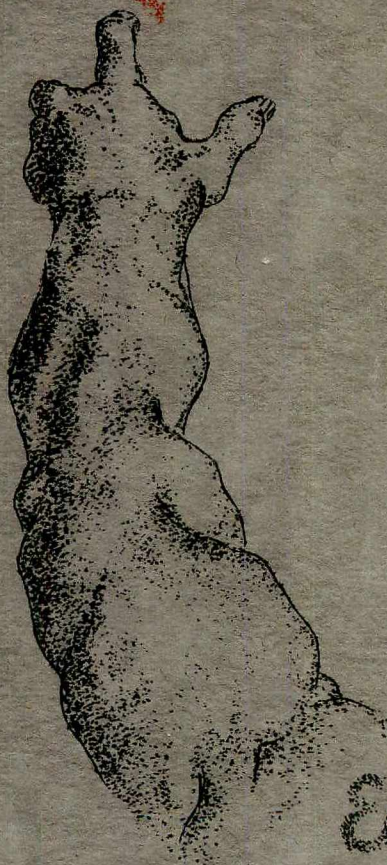


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# SPACE DIVERSIONS N°11

# CONTENTS

Cover Symbol : Producing Thish!

DRUMS ALONG THE MERSEY	John Owen	2
EDITORIAL NOTES	Norman Shorrocks	6
COLONIAL EXCURSION Pt.Six	Ron Bennett	7
I DON'T DIG THE BEATS	Will (J.) Jenkins	13
SPUTNICUS GRATIS (No. 2)	Norman Shorrocks	14
I'LL NEVER BE A WORT RUNNER NOW(Sic)	Bob Richardson & Pete Daniels	15
I HEARD THE BEAT OF FANNISH DRUMS	Terry Carr	19
.....SOMETHING STIRRED ?.....	Letter extracts, 41 & Comments J.O.&N.S.	52
MY LIFE WITH BENNETT	Bill Donaho	44
A FEMMEFAN'S FARRAGO	Patricia Milnes	48
TIRED OF FANDOM ? -TRY THIS !	Eric Bentcliffe	50
TAFFPLUG	The Group	54

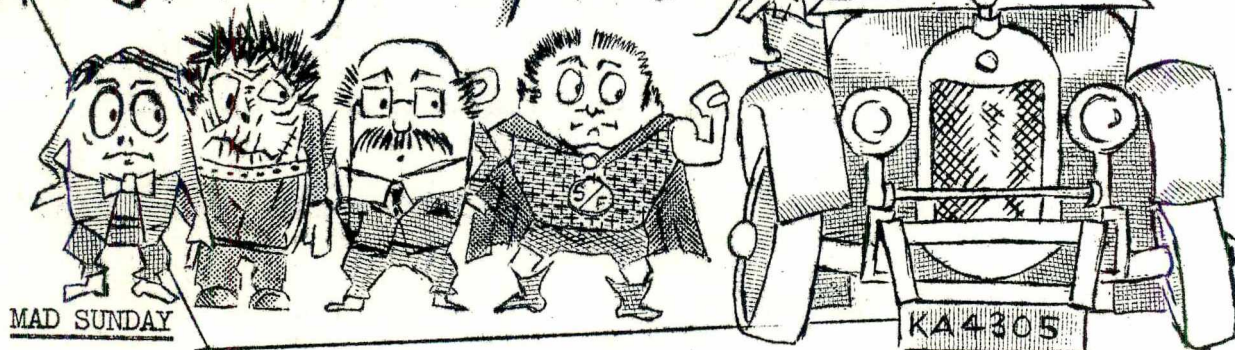
S.D. is edited and published by Norman Shorrocks, 2 Arnot Way, Higher Bebington, Wirral, Cheshire, England. For the LIVERPOOL GROUP and O.M.P.A.

Illos for the Terry Carr Solarcon Saga by ARTHUR THOMSON

COVER and all other illustrations by EDDIE JONES

This is the LAST ISSUE, but a letter of comment will ensure receipt of the FIRST ISSUE of BASTION !

# Drums Along The Mersey



The Monster, the Eccentric Professor and the somewhat jaded-looking Juvenile Lead totter out of the house and scramble into the 1925 Morris. "Ho!" roars the E.P., clapping his hands. There is a sudden flash, followed by a great, billowing cloud of smoke; from the last white wisps emerges a massive figure clad in a colourful, tight-fitting uniform, black mask and a flowing cape... "Come on already!" cries the Professor agitatedly; "get a move on!" The magnificent apparition bounds forward, leaps lightly onto the running-board, and swings himself inside the vehicle. "Let's go!" cries the Eccentric Professor, nudging his chauffeur; and Old England's traditional Sabbath calm is shattered by the reverberation of an antique engine as the splendid old car sways gamely down the driveway and out of the gates. Church and chapel-goers in the street furtively cross themselves as the vehicle rattles past, carrying its grisly, ill-assorted cargo to God knows what hellish rendezvous.

If the President of the Lord's Day Observance Society has nightmares, they're probably something like that... But let it be known that the foregoing was no nightmare, except perhaps to its participants; it was, in fact, the start of the first Sunday's shooting on MAD's new prestige epic, "I Was A Teenage Crab Monster," when eighteen people gave their all from ten a.m. till six p.m. to prove that the more outrageous and improbable the cause, the more enthusiasm it'll attract. MAD thanks them all, and especially Mike Green, for the use of his vintage car; Patty Milnes, who obligingly fell into the Leeds-Liverpool Canal when we asked her to, in aid of a scene that won't even be used now; Jeff Collins, for putting his flat at our disposal; and Ted Molyneux, who arranged certain special shooting facilities and kept Patty company in the Canal.

Little more need be said, except to quote just a few of the items assembled for this first day's shooting (which may, if we're lucky, finally yield about two minutes' screen time): One home-made scar; one false walrus moustache; one pair bright blue bathing-trunks; four cars (one vintage); one pair fireman's boots; two packets smoke powder; one rubber ear (outside); three pairs pince-nez; one huge, rambling old mansion, borrowed for the day; one canal; several bloodstained bandages; and one pair flannel combinations dyed Cambridge blue. An epic, I tell ya!



## DIVE RAIDED; OR, GIVE YOUR WRONG NAME IN

One recent Monday-evening, chancing to glance up from an enthralling discussion on the metaphysical content of current s-f, we became aware of a round red face peering at us like a voodoo moon from the curtains that border the Inner Sanctum. The face, it transpired, belonged to an Officer of the Law (several of the members disappeared as if by magic into the Potrzebie), who, belying his Force's reputation for Elephantiasis of the Feet, had tiptoed like a Maira Shearer up five flights of stairs to warn us - most politely - of the sinfulness of leaving the street-door unfastened, and, incidentally, of consuming Alcoholic Libations after 10 p.m., which apparently is an offence of the utmost gravity and might endanger the entire social structure of these Islands. On being given various specious assurances by the Chairman that such a thing would never, never occur again, the scuffer departed good-humouredly and things returned to normal - except for those members hidden in the Potrzebie, who resolutely refused to come out until several more hours had elapsed. You can't altogether blame 'em: one or two have complete Black Museums to themselves down at the Yard.



## HUZZAH FOR THE HIGH LIFE

Or: "Two cokes, Rupert darling, and a Nescafe for Norah"

The conjunction of an irresistible force (the Will to Live It Up) and an immovable object (the nation's liquor laws) has resulted, in this City, in a sudden mushrooming of Jazz and Coffee Clubs; cellar space in the downtown back-streets is now at a premium, and recently the Group had the unique experience of a motorised club-crawl around several of these stylish, dimly-lit establishments. Serving no alcohol after 11, but nevertheless able to remain open when pubs and restaurants have closed, such clubs have become extremely popular with bearded Arts-faculty students of both sexes, tragic brunettes, the errant sons of Company Directors, jazz enthusiasts, professional killers, sixteen-year-olds going to the bad, Chin-less Wonders, beatniks, and the Young in Heart generally. There are havens for the intelligensia - at a place behind Mount Pleasant one may hear the names of Kafka & Proust (one of the really great vaudeville acts of our time) creep casually into the conversation; clubs for Decadents - a rendezvous we may refer to as Lola's is not unlike 'Das Blaue Engel' in atmosphere; clubs for Cats, with Rock, Ray Ellington and Cuddly Dudley; clubs for both Modern and Trad, jazz fans; clubs for idiots, with Hawaiian bands playing Gershwin; and one unclassifiable, and infinitely tiny, cellar, illuminated by a solitary red light-bulb, where fifty-odd dancers, quietly sweating to the dulcet strains of oil-drum, washboard and bongos, are compacted together in a kind of virginal promiscuity, and there sway gently, like an Anfield football crowd, until the small hours. One thing, however, these diverse Temperance Taverns have in common: the coffee is uniformly lousy, and should be laced with rum from a hip-flask, an essential accessory for such jaunts. So, they're interesting; but they're not the Liverpool Group, which, after all, is the most exclusive establishment in the area. I mean, where else can you sign in on the window-panes... with your fingers?



## STAN NUTTALL TO BUY 2½-LITRE RILEY

Stan Nuttall is to buy a 2½-litre Riley. Stan Nuttall IS to buy a 2½-litre Riley. Stanley WILL buy a 2½-litre Riley. Stan won't let us down; he's going to buy a 2½-litre RILEY. He is going to, aren't you, lad? Yes, of course you are, Stanley. A 2½-litre Riley, Stan...

## I STILL DON'T BELIEVE HE MEANS US

Through members' letterboxes recently slid Vol. 1, No. 1 of 'Waldo', a fanzine which, besides bearing the customary Bentcliffe stamp of excellence, must be specially acknowledged here because of the high proportion of pages it devotes to a glowing - indeed, blushmaking - account of this Group and its members. Such an inter fan tribute is, to the best of our knowledge, something absolutely unique, and we should like to thank Eric and his collaborators for their interest, which is highly flattering, and for the kind remarks, which are likely to enlarge our crania to quite unprecedented proportions. May we in our turn say that Eric and Terry are among the nicest Drunken Bums we know, and that we could wish for no more congenial company with whom to slide gracefully beneath a table - a feat that we have, indeed, performed together on more than one occasion. Once again, our thanks.

## ALL WE ASK IS A CHANCE TO GO STRAIGHT

The International Solidarity party, held recently, featured Oriental raspberry liqueur, Soviet cigarettes, Caledonian brown ale, Rumanian folk-songs and Elvis. This improbable mixture proved, believe it or not, to be deuced palatable, and was enlivened in the small hours by a visit from some of the Merseysippi bandboys, who joined us for a vodka-Pymms or two. Needless to say, we were raided; an Officer, Acting on Information Received, clumped up the five flights to see what all the row was about; eventually, however, he left wearing a faint, bewildered smile and we were able to resume. Phase Two of the festivities took place next morning on Freshfield Beach; this time, though, hearing the soft clip-clop of a horse's hooves and suspecting the worst, we hastily lowered the Evidence into a hole we'd dug for just such an emergency. Seconds later, from behind a sand-dune, emerged a mounted cop who surveyed us critically, warned us to put the fire out before we left, and rode majestically into the sunset... Memo to John Berry: can't you use your influence or somethin'?

## WHAT A MAN! IF MERE MAN, INDEED, HE BE...

Harrison-lovers everywhere will be inexpressibly happy to hear that a Neumann-engineered car crash in which the Lordly One was recently involved resulted in no serious injury; indeed, it has given a rather fetching extra twist to the Master's renowned Proboscis. Offered cosmetic surgery at Liverpool's Walton Hospital, the Great Man refused with dignity. "I have," He said, "my illustrators to consider."

## NEWS OF THE MADMEN

MaD-Cine's latest creation, 'The Room At The Top' (two years in the making, and you could have fooled me), is now in its final editing stages. This semi-documentary production covers the events in a typical Group week; Monday, for example, being Club Night, Tuesday Ladies' Night, Wednesday - but one mustn't reveal too many of





the picture's subtle plot-twists. One can say, however, that 'TRATT' will feature MaD's exclusive new 'Plagiarism '60' process, which involves the insertion of carefully chosen shots from early Biograph and Selig pictures, and which, says Executive Producer Shorrock, "will give a scope and dimension previously unknown in 8 mm." One is also reliably informed that the Alien Fiend required for this production is now ready. Built of papier-mache over a wire framework, this gruesome creation collapsed into a Valdemar-like mess in the early stages of construction, but was laboriously resurrected and now stands firm and uncompromising in the Shorrock garage. Over 10' long and 5' high, it is mounted on wheels and will be guided by a driver from within. It has (like O'Reilly) one great bleary bloodshot eye, but powered by 1500 watts; also antennae which wave eerily - wave, anyway. Yngvi, as the louse has affectionately been christened, will be towed to location by car, which probably means another little tussle with the Law, this time under the Road Traffic Acts. Ah well.

### THE NEW LOOK

LaSFaS, then, has passed peacefully away, and the Liverpool Group (LiG, or 'Elegy') is born. A new official policy might have induced a schism in less happy fan-cabals, but provoked barely a ripple on the placid (you should excuse the expression) Waters of our Society. Needless to say, we'd been conscious for some time of a certain ambivalence in our objectives, which has led in the past to some tricky situations: recently, for instance, a BBC deputation from the 'Tonight' show - who clambered to the clubroom in search, presumably, of a meteorite collection & Astronautics Museum - were dismayed to discover that, under Shorrock's Law of Gravitation, we'd evolved from a casual fan-club into a dedicated anti-Temperance society with tenuous, in fact barely discernable, s-f connections. Happily, the need for any such shifty self-justification as we employed that night is now past.

### DISTINGUISHED VISITORS DEPT.

Don Ford, of TAFF, and Dave Kyle, of WPDM, were both with us over Easter. Don impressed everyone with his friendliness, geniality and Pymm's intake, and we trust he enjoyed the Higher Bebington St. George's Day celebrations as much as we enjoyed his company. Dave, of course, was already well-known to us, and as a tribute to his impeccable taste in native beers (after much experimentation, he settled down to Mackie's mixed), we've created him Chairman of our Potsdam, N.Y., Chapter, with the many obscure and therefore undeniable privileges that this Office entails.

### MISSIONS OF GRAVITY.

After their idyllic Crusoe-type holiday in the Med., several members will fly this summer to Yugoslavia as UK delegates to the Festival Of Slivovicz And Other Folk-Arts, in a sincere attempt to make the international situation a little more fluid; while two or three crusading spirits may safari in Eire's deep south, or perhaps take a barge to Llangollen in an effort to bring Light and Hope to the natives there.....Ah Youth, Youth !

### KYLE MAKES COMEBACK !

Dave Kyle, on the last evening of his stay with us and after the 'official' Monday meeting at Vat 69a, was driven in Stanley's horseless carriage to the Pier Head, where Norman and he were to catch the cross-river ferry to Bebington and bed. But the vast, cathedral-like interior of Mr. Nuttall's vehicle often prompts philosophical thoughts, and it was decided to park for a while and indulge in a little speculative chit-chat about this and that. Dave, on this occasion, revealed to us an



unexpectedly serious facet of his character - the conversation ranged interestingly from the transatlantic tempo of living, through the delights of the Open road, to the potentialities of the human race- and we were in the process of mulling over the strange contiguity of the sublime and the barbaric in Man's makeup, when the Liver Building clock (no respecter of such meditations) began to strike midnight - our cue to break things up. "The last Ferry," said Norman, clutching at Dave's camelhair lapel; "come on, or we'll never make it !" "Sure we will," replied Dave blandly; and bidding us farewell, he and Norman disappeared down the ramp to the landing-stage. After a discreet interval, and assuming they'd caught the boat safely, we were about to drive off, when we beheld them dashing back in our direction. "Too late?" we queried, as they clambered back into the car. "Not at all," said Dave, panting; "I said we'd catch it - and we did !" They had, in fact, boarded the vessel and got off it again; and so, having proved his point in this irrefutable fashion, Dave relaxed once more and resumed his metaphysical conjecturings, while the ferry slid slowly into the night. A trivial incident, perhaps; but a delightfully zany one, and illustrative of a pleasant unpredictability - as well as a healthy contempt for the timetable - in WPDM's roving boy.

END OF THE LINE .

This, as you may know, is the final issue of "SD, the Regular Fanzine" (known to its perpetrators as 'Old Nausea') before its amalgamation with its distinguished Stockport sister TRIODE; and one feels the new composite 'zine should, if nothing else, prove to be an interesting blend of the 'Fannish-Humorous' and 'Fuggish-Bibulous' schools of writing. At the moment, no title has been fixed for the new publication; one hears the names 'POOP', 'BLOG', 'SCOUSE', 'TRATT' and 'FUMBLE' bandied about pretty frequently, and yet one hopes, desperately - Anyway you'll know when it reaches you, you lucky people .

STOP DUPEP .

Stanley bought a Wolseley.

- JOHN OWEN

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#### EDITORIAL NOTES.

\*\*Once again SD emerges - albeit for the last time. \*\*If you care to look up the Editorial in No.10 you'll agree that some of John R's playful forecasts have indeed come to pass - in respect of the WSFS; trufans tuning to SF again; the complete gaffiation of D. Newman. \*\*Apologies in advance for the datedness of some items this, and to Stanley, as we've had to omit his loooong Hi-Fi Article. Sorry Stan. \*\*Like the pubbing of BIPED some years ago, another standing joke gone! \*\*As this IS the O.O. of LASFAS, for the record the current officers are: Chairman: Stan Nuttall (yet), Secretary: John Roles, Treasurer: Frank Milnes (natch.) BUT there will be a new election for these posts with THE LIVERPOOL GROUP (a new 'official' name, mainly for purposes of recruitment) on Monday May 30th. \*\* Also for reasons of mutual expediency S.D. will combine with TRIODE in the new title of BASTION, edited by Eric Bentcliffe and published by me, for the Group. \*\*Don Ford's taff trip to London (and these parts) has rekindled for most of us that feeling that TAFF is so very much a worthwhile cause - international fan relationships and all that. However Ron informs me that a minimum of about £30 (\$85) is still needed (as of 14/5/60) to pay the fare of our Pittcon taffan in September; and remember these reservations have to be paid for well in advance - in early June most probably. So please, deluge Ron and Bob NOW with donations, and remember your VOTE must reach one of them by June 15th at the latest. Voting forms are enclosed. \*\* Also muchly enjoyed was Dave Kyle's visit here, postcon, overlapping with Don Ford on Saturday (orgy) night, and his visit to the 'Swan' and (contd. on page 53)



# COLONIAS

BY RON BENNETT

## EXTENSION

### \* PART SIX: THE TURNPIKE THROUGH CLEVELAND TO CHICAGO.

It was just after noon on Friday 22nd August that Sandy Cutrell called for me. There was quite a crush in the car that finally drove off through New York's Central Park. Sandy was driving. A.H. Blackwell, the son of Russell Blackwell, a friend of Dick Ellington's, was sitting next to Sandy, and Bill Donaho balanced the pair of them by taking up half the front seat. I asked Bill, who was out of work at the time, how he could afford to travel to the West Coast in order to attend the Solacon. It seemed that Danny Curran, with whom Bill shares the Nunnery (the New York party centre where I'd been the previous evening) was now working and repaying the money that Bill had lent him when he was out of work.

We called at an apartment near the Park, on the edge of the Harlem district. A pair of street urchins begged a quarter from soft-hearted Sandy and were highly delighted when I gave them a ha'penny. I hope they were as pleased with me when they tried to spend it. The Apartment itself was shared by Roger "Teddy Bear" Sims, who was later destined to become Joint-Chairman of the 1959 Detroit Convention, and Bill Rickhardt, that young but mature fanzine editor who had been outcast from Detroit to seek his fortune in New York. He had been working at Cushman's Bakery in order to collect some cash for the con. Roger and Bill piled their cases in the back of the car next to me and squeezed up to me, one sitting on the other's lap. It was quite a drive.

We drove out along the New Jersey Turnpike. I had seen speed highways in Germany when I had been there to look up Ellis Mills in Frankfurt, and also the previous afternoon when Sandy had driven me out of the City to the outer fringes of New York State in order to see Manhasset Bay. This was the first time, however, that I had seen such a highway tolled. The word, "Turnpike", I was told, means that one pays to travel along it. As they're usually the best roads, one evidently doesn't object to this too strongly.

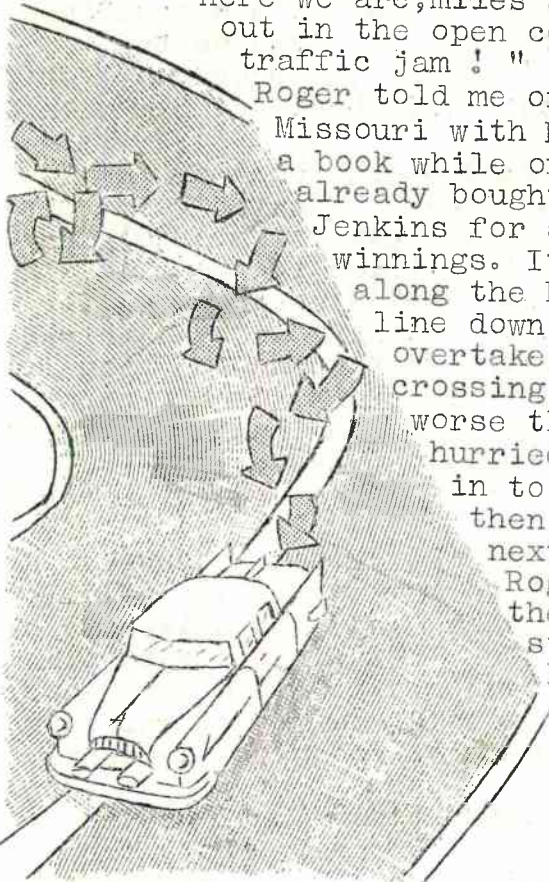
After skirting Newark, this highway cuts south almost as far as Philadelphia. Here it becomes the Pennsylvania Turnpike, and a fresh toll, about a cent per mile travelled, has to be paid. We passed over the Susquehanna River at Harrisburg and drove through a really scenic



stretch of countryside, the Blue and the Allegheny Mountains. When we stopped, I managed to take a few colour pictures. I'd always wondered whether the blue grass one sees in films is real. It is. I also took some shots of cars zooming along the turnpike, and of the restaurant at which we stopped for a meal. These roadside houses combine a garage, or 'service station' and a restaurant, which also sells souvenirs, sweets, cigarettes, magazines and newspapers. They are operated by a large monopoly called Howard Johnson's, which is nationally famous for its fifty-six flavours of ice cream. At a second stop later in the day, I invested a dollar in a pair of clip-on sunglasses, which combatted the bright glare and which really turned me into a typical tourist.

We were suddenly surprised to find ourselves passing a pre-war English car, probably a Singer, which looked small even by English standards. Sandy was quite taken with its English number plates, and we all waved and whistled as we roared past. A tubby cigar-smoking army sergeant waved back with mild interest. Sandy was telling me that the Pennsylvania Turnpike was probably the fastest road in the world when we came round a bend between the mountains to find a long line of cars ahead of us. We were stuck there for quite a time, and took the opportunity to get out and stretch our legs by walking downhill to the obstruction that was causing the hold-up. A car had burnt out. "Imagine," said Sandy, with that tone of disgust a favourite uncle uses when his card trick has misfired, "Here we are, miles and miles away from New York, right out in the open country, and what do we find? A traffic jam!"

Roger told me of the time he had been driving in Missouri with Harlan Ellison, who had just written a book while on basic training in the army. I'd already bought a copy of this book from Will Jenkins for a dime of my previous evening's brag winnings. It appears that Harlan was driving along the highway when he crossed the yellow line down the centre of the road in order to overtake another car. A yellow line means no crossing into the next lane, and to make matters worse the car was a police car. The police hurriedly indicated that Harlan should pull in to the side of the road. He did so, and then whispered to Roger, who was sitting next to him, "I haven't got a licence." Roger suggested they change places, which they did. A burly policeman came up and stuck his head in the window. He had a look at Roger's licence, and said, "Don't you know what that yellow line means?" Harlan nudged Roger and whispered, "Tell him that in Michigan they have white lines." Roger repeated the magic words parrot fashion, and Harlan's party trick had worked.





Eventually, the Pennsylvania Turnpike petered out and gave way to the Ohio Turnpike, which meant a further payment. It was getting dark by this time and though by the time we passed Youngstown, where I had expected to see John Koning waiting at the side of the road, we didn't even see the side of the road. Bill Rickhardt told me of the time he had been stranded out in Youngstown with a crowd of friends. He'd 'phoned the Falascas for help and though it was in the early hours of the morning, Nick had driven out to help them back to civilisation.

And so we left the Turnpike on the outskirts of Cleveland and found Warwick Drive where I was introduced to Nick and Noreen Falasca. I had heard from various sources that they would turn out to be two of the finest people I would meet in the States, and I was grateful that I had the opportunity of finding out for myself. They are a fabulous couple. They've been termed Fabulous Falasca Fandom by some farsighted person, and that's the only way one can think of them. Nick is somewhat excitable in his dialogue, illustrating this point or that by gesticulation, but this is certainly not a fault in his case, for he has a fine head on his shoulders. Noreen, slim and fine features, balances Nick's personality by toning it down. They're the sort of people anyone would be proud to have as next door neighbours, though I don't know if their next door neighbours would agree with me.

Noreen prepared a meal for us and afterwards we sorted out who should sleep where. As a guest to the country-cough-I rated a place in the guestroom's double bed, though I did offer to stay up all night teaching Nick how to play Brag. Noreen sensibly countered this wild suggestion by telling me that I wouldn't be sleeping the following night, as we would be driving through it. I went to bed, but when I came accross my photo album in my case took it along to show Nick. Roger and Bill Rickhardt, who had bedded down on the floor of the living room, heard Nick, Noreen and me talking in the bedroom, and came in to look at the Photos, also. We were still sitting there swapping fannish stories, at five. Noreen finally chased us off to bed. I climbed into bed, alongside Sandy Cutrell. When I woke up around eleven the next morning, I turned over and found a snoring Bill Donaho alongside me. It was that kind of visit.

\* \* \* \* \*

I later discovered that Sandy had got up around nine and Bill had deserted his pallet to take his place. He didn't even say good morning when I got up, and indeed Bill's only contribution to the day's happenings was that he stayed in bed until the evening.

I had an excellent breakfast, making a note to remind myself to recommend Noreen's cooking, and got on the 'phone to John Koning, over at Youngstown. John and I had been playing postal chess for some fifteen months at that time, and we'd managed to progress as far as the thirteenth move. John later wrote to me that he'd had a 'phone call from someone with a German accent, who claimed to be me. Naturally I denied all knowledge of this.

Afterwards, I tried to explain to Bill and Nick the intricacies of playing cricket, and we played through Nick's collection of LPs. It was about this time that Greg and Pat came into my life. I'd been warned that I'd be meeting a pair of fringe fans at the Falascas', from whose home Nick and Noreen would be travelling on to Chicago, and Sandy would be making a diversion down to Indianapolis. Greg and Pat would be going on one of these trips, eventually going



out all the way to Los Angeles, and I'd been advised to take the route on which they would not be travelling. Greg himself, a wild youth of about nineteen or twenty, was 'all right', I was told, but Pat has the reputation of being able to talk and talk and talk. And not too interestingly, either. She asked me a few questions about how I was liking the States, which didn't seem unduly unusual to me, but being forewarned, I managed not to prolong the interview. Greg and Pat left a little later with Sandy, and although I would have liked to have looked up Bob Madle, I was booked for the Chicago trip.

In the afternoon, Nick, Noreen, Roger and Bill Rickhardt took me down into Cleveland, and we drove round the city centre, looking at the civic building which had appeared in the 1955 Clevention programme booklets and stopping on the Lake Erie shore.

This was my first sight of the Great Lakes, and actually my last. A large ship was loading up with passengers nearby and a seaplane obliged by coming in to land, so that I could take a colour shot. Otherwise, the sight was disappointing. I hadn't expected to be able to see Canada, as some tourists evidently do. It's about fifty miles over to the Canadian shore, and the best part of a day's steamer trip. The water, however, was a dirty slate, and Noreen told me that the Lake was used as a sewage outlet, which didn't make the prospect of bathing sound too attractive.

Cleveland, itself, disappointed me. It's hard to judge any place on the acquaintance of an hour or so, but this was a Saturday afternoon. Practically any other centre I've ever been in would show more life at such a time than did Cleveland on that day. It appeared not only lifeless, but dowdy and very very dull.

We strolled around the town, looking at a drugstore's magazine racks, and we paid a visit to a downtown secondhand book store. Here I picked out a couple of Frederic Brown mysteries that I hadn't read and managed to beat the others to two of the MAD series of pocket-books. While I was looking at some of the old Dime Mystery Magazines in the hope of picking up a rarish Bradbury story, the store's owner, a character called Kay, complained that the others were making too much noise, and that "this isn't a bar-room". I took my books over to him and was a little surprised that he wanted the cover price of thirty-five cents for the two MAD pbs; they were a little battered. I turned these down, but bought the two Brown pbs at a dime apiece.

No sooner had I made the purchase than Kay tore down one of the gangways between the bookshelves. "Give me that", he yelled, tearing a book out of Nick's hand. "You can't show books like that to minors!" Nick was showing Bill a copy of Harlan Ellison's 'Rumble', the story of New York teenage gangs that Harlan had written while on basic training in the army. Nick protested that we knew the author of the book, but this only brought a fresh outburst from this epitome of logical salesmanship. "You're not customers, you're just in here making a nuisance of yourselves. Get out of my store." I asked him, seeing we weren't customers, if I could have my money back on the two Brown books, but the reply was "No. You've bought those." We still evidently weren't customers, though, and we left this sour character to his self-appointed profession of balancing the kindness Americans are only too pleased to show to visitors.

Back at Warwick Drive, we had another meal before shooting off into the wilderness and just before nine, with a bouncing Bill Donaho awake and refreshed, we prepared to depart. No sooner had we piled into the car than Nick's parents, who occupy the neighbouring house, called us in for a parting drink, and I made the



acquaintance of the American highball, a smooth drink which certainly demands further investigation.

And then we were off again. We followed the Ohio turnpike until we stopped at a Howard Johnson's roadside restaurant at Maumee - just outside Toledo. It was here that we met the Detroit contribution to the cross-country caravan and I transferred to their car. It was actually Fred Prophet's car. Fred had been over to the London convention last year, but I hadn't seen much of him then, and I have to confess that I was a little put out at the time I transferred to his car. I'd grown very attached to the Falascas and didn't particularly want them to foist me off on someone who was a virtual stranger. I always seem to have a sneaking suspicion that fans who aren't active in the fanzine world are not all they should be.

Which is just plain ridiculous. It sank into my typically idiotic mind that Fred was doing me a great favour, as he had previously agreed to drive the TAFF delegate across country. This, naturally, as any sane person can see, was a wonderful gesture, and Fred's personality soon showed me what a great travelling companion he is. He's an enthusiastic and entertaining conversationalist, and his informal manner, combined with an amount of common-sense, meant that he put up with my more difficult moods with fortitude. He was instructive throughout the trip; it was never too much trouble to explain anything, and he stopped in some darned awkward places so that I could take pictures. Whenever he put forward a suggestion, it was that suggestion to which we adhered. There was no question of dictatorship; it was just that his suggestions were the most practicable and the most sensible.

Dean McClaughlin had driven down to Maumee to have a word with Nick before returning to Detroit. He later flew out to the Con.

Jim Broderick and his cousin Doug were my other companions in the car. Jim struck me as being another of the Prophet ilk. They seem to breed 'em mature round Detroit way. Doug was a little wilder. When he stopped acting the part of a free and easy youth with a chip on his shoulder, he was quite a nice guy. Unfortunately, I didn't have the chance of getting to know him really well, as he was only travelling with us to Chicago, where he'd get a connection to his home further south. By the time we had reached Los Angeles, though, I was thoroughly ashamed of the selfish initial impressions I'd formed of Fred and Jim. Walt Willis had said that I'd be meeting a lot of nice people, and they were two of the nicest.

The Ohio Turnpike gave way to the Indiana East-West Toll Road, so that I could chalk up my fifth American State. I was sorry that we didn't stop anyway near to South Bend which we practically skirted, so that I could call up Betty Kujawa who has become a sort of personal guardian angel to several English fans, but it was not to be. I had always wanted to see Indiana, which I'd been told was as close to English countryside as I'd find anywhere in the USA, but it was dark during the entire ride, and not only did I not see very much, but I remember even less. I slept much of the time. It was a warm evening, and both Fred and Jim kept dozing off too. At one time Doug, who was driving, let his eyelids drop long enough for us to slide over on to the shoulder of the road. It was that kind of ride. Monotonous.

Eventually we reached Chicago, following the Falascas' car,



which Bill Denaho was driving, along the 'Outer Drive'. It was weird to realise that on our left were most of Chicago's famous skyscrapers, and on our right was Lake Michigan, and not to be able to see either.

Bill indicated that he was turning left and moved left, over to the inside lane of the six-lane highway. We followed. He turned just as the lights changed colour against us, and we followed him. We suddenly found ourselves driving across the six lanes of traffic travelling in the opposite direction. This traffic had begun to move with the light change, and it wasn't until later that it dawned on us that we had had a lucky escape. I can still hear the squealing of brakes.

Bill and the Palascas roared off into the night to let the waiting Kemps know we were on our way. We turned off to drop at Union Station. It was then 2.15 a.m., local time, and we put our watches back accordingly. The Station was deserted except for a pair of beefy cops who directed us to a window where Doug was able to purchase his ticket and enquire the time of his train. We left him with our sympathies and a three-hour wait ahead of him, and went off to find the Kemps' home.

Here the caravan was to pick up the Chicago contingent. It seemed completely strange that the Detroit and Chicago groups, both of whom were to bid at the Solacon for the 1959 Worldcon, should travel together, and with such a co-operative spirit. That, I suppose, is American fandom for you.

At the Kemps', we found a miniature convention awaiting us. Several fans had driven up from all over the place, in order to wave the caravan farewell. I was a little bewildered to find Juanita Coulson pushing a cup of coffee into my welcoming hand. