu & Andi's Roscoe Page
Stu Shiffman and Andi Shechter
<http://www.halcyon.com/roscoe/>

Steven Silver
<http://www.sfsite.com/~silverag/>

Jon Singer's Homepage
<http://www.bazilians.org/default.html>

Al Sirois
<http://www.w3pg.com/jazzpolice/>

Garth Spencer
 Garth's private world
<http://www.vcn.bc.ca/~brothgar>

Mae Strelkov Hecto Gallery
<http://www.fortunecity.com/roswell/quatermass/87/mae/>

Inside Jim's Head
Jim Trash
<http://www.scream.demon.co.uk/~trash>

Wilson Tucker
<http://www.inil.com/users/lori/wtucker.htm>

Reed Waller
<http://www.winternet.com/~rwaller/>

The Bitch Demon
Pam Wells

<http://www.bitch.demon.co.uk/>

Clubs

Baltimore Science Fiction Society
<http://www.bsfs.org/>

Bay Area SF Association
<http://www.wallis.com/basfa/>

Cincinnati Fantasy Group
<http://www.cfg.org/>

Fandom Association of Central Texas
<http://www.fact.org/>

Los Angeles SF Society
<http://www.lasfs.org/>

Melbourne SF Club
<http://www.vicnet.net.au/~msfc>

Minnesota SF Society
<http://www.mnssf.org/>

MIT Science Fiction Society
<http://www.mit.edu:8001/activities/mitsfs/homepage.html>

NWSFS (Northwest Science Fiction Society)
<http://www.webwitch.com/nwsfs.html>

NESFA (New England Science Fiction Assn)
<http://www.nesfa.org/home.html>

Orlando Area Science Fiction Society
<http://OASFIS.org/>

Research Triangle Science Fiction Society
<http://www.sandbaggers.com/rtsfs>

SF3, Madison, WI
<http://www.sf3.org/>

South Florida Science Fiction Society
<http://scifi.squawk.com/sfsfs.html>

The Tampa Bay fandom page
<http://members.aol.com/tbayfandom>

UK Student SF Societies
<http://www.arcfan.demon.co.uk/sf/clubs/student/>

Washington SF Association
<http://www.wsfa.org>

General / Miscellaneous

Fan History For Sale (http://fanac.org/For_Sale.html):

a page where you can find fanhistorical publications available to purchase from a variety of sources. This is a free listing as a service for fans. If you have an appropriate publication, contact us.

THE ROYAL SWISS NAVY Web Page
Garth Spencer
<http://www.vcn.bc.ca/sig/rsn/>

Links

ANSIBLE Links
<http://www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/SF-Archives/>

<http://www.ansible.demon.co.uk/>

FIAWOL Web Site
<http://www.fiawol.demon.co.uk/>

Minn-StF Links to Fannish Resources
<http://www.mnssf.org/minicon/links.html>

roc's garden:
Fan History Archive
<http://www.smithway.org/archive.html>

SFF Net's Fandom Domain Links:
Fandom
<http://fandom.sff.net/lkfan.htm>

The Slan Shack
<http://dpsinfo.com/sf/slan.html>

Fannish Mailing Lists / Cons

To use a very loose analogy, fannish Mailing Lists are akin to APAs: You "mail" your contribution to a Central Mailer (in this case, software), which then distributes copies to all the other Members. The primary difference from Real APAs is that you can get response virtually instantly. Sometimes this is "Good". At others times, perhaps not. You should at least try the medium. If it's not for you (and it's not for everyone) you can always bail out. As long as you save the bloody First Official Message you get from the ListOwner....

Timebinders (<http://fanac.org/timebinders/maillist.html>)

The purpose of the Timebinders Mailing List is to talk about fan history -- interesting people, incidents, jargon, fads, zines, cons, etc. You can use it to plan fan-history-oriented events, solicit ideas, try to find contacts, etc. This list is for non-profit use only; spam filters will be included to avoid junk E-mail. This is an informal, generally low-traffic, unmoderated group. Please avoid flaming. We might not all be friends here, but let's make an attempt to get along, shall we? Thanks. This is a public, archived mailing list.

To subscribe to the Timebinders mailing list, send e-mail to LISTSERV@SFLOVERS.RUTGERS.EDU with the command:
 SUB TIMEBINDERS
 YOURFIRSTNAME
 YOURLASTNAME

###

MemoryHole Mailing List

MEMORY HOLE is a discussion and information forum for science fiction fans interested in

A - reading, collecting, and archiving science fiction fanzines

B - discussing and preserving the history of science fiction fandom and fanzines

C - commenting on current events within science fiction fandom where they may reasonably be said to impact on the first two given aims.

NB - This is not a moderated group, but members are asked (pleaded with) to stick to the point; it is better to have

infrequent but pertinent postings than heavy but irrelevant traffic.

Other than that the main aim of MH is to pass along knowledge, gossip, facts, interesting untruths, genuine news, and substantiable rumour. Knowledge is fun in itself.

... for information, Contact:

Greg Pickersgill

<gregory@gostak.demon.co.uk>

<memoryhole-owner@egroups.com>

###

Trufen

Trufen is a membership-by-application international fanmailing list with (almost) no subject restrictions. The membership consists of largely of current or former fanzine editors, writers and artists. From lighthearted chat to the in-depth exploration of fanmailing conundrums, from broccoli to corn, from convention reports to raw gossip, we talk about it. We even have a SETI@home team to help find the aliens. Trufen is moderated by Victor Gonzalez, who (mostly) approves subscriptions, and does NOT moderate messages sent by list members. Message archives and the member list are not public.

To subscribe, send a message (no subject or body required) to

<trufen-subscribe@eGroups.com>.

To unsubscribe, send a message to

<trufen-unsubscribe@eGroups.com>.

If you have any problems, please e-mail

Victor at <squb@galaxy-7.net>.

#####

In addition to the Mailing Lists:

"Usenet is a worldwide distributed network: anything you say there can be read not only by the people you know you're talking to, but by your boss, your ex-mother-in-law, and your least-favorite government agency. If you're interested in reading one or more newsgroups, ask your Internet service provider how to get access. If you have Usenet at all, you should have rec.arts.sf.fandom; you may have to ask for alt.fandom.cons and, if you're not in the UK, uk.people.sf-fans."

— Vicki Rosenzweig

FANZINE Conventions:

CORFLU is the longest-running fanzine convention in the solar system.

Go to <<http://www.galaxy-7.net/squb/corflu2k.html>> for more information, or send an e-mail to <squb@galaxy-7.net>.

Fans in the United Kingdom should contact Linda Krawecka at <lkrawecka@tigert.demon.co.uk>.

DITTO 13 ("the Millennial Ditto"), 22 to 24 September, 2000. \$30 att, \$15 sup, \$10 under 12 until the end of 1999. Make 'em payable to NEIL KADEN. No hotel yet, but probably near the Dallas Galleria.

Contact info:

Ditto #13 c/o CircleNK

801 Timberwood Circle

Fairview, TX 75069-9183

<http://www.circlenk.com/ditto13.htm>

kaden@alum.mit.edu

EGO SECTION

Building an on-line "Outworlds":

... one Page at a time

BUILDING YOUR WORLD...

Stephen Leigh

<http://www.sff.net/people/sleigh/worldbuilding1.html>

[excerpted in "Outworlds 69"; pg. 2521]

A Quasi Journal

Stephen Leigh

<http://www.sff.net/people/sleigh/Journal.html>

[excerpted in "Outworlds", starting with Issue 71]

1975

Patrick Nielsen Hayden

<http://www.panix.com/~pnh/1975.html>

["Outworlds 71"]

WHERE ON THE WEB IS BOWERS?

Chris Sherman

<http://www.silentway.com/bowersweb.html>

["Outworlds 69"; pg. 2499]

A MATCH MADE IN HOLLYWOOD

Bruce Townley

<http://www.dnai.com/~gmatting/match.htm>

["Outworlds 69"; pg. 2516]

PALS

Patty Peters

<http://www.dnai.com/~ppeters/bob/bobhtml.htm>

[published as "Bob" in "Outworlds 70"; pg. 2595]

... upcoming in "Outworlds":

Wm. Breiding's column: 'Lost Empires of the Soul'

... previous Installments can be found on-line,

in Issues of Gary Mattingly's

SKUG at:

<http://www.dnai.com/~gmatting/skug.html>

Input, additions, suggestions ... are always Welcome. Quibbles, Tolerated.

... My Thanks to all who Contributed.

And to Victor Gonzalez for guest-hosting this party on the Web.

--- Bill Bowers | 11/05/99 |

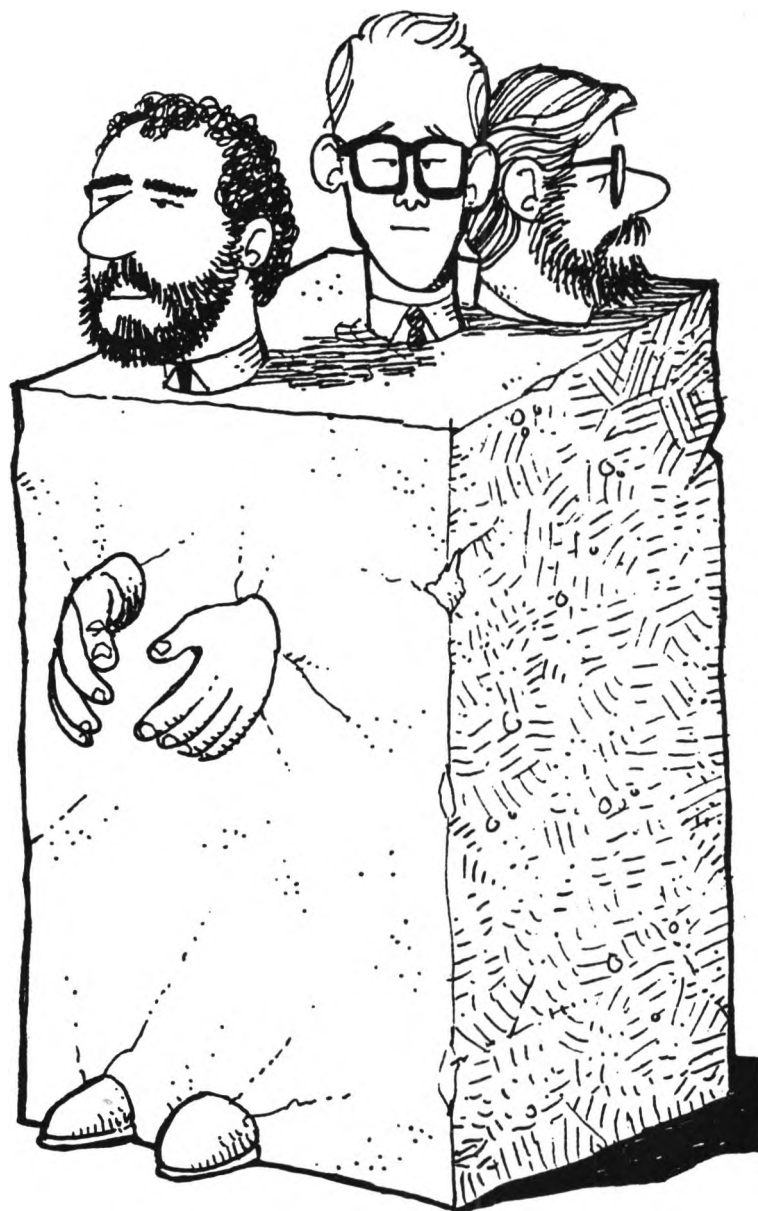
<BBowers@Earthling.net>

The on-line version of this List can be viewed at:

<http://www.galaxy-7.net/squb/links3.html>

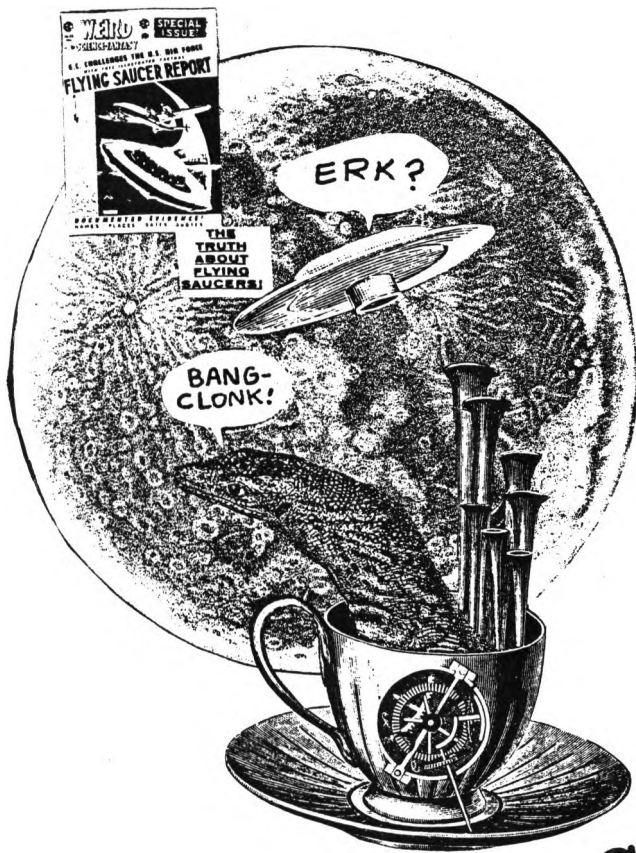
QUESTION:

What do you have when you've got 3 lawyers buried up to their necks in concrete?



ANSWER:

Not enough concrete.



How Gentle Giant Toys Around With Animation

by Francis Hamit

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This article originally appeared in the October 1999 issue of *Advanced Imaging* magazine.

As George Lucas discovered over 20 years ago, there's sometimes more money to be made selling toys and other three-dimensional representations of characters from a motion picture than from the film itself. Toys, collectibles, premiums and action figures are all items which are of intense interest to fans. These licensed characters can be based upon a licensed character like Mickey Mouse, Barbie, Jabba the Hutt from "Star Wars", or a real actor or person-ality.

The challenge is to deliver prototypes for

production that are both impeccable and cost-efficient. The customers of Gentle Giant Studios, Inc. include such corporate giants as Disney, Dreamworks SKG, Galoob Toys, Marvel Comics, Mattel, Nickelodeon, Sony Pictures, Twentieth Century Fox, Universal Studios, and Warner Brothers.

The four-and-a-half-year-old firm has 25 artists and technicians working with its clients to assure that every prototype is accurate, highly detailed, and ready for production. The sculptors work as a team on each item. Some specialize in form and proportion, and others have a facility for rendering facial expressions or other tiny details such as wheels, gears, or costumes.

S This can be especially important when the action figure is one whose character is played by a living actor. They have contractual control over their image and must approve the final result.

Gentle Giant has been a leader in this field for a number of years. Recently we sat down with Karl Meyer, Founder and President of the firm, and Steve Chapman, the company's Technical Director, to find how this enterprise is updating traditional sculpting techniques with laser scanning, computer graphics, and three-dimensional rapid prototyping molding machines.

The scanners are from Cyberware of Monterey, California, and the rapid prototyping machines are from 3D Systems of Valencia, California. The computer platforms are from Intergraph and SGI, along with some Apple Macintosh units, using Windows NT as the operating system and an Alias/Maya package combined with Gentle Giant's own proprietary G3 modeling software. There is no direct input from the 3D Maya format to the STL code used by the 3D systems prototyping machines, so Maya is translated to OBJ, the original Alias Wavefront format and from that to STL.

The initial data for these objects can be derived from two-dimensional drawings, or from three-dimensional data files. The tradi-

tional process used hand sculpted plasticine clay figures, which were then rendered in wax before a mould was created. This was a painstaking process sometimes requiring many tries before client approval was received.

Because of the way that Gentle Giant's customers sometimes change their minds, asking for changes in the size of the finished object, the benefits of using laser scanning and taking three-dimensional CAD files are indisputable. The savings come from the ability to simply scale an existing object to size, rather than create a new model. Also, animated characters are seldom perfectly symmetrical. Adjustments are often necessary. Some objects, such as toy trucks and cars, can be taken directly from 3-D CAD files, but more complex representations must be refined by human hands.

Karl Meyer told us, "The majority of the work we do here is still generated by our own sculptors using clay, but with a growing number of physical properties available to us as 3-D databases we are able to output to solid form without an intermediate physical model.

"Basically, (the model) is loaded in. We control the size. We can create a mirror image of it, if we need to. You can core it out and put bosses in it to make it so it will snap together in a kit. Toys have different limitations, depending on how they are mass-produced. Having it in digital form allows you to back-and-forth, so that you can revise it or make any adjustments you need to make it a quality product. Sometimes, you need to cheat to make something work. Machines are unable to cheat, but human beings can. These problems are very hard to solve in a computer, but an experienced sculptor can solve them by jamming in another piece of clay in the proper spot."

Steve Chapman added, "If you carry this process through to its logical conclusion, then companies like General Motors would be able to design a new car entirely in 3-D CAD, without using clay models, and using the same data to create the Hot Wheels models of that car. Taking it one step further, you can do that with any product, even an F-14 jet fighter. That means that Lockheed should be the people producing the models.

