

...THAT'S

N AS IN NEWELL-POST ?

U AS IN UFFISH?

L AS IN LOQUACIOUS?

L AS IN LOQUACIOUS AGAIN?

- AS IN IRISH?

F AS IN PHANTOM?



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NULL-F

This is the 1975 Edition of NULL-F, the Old Fapan's Guide to Minac, published for the February, 1975, FAPA mailing by Ted White, who even yet resides at 1014 N. Tuckahoe St., Falls Church, Va., 22046, and does this sort of thing at least once a year, like clockwork. QWERTYUIOPress, y'all...

THIS MORNING, at 5:18 a.m., I awoke from a sound sleep with the sudden awareness that if I wanted to continue to be a member of FAPA after twenty years of that sort of thing, I had better do a zine, double-quick. Today is January 31st, and the deadline is barely over a week away. Well, it took me more than an hour to fall asleep once again, to dream of an invasion of bears into my house (cute little devils!) and Greyhound busses in my driveway (made me indignant), none of which need concern us overly much here. The important thing is to Get Out the Zine!

Well, I actually read the November mailing straight through, the day it arrived, and I thought at the time that presaged an awakening of my interest in this August (or "February") group. Obviously, that interest was not fully kindled--or I wouldn't be sitting here at 9:30 in the morning, batting out stencils for this zine at the last possible moment, but perhaps I'll follow these opening pages with my first mailing comments in years. Let us see.

WHAT HAPPENED, LAST YEAR? Well, 1974 was the year my second marriage called it quits. The handwriting was on the wall for at least the previous two years, and early in 1974 Robin took a job in D.C. (office manager, Quaker House--a job she still has, despite occasional threats to quit) and found, after a few months, that commuting was more of a drag (20-minute walk to bus, bus-ride, with one transfer, of 70 minutes) than she cared for on a regular basis, and took a room in the city within walking distance of her job. Now she owns an apartment in a coop building in the same general area, and is pretty much living on her own for the first time in her life.

I, on the other hand, continue to live out here in Fabulous Falls Church where I am still in the process of remodeling the house, and Kitten (our daughter) is living here with me. (At this precise moment Kitten--who is now four and a half--is in attendance at the Falls Church Presbyterian Church Pre-School, a nursery school which she attends from 9 to 12 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.)

I am inclined to think (but don't hold me to it) that married life is not for me. My first marriage lasted four and a half years; my second around eight years. That's almost thirteen years of my adult life. The inertial drag on my energies--which has forced me to abandon (or almost so) two careers (jazz critic, sf writer)--is something I'm rarely aware of until it ceases. But I've noticed that when I am single I begin accomplishing things again: long-delayed projects are attacked with new energy. Without encumbrance I work at my own speed--which is inevitably faster.

One major project started last year was to put my teeth in shape. Over the past fifteen or so years I'd let my teeth go almost completely--largely

out of a sense of fatalism about them. This fall I began seeing a local dentist who not only taught me I could have an effect upon my mouth with proper care, but rebuilt my teeth for me. Now, \$3,500 later, I have not a spot of decay in my mouth and all my upper teeth are capped or bridged. The effect is pleasing to me, and completion of the work did a lot to build my spirits.

What's new on the sf front you ask? (You didn't? I'll overlook that.) Well, in a little over a year, now, the 50th Anniversary issue of AMAZING will be coming out. I have ambitious plans for it--although to what extent they'll be realized I'm not sure. I'm in my seventh year with AMAZING and FANTASTIC now. Do any of you remember the doom-laden predictions when I joined the magazines in 1968 that I wouldn't last six months and, in all likelihood, neither would the magazines? I do. Sometimes I even chuckle a little. But not enough to mess up my aim as I toss another dart at my Harry Harrison dart board (right eye: 1,000 points). I was paging through the back issues from 1969 and 1970 recently, skimming over the lettercolumns, and I was amazed at the number of people whom I more or less introduced to fandom. In one issue I explained fandom to a young reader named Rick Stoker. Recently I bought his second story from him. (Rick lived in Fabulous Falls Church for several months last year, a guest of Rich & Colleen Brown.)

Although I've written very little, professionally, in the past few years (my last book was Star Wolf--not my title!--published in 1971 by Lancer...), I did write a contribution to a book of new pulp fiction which will come out soon, and the May, 1975, issue of AMAZING will feature my novelette, "Under The Mad Sun," which I enjoyed writing quite a bit. I have decided to write a story every month, and maybe even get back to books--several of which are long overdue.

On the music front--remember the Old Days, fellow Old Fapans, when I used to write furiously about jazz, carrying on long arguments with people like Bill Evans about The Place of the Saxophone in Jazz?--I've been reviewing records and getting onto freebie lists again, but this time the genre is rock (loosely defined) rather than jazz. (I did review Mingus' last jazz album, a review picked up and republished by the Society of Bassists.) Unfortunately, my consuming interest these days is European rock, of which very few albums are issued domestically. So I've been hunting down imports from such unlikely countries as Hungary and Greece. The bulk of my foreign albums are English, of course, with German albums a close second, followed by Dutch and Italian.

When I say "rock," however, I am not talking about what passes for rock here. No, you know me, folks: my interest is in the pretentious, arty amalgamations of rock/jazz/classical which make use of instruments like the synthesizer and the Mellotron. The descendants of King Crimson, if you will... I recently counted up my record collection and found I had over 3,000 albums, roughly half of them jazz.

I've also been playing my alto sax more--both with records and with whomever I can find to jam with--on either piano or organ, both of which I have in my livingroom. One of these days, real soon now, I'm going to have to relearn the piano (I used to play it quite well as a kid) and get a teacher for the sax. I'm serious: it's time to get moving with my music. I'll be forty in another three years (yeah, The Kid has grown up) and I want to get started on a career in music before it's Too Late.

What else? I have embraced drugs (the non-addictive sort) wholeheartedly this last year: mostly marijuana and LSD. Neither seems to have sapped my Will to Live or any of that crap. I've been tripping, on and off, since 1959, smoking dope since 1968, but I expect I consumed more acid in 1974 than I had in all the years previous, even driving to Cincinnati last summer on the stuff. It dsot'n rilly rat yur brane...

Actually, I find the freak culture ("hippie counter-culture") very much to my liking. At last I fit in somewhere beyond sf fandom... Most of us are productive, creative people, and my life is probably more enjoyable now than it's ever been.

Speaking of which, some years ago Andy Main quit this organization in disgust at the reactionary flag-waving which greeted his comments on the Current State of Things in this country. That marked a period of disaffection for FAPA for me: I sympathized very strongly with Andy's disgust with the Old Farts here who were (and perhaps still are) living comfortably in 1953. Perhaps some of you will be interested in Andy's current activities. His picture can be found (twice) in The Whole Earth Epilogue, which he had a hand in creating.

In the meantime, how about some mailing comments?

NOTED: 149

HORIZONS: Warner - Although I have no first-hand involvement in George Senda's ripoffs--he never stuck me with a bad check-- I am under the impression that his "apparent repentance and restitution efforts" were largely cosmetic and without substance. As far as I know, most of those to whom he acknowledges owing money have yet to receive it. And he has yet to acknowledge debts to some of those he ripped off back in those hectic days of 1972 just before the LACon. I wouldn't rush to welcome him back with open arms just yet...

I believe I'd notice "a conversion of police forces into gestapos." In fact, I believe the corrupt Nixon administration did its best to hasten just that. A significant amount of what is recorded as "crime" today is the direct result of the illegal prohibition against drugs. I think it's significant that the original prohibition against alcohol was directly responsible for both the creation of organized crime in this country and the contempt for the law of much of the citizenry. Today's laws on drugs are enriching organized crime fantastically, have created a fantastic black market for drugs of dubious quality, and has had the effect of forcing drug users into criminal channels of activity. And of course the most gestapo-like tactics used by "law-enforcement" officials are those used by federal drug agents, as has been brought out in the news repeatedly.

As a user of drugs which have been found to be safer for my body than either alcohol or tobacco, I resent the fact that people operating in ignorance or linked with corporate interests who have a financial stake in maintaining the illegality of my drugs have the power to legislate me into criminality when none of my actions are in any respect harmful to either me or society. There are between 20,000,000 and 50,000,000 people like me in this country--between one quarter and one tenth of our population--that's a significantly large number of people to turn into "criminals" with the stroke of a pen. If drugs were legalized--some of them with controls of the same nature used on tobacco and alcohol--not only would we be "decriminalized," and not only would the government pick up hefty new tax revenues, but actual crime--muggings, street crime, etc., to say nothing of the profit-making arms of organized crime--would be significantly reduced. The unwillingness of the government to take this sensible step says a lot, I think, about the venality and stupidity of our elected officials --and those who elect them. I'm sure you're right: before taking steps to reduce the causes of crime, most people in this country would rather live in a repressive police state, smugly convinced that it won't hurt them. How blind, how foolish. It can happen here. Ours is a nation of "good Germans." "...any given person /in Baltimore/ has one chance in a hundred of being murdered every twenty years." What nonsense! Come on, Harry--that's

lying with statistics, and you know better than that. Murders aren't committed at random, nor equally distributed among the population. Murders can be roughly divided into two classes: unpremeditated and premeditated. The latter occur largely in criminal milieu and account for a small percentage of the total. Most unpremeditated murders occur within families or among acquaintances and are spontaneous reactions to frustration or otherwise unbearable circumstances. Other are inadvertently caused by disputes, bar fights, the like: manslaughter. A few are caused by someone going off his trolley and shooting everyone he sees. But very few. The actual odds on being murdered in Baltimore depend greatly on the class of person one is, and where one lives--who one's associates are. The average citizen stands very little chance of being murdered in Baltimore--as he does almost anywhere else.

You know, Harry, twenty years ago I used to argue against your ignorance of jazz; now I find myself wanting to do the same when you say, "There's very little rock or jazz that attains even the Schumann degree of harmonic and form daring." Really--why say things like that, when you are ignorant of at least 95% of rock and jazz? I could pull at least a hundred albums from my rock collection alone that would prove the error of that statement. Contemporary artrock is probably the most musically advanced of anything being created or performed today: it has assimilated all of twentieth century music and much of the music of former centuries. It is being produced (largely by Europeans) by people whose training and knowledge encompasses everything from medieval recorder music to Stockhausen, et al. The Germans and Italians in particular have produced music which is at once harmonically sophisticated and emotionally exciting--something which can be said for few of those 20th Century composers who have remained within the Academy. But equally the English rock composer/musicians are rediscovering and reusing the materials of 19th Century romantic classicism--and on levels the Beatles of ten years ago would hardly recognize.

I certainly did not "get exposed to loud and driving popular music before I discovered serious music." I grew up in a house filled with the music of Beethoven, Brahms, et al, and didn't discover music which emotionally involved me until I found Stravinsky, Bartok and the other 20th Century composers in my teens--at about the same time I discovered jazz.

The first sf or fantasy novel published as a paperback original? I suspect the answer lies among those relatively forgotten paperbacks published in the early fifties by obscure publishers located outside New York. I am thinking of a Chicago publisher (Merit Books? That sounds right.) who used authors from the Ziff-Davis Chicago stable, like Rog Phillips. But the first original sf paperback was Don Wollheim's The Pocket Book of Science Fiction, published in the early forties. But it was an anthology--not a novel.

Art Saha's son is named Mathew.

BETE NOIRE: Boggs - Ghod, what a blast from the past! I was astonished to read this, Redd. It's one of the best conreports I've read in years (one of the best-written, and by one of fandom's best writers; how the poorer writers have done in conreports!), and amazingly evocative of the events. I'd almost completely forgotten some of the incidents you report, including several in which I played a part. To the extent that I recall them, your reportage seems accurate--more so by now, I'm sure, than my memory.

I'm not sure what effect your publication of the report now will have. The ensuing ten years have mellowed many antagonists, and the fervor with which you attack such items as the Lupoff report seems a little misplaced, this long after the fact. (Lupoff, of course, has changed greatly since 1964.)

My own position during the convention was this: I had joined before the Boondoggle hit, and although I renounced my membership in MINAC during the controversy over the Boondoggle, the Committee never took notice of that fact, so my membership was in effect throughout the con. Nevertheless, I never attended any of the program items except the Awards Banquet (where I did not eat, but occupied a chair in the back) and generally avoided the convention itself. (I attended the Awards presentation largely in anticipation that F&SF might win a Hugo--I'd been deputized to accept the award. I had rehearsed a nice little speech attacking the convention in the event that I was to accept the award, but, alas, it went elsewhere that year.) I lived throughout the con at Walter & Marion's house, commuting either with Marion's car or the bus, which ran almost directly there. I did not boycott the hotel, however, like those who remained largely in the lobby. I simply spent my time in the 'public' areas (which, like you, I feel should have been public in fact as well as name) and at room parties. I hardly missed the convention proper...and you know something? Since then I've followed pretty much the same pattern--using the convention to socialize with my friends and ignoring most of the programming.

You mentioned my own conreport. You're correct that it was neither finished nor published. I bogged down (no pun intended) on it midway through the con. As my personal life became more involved (with a young lady who was there), my interest in writing my conreport lessened. I'd like to find that working draft, though--it must be in a box somewhere--as much out of curiosity as anything. I'm pleased you thought my report of your mezzanine incident was "a mostly accurate account," inasmuch as I remember it occurring largely as a sudden flurry that had me saying "Huh? What happened?" afterwards.

Part of the report was published, however. I was sending serial instalments east to Dave Van Arnham for his FIRST DRAFT, which appeared in APA F and APA L. I believe I sent him at least one instalment--but it was exclusively pre-con stuff--the trip out, a party at Phil Dick's, possibly Donaho's party (but more likely not)...

I thought it was a great idea to write a conreport during a con--usually at the end of the day--while the events were fresh and vivid in my mind. What I overlooked was how unfresh I would be at the end of a day of heavy conventioning...

Ah, that after-con party at the Ellingtons'... The young lady and I went out in the middle of the party to take her girlfriend home (I was driving Marion's car again), and afterwards we drove to a secluded (we thought) area where we moved to the backseat for amatory dalliance. It was my first time in the back seat of a car, and I found it rather awkward and not too comfortable, but the climax (so to speak) occurred when I heard a rapping sound at the window behind me and a flashlight beam passed over my head and settled on other, unclothed parts of my anatomy. We sat up and attempted with very little success to restore our clothing to its usual appearance as a young uniformed Berkeley policeman politely apologized for disturbing us and asked if we could show proof we were over 21. We did so, and he apologized for disturbing us again, and, I thought, all but told us we could resume where we'd left off. He was so nice that the young lady, in a burst of sympathetic relief perhaps, invited him to the party, giving him the address. Some time after we'd returned to the party he showed up, out of uniform and apparently looking for more of those wild beatnik girls like the one with me. I told people who he was and earned some scowls for having any hand in his presense there, but all remained cool, as far as I know.

Another incident at that party which amused me at the time was Judy Merrill's fruitless attempt to seduce Phil Dick. She wasn't at all subtle about it, either. (It seems to me her subsequent reviews of Phil's books were less kind, but I can't substantiate that...)

Oh well; ten years--that's not too many...

DIASPAR: Carr - This is indeed vintage stuff, and it makes me want to see more of it--especially the parts by TCarr, which prove that you haven't lost your touch (really nicely even stencilling, there...). But just a little over two pages out of 24? That's not enough. More, more!

Fritz's story was an enjoyable lightweight whimsy, but Grania's piece was really fine. I get to see Grania pretty infrequently these years--in 1972, during our stay in the Bay Area, and for an afternoon when she and Steve were passing through this area on their way back from Europe last year--but I enjoy her more now than ever (has it been fourteen years since I met her?), and "In Search of La Mama" was as good as hearing the story from her own lips.

Having grown the magic mushroom myself, however, I can authoritatively point out that the mushroom Ray drew is incorrect...

FAPA BOOK: BPavlat - Fascinating. I really enjoy this kind of fanhistory.

OF CABBAGES AND KINGS: PRPavlat - Rather few vegetables were/are native to this country. Mostly corn and the gourd family and potatoes--both white and sweet. Oh, and peppers. Most of the others come out of Asia. My Encyclopedia of Cookery goes into the historical derivation of almost all edibles, if there's anything you want to check out on that score...

Hmmm. Your list requires amending. Corn is American, yes, and sweet potatoes--but the latter come from tropical America and are a member of the morning glory family (and are not related to yams, although they too are American). Broccoli: a favorite vegetable in Greece and Italy for 2,000 years, the seeds were brought here by Italian immigrants. Commercial growers started producing it around 1920. Cauliflower: a member of the cabbage family, as is broccoli, it has been grown for centuries in the coastal regions of the Mediterranean and in Asia Minor. The oldest records of it date back to the 6th century B.C. Spinach: originated in southwestern Asia, brought to China around 647 A.D. and taken to Spain by Moors in the 8th century; it was unknown to the ancient Greeks and Romans. Carrot: cultivated for over 2,000 years and was adored by the Greeks and Romans among others. You say "potatoes were brought over from Europe," but in fact the white (so-called) potato was originally cultivated in Peru and probably Ecuador, where potatoes of all sizes and colors (many kinds unavailable elsewhere) are still sold in the markets. When potatoes were first taken to Europe, they were considered fit food for only chickens and pigs. The potato, like the tomato (another American vegetable) comes from the nightshade family. That family also produces the ground cherry and some other odd fruit-vegetables Luther Burbank developed without consequence... Among food-providing animals, only the turkey is native, at least among what's sold in stores. (Regional favorites include native animals like possum, armadillo, etc.)

The campaign literature was interesting. Although I have yet to run for any local offices, I have assisted in the campaigns of several who have. I'm a director of the Falls Church Citizens for Quality Living, Inc., a non-profit corporation devoted to keeping development sensible and maintaining the basic character of the city in the face of real-estate rapists. We put our founder and first president (a good friend who lives a block up the street) on the city council, in a clean sweep which tossed all the rascals out and put all the good guys in. Since then the city laws on development have been rewritten and tightened. And my interest in local politics has waned...

null-f: 7

THE RAMBLING FAP: Calkins - You know, TRF has become one of my regular favorites in the mailings, Gregg. It is one of the few remaining Fapazines which reminds me of the Good Old Days of the 1950's when I was a young Fapan and Eager.

Reading about your thoughts on turning 40 really hit me with a sense of deja-vu. I'm less than a week from 37 myself, and I recall reading your editorial in OOPSLA! when you'd just turned 18. I was then 14 or 15 and I remember thinking how much older and more mature you were at the advanced age of 18. How times have changed... I'll never think 18 is "mature" again.

And you too have gone through two marriages and are once more single. I can very easily empathize with your feelings on the subject, as my own earlier comments on the subject probably indicated. You write well about your thoughts, feelings, and lifestyle. I don't think you have anything to apologize for in that department, and although I certainly don't know you well enough to know if indeed you are expressing your inner self that readily, I feel I know you better and like you better for the things you've written in recent TRFs.

You comment to Hulan that "there seem to be plenty of mailing comments every mailing." Perhaps so, but the level of communication does not seem to be very high in many cases. Am I simply being falsely nostalgic for other times? I remember when FAPA still had some kind of a brain trust, with people like Vernon McCain and Bill Danner jousting in every mailing and plenty of others joining in. I have skipped over many mailings--pulling out only those zines which looked interesting--in the past five years. And when I have contributed to FAPA--often with pieces I regarded as comment-worthy--the response has been meager. I believe the last NULL-F drew three (count 'em: 3) mailing comments. (Maybe doing mc's myself this time will change that.) Speaking of such things, several years ago you printed a letter from Rick Sneary in which he said several foolish things about me --apparently based on misconceptions--which I really wanted to comment upon, but never did. Just as well, I suppose; now I can't even remember the substance of his remarks.

I'm pretty sure Dian Crayne did not mean to say that Chicon II was her first worldcon. I think she meant Chicon III--in 1962, rather'n 1952. I envy you the 1952 Chicon II; I read the conreports and really wished I had been there. The same is true of the 1953 Phillycon (which I could have attended, although I was only 15 then) and 1954 Sanfrancon. Those cons were small enough that a few conreports (written by the right people) could really fill you in. And those conventions produced several classics, including Willis'.

This fall, while having my teeth worked on--root canals, extractions, cutting for capping, etc.--I went on several involuntary fasts lasting for several days on each occasion. What I mean is, I simply had no interest in food or eating--or I found it impossible to eat anything but thin soup. I lost enough weight to force me to add new holes to my belt--which I wear three inches tighter these days than I did for several years. It's a good --if drastic--way to lose weight, fasting.

Burb was, as usual, suburb...er, superb...

COGNATE: Hickey - I really found this to be a waste of my time.

MOONSHINE: Moffatts - No checkmarks, but I found "Partial Recall" as fascinating as I did the early-LASFS fanhistory in the recent PREHENSILE. You know, it was still possible to feel that way about fandom in the early fifties, when I discovered it, but I wonder what it's like now? Fandom is so large and amorphous and...respectable.

null-f: 8

FANDIARY: Goodman - Jack (Jxtn Muir) Harness' interpolated comments were an added bonus.

I think you overexaggerate the "bad reputation" I enjoyed during the time we were bidding for the NyCon3, but you're right: we figured the best way to overcome any such reputation was to campaign vigorously all over the country. I've been well-known (and reasonably well-liked, as far as I know) at Midwestcons since the late fifties, and we made a point of hosting parties in the midwest since the Tricon (at which our bid would be voted upon) was in Cleveland, and we figured most of the voters would be from the midwest. But we also campaigned at two Westercons as well. I don't think we did a lot of campaigning in the east. But fortunately there were less conventions then. I haven't noticed west coast fans doing much serious convention-bidding outside their own area, although of course I pay much less attention to such things now...

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SO MUCH FOR MAILING COMMENTS. It wasn't a very large mailing, was it?

Tonight I'm hosting a Falls Church Fanoclast meeting here (we alternate between my house and the one John Berry is now living in, off Dupont Circle in D.C.), and any hour now (it's now mid-afternoon) I'll have to start picking up Kitten's toys and cleaning the place up. I've always enjoyed hosting fanmeetings and parties because, among other things, it prompts me to keep the house in order on some sort of regular basis.

Kit is up in her room (it used to be my room when I was a boy) watching Public TV (Children's Fair) on her own TV. I got it for her when I realized the alternative was to have the TV down here going with Sesame St., Electric Co., Mr. Rogers, etc., all afternoon, every afternoon. I put up with that for about a year (enough time for tedium to set in) and then bought her the cheapest set (\$60) I could find at Korvettes. I think it's a Good Thing; she knows her alphabet perfectly, can count easily into the thirties and higher, and is generally pretty sophisticated for her age. Of course, she's also beautiful... Sometimes I wonder what it will be like when she's teenaged. Will I become the typical Daddy--jealous of her boyfriends, etc., and out of communication with her? Or will we somehow surmount that hurdle? I'm a little dubious, although I hope for the best.

It's not particularly easy, being a single parent. It's easy to start resenting a kid for taking up so much of your time--when you have no partner with which to share that responsibility--and that's a trap I've tried to avoid, not always entirely successfully... And I do look forward to next fall, when she starts public kindergarten on a five-days-a-week basis. Regular school should give me even more free time. Sometimes I feel like the typical housewife, relieved to have her kids all off to school. But I love my daughter and I have no intention of giving her away, even if the opportunity was available, which it is not.

This has been mostly page-filler, I'm afraid--on-stencil ramblings (well, it's all on-stencil composition) to fill out my eighth page and save my membership for another year. In a few moments I'll have to go downstairs and take the front off the Gestetner 360 and see if I can lubricate a trouble-spot. Chick Derry tells me that if that doesn't work, he'll have to take a look at the machine, but although I'd like to see Chick again--our paths haven't crossed too often of late--I hope I can get it working well enough to get this run off tonight and into the mail no later than tomorrow. We'll see. If this appears in the May mailing you'll know something didn't work out, somewhere along the line.

--Ted White 1/31/75