"The original artist(s) must have their original vision, as expressed in a movie or computer game, carried through even to the tooling for three-dimensional toys," Chapman said with passionate conviction; "The original data is the three dimensional images in the computer; in a two-dimensional movie, it could be (made into) three dimensions by adding two additional cameras. (These images) are created as three dimen-

sions in their original form and that must be carried through in detail.

"(This process) has a circular nature," he noted; "The movie becomes the video games which becomes the toy, but the toy could be the basis for the original movie. It's the value of the original vision which must be maintained. We are not the creators (of the vision) but (are) trying to make the original vision come through. We're eliminating the noise that is added at each level and staying true to the original vision. This empowers the original artist(s) and allows them to become tool makers without learning tool maker's skills. It's re-created, rather than created. Accuracy and the integrity of the artist are our paramount concerns."

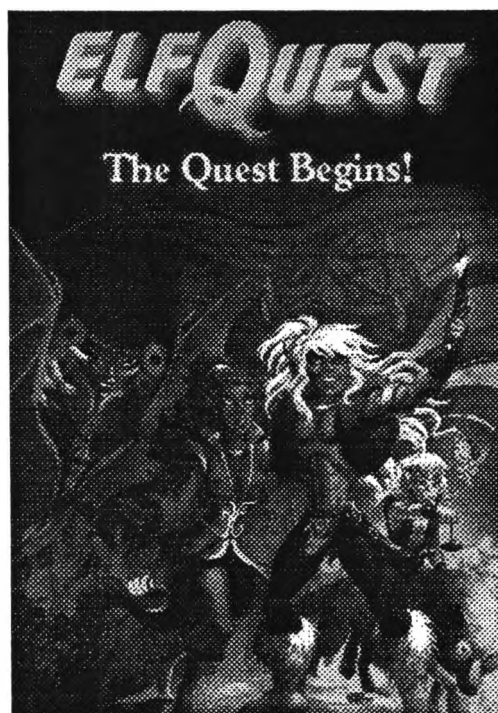
Karl Meyer said, "Our job is to take the character (from an animation) and stay true to the original integrity of the character." Meyer picked up a complex prototype of a toy from the table in front of him. "This is for 'The Thornberries' on Nickelodeon. It will be given away by Burger King in about six months." We watched as a monkey climbed up a pole and then glided down the spiral pathway, to start over again. "Look at the quality of this piece, the detail and the finish," he said with obvious pride. "I don't think you could find anything like it for even ten or fifteen dollars at a toy store. You'll get it free with a hamburger."

The final finishes are also now rendered as computer files and taken from painted master models, or even output as decals. The firm is always looking for new ways to improve its technology and recently added a haptic feedback device from N-System. "It's just like sculpting in real life, but without all that clay," said Chapman, inviting us to use the cursor to trim away a block in virtual space.

Karl Meyer said that the firm's growth to date has been mostly due to word-of-mouth in the product licensing sector of the entertainment industry. "We've done thousands of jobs," he said, "And they range from simple one-shots to continuing contracts with major firms. We've even done some work for free because we wanted to associate ourselves with a concept we believe in."

"We charge by the job, with extra fees for design changes and we work within (our clients') budgets. We take the responsibility of making sure that everything we do is character-correct. We usually work with the licensing department of a major firm rather than the creators directly so that all of the legal and business issues are dealt with at the same time."

The blend of traditional craftsmanship and high technology has worked well for the firm. The company is privately held and financial details were not disclosed for competitive reasons. Gentle Giant is now involved in most of the major deals in this sector.



Elfquest preliminary poster art © 2000 Wolfmill Entertainment & Warp Graphics

WOLFMILL SIGNS TOY DEAL FOR ELFQUEST

Craig Miller and Marv Wolfman's company Wolfmill Entertainment has signed a worldwide licensing agreement with Living Toyz for a line of action figures based on Wolfmill's forthcoming CG animated feature film *Elfquest*.

Described as both "a fantasy with teeth" and "an action soap opera," *Elfquest* tells a dynamic fantasy adventure with a richness and depth provided by the large cast of characters whose emotional stories are expertly woven in and out of the action. Cutter, young chief of the Wolfriders, must lead his tribe of warrior elves across a hostile world to find safety. Through his adventures he finds evil, magic, and romance.

Prior to the release of *Elfquest*, Los Angeles-based Living Toyz will produce several sets of action figures based on the original comic book designs as featured in the "Elfquest" comics published by Warp Graphics.

With the premiere of the film, Living Toyz will release a double-sized set of figures based on the character designs

from the film.

"Elfquest" is an internationally successful fantasy adventure comic book property created by Wendy and Richard Pini and distributed both as traditional comic books and in bound collections (both hardback and trade paper) available at all major book stores. The American Library Association called it "One of the most important works in American Fantasy." Published in a variety of languages, over 2.5 million copies of the bound volumes have been sold throughout the United States, England, Europe, Scandinavia, Russia, Australia, South Africa, China, and Japan. NASA took "Elfquest" into space as the symbol of a recent science mission, one of only two comic characters ever to be so honored. (The only other: Snoopy from "Peanuts.")

The screenplay for *Elfquest* is being written by Marv Wolfman, Craig Miller and Wendy Pini. Miller and Wolfman are also the film's Executive Producers through their company Wolfmill Entertainment. Most recently, Wolfmill Entertainment produced the 52 episode television series *Pocket Dragon Adventures* which is currently in its second year of release, playing on the BKN Kids Network in the United States, YTV in Canada, the BBC in England, and around the world.

The film is being produced in association with the European Animation Group, a pool that includes Project Images Films, Sceneries Europe, GTC (France), Das Werk, Trixter Film (Germany), Indice Multimedia, and Storyboard (Spain).

Changes of Address

Michele Center,
E-mail: AuntyM@globaleyes.net
William Center,
E-mail: CaptBill@globaleyes.net
Irwin Hirsh,
E-mail: hirsh@bigpond.net.au
Bjørn Tore Sund, Eidsvågskogen 12,
5101 Eidsvågneset, Norway

DASFAX published Carolyn Thompson's holiday letter announcing that she has moved to Escondido, CA.

Irwin Hirsh says he has used a variety of e-mail addresses over the past few years, and various of them are still good but are either his work address or an infrequently-checked address, so please use the new one.

Obituaries



Robert Ronald Hahn

by Mike Glyer

Robert Hahn, a member of the SCA and SF communities, passed away on January 27 after a struggle against brain cancer (glioblastoma multiforme stage 4). He had just turned 60 in December. He was known to the SCA as "Hrolfr the Silent" because of his quiet gentleness. The lyrical notice of his passing appears in the box below.

YaLeah, his life mate for 25 years, offers "The Hahn Report" to fans who want to know more of his last few months, and to people who might be helped by reading about the various standard, experimental, and alternative cancer therapies he used or investigated. Send an email request to YaLeah@aol.com

I was deeply touched to read about his struggle. I also appreciated seeing such accessible explanations of the therapies, none of which I had previously heard about. Before I read the "Report," my thought had been to weave its factual contents into an obituary. Having read it, I think there is more wisdom in YaLeah's method of sending it upon request. I hope more fans will request it. She adds, "I'm willing to share our research in even greater depth with those who specifically ask for more alternative cancer info. It was abbreviated in the 'Report,' but for most people that little is enough to really open their awareness."

Also, bandit has suggested raising funds to send Hahn's ashes into orbit. YaLeah writes, "There are ashes available, and now

set aside for the purpose. Hahn would be astonished, and delighted, and quite honored by this. It's totally appropriate, exactly the kind of thing that tickled his fancy." Anyone interested in participating should send e-mail to bandit@cruzio.com

World of Null A.E.

by John Hertz

Reprinted from *Vanamonde* 351 by permission

A.E. Van Vogt, most dazzling of sf's authors, was in 1996 given the Science

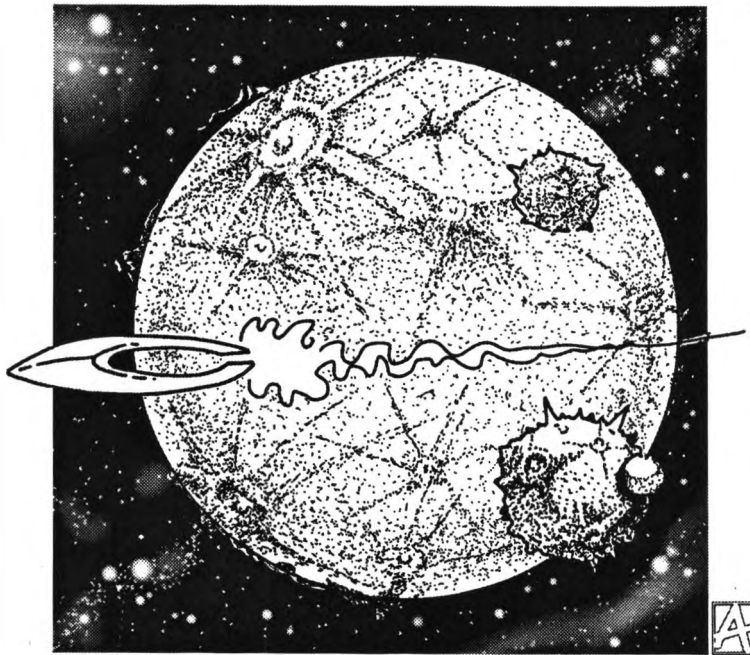
voice. Ellison called him a terrific writer. This was twice true, since some of his stories are terrifying. *Futures* leads with "The Enchanted Village" (1950), which represented him in the 1996 Nebula volume and dwarfs much that appears today. "I sing the Talent Electric," wrote Ellison for *Nebula Awards* 31; "Van Vogt was the wellspring of wonder." At the funeral, Ellison read tributes from Jack Williamson, great when Van Vogt was a newcomer; Sir Arthur Clarke, who came onto the scene at his heels; and Ray Bradbury, another distinctive voice; all three Grand Masters themselves. I went on to the cemetery. Bill Warren could not. Before I left he turned to me. We'll never know what the sevagram was. *R.I.P.*

In Passing

Famed hekto artist, fanwriter and 1974 Ranquet guest of honor **Mac Strelkov** passed away on January 27. [[Source: *Ned Brooks*]]

Maurice Beyke, a long-time Huntsville, AL area fan, was killed in a car accident on January 9. [[Source: *NASFA Shuttle* 1/00]]

Comic book artist **Gil Kane** died of cancer during the last weekend in January.



Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) Grand Master lifetime achievement award. He was by then wasting under Alzheimer's Disease; his anthology last year was called *Futures Past*, he could not be expected to write again. Death released him on Friday, January 26. At his funeral [January 31], Harlan Ellison gave the eulogy; he had written the introduction to *Futures*, and earlier lobbied for that award. Like Ellison, Van Vogt was a distinctive

Robert Hahn

~~~~~  
He loved well and was well loved.

He made the world a better place simply because he was in it.

His attitude was cheerful and supportive, causing people to both laugh and to think.

His life's works will continue to provide quality spaces for others to live their lives.

He is now released from worldly constraints and can participate in  
whatever the Universe has yet to create.

May his Gentleness continue in this world through each of us.  
~~~~~

Lucky Baby!

By Marie Bartlett-Sloan

Kirby and Marie Bartlett-Sloan have now adopted their third Chinese orphan. Marie has designed a web page to guide others through the myriad details of the international/Chinese adoption process. She also wrote a narrative about going to China to complete the adoption of her third daughter as part of a year-end family newsletter. Many thanks to Marie for letting me excerpt it in File 770.

Nothing can compare to the arrival of our new daughter, Mary Katherine!

We pretty much decided to pursue a third adoption during our second trip to China in 1996, but had needed the time to think about it and get our ducks, and girls, in a row. Gathering documents and running them through the gauntlet of notaries, certifications and official stamps occupied all the summer of 1998. We were finally able to send our completed dossier to our adoption agency, Chinese Children Adoption International (CCAI) of Colorado on September 2, 1998.

We paced, we waited, we jumped every time the phone rang, and sloooooowly, the time passed.

By the time May rolled around, we were nervous wrecks. We both were checking our answering machine at home six and eight times a day.

May 4, 1999. When I walked in the house, the message light was blinking. Caller ID showed a Colorado area code! This was it!

In a preternatural calm, I called CCAI — and got put on hold. I called Kirby at work with my cell phone. Kirby answered his desk phone and told me he was on his cell phone with CCAI at that very moment. So there we were, each holding two phones to our ears, waiting for Kat at CCAI to put together a conference call. Kirby and I were able to hear about our new daughter together. What a crazy, exciting, wonderful, indescribable moment!

Yuan Pei Shan was born September 15, 1997 in Nanning, Guangxi province, China. She was under the care of Mother's Love Orphanage, a joint effort of the Chinese government and Hong Kong citizens. It was reputed to be one of the best orphanages in China. More than likely, she was with a foster family. CCAI e-mailed us the referral

photo — a pretty little face looking four-square at the camera with a solemn, interested expression and bright, intelligent eyes. She would be about 22 months old when we received her. We decided to name her Mary Katherine after both grandmothers and a great-grandmother. We were beside ourselves with joy. She was PERFECT and we wanted to go get her NOW!

Four days later, on May 8, the beginning of Mother's Day weekend, the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade was bombed.

Shock. Then despair. Pregnancy and adoption have their similarities, but they are polar opposites, too. The pregnant mother always knows where her baby is. She doesn't have to wonder who is taking care of the baby. No stranger will appear out of nowhere to tell her she can't be a mother because a form wasn't filled out correctly or her fingerprints didn't clear. No one will change the due date by weeks, months, or years. No one will turn her away at the last minute, telling her to forget about it.

There we were, looking at the photo of this marvelous little girl who was already ours in our hearts, knowing that if diplomatic relations between the U.S. and China were cut off, we might never be able to hold her.

The China adoption lists on the Internet were in an uproar. As an 'old hand,' having watched US/China relations with interest since 1994, I counseled patience and a wait-and-see attitude. There had been many ups and downs between the two countries during the years, but never once had China's international adoption effort wavered. It seems to have support from the very top. Jiang Zemin, the most powerful man in China — President, Communist Party General Secretary and Chairman of the Party's Central Military Commission — is rumored to have been adopted. Zhu Rongji, the Prime Minister, had invited the founders of our adoption agency to a banquet in his honor when he visited the US in early 1999. He was well aware of their efforts. My heart quailed, but all we could do was wait. There was absolutely nothing we could do.

We were glued to the TV and Internet that weekend. Gradually, it became clear to me that there was a lot of high level diplomatic posturing going on. We began to have hope. If the work of CCAA in Beijing con-

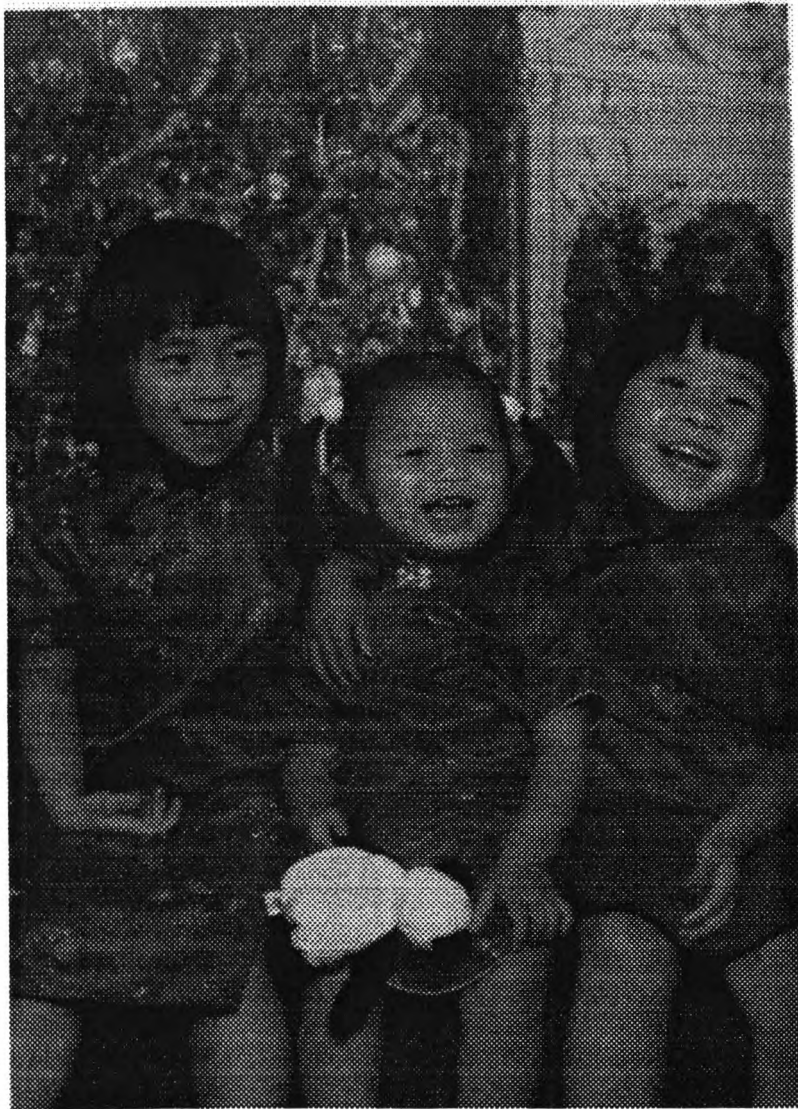
tinued uninterrupted — referrals of children and travel authorizations — this was a good sign that all would be okay.

On Monday and Tuesday, individual reports of referrals and travel authorizations continued to appear on the Internet. Adoption agencies reported the same. Best of all, Jeannette Chu, the Adoption Officer at the American Consulate in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, China, began to send updates to the Internet adoption lists, sometimes four or five times a day. Jeannette tracked down and communicated with all the 50 or 60 American adoptive families in China at the time. All were safe. Most were told to wait a few more days in the provincial cities and keep a low profile. As families filtered in to Guangzhou (a.k.a. Canton), the Consular officials made special arrangements to finish the U.S. portion of the paperwork at the hotels.

CCAA didn't miss a beat. It was as if nothing had happened. Dossiers continued to be accepted, referrals of children and travel authorizations sent out. This experience proves that China is committed to finding homes for its orphans, no matter what. The children truly do come first!

The U.S. Consulate in Guangzhou was delayed a few days. In the end, if we were personally delayed in travel, it was only by one day. Kudos to Jeanette Chu for her wonderful work in communicating with the China adoption community during a very frightening time.

The worst part of the wait is not before you get the referral but after. You have the photo but you don't have the kid! I had set up the guest bedroom as a staging area for the luggage, so the final packing began. In addition to our own clothes and stuff, we had to bring clothes for Mary, diapers etc, a large box of Cheerios, raisins, medications for everything you could think of. I brought 50 rolls of 35mm film for my Minolta plus a Polaroid camera and film. Kirby armed himself with what seemed to be a lifetime supply of video tape for the video camera. We also packed donations of clothing and liquid infant vitamins for the orphanage. We made final arrangements with our friends Lynne and John, who had generously offered to take care of Louisa and Julia while we were gone. We updated our will and insurance. And even though we had done this twice



Marie and Kirby's three daughters:

Louisa: b 3/94, Jiujiang, Jiangxi province, a. 6/94 Nanchang, Jiangxi province

Julia: b 5/95 Jiangyin, Jiangsu province, a. 1/96 Nanjing, Jiangsu province

Mary Katherine: b 9/97, Nanning, Guangxi province, a. 8/99, Nanning, Guangxi province

Marie's story behind the photo: "It was quite a trick to get three little girls to sit together and all smile at once for the photographer. Fortunately, she was patient and good with kids. She shot about 25 poses, and this was the only good one. We could preview each pose on the computer and then accept or reject it. In one shot, Louisa had a finger up her nose. In another, Julia had stuck her fingers in her mouth at the last moment and stretched her mouth out into a big smile. Etc., etc. It was like *Calvin and Hobbes* come to life.

"Right after the photo that made it into the card was taken, Mary tumbled off backwards from the platform they were sitting on, but came up smiling. But the *piece de resistance* was when Louisa said 'Here, Mommy!' and stuck out her hand with a tooth in it! It was her first loose tooth and she, of course, had to take that moment to finally pull it out."

Marie's recommended webpages:

Marie and Kirby's Travel Tips for Those Adopting From China

www.crosswinds.net/~monkeyking/tripelist.html

Families with Children from China (which has mountains of info and links on China adoption)

www.fwcc.org

Chinese Children Adoption International (our agency)

www.chinesechildren.org

before, we scurried around like crazies.

We left Atlanta for Los Angeles on June 30, spent the night in LA, then took a 16-hour flight to Hong Kong. On July 4, we were up bright and early to travel from Hong Kong to the airport in Guangzhou (Canton), China by charter bus, and to fly to Nanning, where we would receive our children that evening. None of the other four families in our group had ever been to China before. We kept quiet, letting them experience it themselves.

Nanning is about 90 miles north of Vietnam. It is famous for its wonderful fruits and seafood. We could see the land as we flew, dotted with ponds, lakes, rivers, water everywhere.

When we arrived, we were met by our third guide, Daphne, and off we went again by bus into the city to our hotel. The highway passed through fields of rice and vegetables, and was lined the whole way into the city by traditional brick homes and little roadside businesses. Compared to the West-

ern style prosperity of Hong Kong, and even the Chinese style prosperity of Guangzhou, here we could see a taste of what poverty could be in China. Yet everyone looked healthy, well fed, and decently clothed. We could see people smiling and laughing. People had little TV sets (a window to the world unavailable even 10 years ago), everyone had bicycles, some had motorcycles. Even along the highway we could sense a bustle and energy about us.

Old style traditional brick homes gave way to modern high-rise apartment buildings as we entered Nanning. The city was simply awash in flowers, gardens and plantings, the streets lined with trees shading the sidewalks. Aside from a few historic buildings, all the buildings we saw were relatively new and in good repair. We got to our hotel, The Majestic (and so it was!) about 7 p.m.. All of us were nervous and quiet. When the day began we thought we would be receiving our children this evening, but Daphne told us on the bus that it would probably happen the

next day. It was a letdown, and all of us were tired..

We got up to our room. There was a portable crib/playpen, complete with bedding, all made up and waiting for us. We barely had time to look out the window and receive the luggage from the bellmen when we got the news that the children *had* arrived. Yeow! I scrambled to arrange the luggage and supplies. The phone rang. Kirby grabbed the video camera and we stepped into the hall. There they were!

The next few minutes were chaotic. Each of the little ones, ranging in age from 18 months to 2-1/2 years, was nervous and apprehensive, unsure of what was happening to them. They had all been with foster families but now were being held by women from the orphanage. As family names were called, the ladies passed the girls to their new parents, and every one of the girls began to cry. I took Mary in my arms. Someone handed Kirby a plastic bag with a bag of powdered formula, a baby bottle, and a few

small bananas in it. Then each family retreated to our respective rooms.

Mary was clearly terrified. It was heart-breaking to see her distress. She stayed plastered to the hotel room door, standing on tiptoe in her little plastic sandals, straining to reach the door handle so she could get out. She kept crying "Aiya! Aiya!" (Auntie! Auntie!) and pounding on the door. We sat on the floor near her, but not too close, quietly talking to her. She would turn and glare at us, clutching the little pink bear Kirby had given her, but refusing all further contact. After about an hour, she finally crawled in my lap and fell asleep from exhaustion. She was wearing a little peach sundress with ruffles at the hem and neckline. Her hair was done up in two ponytails with pretty peach ribbons and had obviously never been cut. It was long enough to touch her shoulders, but was still thin baby hair. And it was exactly the same shade of brown as my hair. I took off her sandals and found lots of dirt under her toenails — aha! a dirt digger just like Louisa! Kirby replaced her traditional split pants with a diaper and we tucked her in for the night, still in her little dress. We watched her sleep peacefully. We comforted ourselves with the thought that her distress showed she was emotionally attached to her foster parents and knew how to love. It was really a healthy sign.

The next few days were occupied with paperwork, walks in the nearby park, and quiet time in the hotel room. Our travel group and two other travel groups who were staying at our hotel were also able to visit the orphanage. This was a thrill for Kirby and me because we had not seen the orphanages that Louisa and Julia were from. Mother's Love was several miles outside Nanning, surrounded by orchards and small farms, plain, but neat as a pin. We saw the clinic, meeting room, diaper and bathing room, and the infant nurseries where about 40 babies lived. Toddlers lived with foster families as Mary had. It was obvious that the staff cared about their charges. Even seriously handicapped infants were clean and well fed. We could tell Mary recognized several of the ladies and wanted to be picked up. I could see the distress on one lady's face in particular. Our eyes met, then she turned and rushed away across the courtyard to stand behind a column, where she watched for the rest of our visit.

Mary continued to be reserved. She clutched her bear but refused all other toys, shoving them back to us when we offered them. She did, however, take to the Cheerios I had brought. She ate them, dumped them, put them back in the little plastic tub, mashed them with her hands, hid them and

found them again, and gradually came out of her shell. Though her diet was pretty much Cheerios, raisins, local bananas, and water for the first few days, I could tell she was a hearty eater. It was just a matter of time.

Gradually I became the hugger, holder and feeder. Kirby became Daddy the Packhorse. We had brought a convertible backpack/stroller with us. Kirby carried Mary in the backpack everywhere we went. From her perch, she became Mistress of All She Surveyed, peering out from beneath her little denim ladybug baseball cap. She quickly learned that she could steer Kirby by kicking him in the ribs. She also learned that if she didn't want to get down, she could stick her feet in his pockets and really tangle things up. All this cracked up the little old ladies we met on the street. It is unusual for a man to have much to do with childrearing in China, even more so to see a foreign man carrying his little Queen Bee on his back. We had many happy 'gesture conversations' during our whole time there, aided by language cards specially prepared for adoptive parents.

On July 8, I was able to meet Mary's foster parents and recorded it all on video. They were a very pleasant older couple, and had already received an 8-month-old girl to raise up next. We are so grateful to them for the wonderful job they did in starting Mary off in the world, and will be keeping in touch with them.

When we woke up on July 9, we found the baby fairies had done their work during the night. Mary woke with a smile on her face. She was a new little girl, ready for a busy day. The toughest part of the transition was over. And from that point on, she insisted on sleeping with me as she had with her foster mother. Her appetite picked up (prodigiously), and she began to interact with the other little girls in our group. They too were beginning to adjust to their new parents. The stress began to lessen and the fun began. But we were all tiring of Nanning. All the girls were unhappy when we inevitably returned to the hotel after a walk — the "scene of the crime" as one of the other daddies put it. It was time to move on.

We flew back to Guangzhou on July 9. July 10 our guide took us and the girls to the medical clinic on Shamian Island for their cursory physicals as required by the U.S. government.

On July 12, we conducted business at the American Consulate. The three of us shopped some more, spending most of the day on Shamian Island. We had a hilarious encounter with a young man in a seafood shop. The food was *very* fresh, i.e. alive, and

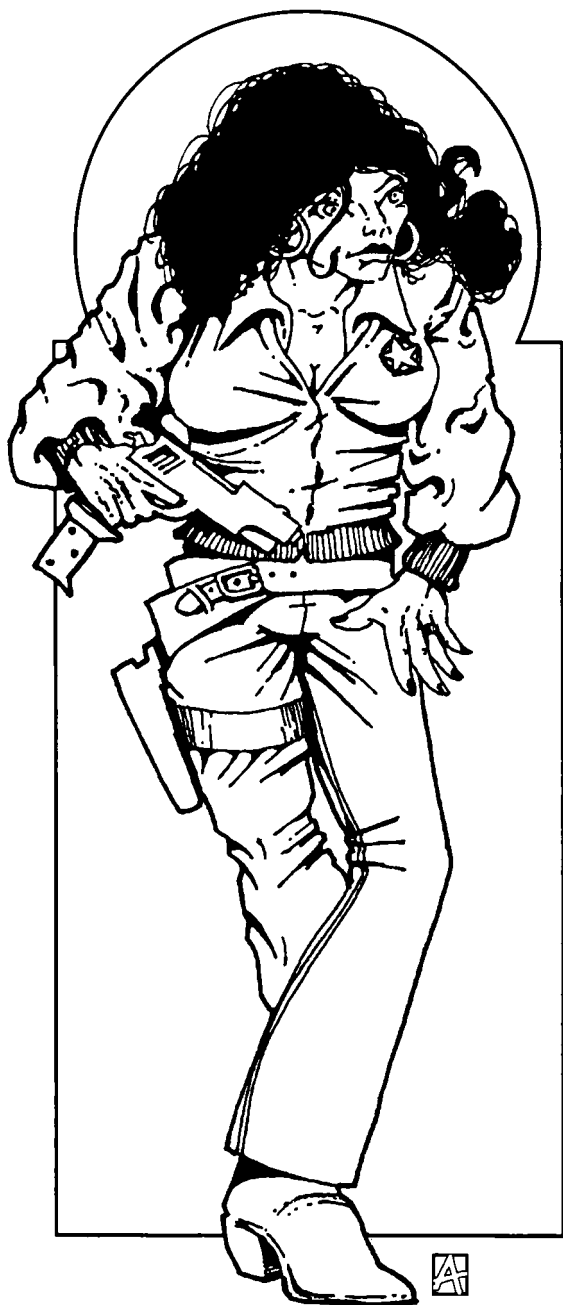
we had lots of laughs together as he picked up live snakes, lobsters, and a huge clam with a foot which extended and retracted in, "ahem," a most remarkable manner. And everywhere we went, the people were so friendly, especially the older women. People would say "lucky baby" and give us thumbs up.

July 14 — It was a short hop from Guangzhou to Hong Kong by plane. We were all eager to return home, but sad as well. Mary was a little trouper, enjoying every new thing that we did, whether dinner in a restaurant, a bus ride or an airplane flight. But she was leaving everything she had ever known — home, the love of her foster family, everything. We boarded the plane in Hong Kong and began the 14-hour flight to LA, stuffed in like sardines without the benefit of olive oil. Mary declined to sit between us, instead clinging to me in my arms and sleeping for the entire flight. Kirby had to hand feed me when the meals came around. I saw more feature length films during that flight than I had seen total since becoming a mother. Mary's long sleep was good, but it was bad too.

Kirby and I bid our travel companions goodbye at the LA airport. Now all we wanted was to get home. We flew to Denver, made the connection, and arrived in Atlanta about 8 p.m.. John met us at the airport with Louisa and Julia. We had missed them so much, and they had missed us. We had called them several times from China and knew they were having a good time — they were too busy to talk to us on the phone! Even though we had talked to them a lot about the new sister we were bringing home, we wondered how they would react. We had nothing to worry about. Both Louisa and Julia hugged and kissed Mary on their own! Mary looked confused.

Now it has been six months. We can't believe it. Neither of us can remember what life was like without Mary. She is a little pistol — smart, energetic, strong willed, and full of fun. The Queen Bee has become the little sister who tries to copy absolutely everything her big sisters do. She is picking up English at a tremendous rate, but sadly has lost all the Cantonese dialect that she was learning to speak in China. She is almost potty trained, loves to help, is good to the cats, and has pretty much quit biting (!). She is affectionate and polite, saying "please," "thank you," and "sorry" when appropriate. We are amazed, delighted and very grateful once again to the Chinese government for the honor and privilege of raising this wonderful child.

Conventional Reportage



Lack of Conviction

Omaha fans must wait until April 2001 for the first Conviction, planned for their city this spring. In the meantime, the committee will holding onto the pre-registered memberships. At least, when con finally happens, there will be a dealers room.

Ginnie Fee posted, "The committee received many requests for dealers room info, but the hotel we had originally booked with did not have adequate meeting rooms for us to have had one. Finding a larger venue was one of the reasons for the postponement."

Almost all of the guests have reconfirmed for the future date. More information can be found on the convention's website: <http://www.dykely.com/conviction>

Online Registration Arrives!

Online registration is available for Chicon 2000. You can access it from the registration page or the home page. Chicon accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover.

Toronto in 2003 Chairman

Peter Jarvis is the choice of The Board of Directors of Toronto World Science Fiction Convention in 2003 bid to chair Torcon 3, should Toronto win.

Originally from Montreal, Peter Jarvis now lives in Hamilton, Ontario. For the bid committee, Peter has served as the vice-chair of the bid, and as the chair of the bid's publications committee.

Further information on the bid can be found at www.torcon3.on.ca

Upcoming Conventions

Mythcon XXXI: There's another Hawaiian convention in 2000. Mythcon XXXI will be held at the Kilauea Military Camp, Volcano, Island of Hawaii from August 18-21. Its Guest of Honor is writer/scholar Steven Goldsberry, author of *Maui the Demigod: An Epic Novel of Mythical Hawaii*, and Associate Professor of English (Creative Writing), University of Hawaii at Manoa. Mythcon is hosted by the Mythopoeic Society, an international literary and educational organization devoted to the study, discussion, and enjoyment of the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams.

Mythcon XXXI's conference's theme is -- surprise! -- Myth and Legend of the Pacific. Papers dealing with the confer-

ence theme are encouraged. So are papers focusing on the work and interests of the Guest of Honor, or on the Inklings (especially Tolkien, Lewis and Williams). Papers on other fantasy authors and themes are also welcome. The committee notes, "Some that suggest themselves are island worlds; the Great Sea; sea journeys; symbolism of earth and fire." Abstracts of papers should be sent to the Papers Coordinator at the following address by April 30, 2000: For more information, see the web page:

<http://www.mythsoc.org/mythcon31.html>

or write: Edith L. Crowe, Clark Library, San Jose State University, San Jose, CA 95192-0028; E-mail: ecrowe@email.sjsu.edu

Bubonicon 32 will be held August 25-27, 2000 at the Howard Johnson East, 15 Hotel Circle NE (I-40 and Eubank) in Albuquerque NM. The Guest of Honor is Walter Jon Williams (*The Rift*, *Metropolitan*, *Hardwired*) of New Mexico. Mistress of Toast is Mary Ann Cornett, a fan from Iowa ("member of the Tucker Smooth Circle.") Guest artist is comic book artist and fantasy illustrator Lela Dowling of California. Auctioneer is Robert E. Vardeman. Memberships are \$22 until May 29, \$25 until August 14, and \$28 at the door. Contact: NMSF Conference, P.O. Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176 or e-mail cwcraig@nmia.com. Website: at members.aol.com/bubonicon.

Light Reading

"However, you will find it surprising to learn that the con committee denied us admission to the Friday night dance. It was a Black Tie/Lingerie/Toga (BLT) party. You had to wear a formal suit, underwear, or a Toga to gain admission. I did not bring a coat and tie with me on this trip, and I don't wear just underwear or a Toga." **Tom Feller**, *Southern Fandom Confederation Bulletin*, 11/99.

"I don't get in preparing a bundle for SAPS the sickening feeling I do when I stuff an envelope with more than 60 copies of *Horizons* [for FAPA] that at least half of them will go unread into a wastebasket." **Harry Warner, Jr.**, quoted in *Dinosaur Spit!* #1

"I'm not good at predicting the future, just warning against it." **David Gerrold**, at LASFS 65th anniversary banquet.

WELCOME TO DOWN UNDER, DOWN UNDER

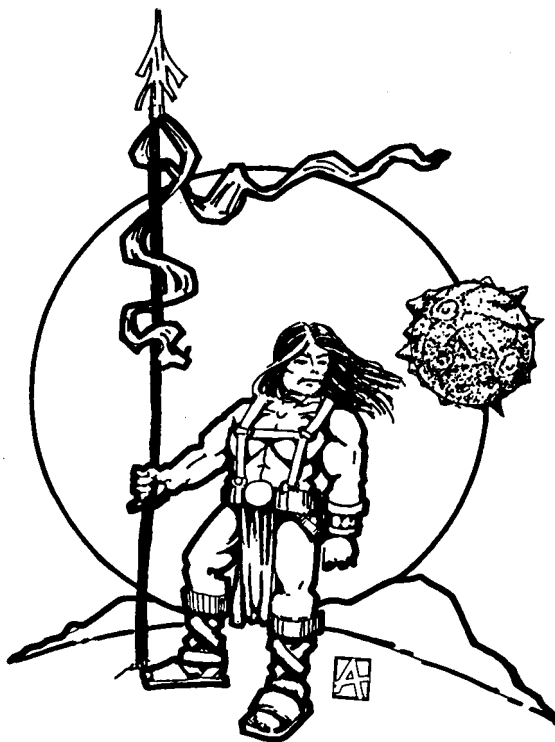
By Sue and Steve Francis

This is a tale of our travels in Australia around the time of AussieCon 3, the 57th World Science Fiction Convention. We left Louisville on Wednesday, August 25th and started off by having our United flight through Chicago to LA switched to TWA through St Louis because of bad weather in Chicago. However all connections were made and we arrived in LA an hour earlier than originally scheduled. We found Margaret Keifer (one of two people who has attended all 50 Mid-WestCons in Cincinnati) at our United gate. Visiting with her made our time fly by quickly.

After approximately 30 hours in the air and bouncing through the airports (five of them) we arrived in Melbourne, Australia. Somehow we took a wrong turn and managed to get past customs and immigration without checking in. With the help of a friendly airport staff person we finally passed through immigration without a hitch. The flight from Melbourne to Hobart, Tasmania was uneventful and we arrived at the airport about 1 PM on Friday, August 27th (still Thursday in the States). After claiming our bags we caught a taxi and headed off to the bed and breakfast which was to be our home for the next four days.

The name of our bed and breakfast is the Colville Cottage and is situated in Battery Point, a beautifully kept old residential section of Hobart. The reservation was arranged by Robin Johnson (Chairman of Aussiecon 1) for us. It is located at 32 Mona Street right next door to Robin's home. The place was a very old home converted to a bed and breakfast. Carl and Louise (the owners of the B&B) kept the home in immaculate condition. Carl and Louise made us feel perfectly at home and served up a wonderful breakfast each day. They were typical of the very friendly people of Tasmania and of Australia in general. As a side note, Tasmania is the island state of Australia, not a separate country. We detected none of the animosity evident toward Americans found in some of the other countries.

Our first day there was devoted to kicking the jet lag, so we went out exploring on foot. I had decided not to try driving in Australia because of the left hand driving lanes. I was afraid that in a stressful situation my instinct would take over and I would find myself in the right lane (which does not work well there). We found it to be easy to walk everywhere we wanted to go in Hobart.



It is a relatively compact town of about 100,000 people.

We had planned to try to make our bookings for the day trips on our first day there. We headed downtown looking for the tourist information office and stopped on a corner checking out our map and looking very puzzled. At that moment a very kind gentleman stopped and asked if he could be of help (Another example of the friendliness exhibited by the Australians). We asked where the tourist office was and he said it was the pink building just across the street. We had found it but did not realize it yet. The lady in the office was very helpful and we booked our trips to Port Arthur, The Cadbury Chocolate Factory and the bus trip to Devonport. Devonport is the departure point for the Spirit of Tasmania, an overnight ferry that runs across the Bass Strait to Melbourne 3 times a week.

After booking the local trips we wandered around town and explored the area around the docks at the harbor. We checked out the area around Salamanca Place where the Salamanca Market would be set up the next morning. After a few hours of exploring and shopping we made our way back to the bed and breakfast (from here on in referred to as "home"). A short time later Robin Johnson contacted us and made a date for

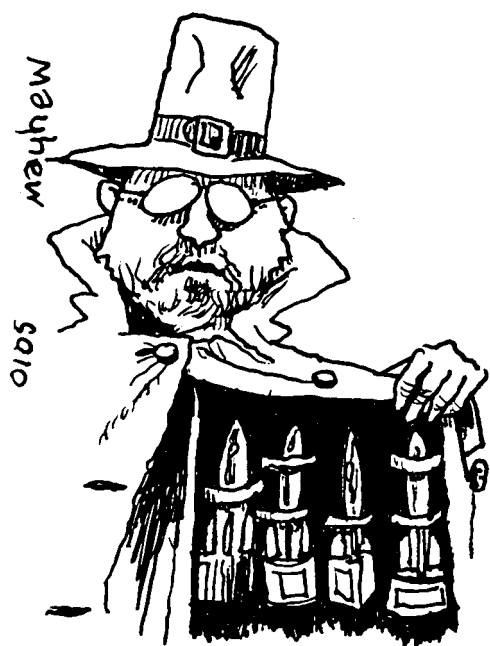
supper and to see the opening of a new art exhibition in one of the old converted warehouse buildings along Salamanca Place. After seeing the exhibit and meeting some of Robin's Artist friends, Robin, his wife Alicia, Sue and I had a Tasmanian version of Chinese Fast food for supper. By this time we were ready for a good night's sleep. We had forced ourselves to stay up as late as we could to help minimize the effects of being 14 hours and 1 day off our regular biological schedule.

As you may have noticed, I have written 2 pages and so far have only covered the flight to Tasmania and the first day. This is going to be a very long story of our travels.

Our breakfast was set for 7:30 AM, so we made our way to the main house and the enclosed porch area which was set up as the breakfast room. For breakfast there was a choice of several cereals, fresh fruit, juice, scones or toast, Bacon and Eggs fixed my choice or the daily special. At breakfast we met Walter and Maureen Heaton, who were down from Devonport on holiday. They are a very nice pensioned couple (originally from England) now living in Tasmania. After breakfast we set out for the Salamanca Market which was about a 15 minute walk from home.

We found the market stretching along Salamanca Place in front of the row of converted warehouses we had visited the evening before. It had hundreds of temporary stalls set up with vendors selling everything you can think of. There were souvenirs, fruits & vegetables, flowers, clothing, games, craft works, beautiful hand knitted (Tasmanian Wool) sweaters, food and even one dealer selling antique tools. The market was four rows across and ran for about a half mile along the street. We shopped for about 4 hours until our feel said "enough already!" The market was as much fun as Roger Sims told us that it would be. It was here that we began to fill the extra suitcase we brought for the return trip. There were a number of people passing out pamphlets and wearing signs. We did not pay much attention to them but it reminded us of home. There were different musical groups performing intermittently during the day and Hobart has it's very own Town Crier wandering about the market place.

As we made our way back home we passed through several little mini-parks



which dotted the area around Battery Point. A bit of a rest was in order after the market, so we relaxed in our room, Steve slept and Sue read. About an hour after we had returned to the room, there was a knock on our door. Much to our surprise it was Walter. He and Maureen were going to motor up to the top of Mt. Wellington, which overlooks Hobart, and he asked if we would like to join them. So off we went on an unexpected side trip up the mountain. After about 45 minutes of narrow winding roads we found ourselves at the top of a very cold and windy Mt. Wellington, 1720 meters above sea level.

The fog was quite dense and we could not see anything but our immediate surroundings, not even the top of the TV tower set on the peak. So we wandered around the overlook and the observation decks for a while when all of a sudden a wind came up and blew all of the fog away. We had a magnificent view of Hobart, the Tasman bridge, the harbor and the Derwent River. The view was fabulous. After returning home, we joined Robin and Alicia for dinner at DaAngelos, a fine Italian restaurant only a block away from home. We would not have been able to eat there if it had not been for Robin and Alicia, (They are frequent diners at DaAngelos) We then adjourned to a place called "Mummy's" for dessert. They served such large desserts. We then went back to our room, checked out the "Telly" to see if we could find out what was happening in the world. All of the news was about the turmoil in East Timor in Indonesia. This was big news in Australia as East Timor is only 700

km from the north coast of Australia. More about that later. We then fell asleep. All in all one hell of a g'day mates.

On Sunday, we were picked up by car to begin our trip out to Port Arthur, the 1830's penal colony where England dumped all of their undesirables. The bus trip out to the peninsula where Port Arthur is located was long but filled with many interesting sights and tales from our bus driver. We arrived at the visitors center and began our tour of the grounds (after the obligatory look about in the gift shop).

The grounds were quite extensive with many of the old buildings remarkably well preserved. Much restoration had to be done after the disastrous bush fires that struck the area earlier in the century. What remained presented a very grim picture of what life must have been like for the inmates of this ancient prison. Most of the written records were lost to the fires, so there are few accounts of who the inmates or their guards actually were. The grounds were beautifully kept, but the place still presented a very somber and sobering ambience.

After a second stop at the gift shop (this time to shop) and lunch we returned to Hobart by bus. The place we selected for dinner was called "El Taco", a Mexican restaurant located a few doors away from DaAngelos. The appetizer we chose was Guacamole. Our waitress brought out this huge bowl of guacamole and chips. We didn't think that we would be able to eat our entrees but we managed. No dessert this time however. The entire meal was excellent and we were very happy with our choice of restaurants. We went back home, and decided to call a taxi and go to the casino. Sue spent the \$25.00 we allotted for the casino, then returned home and watched the telly for a short time.

This time we watched a girls basketball game. This was a different game of basketball than what girls play in the US. The first noticeable difference is the uniforms. Australian girls wear a uniform that is similar to our cheerleaders with little short skirts. Another difference is that their basketball goal does not have a backboard. The young ladies do not dribble the basketball, they just pass it around. When they are ready to shoot the basket, everyone freezes except the closest opposing guard who puts her hands up in the air as if to block the ball. There is no touching of the other team's players, which makes for a very tame and different game.

We then crashed for the night around 9 p.m.

Monday our day trip was to the Cadbury Chocolate Factory in Claremont, a few kilometers north of Hobart. We selected the river cruise as our means of travel to the factory. It was a relaxing 1½ hour trip up the Derwent river to Claremont. The boat's narrator kept us entertained with a series of commentaries about the features along the river. There was a certain amount of BS mixed in with the stories. Of particular interest was the story of the barge that struck a pier supporting the Tasman Bridge in Hobart and the subsequent collapse of 2 sections of the bridge. This event had a major impact on the Hobart area back in 1975, when the people who lived on the peninsula across the river could not get to work, and the ones at work could not get home. They then built a second temporary pontoon bridge. The Bowen Bridge was built in 1984 a few of kilometers up river from the Tasman Bridge. This bridge replaced the temporary pontoon bridge.

We arrived at the dock and walked up a gravel path to the entrance to the chocolate factory. We could smell the chocolate even before we entered the place. After a brief orientation (no cameras were allowed inside) a very charming guide named Sue conducted us on the tour through the plant, explaining the processes as we went along. There were numerous "feeding stations" along the way, where we were invited to try samples of the various products. It did not take long before most of us were ready to swear off of chocolate for a long time (speak for yourself Steve). After the tour, Sue (my wife, not the tour guide) purchased 5 kg (11 lbs.) of mixed chocolates to take to the convention. We even managed to bring a couple of pounds back to the US for ourselves. We returned to the dock to catch the cruise boat back to Hobart. Needless to say we ate very light for that night's supper.

Tuesday morning we went in for our 7:30 breakfast and to say our good-byes to Carl and Louise, before heading north on the bus to Devonport. Every day Louise and Carl would play some light background music on the CD player in the kitchen as she prepared breakfast. On the second morning she was playing some of Enya's selections including Orinoco Flow. I asked her to turn it up a little so I could hear it better in the breakfast area. It happens to be one of my favorite pieces. On Tuesday morning at Breakfast, she played it again. What more appropriate than a song containing the words "Sail away-Sail away-Sail away" just before leaving to catch the Spirit of Tasmania to Melbourne.

The bus trip took about 6 hours total,

including a stopover in Launceston. This is a small town in the North of Tasmania maintaining much of the flavor and colonial architecture of the 19th century. We wandered about the city center, had lunch and then headed off for Devonport to catch the Spirit.

We boarded the "Spirit of Tasmania" about 5 p.m. The Spirit is a combination cruise ship and auto ferry. The lowest 3 decks are cargo bays for automobiles and the upper decks contain the passenger cabins, restaurants, bars, casino, game room for teenagers and a play room (with videos) for the youngest children. The crossing was very smooth across the Bass Strait and lasted about 14 hours. We had reserved the large suite for our trip, it was about 2/3 the size of a regular hotel room. This was the top of the line cabin, but what the hell, we were only going to do this once. No sea sickness was experienced (we cheated and took seasickness pills before we sailed). That evening we had a very pleasant supper in one of the ship's restaurants. We learned before we left Australia that the Spirit of Tasmania had three of its four main engines break down about 2 weeks after we had made the crossing. That was way too close for comfort. The crossing on the Spirit was well worth doing, and we recommend it to anyone visiting Tasmania (after the engines are repaired of course).

Upon arriving at the Melbourne harbor and after a short wait we arranged for a taxi to take us to the Centra on the Yarra Hotel. AussieCon 3 was being held in the Melbourne Convention Centre which is directly accessible from the Centra Hotel lobby. This complex is located on the southwest corner of the downtown Melbourne area. The city has a wonderful tram system that you can use to travel anywhere you want. Auto traffic is heavy and about what you would expect in a city of 3 million.

After checking in to the hotel, we located the others in our group that we had planned to meet in Melbourne. We found Pat and Roger Sims, Bill and Cokie Cavin, Dick Spelman, Debbie Oakes, Margaret Keifer, and Chris Stuber. The Melbourne Zoo was to be our next stop. We took the tram to the back entrance of the zoo, made sure our cameras were all loaded, and had a great relaxing afternoon wandering about the zoo and taking pictures. Somehow in our trek through the zoo, we lost Bill and Cokie Cavin and ended up returning to the hotel without them. That evening after supper we checked out the convention area, and signed up for our time slots to work in the at the door registration area. Sue worked several shifts at registration, and I did one

shift at registration and was a member of the site selection ballot counting crew on Saturday evening. The CFG hospitality suite was opened that evening and continued to be available through Sunday night.

On Thursday we cast our ballots for the 2002 Worldcon. San Jose, California aka ConJose' won with 666 votes out of a total of 820 votes that were cast. The huckster room and art show were quite small by Worldcon standards but relatively well stocked with books and art respectively. We did not spend much time in either and are looking forward to the monster rooms common at US Worldcons. The main convention center foyer was used for registration, at con sales, the freebie tables, and information. It probably could have contained site selection and the bidders tables as well. The latter were located in a rear area on the back side of a block of meeting rooms.

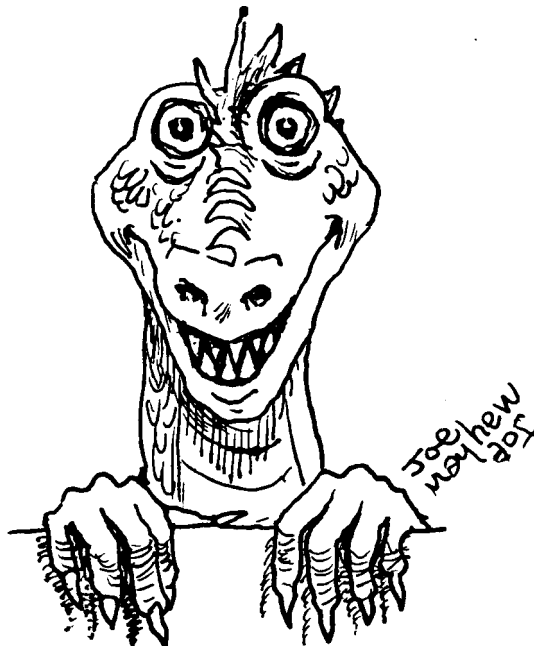
At the business meetings (and after listening to Mr. Sacks for a while) several things were accomplished. Sue was re-elected to the Mark Protection Committee for her fourth 3 year term. The amendment to revert to a two year voting cycle was narrowly defeated as was a proposal to split the dramatic presentation Hugo award into two divisions, a long form (100 minutes or more) and a short form (less than 100 minutes). The main piece of business was the passage of the no-zone site selection process with a 500 mile exclusion zone. When this amendment to the constitution goes into effect (no seated Worldcons or current bids will be affected by this change), any city anywhere can bid as long as it is beyond a 500 mile radius of the city hosting the site selection for that year. This theoretically means that

one city could conceivably host the Worldcon three years in a row, but not the fourth (as if any con committee would be crazy enough to try this). There are probably other ramifications to this change but we will leave that to the nit-picking and fly-specking committee.

On Friday we took a bus to the Healesville Wildlife Preserve located a couple of hours north east of Melbourne by bus. This area contained many animals and birds indigenous to Australia as opposed to the Melbourne Zoo which contained wildlife from all over the world. We enjoyed the tour, which was narrated by a very well informed tour guide named Mary Anne. At mid-day we enjoyed a lunch break at the Preserve's cafeteria. After lunch we were treated to a very entertaining demonstration involving several quite large birds of prey found only in Australia. We returned that evening to enjoy a round of bid parties and the continuation of the CFG suite on the tenth floor of the hotel.

Saturday was devoted to shopping in Melbourne, purchasing our ConJose' pre-supporting memberships and counting ballots, as well as the usual round of Wizard playing in the CFG suite. Saturday night, the Hugo Award ceremony was held. As mentioned earlier, Steve and Dick were asked by Mark Linneman to join the site selection ballot counting committee. We set a new time record for counting ballots and posting the winner. It took only 41 minutes to complete. I have now been a member of the ballot counting committees that took the longest (14 hours in Chicago in 1991), the shortest as mentioned above, and the count with the most ballots cast (Atlanta vs Glasgow at Magicon 1n 1992). I pre-supported Toronto in 2003 at their party that evening for \$15 and turned right around and won a \$25 hardcover Ben Bova book in their drawing. Sue played more rounds of Wizards that night in the CFG suite.

Sunday was highlighted by the announcement of the site selection winners and the purchase of attending membership conversions for ConJose'. We went shopping at Victoria Market and tried to find a hat that would fit my head. Unfortunately we could not find one large enough. Sue attended the Marks protection committee meeting held late that afternoon. We had dinner with Stephen Boucher (AussieCon 3's facilities manager) on Sunday evening in the hotel restaurant. We were invited to attend the past Worldcon chairs' party after dinner where we met several of the past chairmen that we did not know. The Masquerade was also held on Sunday eve-



ning. We went back up to the CFG Suite briefly and then returned to our room finish re-packing for our whirlwind tour of north-east Australia.

We had to go to bed early, as we had to leave at 6:40 p.m. the next morning. Pat had made arrangements for our transportation so we had three taxis waiting to take us to the airport. Our small group of nine people had expanded to a group of 15 by this time. We were joined by Carolyn Hickman (Lynn Hickman's widow), her daughter Kharis and son-in-law Russell, co-worker Sabrina and friends of the Cavins, Don and Dottie Gilbert. We all checked in at the airport, checked our luggage and were off to Uluru (Ayers Rock) by way of Alice Springs. All we saw of Alice Springs was the airport when we changed planes.

After arriving at Ayers Rock, and checking into the Outback Pioneer Hotel, we went to the small shopping center located near our hotel. and bought some juice and sweet rolls for breakfast the next morning. We also fitted in a little souvenir shopping. We finally found a couple of Aussie hats that fit us. We caught the shuttle bus back to the hotel and prepared for our evening at the "Sounds of Silence". While we were waiting for our group to board the bus, the bus driver called Bill Cavin's name. They were to board the bus that was already there. We told Bill and Cokie to save seats for all of us and shortly after they left we boarded our buses. When we arrived after a bumpy bus trip on a very narrow and unpaved road, we followed a gravel path up a small hill. We walked at a comfortable speed up the hill for approximately ten minutes. When we got to the top of the hill, there were waiters and waitresses dressed in formal attire passing out glasses of champagne. Remember, this is all outdoors in the middle of the Australian Outback, a thousand kilometers from any large city. There were many tables with white tablecloths, and complete setup for a formal dinner. We did not see Bill and Cokie anywhere. Unfortunately, it turned out that there were two areas set up for this dinner and the other bus went to the other side of Ayers Rock.

The restaurant that had prepared our meal and their staff was of 5 star quality. Our menu was an Australian barbecue buffet. The entrees were emu, crocodile, kangaroo, buffalo, lamb and baramundi (an excellent white fish). And yes, we tried them all. We found them all to be quite good. There were vegetables as well, but..... After a couple of glasses of champagne, Steve tried playing the digeridoo. It was very loud, but not very tuneful.

We were dining by candlelight and after

everyone had finished dinner, the staff went around and snuffed out the candles and turned out all the lights. WOW!!!! The sky lit up as we had never seen before.. In a perfectly clear sky, with no light pollution, you could see the Southern Cross, the Milky Way, Mars, and Alpha Centauri (the star that is the closest to us at 4.3 light years). Alpha Centauri has had more SF stories written about it than any other. The resident astronomer told us many wonderful aboriginal stories about how the stars and constellations were named. He used a powerful hand held spotlight like a blackboard pointer to point out the various stars and constellations as he spoke.. If any one thing that we saw in Australia could be said to make the whole trip worthwhile, this view of the southern sky was it! The gas lights were turned on afterwards so we could safely find our way back down the path to our waiting buses. We all went to bed early again that night, as we planned to watch the sunrise at Ayers Rock as well.

We all got up before dawn, and had our juice and sweet rolls before catching the bus back to Ayers Rock. We watched the sun come up and how the rising sun caused the color of Ayers Rock to change. We took photos every 10 minutes to get the entire effect of the color change. The Rock actually turns a bright red color when the sun's rays actually strike the rock.

The wind was quite gusty that morning and time was short, so we did not get to climb to the top of Ayers Rock as we had hoped. Maybe the next time..... After a time, we all reboarded the buses, went back to the hotel, grabbed our luggage and returned to the airport. This time we were on our way to Darwin in the Northern Territory and the Carleton Hotel.

We had dinner at the Crustaceans, an upscale seafood restaurant located at the wharf on the harbor. We noted all of the naval activity in the area as the UN peacekeepers were preparing to leave for East Timor in Indonesia. Their mission was to try and stop the violence being perpetrated on the civilian population of East Timor following their vote for independence from the rest of Indonesia. East Timor is less than 700 kilometers from Darwin.

It is Wednesday morning and we are off for a two day tour of Kakadu National Park. On the way to the park, the bus driver told us that the people living in the Northern Territory were very laid back and casual. They live on what is called "NT" time. This means that if you ask when something will be ready, the reply will be "Not Today, Not Tonight, Not Tomorrow, Not Tuesday and Not Thursday! We traveled on the Adelaide

River and the Marrakai Plains deep into the park. Our first walking tour took us to Nourlangie Rock where we could view and photograph some of the ancient Aboriginal rock paintings. We then climbed up to the scenic lookout over the Kadadu woodlands and the plains. The view was magnificent! We then had lunch and went on the Yellow Waters boat cruise to view the salt water crocodiles and the prolific bird life. We saw one extraordinarily large crocodile sleeping on the river bank. The tour guide said she had never seen that particular crocodile before and that it was the biggest she had ever seen. We also visited the Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Center. That night, we stayed at the Gagudju Crocodile hotel, and yes folks it is shaped like a giant crocodile. You enter the hotel lobby through the mouth of the crocodile. Needless to say, Sue immediately found the gift shop. The crocodile's feet were the stairs to the second level sleeping rooms. After a dip in the hotel pool we played Wizards and again hit the sack early. Those early mornings were killing us.

On Thursday, we took a boat cruise on the East Alligator River and saw Ubirr rock art (some of the paintings are believed to be 20,000 years old). While we cruised the East Alligator river, our Aboriginal guide showed us some items that had been made and used by the Aboriginal people. There are no alligators on the East Alligator river in spite of its name. The early explorer who named the river was from Florida and did not know the difference between alligators and crocodiles. With the permission of the Aboriginal people living in the area, we were allowed to leave the boat and go ashore in Arnhem Land. Our guide told us that he considered it a great privilege to be allowed to set foot in Arnhem Land. We toured the Bowali Visitor's Center, then returned to the Carleton Hotel in Darwin.

Our next trip took us to Katherine Gorge., about 250 kilometers southwest of Darwin by bus. A cruise by boat took us through two of the thirteen gorges that form Katherine Gorge. The sheer rock faces of the gorge were magnificent. There was a ¼ mile walk between the first and second gorges over some very rocky terrain. This gave us an excellent opportunity for taking photographs and video tape of the area. On our return trip from the Gorge, we stopped at Edith Falls, where some of our group went for a swim in the pool at the base of the waterfall. The rest of us went on a rather strenuous hike up to an overlook that gave us a spectacular of the falls and the pool below. We then returned to Darwin with an evening stop at the Adelaide River.

On several of our bus trips in the North-

ern Territory, we say a number of Road Trains on the highways. These are very large trucks with multiple trailers. Most of the Road Trains that we saw had three or four trailers, but could have as many as six trailers. We talk about our eighteen-wheelers, but these road monsters can have as many as 120 wheels.

We left Darwin at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday bound for Cairns on the east coast of Queensland and the Great Barrier Reef. After checking into the Holiday Inn, we had the remainder of the day free to wander about the area and of course more shopping. Dick noticed a "Johnny Rocket's" American hamburger restaurant on the mezzanine level of The Pier (a two level shopping mall at the waterfront). Dick, Pat, Roger, Sue and I decided that it was about time for a good old fashioned American hamburger and fixin's. During the meal, we were treated to a very entertaining floor show. The entire staff of the restaurant came out on the floor and performed a line dance to a rock'n'roll number from the fifties. Later some of us used the free time to wash our clothes in the hotel's laundry. For supper, Debbie Oakes recommended JH's Restaurant on the Balcony just down the block from the hotel. The food was plentiful and very good and Sue made the comment that "the desserts were to die for!". The manager/waiter was very entertaining and nick-named Cokie Cavin "Mrs. Hat." She was the only one of our party wearing one at supper.

Sunday morning, we rode the Kuranda Scenic Railway from Cairns to Kuranda, the "Village in the Rainforest", high in the mountains above Cairns. Kuranda is a typical tourist haven with many shops (much to Sue's delight), sidewalk vendors, restaurants and wildlife sanctuaries. Sue and I chose the Australian Butterfly Sanctuary for our morning's entertainment. This is the largest such sanctuary in Australia. We had never seen so many different varieties of butterfly with all of their beautiful vivid colors. The butterflies were so tame and used to people that several of them landed on Sue's hand, wrist-watch and on her sweater. After a lunch at one of the sidewalk food vendors, we proceeded to the Skyrail cable car terminal. The Skyrail is a series of enclosed cars suspended on a cable that carries you high over the rainforest from Kuranda back down the mountain to Cairns. Sue was not sure she wanted to board the small car hanging from that skinny little cable, but she did. After a bit she was too busy standing up and taking pictures of the rainforest to worry about the cable car. There were two stops along the Skyrail route that allowed us to see the rainforest close up.



After leaving the Skyrail at the foot of the mountain, we went to a showing of one of the Aboriginal cultural exhibits. This was a reenactment of the "Dream Time" which dates back tens of thousands of years in Aboriginal history. We caught the early bus back to our hotel, then headed over to JH's again for dinner (what the heck, it was good and it was close to the hotel). The bunch then retired to the Dick's room for the usual round of Wizards.

Monday was to be the big day in the Cairns area. We boarded the Ocean Spirit for our cruise out into the Coral Sea and the Great Barrier Reef. Michelmas Cay is a small sandy island about 35 kilometers out to sea. A fine buffet lunch was served before we reached the island. When we arrived we were treated to a ride on a semi-submersible boat which gave us a remarkable view of the coral reefs and sea life near the island. Some of the group went snorkeling and others went scuba diving. Sue elected to try scuba diving and loved every minute of it. Dick Spelman, Margaret Keifer and I took the launch to the island for more picture taking. We waited for the scuba divers to return to the island to no avail; they swam back to the Ocean Spirit instead. We took the launch back to the Ocean Spirit and set off on the return trip to Cairns. On the fore deck a crewman was entertaining the passengers with some Australian folk music. As I came forward I heard him singing "Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport". That evening went along the Esplanade to a place called The Night Market for supper. The Night Market is an indoor mall like area that goes through the building to the next street north. Along the Esplanade there were a great many shops on either side of the entrance to The Night Market stretching from the hotel to The Pier (a

distance of four or five city blocks).

Tuesday was to be our last day of touring and sightseeing of this great and adventurous trip to Australia. Another bus trip and we arrived at the Daintree Rainforest Environmental Centre late in the morning. As we walked through the rainforest preserve, we had a chance to see a great variety of plant life that one will not see in the northern hemisphere. The foliage was very dense and lush and very well cared for by the park officials and staff. The tree that impressed us the most was one that had its roots growing up instead of down. Later that day, we took a short boat cruise on the Daintree River, but only saw one lonely crocodile and one large snake partially hidden in a tree. Our last trip of the day was by bus to the beach at Cape Tribulation, where a bit of wading in the Coral Sea was enjoyed by several of the group. We ran into Joni Dashoff (the wife of Millennium Philcon chairman Todd Dashoff) on the beach. On the way back to Cairns we crossed the Daintree River on a cable ferry and had a final stop for food.

The next morning we packed up and set out for the airport for our flight back to Melbourne and the Centra Hotel. Upon arriving at the hotel we reclaimed our stored luggage, checked in, and met with Stephen Boucher for our last supper in Australia. After supper, we repacked our luggage for the long trip home, and adjourned to the CFG parlor (Bill Cavin had upgraded his room to a suite for the last night) for one last round of Wizards. At 11:30 a.m. we were on our way home with stops in Auckland, New Zealand, Los Angeles and Chicago. I was worried that we would not have time to clear customs in LA with only a one hour layover at LAX. We made it through OK, but Mark Linne-man did not. He did not get home to Cincinnati until the next day. When we finally reached Louisville, we really appreciated Judy Garland's last line in "The Wizard of Oz". We are already thinking about doing it all again in 2007 (assuming that the Aussies win the Worldcon again).

++ Sue and Steve Francis

[[Steven Silver visited LASFS after he was on *Jeopardy!* He told me, "My goal was not to embarrass myself and to make enough to pay for the trip." Oh, yeah -- and "Get to work on Chicon's fan program!" Here's the first of his two-part cliffhanger --]]

For years, people have been telling me that I should try to get on *Jeopardy!* However, living in Chicagoland, it wasn't the easiest thing in the world to audition. Until recently, all *Jeopardy!* tryouts were held in Los Angeles, which would mean flying myself out on the off chance that I would qualify. If I did qualify, I would have to fly out a second time to appear on the show, all at my own expense. Of course, that wouldn't guarantee that I would win anything.

A few years ago, *Jeopardy!* began taping a few shows on the road. In 1999, they announced they would be taping the College Tournament in Rosemont, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago in which I happened to work at the time. As long as they were in the area, they would be holding auditions for the show. My parents jotted down the phone number to call to set up an appointment and I called the number.

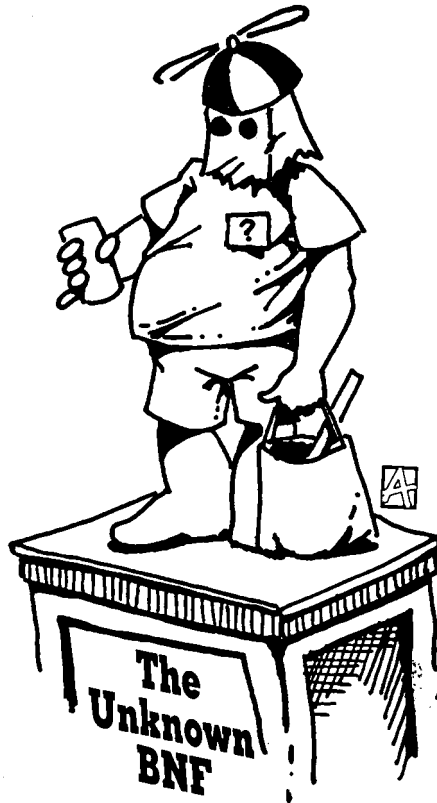
The number dropped me into voice mail, where I had to provide some demographic information: age, address, job title, etc. I did so and waited for *Jeopardy!* to call back. Actually, I pretty much ignored it, figuring that if they wanted to call me, they would and there was nothing I could do about it at that point.

Then one evening, I was sitting at home with my wife when the phone rang. Elaine picked it up and got a rather strange look on her face. She held to phone out to me and explained, "It's for you. It's Louis. From the *Jeopardy!* show."

Louis asked me if I was interested in trying out for *Jeopardy!*, a question I thought was rather silly since I wouldn't have called their number if I hadn't wanted to try out. He confirmed the information I had given over the phone on my initial phone call and we set an appointment for April 14, 1999. Louis told me I would receive a confirmation package in the mail.

And I waited.

Meanwhile, my mother had begun filling out forms to enter the family in the raffle to win tickets for the College Tournament tap-



ings. Each entry would be entered in a raffle to win up to four tickets for one of four tapings to be held the weekend prior to my audition. By the time she was finished, she had sent in 35 requests for tickets. Eventually, we received word that we had won four tickets in the raffle. Only one of the requests had been selected.

By the time the taping had rolled around, I still hadn't received a confirmation letter from Louis and I was a little concerned. When we arrived at the taping, I decided that during one of the breaks I would corner one of the *Jeopardy!* people and find out how I could get a confirmation, or if one was actually necessary.

During the first game taped, one of the contestants was a fellow named Stephen, whose family was sitting next to me. I talked to them a little during the show, trying to get some idea about what would be in store for me the following Wednesday. As it happened, Stephen won his game and a camera zoomed in on his mother during the credits. If you look at the left side of the screen, you can see me applauding, although the letter V (for Volvo) was superimposed over my face. Even

if I flubbed the audition, I could be seen on *Jeopardy!*.

On Monday, I called *Jeopardy!* and arranged to have a FAX of my confirmation sent out to me. It arrived on Tuesday, and I'm really glad I made that call.

The Audition: When I had heard that I had a *Jeopardy!* audition, I naturally asked to take the day off of work. I did not tell my boss or co-workers why I needed the time off and they naturally assumed I was interviewing for a job. I figured that if I did poorly at the audition, I wouldn't have to face a few days of questioning afterwards, and if I did well, I could return to work in triumph.

The auditions were held at the Marriott in downtown Chicago. When I arrived, they asked to see our pink confirmation letters. I turned in my glossy confirmation letter on FAX paper and Suzanne, the producer looked at it and asked what had happened to the letter they had sent me. When I explained the situation, he let me in.

The room held about eighty people. We were each given a *Jeopardy!* pen and a couple of pieces of paper. One of the pieces of paper asked for contact information and five things we could discuss with Alex Trebek if we appeared on the show. The other piece of paper simple had a line for our names and fifty numbered lines where we would be able to write down our answers.

Suzanne and Glenn explained that they would be showing us a videotape with fifty questions, each in its own category. We would have eight seconds to write down each answer before the next question appeared. Answers did not need to be in the form of a question and spelling did not count (a good thing for at least one of the answers). They recommended that if you did not know the answer you just skip it rather than try to come back, a technique which they found caused people to lose their rhythm and do poorly on the test. To pass the audition, you needed to answer thirty-five of the questions correctly.

I've been asked many times if the questions were difficult, and I have to say that although I didn't think they were, I also passed the test. Seventy of the eighty people I took the test with, however, did not pass, so I guess that objectively they could be considered difficult. In any event, I only remember a handful of the questions.

A Fan in Jeopardy!

by Steven Silver

I've also been asked how many I got correct, and the answer is that I really couldn't say. Because there are only two people grading papers and they have to get through eighty of them in about ten minutes, they stop grading a paper as soon as the person has gotten sixteen questions wrong or thirty-five questions right. It is possible that I only got thirty-five questions right, but I think the total was closer to forty-three.

While waiting for the *Jeopardy!* people to return, we filled out our topics for discussion with Alex and talked. I discovered the woman next to me was an attorney who was taking the test for the third time. Very few people made it into the contestant pool the first time they took the test and even fewer managed to make it on the show.

Suzanne and Glenn returned to the room and called off the names of the qualifiers in random order. As it happened, my group had ten people who passed and I was the tenth name they called.

The ten of us were asked to fill out more paperwork, have our pictures taken, and then it was time to participate in a practice game of *Jeopardy!*. We were divided into groups of three and handed the "lock-out device" or buzzer, which is the bane of so many *Jeopardy!* contestants. We were told that the trial was simply to see how well we could handle the buzzer and work the board to keep the flow of the game moving along. We were not in competition with the other people holding buzzers. If none of the mock-contestants could answer a question, it would be thrown open to the remaining seven.

After we each had our turns to pretend to play *Jeopardy!*, we went through a small interview, in which we explained who we were, what we did, and what we would do with our winnings if we made it on the show. Eight of the potential panelists explained they would travel, one said he would buy a house in Ireland and become a full time writer (and I was thinking that *Jeopardy!* just does give out that kind of prize money), and I said I would invest the money to pay for my daughter's college education (she was one at the time).

We were told that we all had qualified and would remain eligible for one year. The show would tape its sixteenth season from June to February. If we were selected, we would receive a call (or e-mail or letter) asking us to be in Los Angeles for our taping date. We would have one month to make our arrangements and it would be entirely up to us to pay for the airfare, hotel and any other costs incurred.

I was so happy that I had passed the audition that I wasn't even unduly bothered by the flat tire I had as I drove home.

The Wait: And so I waited. I knew I would hear from *Jeopardy!* until at least May, and probably later, since they tried to use up people whose eligibility was expiring first. The months past. I left my job and took another. 1999 turned to 2000, and I began to lose hope that I would receive a phone call.

In January, I was at work and decided to check my answering machine. One message asking me if I would be able to fly out to LA to be on *Jeopardy!*. I jotted down the name and phone number and borrowed the cell phone from Bob, who sits in the cubicle next to mine (and has long distance built into his plan). I called Grant at *Jeopardy!*, but he was away from his desk. I called my wife.

"Elaine, I'm going to be on *Jeopardy!* I'm going to win a million dollars!" I blurted into the phone.

"Wrong show," she said, her voice filled with excitement.

"Okay, but not having to deal with Regis Philbin has got to be worth \$950,000," I pointed out.

That evening, I managed to get in touch with Grant and he invited me out for the show that taped on March 1. He explained that they would tape five shows that day and then go on a four week hiatus. If I won the last show and it was not my fifth show, I would have to return to LA on March 28 for additional shows.

When I had started my new job, I mentioned to the human resources representative who made me the offer that I would need some time off in 2000. One week in August/September for the Worldcon and possibly one week in the first quarter of the year to appear on *Jeopardy!*. She told me it wouldn't be a problem and I would have to let them know when my *Jeopardy!* show would be on if I made it.

The next day, I was talking to the CIO at a company cocktail party, and he made it clear he had heard about my potential to be on *Jeopardy!* and wanted to know when I would be going out to California. I told him I didn't know. After talking to Grant, I walked into the CIO's office the next morning and explained I finally had an answer to question he had asked me several weeks earlier. He knew exactly what I was talking about.

Over the next couple of weeks, I made reservations for a trip to LA with my wife and daughter. Arranged to stay with an uncle in Yorba Linda and see some high school friends. My parents asked if they could come along and we said yes. My mother offered to pay our expenses in return for 10% of my winnings. A great deal if I did poorly on the show, but possibly making for an expensive trip if I won more than \$6,000. I declined her offer. My wife became a little nervous about the money we were spending and I told her

that I came up with a figure which represented the cost of the trip and the amount of lost wages for both a week in LA and the week at Chicon, and I told her that if I didn't think I could win that much money, I wouldn't be flying the family to LA. People have asked me how I prepared for *Jeopardy!* and tend to be a bit disappointed with my answer. I began by taping *Jeopardy!* shows to watch, but that only lasted about a week. I didn't read any trivia books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, or anything else. I didn't practice pressing down on a buzzer or a pen. In fact, I tried to ignore the entire situation. I figured that there was really no way of studying for the show. If the information wasn't internalized, it would take too long to access when I was on stage.

The closest I came for preparing was contacting a local bartender. In October, a local bartender had appeared on *Jeopardy!*, winning \$7500 on his first day and a trip to Hong Kong on his second day. I decided to talk to him and see if he had any pointers. His main comment was that 80% of the game was the buzzer. I also discovered that several other fans and science fiction people have appeared on the show. Janice Gelb was on, as was Rick Cook.

The other question I received, which is apparently the number one question asked of *Jeopardy!* contestants and staff, is whether the show sends out a list of topics to study. They don't. In fact, all I received from *Jeopardy!* prior to the date of taping was an eight-page contract, a personal questionnaire (those topics to discuss with Alex, again) and directions to the Sony Pictures Studio lot. They also recommended an hotel which gave a good rate to *Jeopardy!* contestants.

The day of departure approached. We were flying out of Midway Airport on Sunday, February 27. While we were packing, my mother-in-law from Lexington, Kentucky called. She wanted to wish me good luck and let me know that according to the Thursday issue of the University of Kentucky paper, a student from UK would be flying out to tape an appearance on *Jeopardy!* that week. On Friday, another article appeared stating that the editor of the geological journal would also be flying out to tape an appearance on *Jeopardy!*. I took down their names and, for the first time, became nervous. The faceless, nameless contestants I knew I would be facing had become potential adversaries.

My Appearance: I'll give more details of my appearance on *Jeopardy!* in the next ish.

You'll be able to see me on Tuesday, June 13, but I highly recommend watching on Monday, June 12, so you can understand who and what I was up against.

"Tails" of Moving to Hawaii

by Marie Rengstorff

About Dog: I wanted my nine pounds of fluff and attitude to fly in the cabin to Hawaii. This arrangement took hours of phone calls usually ending with "It can't be done" or "dogs have to fly to Hawaii in cargo." Not my little puff. No way.

Using my mileage plus account, my airlines charge card, extensive knowledge of the rules, and a full-fair first class ticket as leverage, I managed to purchase an in-cabin, \$50 ticket for my dog. Toy and I settled in for a really comfortable flight. But weird.

I thought it strange when the stewardess had trouble with my request for some water for the dog. I asked three times while pleadingly holding out my dog's dish. The stewardess gave me the strangest look as she poured from the people-pitcher into Toy's little bowl.

Toy, in her black Samsonite case which looks like an athletic bag, never made a sound the whole flight. If we changed elevations I allowed to put her head out and I rubbed her ears to help her with the pressure changes. She sat perfectly still and unblinking, as Pekinese tend to do, for this massage, looking more like a stuffed animal than a live being. From time to time during the four hour flight over the ocean I looked into her bag and said a few words to her. I shared my lunch by taking a pinch from my plate and sticking my hand into her bag. I thought I was acting like a normal pet owner with a well behaved animal.

When the pilot announced "40 minutes to landing," I asked the stewardess, not for the first time, for an agricultural declaration form. "I have to declare my dog," I said. (Failure to do so would be a \$10,000 fine for the airlines and 120 days of quarantine for my dog.)

At 20 minutes to touch down I asked again. They had "run out of forms." I asked for a pen and paper so I could write a note to the pilot. He had to call the ground and have my dog met by an official. The official would take the dog for a blood test which checks resistance (anti-bodies) to rabies. At this time I mentioned about the potential fine and the extended quarantine.

Suddenly, the stewardess found some forms. In the remaining few minutes, I filled one out, gave it back, and started to rub Toy's ears. We were dropping fast.

As the landing strip appeared out the side window, the stewardess came running back. "Dogs are not allowed in that seat," she squealed. I don't know what she thought we

were going to do about it. The landing strip was 10 feet below the wheels. I sat with my mouth open. The man on the aisle had his mouth open too. We definitely did not have time to discuss an alternate plan. Changing seats rated somewhere between pointless and impossible.

I guess the stewardess figured that out too. She ran for her seat. We touched down as she strapped in.

The only thing I can figure is, the stewardess thought I was some kind of crazy rich lady who flew with her teddy bear, gave water to, fed, petted, and talked to her stuffed toy. I'm sure calling "Toy" by her name did nothing to clarify the situation.

I mentioned this speculation to the man next to me as we taxied in. He shook his head and said, "You did everything you could. The dog's manners were perfect." He shrugged and shook his head again.

I'm really sorry we were not ending our trip in Honolulu instead of going on to the Island of Hawaii, the Big Island. I would have quit trying to fill out a form. We could have simply walked away at Honolulu. Toy would have gotten out of the 30 day quarantine.

Actually, Toy did not mind those 30 days. She loves people and other dogs. Each little dog had a suite with two dog beds (one covered, one open), two people chairs, tables, a rug, and two play sessions a day when not visited by the owner. And, of course, the standard room service. For an extra fee Toy could have had special meals.

I suffered through driving 130 miles a day, six days a week to visit her. I would drive over to Hilo, visit Toy, camp overnight, visit Toy, drive back, and then try to get a little work done at my house before starting the whole commute process over again. I made a point of touring during every trip around the island. I now know more about the island than many Hawaiians. Of course I took free hula lessons. And, Phyllis Eide, who lives near my dog's hotel, was more than kind.

On Dolphins: I love to swim with wild dolphins. I was told, many years ago, that if you want to keep the dolphins near you, (a) act like a dolphin and (b) entertain them. I swim out as lightly accoutremented as possible, goggles, nose clip, snorkel, and fins. No mask. It gets in the way. I take the snorkel off and stuff it down my suit. One cannot spin like a dolphin with a mask and snorkel on. They create drag in the water. Then, like

the oldie synchronized swimmer that I am, I spin and twist and somersault in the water like a weird dolphin. So far, if the dolphins are in or near the bay, they come and watch me. A pair of young ones even seem to imitate me.

When I am done and start to swim toward the rocks and shore, the dolphins follow me until I duck under, wave goodbye, (I even say goodbye underwater) and put my snorkel back on. (Perhaps that stewardess was right.) By then, I usually have a dozen or more people behind me because they are following the dolphins. They can't see my "act like a dolphin" routine because that takes place in deep water with swells which block the view of near-surface activity. Okay by me. I keep my act as silly as possible.

The get-out-of-the-water area is called Three Step. A log jam of people forms there since people must climb out two or three at a time. I try to play ignorant and listen: "Didn't the dolphins stay a long time today." "The dolphins slowed down today. They usually move so fast that you really can't get a good look at them." (These are spinner dolphins, a zippy breed.)

All I know for sure is, I have a really good time. I also need a nap when I arrive home.

On English: I heard that the rule directing the use of a comma before a conjunction, specifically "and," has changed again, for the *fourth time* in my life. I figured there were two choices: use the comma or don't. Nope. The latest rule says, use a comma only if the item in a series before the "and" is a phrase.

My thinking: the people making up these rules should get a life. We now have four generations trained in three different rules. That is stupid, irritating, and confusing. (Note the last, and now incorrect, comma before the "and" in the previous sentence. It stays. That sentence applies the "comma rule" which was declared correct twice in the last six decades. I know through experience. Age should be good for something.)

I am a scientist. English is a tool to me, not a fetish. I can be just as silly about a new electron microscope. But if we move a new microscope into the lab and take the old one out, everyone in the room knows about it and makes the change together. And, the new microscope is *better* or we wouldn't have spent the money. The "and" and "comma" rule just flip-flops around. *Why?*

The Fanivore

Alexis A. Gilliland

In your own "Graphic Examples" you lament that your nickname, formed by syllabic fusion, would be the puny and noneuphonious "Migly." Be not dismayed! The rules for such formations are sufficiently flexible so that you could, if you wished, be known as "Kegler," a *nom de plume* suggesting a robust party animal, and evoking one of the giants of fannish legend, besides.

It is nice to see Grant Canfield getting the recognition of the Rotsler Award, and I only regret that you couldn't turn up a piece of his work to illuminate the news item.

John Hertz did a proper obituary on Walt Willis, who inspired a whole lot more people than there was room to mention. To some extent Willis defined the era of which he was so prominent a creature; to carry on the work he and James White started is probably not possible, but surely we can cop a bit of their attitude and wit for such work as we have.

Chris Barkley complains about Ayn Rand getting a US Postal commemorative stamp, when C.L. Moore, unarguably a better writer, did not. Hey, Chris, you want sf writers on stamps, you take what they give you, and be glad it wasn't L. Ron Hubbard. We note that Hubbard founded a religion, while Rand was a major prophet for the rather less organized Libertarians. On some Internet survey, Rand was voted the Best Writer of the Century, proving only that Libertarians have infiltrated the Internet. In 1966 I read and reviews Rand's *The Virtue of Selfishness*, a collection of essays. What I remember is that every one of them had flawed logic. Less politely, her essays were all wrong. So what other bad writer of dumb fantasy had a major posthumous influence on world affairs? Karl Marx comes at once to mind, and I believe that Ayn Rand tried to be the anti-Marx. So Rand gets a stamp; it wasn't for the excellence of her prose but for

her ideas and the politics they inspired. That should do.

Harry Henderson

The discussion by Chris M. Barkley about commemorative stamps for science fiction writers and artists is quite interesting. As a fan who is also a philatelist, I'd like to make a few observations.

The CSAC rules note that stamps will generally be issued only for a "significant anniversary" of the subject's birth. This means that if you want individual stamps for the artists and authors mentioned, you should look at their birth dates and look for something like the 100th anniversary of their birth. Unfortunately this would make such stamps few and far between.

However, there is an alternative. There is a sheet format that has been used to honor, for example, jazz and country musicians and the "Legends of the West." These "mini-sheets" generally have 20 stamps, which could be five designs repeated four times or perhaps 20 different designs. Subjects for these sheets do not have to have significant birth anniversaries, so a proposal for a sheet of "Writers of the Imagination" or "Artists of the Imagination" for example might accommodate a good variety of subjects. However, since such a sheet is a much more major issue than a single stamp, it might well be a tougher "sell" than a stamp for just one individual.

Another thing to keep in mind if you want to go the single stamp route is that people chosen generally have to have widespread name recognition across American society. C.L. Moore, alas, lacks that. (Ayn Rand, on the other hand, whatever you might say about her well-known personal flaws, was one of the most popular and influential authors of the mid-20th century).

Allow me to introduce to you an amazing array of typos and grammatical blunders!



So for individual stamps Asimov and Heinlein, for example, might be good "sells" but Moore would not be.

At any rate, I wish success to this effort. It would be neat if we could get a couple of mini-sheets issued in time for the magic year 2001, but it's probably too late.

Chris Barkley

I'd like to thank Harry Henderson for pointing out on what turns out to be poor bit of research on my part.

Mr. Henderson is absolutely correct... individual stamps for each author would be a hard sell to the

USPS; arguing for a series of sheets, with six luminaries in each series was my intended plan. Something like:

Series One: Edgar Rice Burroughs, Will F. Jenkins (Murray Leinster), Stanley Weinbaum, Clifford Simak, E.E. "Doc" Smith, Ph. D., Hugo Gernsback.

Series Two: John W. Campbell, Jr., Robert A. Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, Theodore Sturgeon, C.L. Moore/Henry Kuttner, Edmund Hamilton/Leigh Brackett.

Series Three: Anthony Boucher, Terry Carr, Donald/Elsie Wollheim, Groff Conklin, Judy Lynn/Lester Del Rey, T.E. Dikty.

Series Four: Vaughn Bode, Hannes Bok,

Virgil Finlay, Frank R. Paul, Jack Gaughan, Chesley Bonestell.

Series Five: Philip K. Dick, Frank Herbert, Cyril M. Kornbluth, Alfred Bester, Alice Sheldon (James Tiptree, Jr.), James Blish.

Series Six: Robert Bloch, Avram Davidson, Roger Zelazny, Ed Emshwiller, H.L. Gold, Edgar Pangborn.

The website is *still* under construction (he said wearily) but if you want to take a sneak peek go to:

<http://pweb.netcom.com/~scottst/stamp/index.html>

Harry is right about it being far too late to have any stamps available in 2001...but if we all push hard enough behind this campaign, having a first series issued by the 2003 Worldcon is not an impossibility.

Fred C. Moulton

In *File 770:133* Chris M. Barkley makes several comments about Ayn Rand and the stamp honoring her which was issued by the U.S. Post Office. Any author, including Rand, should be given a critical valuation, however it is important that the evaluation be based on accurate information.

Barkley states that Rand "immigrated from Russia back in the 1930's," actually this is not correct. In 1926, she left Russia after convincing the authorities that she would be visiting relatives in Chicago for six months. Of course she did not return.

It is ironic that Barkley choose to use the physical description of a "small gnome-like woman with gnarly little hands" as he describes her as "rather cold, distant and rude" towards the audience. It is ironic because one of the criticisms often made of Rand is that her heroic characters were physically attractive while her villains had weak chins. I have seen the Donohue interview and as I recall Rand was about 75 when that interview was taped. I suspect that my hands may be a little gnarly when I reach 75 and I ask that Barkley and others not judge me too harshly for it.

To return to the topic of the stamp, I expect that one reason that Ayn Rand was selected for the stamp series was the impact that Rand had both with her fiction and with Objectivism. It is possible to dislike Rand on aesthetic or philosophical grounds but it is difficult to ignore the impact that Rand has had. When an author has a novel in print in hardcover continuously for decades, has scholars writing studies of her thought and is often cited in surveys as major influence on individuals lives then I consider that as evi-

dence of a significant impact. This is purely my supposition since I am not affiliated with the Post Office.

Rand, like any other writer, should be given critical evaluation, but that evaluation should be based on the most accurate information possible and it should clearly distinguish between the literary, philosophical and social aspects of the individual and not use a weakness in one area to imply that the writer was also weak in another.

Robert Whitaker Sirignano

I read Chris Barkley's new rant and I can understand his passions but decline to pursue it with him. This is about U.S. postage stamps. I was amused by the Ayn Rand stamp. I don't like the ultimate meaning of her work (and if the U.S. Postal Commission has sought further to compare the Oklahoma City bombing to the central idea of *The Fountainhead* there might have been no stamp. But the Post Office is slow on the uptake.)

A lot of the stamp ideas will be rejected because the people are almost unknown to the general public and their impact is even smaller.

A postage stamp for Vaughn Bode? I went through the bulk of his work last summer. I found he is a first-rate artist and stylist, but his humor is antifeminist and cruel. Is this an issue? The Postal Service issued a stamp of bluesman Robert Johnson and erased his cigarette. PC is very much a topic for the issuing of a stamp these days, so I doubt if Bode will ever be considered.

SF editors for a postage stamp? Get real. Who outside of fandom is even going to care about Groff Conklin? How many current fans even know who he is?

Several years ago I suggested a few stamps for a series I dubbed "20th Century SF Writers." I selected five writers: Edgar Rice Burroughs, H.P. Lovecraft, Robert A. Heinlein, Isaac Asimov and Theodore Sturgeon. The Post Office response was polite, since they receive about 50,000 ideas a year (some of them are demands; everyone seems to have an agenda.) I chose on what I considered public awareness and quality. I like the other writers: Alfred Bester and James Blish and the Kuttners. And A. Merritt. The rest I'd have to say what the post office stamp board would say: Who?

Alan White

Of course, I have another frothy letter as

well - anything to whip the fans into a frenzy! Please Note: The following LoC has a "Tongue in Cheek factor of 6"

If you love Science Fiction, what are you doing in Fandom?

In and out of Science Fiction clubs since 1960 I don't recall the subject of science fiction ever being brought up! Easily being wooed by Fandom in the 50s and 60s, LASFS made movies, put on stage shows; Slan shacks, parties, *Shaggy* and the constant whirl of the mimeo. Why do we bemoan the passing of Marjii Ellers, Bill Rotsler, Walt Willis and Lan Laskowski? They are the brightest lights of Fandom and connections to our past. Unfortunately, we don't miss them enough to make Fandom attractive to others like them.

I can't see where Fandom as a group has produced anything of particular interest or value in the last 20 years. If they did, they should have tried to sell it to me! It seems the only reason for meetings is to strip away any sense of purpose and reason for being in the first place! Don't know what attraction there would be for anybody with artistic pots boiling at home I actually joined LASFS once but could never tell the difference between being a member or not. Twenty years ago I worked for 6 months on a fanzine spending \$1000 - typesetting it just so, Robert Bloch donated a story, the nicest paper so artists and authors would have the best platform in Fandom - offset and bound. Brought a stack to LASFS; the first person I handed it to said "This isn't a fanzine, it's not mimeographed" and threw it on the floor. I was 14 when I went to my first LASFS meeting. What could a 14 year old kid possibly find attractive about LASFS today? The failings of Fandom has caused so many spin-off groups, everybody can have their own personal Fandom.

Is Fandom going out with a whimper, circling the wagons yelling "Stop saying Sci-Fi!" while the rest of the world is going forward saying anything they want? Visit the Comic-Con in San Diego - it's powered solely by creative juices, sponsored by publishers while you are judged by what you produce and the freshness of your ideas. Everything Fandom should be but isn't. At the next Worldcon, ask any given people about Hugo Gernsback or Paul Freehafer. Few will have any idea what you're talking about. At the Comic Con, ask who Wil Eisner is - If they don't know goin' in, everyone knows goin' out! Fandom used to take care of it's icons. What Happened?

When was the last time Fandom filled you with that Goshwowboyohboy? Oh wait, that's a neologism and we all know Chris (neologisms "...should not be used")

Barkley is snipping away more fannish history. Like "1984", dump of the words and you dump of the concept.

Lawrence Watt Evans defined Sci-Fi as "faulty science fiction." If Fandom is inhabited then, by those professing love of SF while eschewing Sci-Fi, then why is Fandom so devoid of science fiction? Clubs don't talk about it, fans don't write it and zines don't print it! When was the last time a Fan Art Hugo was given to a Science Fiction Fan Artist? Jack Gaughan in 1967? When was the last time a Fan Writing Hugo went to anybody writing science fiction?

[[1999. But don't let me interrupt....]]

After reading *Immortal Storm* and *All Our Yesterdays* I got the impression Fandom was looking forward and upward. Now it seems Fandom is looking inward and downward to the point of implosion.

The Sciclopedia however defines Sci-Fi as: "Forward thinking, new, something that exhibits change or embraces the future". I'll buy that, and I think SF stands for "Stagnating Fans". According to my mailbox, I am the only person to mail a zine with a January 1, 2000 postmark. LASFS or some other fan club should have put out the first zine of the new century.

In the mid 80s, missing the likes of George Barr, Tim Kirk, Alicia Austin and others, I railed about the sorry state of fan art, saying it was irretrievably damaged and reduced to a state of fantasy-lite and fan-centric patronage. "Bastard" came the cry of Fandom - "Heretic!" they cried (wishing me to the cornfield).

"If someone can assemble 100 pages of contemporary fan art the same quality as George, Tim and Alicia, I'll print it myself!" I retorted, putting my money where my mouth is. "We'll show YOU!" Cried Fandom en masse! "Ptui!" I said, spitting the money out of my mouth.

Fourteen years later not a single piece of art has shown up! Fandom gets riled easy but seldom actually does anything. For example...

Today the earnest Chris Barkley embarks on a series of "rants" claiming fans and science fiction get short shrift in the media; launching a web-war, writing here and there in an attempt he claims to introduce Heinlein and others to the great unwashed. Magnanimous fan that I am, offered a plethora of suggestions and am it seems, the only person who actually offered to help him. Chris being a fan however, I am safe knowing I will never be called upon.

Alan Burrows tells me to "Get a Life". I wonder what kind of life he would rather me have? One like his, I suppose, but he didn't offer Chris any help. This guy actually ad-

mits saying "Sci-Fi" causes him physical distress! While I'm sure it's not the case, the fact he shares this bon mot is partially why fans get short shrift in the first place. Who gives credence to anyone claiming words affect their bodily functions?

Chris himself replies with some pointlessly windy tale about homosexuals I just couldn't wade through. I would rather have heard his plans for resolving all these things he's been ranting about. You know, parachuting "I, Robot" novels into Appalachia, Borneo the Bible belt.

Am I the only one thinking it disingenuous of Chris to prattle on about the evils of "Sci-fi" and *Entertainment Weekly* being "slick, shallow pabulum" while being a shill for Star Wars, the biggest, slickest, commercial Sci-Fi franchise in cinematic history? In the end, the answer to Chris' puzzlement over Fandom's lack of credibility in the media is Fandom itself.

Tom Feller

Chris Barkley's remarks about powerlessness vs. empowerment reminded me of what John Tulloch and Henry Jenkins wrote in their book *Science Fiction Audiences*. They argue that all of us in fandom are a "powerless elite." - "The more successful fans were in broadening the market for the series, the more marginal they became to its overall reception." In other words, the more successful SF becomes, the less important devotees such as ourselves become.

If we split the Dramatic Presentation Hugo into two awards, we can always vote for No Award in either or both categories and give Marty Cantor some egoboo.

Richard Newsome

A correction to Jack Speer's comments on the alleged discovery of a tenth planet (or small sun) out beyond the Oort cloud, in his Aussiecon report in *File 770:133*. No such discovery has been made at the present time.

An astronomer named John Murray has hypothesized the existence of such an object, about half a light year out, in the constellation Delphinus. At the moment it has not yet been found and remains purely hypothetical.

Over the years there have been dozens of such searches for hypothetical tenth planets. Usually they come up empty-handed.

As to whether the object is a Jupiter-sized planet, or a very small dark star, it won't be possible to determine that until it is found, assuming it exists at all. In either event it might well have Earth-sized satellites orbiting it.

Astrophysicist John J. Matese (<http://www.ucsf.edu/~jjm9638/matese.html>) thinks it is a small brown dwarf star, approximately 3 times the mass of Jupiter, about 2.3 trillion miles from the sun. He doesn't estimate the surface temperature of such an object but I believe it would be on the order of several hundred degrees Fahrenheit. This object would not be giving off much energy in the visible spectrum, which would explain how it has evaded detection all these years, but should be visible to an infrared search.

If this object (so far no one has stepped up to the plate and given it a name) exists, and has interesting-looking planets (detecting them, if they are rather close to their primary and are visible only in the infrared spectrum, could be a challenge), it would make a good destination, as Greg Benford suggested at the Aussiecon panel, for the first exploratory mission outside the solar system.

Allan D. Burrows

Harry Warner, Jr. has never seen Jar Jar Binks??? Has the man no television set? Does he never set foot in Taco Bells, KFCs or Pizza Huts? (Well, good for him!) Are there no billboards in Hagerstown? I'm having trouble believing that anyone anywhere could possibly have missed having that floppy, pseudo-Rastafarian twerp shoved in their face last summer!

And just a quick note to Mr. Barkley. Chris, I was *agreeing* with you! Honest!

Patrick Nielsen Hayden

Sourdough Jackson writes: "For fans of Sector General, there is the consolation that one last novel in the series had just been sent to the publisher before his death."

"Just," I guess, for some values of "just." The final Sector General novel is *Double Contact*, which Teresa and I received from James in late 1998. It was published as a Tor hardcover in Fall 1999, just after James's death. We had barely enough time to revise the back cover flap, before the presses rolled, to make note of his death.

Ironically, James's actual last novel will be *The First Protector*, a tie-in to the TV series *Earth Final Conflict*. When Jim Frenkel was looking for solid, established SF authors who'd be interested in writing for this series, I suggested Frenkel ask James White, and apparently James jumped at the

chance. James once told me he'd always had a sneaking desire to write a *Star Trek* novel, which makes sense, since in a very real sense the Sector General books were *Star Trek* before there was *Star Trek*. This isn't *Star Trek*, but I understand James had a good time writing it. *The First Protector* will appear in hardcover in early 2000.

Francis Hamit

I see that there is one further comment on my "Trill Next Door" article that deserves a response. Elizabeth Ann Osborne asks whether the people on line were typical fans. A fair question, but after 91 science fiction conventions and a dozen years in LASFS, I think I know my people. E3, like many trade shows, sells day memberships to anyone who walks in the door. These "exhibit only" passes are also given away in large numbers by exhibitors. Since E3 is the show for the computer gaming industry, many of the executives and worker bees who attend the show are also members of the fandom subculture.

I also talked to those in line with me, not only about DS9, but about conventions attended, books read, and so forth. This was more a way to pass the time than me being a reporter. I didn't take notes. However, once the matter of the transformation of the Dax character was raised, lots of those in line chimed in, in the same negative way. One couple had driven in from Arizona and paid \$50 each for day passes. Typical? Hard to say, but that seems pretty fannish to me.

As for the right to complain about the quality of a show, that is indeed anyone's right, but such complaints need to be directed effectively. That means in writing to the show's producers, not to an actress who is performing lines written by someone else and accepting direction as to how those lines and consequent actions are to be performed.

It matters little that a few people in line were nice to Miss deBoer. The fact that so many in line were rude should be seen as something which embarrasses us all. Let me note that no one was criticizing the quality of deBoer's performance; it was the new character that displeased them; something for which she can not be held accountable, since, as I pointed out, she was not a writer or producer on the show.

If this were an isolated moment it would simply be an unfortunate incident, but the comment from my actress friend about her experience at a *Babylon 5* convention proves that it is not. For a fan to correct a director of an episode of a show about his own intentions and actions is not just rude,

but borders on the bizarre. As they say in Hollywood, "Was you 'dere, Charlie?"

I agree entirely that the acting life is not for the fragile, but even the toughest practitioner of the craft should not be subjected to uninformed and mindless harping about details that are beyond their control.

Back in the 1980's, when I was on the board of the Shakespeare Society of America, which was producing several plays a year, we received one review in which the critic went into great detail about the inadequacy of our lighting plot and described how he would have done it. My response, in a letter to the editor which was never published, was that, while what he had described was a wonderful idea, that the electrical power service to our theater simply would not support the number of lights needed to execute such a concept. I am, by the way, also a playwright and director and have trained as an actor. I worked for six years as a theatrical technician and stage manager before I became a writer.

All of this looks easy from the outside, but it never is. One of the problems we have in Fandom is the old dispute between those who consider the printed word the highest form of expression and the so-called "media fans." I don't think that it occurs to most fans that the reason that there is so much bad science fiction on television is because it's not all that easy. Most producers do treat viewers and especially fans with respect. The name of the game is "ratings" and fans are considered a market force whose influence is much greater than their numbers. There have been exceptions where producers have taken on a project simply for the money, but these never last.

Gene Stewart

Another nice Taral to ponder, but what's her right hand holding? Her left obviously has the branch well in hand. Perhaps she's preparing to toss a coin she's just stolen, or a squib to help her escape as the branch cracks and her pursuers pounce.

Rotsler Art is the benchmark against which fanart will be measured for millennia to come, regardless of calendar or party-excuse. And yet, as noted elsewhere, ATom measured up, didn't he? And what of Ian Gunn's wonderful toons? It seems that Rotsler's heritage is a slew of fine footstep-followers, and we're all the better for it.

In a recent development, I took a tumble down a set of bleachers at my son's school's gym following a chorus concert. Bruises but no broken bones resulted, and no one had their videocameras running at the time so I

guess I'm not destined for *America's Clumsiest*. As anyone who has ever followed a bouncing fan might guess, I probably did as much damage to the bleachers as they did to me.

I'm glad to see the Philly/LA dispute put to rest. It's not how old you are, it's how big it is...

Let's see, my fannish nickname might, by the Golden Age procedures, be rendered as Gest, which would lead straight to Beau puns no doubt. Usually I use OLD 815, despite or because of its locomotive connotations, because George Himself Woof Scithers gave it to me inadvertently when he dragooned me into fanac. I've used other ones, too, but damned if I can remember them, a creamy beau geste on me, eh?

As a proud owner of several Ken-ch publications, I can vouch for the enthusiasm, quality, and sheer wonderfulness of such things. "Graphic Examples" has me smiling and I second the motion to send Cheslin more than his modest asking prices for these volumes. You'll treasure them, and he deserves rewards as well as accolades. Superb look at *Vanamonde*. It should inspire many to seek out its joys.

Aussiecon Three by Jack Speer: I'd quibble with Benford's reported assertion that, "...after a millennium meaning doesn't come through..." This will be news to those Classicists among us, and let's shall we not forget all the rabid Christians, Moslems, and Jews who seem to find a good deal of meaning in stuff *twice* that old.

Yes, he was speaking of monuments, but he forgets to ask, methinks, to *whom* they fail to impart their intended meanings. Certainly the informed understand and revere them. Further, does anyone have any idea how many tourists stop and gawk, reverently and knowledgeably or otherwise, at the countless monuments scattered all over the globe in a given year? If they're meaningless, why do the draw attention?

Benford's defense of hard sf, however, is hard to beat.

Sf writers' earnestness to get their science right stems from knowing how swiftly and thoroughly they'll be peeled by fen if they don't. It's the Conscience That Is Fandom.

Aussiecon Diary by Roy Pettis: Long live *Buckaroo Banzai*, indeed. First saw it while living in Japan, oddly enough. Amen to fandom's fickle memories and revisionist tendencies when rating a new book, a new season of TV episodes, or the latest filk hit. This con report has a certain charm the preceding one lacked, yet both offer insights and interesting takes on things. Good balance.

Francis Hamit: Don't worry, no one I know has read Tolstoy's *War and Peace* in Russian, either, let alone unabridged, so they can speak only about a truncated translation. However, please keep in mind that DS9 is in a completely different format, being TV, so the writing is utterly different and, more to the point, the final product is collaborative, so it's sort of apples/oranges or cheese/chalk, really, anyhow. Still, I understood your meaning.

Chris Barkley: Great story, and amen. And your rants are always well-written, well-considered, and well-received by me, whether I agree entirely or not. Writing intelligently from what stirs one's passions and outrage is the best way to make a difference. Bravo for reasoned public discourse, and you're damned right we each need to stand up for the oppressed, or who else will?

Leah Zeldes Smith

Chris Barkley writes, "And when Leah Zeldes chimed in and said that she didn't like the measure, I replied if she wanted to make a statement about keeping WSFS focused on purely literary venues and achievements then maybe she and Mike (Resnick) ought to come up with an amendment to abolish the BDP Hugo."

I don't know who Chris had this conversation with, but it wasn't me. My sole contribution to the brief discussion he had with Mike at Octocon consisted, as I recall, of a snort and a head shake. (Many of my conversations with Mike are like that....)

I've never discussed with Chris my reasons for disapproving of his TV Hugo. They have nothing to do with keeping WSFS purely literary, a silly concept.

What I object to is having yet another Hugo Award that has only a handful of possible recipients. How many SF TV shows are there, after all? How many in any given year approach Hugo quality? Yes, each series has dozens of episodes, but the ultimate recipients of the awards would likely be the same very small set of series. And creating such an award would reduce the pool of candidates for the original Best Dramatic Presentation award as well.

If there were only five or six SF novelists, I would likely object to Best Novel too, even if each writer was amazingly prolific.

And as for why we haven't "used the Hugo to encourage better films, tv and other various forms of entertainment," I can only say that it seems to me fandom has tried, and Hollywood, by and large, has paid scant attention — even when its members win our existing award. Creating yet another Hugo

would dilute what little influence we have.

On other matters, my favorite part of this was your fanzine reviews. It's nice to see lengthy reviews in lieu of the "fanzines received" lists so many faneds run. And I liked that they were reviews drawing attention to zines you enjoy rather than criticizing those you don't. (KTF reviews can be fun to write and entertaining to read, but I don't think they serve fandom as well as deserved praise, which not only encourages the people who do things well to go on doing them, but promotes fanzines and fanzine publishing in general.) The fact that I agree with you in these instances helps, too.

Harry Warner Jr.

I see I'm not a member of fandom's core audience as described in the Fandom.com press release. I'm not affluent. I'm not well-educated if the release referred to college experience, and I'm not an "early adapter" if that means people who jump on the bandwagon to be the first to change from something satisfactory to something that is less satisfactory but newer. I'm too tired to be fervent about anything and I don't have enough passions to indulge.

It's good to know that Ray Bradbury came through his stroke without major problems. I heard about the stroke as I was waking one morning and had turned on the bedside radio just in time to catch part of the item. Then I fretted for days over the possibility it might have been fatal or I might have mistaken the name.

Speer's report on the worldcon provides the first information I've seen on the discovery of near-suns out in space closer to our solar system than any visible star. But I can't quite understand how these could be useful for space travel purposes; if they possess planets revolving around them, those planets would not be good places for life to exist.

Jack McDevitt's hypothesis for a story about immortality seems quite similar to the one Dr. David Keller used in his novella, *Life Everlasting*. In his case, he postulated women choosing between the ability to bear children or immortality. I asked Dr. Keller why the women couldn't have children and then become immortal and he avoided the question.

In Roy Pettis' conreport, I was surprised at the description of how fans felt about successive seasons of B5. I thought it was an immutable law of commercial television offerings that the first season is best, the second season can be equally good or almost as good, and then following seasons drop off

in quality further and further. It certainly applies to the dozen or so television series I've watched with some thoroughness. (One exception: *The Avengers*, which didn't really get going until Diana Rigg came aboard.)

It would be good to see Chris Barkley succeeding in his effort to get science fiction people pictured on commemorative stamps. I don't think some of his nominees have much chance: C.L. Moore, Edgar Pangborn, and Leigh Brackett, for instance, are famous among science fiction readers but most or all of their fiction has been out of print too long for younger persons to have heard of them. H.L. Gold deserves to be among the editing nominees much more than a couple of those listed.

The Walt Willis obituary is splendid, if that adjective can be applied to any obituary of someone we knew and loved. I'm glad you reprinted Sourdough's essay about Marion Zimmer Bradley and James White, since you publish for a much wider audience than the mailing list of DASFAx.

Ray Capella's letter gave a much more coherent argument in favor of the *Star Wars* series than most writings on the topic. But I am still unable to find an answer to my basic problem: why in the world would anyone want to use second-rate science fiction movies and serials meant for kids in the first half of the century as models for extremely expensive productions for today's theaters?

If Joseph Nicholas thinks there is a difference between the needs of people in airliners and those in spaceships because the stay in the former lasts only a few hours, then I might propose another example: submarine service, particularly in times of war.

Please pardon the terrible typing. I don't feel well this evening and my fingertips are quite sore from being out in cold weather and playing in the snow. (The game consists in trying to find my car which must be somewhere beneath the snow.)

Lloyd Penney

Congratulations to Grant Canfield on his Rotsler Award win. There are many fanartists who receive little recognition beyond the laughs and good comments they receive, and the Rotsler Award is that extra statement that says they done do good lots.

And now we know why the fanzine supply in Las Vegas dried up...most of the Vegans are writing for Collectingchannel.com. I checked it out, and there are some job opportunities available. I could stand to work at home...and off goes my resume to Arnie Katz. Let's see what I can do.

Peter Dougherty's book has done well;

since sending you that news item, Peter had to come back to get another 50 issues printed up. I'm hoping that with this item printed, another print run will be required. I did get a nice little royalty for bringing some extra business to the company, so we're all happy here.

Ken-ch has been sending his good fanzine works to many people including myself. I hope he's had no problems exchanging the Canadian \$20 bill I sent him. Also, John Hertz sends me *Vanamonde*...such learned commentary, such a display of schooled intelligence, and distilled down to a single sheet...always a pleasure to read.

I am glad that Roy Pettis described Aussiecon 3 as different. Too many reports I've read say that it was bad, while others said it wasn't quite what they were expecting, and that was a bad thing. I didn't go to Aussiecon, but I'm sure I would have found the differences pleasing, as I did with the Dutch Worldcon in 1990. It was a very European Worldcon, with a Perry Rhodan gathering within it, and many differences that gave me one of the most enjoyable Worldcons I'd attended to that date.

Joseph T. Major

SF Canada Funds Taken: This seems to be another rerun. TAffans will remember the case of Abi Frost (did she, too, ever pay more than the one check?) and a club I was in back in the 80s had parallel problems with its treasurer (he had designated the club account to cover his own checking account, and then proceeded to write \$1400 in checks against his own account balance of near-zero, after which he joined the Army.) This makes the comment below alluding to the infamous WSFS Inc. appropriate – what if its treasurer were of similar probity?

E Profitus Fandom: Who does this Mark Young think he is, Will Sykora? And if he takes over fandom – excuse me, Fandom ©™SM – what will he do with it anyway?

Tom Feller should not be ashamed; obviously reading Cordwainer Smith made him breathe easier, so naturally he should write about “Nostrilia.” There must be something in the air.

Robert Whitaker Sirignano points out some interesting considerations about the current and future prospects of best stories. Once, as a curiosity, I looked through the back issues of *Harper's*, *The Saturday Review* and *Atlantic Monthly* for their opinions on the best novel published in 1954, the year I was born. The consensus seemed to be that it was *Mary Anne* by Daphne duMaurier, a

historical novel about Mary Anne Clarke, mistress of Frederick, Duke of York, and coincidentally an ancestor of duMaurier. (Nothing about a long work about nobility and jewelry, by some don at Oxford with the weird name of Tolkien.)

Marty Cantor

I can not put my money where my mouth is – not because my foot is usually in said orifice, but because I have no money. Which means that I can neither join Chicon 2000 nor afford to go there to attend the WSFS Business Meeting. However, despite my lack of fiscal resources, I stand by my loc in *File 770:133* in opposing the splitting of the BDP Hugo – and I also support, if there is an appropriate motion, the abolishing of the current BDP Hugo. And for very good reasons about which I wrote in my previous loc. I commend Chris Barkley for sticking to his guns on his proposed amendment to split the BDP Hugo even whilst preferring the BDP go away – I appreciate people who take principled stands and stick with them. Even when they are very, very wrong.

John B. Speer

I was naturally tempted to join the mailing list, but that heap of unread or half-read fanzines in my room (we call it the Black Hole) is a constant reminder that I can't read all the mail I would urgently like to read. So, no.

I spotted only minor errors in your copying of Aussiecon Three. One thing I probably should have clarified for your readers is WIPP. Since it's here in new Mexico, ASFS readers needed no explanation that it's the Waste Isolation Pilot Project.

I will not mention nitmarks I applied to other parts of this *File 770*, and hope you won't feel slighted because of that.

[[It's just reassuring to know that there's still *Grammar West of the Pecos*!]]

Janice Gelb

Thanks for the column inches for DUFF. The person who wrote the line about the ability to eat enormous quantities of food and accept high levels of friendly hospitality in the race announcement was actually not me but Aussie administrator Terry Frost, who was undoubtedly speaking from the experience of being well-fed on his own DUFF trip to the US.

John Hertz

Dear Migly: You should never have volunteered that. However, many thanks for mentioning *Vanamonde* in the same breath as Ken Cheslin's splendid Atom reprints, for writing at length, and for your hard work. I was especially gratified by “a poet's heart.” I can't be annoyed when people say I have interesting ideas, but there is a craft of writing, and I do work at it.

Marie Rengstorff

I received my new *Analog* today. It had a small bio on James White. Dr. Stan Schmidt said, “His [James White's] appearances in *Astounding/Analog* were relatively few but memorable, including the novelette ‘Sanctuary,’ . . .”

From that I decided to get down on the floor and go through the SF magazines which I brought to Hawaii. Most were from 1951-1961. I wanted to see if I had any other of James White's stories buried in my collection. I did not. No surprise. I expect that they would have been published, at least the ones published in the U.S., between 1971-1981.

What I did find surprised me. Asimov was published in *Galaxy*. Isaac Asimov's *SF Magazine* was edited by Scithers, and Campbell edited *Analog* and *Astounding*. I vaguely remember all that, but there is nothing like getting down on the floor, getting dirty and stiff, and being reminded all over again. In addition, women had science articles published. A published SF story by a women was really rare. That was no surprise. In high school, if a girl was caught by a teacher carrying a SF fanzine around, she was ordered to take that *blank blank* filthy thing back to her locker. Or, it was taken from her and burned, if the teacher had the chance, in the wood stove. Girls were supposed to be nice, delicate, and protected from such filth. Some boys, however, were never without a disgusting, mimeographed cover on top of their books. You must picture the fanzine covers back then: blood all over the place, intestines hanging out of slashed bodies, exploding space craft with men screaming as their bodies blew up in the vacuum of space. I would study the covers, and the boys would let me, until a teacher looked our way. Then the boy would pretend to suddenly notice my interest and tuck it away while giving me a shammed look of shock.

In contrast to the fanzine covers, the SF magazine covers were very puritan pictures

in primary colors. But carrying a fanzine around, reading it, and writing for it during study hall was vital to most of the SF writers-to-be who I knew in the 50s. Part of girls education was being short-changed. Girls were, however, allowed to write some science.

It is starting to rain. That means that my catchment tank is filling. Good thing I was allowed to learn a little engineering. A 9,000 gallon catchment tank, with filters, piles of valves, and a pump is both large and forbidding to the typical, frou-frou 1950's girl. I'm going to go listen to the rain fill my tank.

Ken Cheslin

GoldenAge! And I never knew it! Kench, cuz in 1959 there were Ken Potter/Slater/MacIntyre/Bulmer. Only use Kench for signing cartoons, really.

[[Kench also thinks the ATom cartoon about whether it's "worth having the operation just for a chance to get into another apa" comes from the 1970s and refers to A Women's Apa.]]

Selina Phanara

I just looked at the *File 770* site (I stumbled upon your name and the connected webpage through Chicon.org)

I was delighted and very impressed with the layout and design. I am thinking very specifically about the article on Fan Clubs. The way you used the text was just artistic!

Even better was the article itself! I have never before seen such an authentic and honest account of "the way things are." I think most fans are capable of much more than gets done and I felt a kick in my pants just from reading your article!

Joyce K. Scrivner

I really enjoyed the note on Collecting Channel - I've looked in a couple times, but not gone very deep. I expect that it would eat my time easily on a daily basis with as much stuff as appears there. I can certainly see where the fanzine productive activity in Las Vegas has disappeared, at least temporarily!

Carol Kabakjian

I have it on good authority that at one "big name" PSFS member did not go to war for W.W.II. He (I'm bad with names and don't

remember his) continued to hold the Society's meetings during that time. There was no hiatus during W.W.II for PSFS. This is why we *can* claim that we are the "oldest, continuously running SF Society in America."

I've been a PSFS Society member since 1986, and as of April 1 I will be starting my 8th year as Secretary for the Society.

[[Doesn't it take more than one guy to define a club as continually meeting?]]

Sally A. Syrjala

It seems there is more heated debate of words written in *File 770* about *The Phantom Menace* than there is in *Southern Enclave*, which is a *Star Wars* letterzine.

Southern Enclave has been published since August 1983 and will see its last issue published this Spring. In her statement about why #55 will be the last issue, Cherie Cargill states, "I have come to the conclusion that the core of SW fandom simply doesn't care anymore." She mentions that there has been no resurgence in SW fandom and that there have only been a few LoCs on the film.

Once upon a time I wrote paragraphs on Vader's transformation and transcendence from the Garden of Eden's death sentence bestowed from the eating of the Tree of Knowledge. Yet Cherie mentions none of the expected heated debate over Anakin's "immaculate conception" having taken place.

As for me, I didn't even see the film. Its previously indicated humanity of characterization would not be a strong point of the movie as the coldness in *Return of the Jedi* made my interest in SW wane, *The Phantom Menace* just didn't seem worth the effort or money involved in the viewing.

Star Trek fandom fell to division and rancor over the K/S issue. Now a *Star Wars* letterzine is falling to what seems a lack of interest.

We Also Heard From

Sheryl Birkhead: Nothing in a long time has made me happier than seeing Grant Canfield as the Rotsler Award recipient. Thanks for the info.

Eric Lindsay: Another fine issue, and decidedly thick for a newzine. You sure you aren't back in genzine country? I think you protest too much.

Sam Long: When I heard of DeForest Kelley's death, I, too, said his epitaph would be, "I'm dead, Jim," but upon further

thought, I figured it would more likely be, "Dammit, Jim, I'm a corpse, not an actor!"

Bill Bowers: Thanks for *File 770:133*, which shares the distinction of being - along with a John Hertz "mailing" - the First Fanzine received this century. January 3rd was a L.A. kind of day.

I particularly enjoyed your piece on the Vast Eival Katz Empire and the much deserved appreciation of Ken Cheslin's work.

Joy V. Smith: I love con reports, and I have to say how tickled I was at Jack Speer's reaction to the "How I Sold My First SF Novel" panel: ("I love to sell the story. Of unseen things above...") Good Aussiecon report by Roy Pettis too.

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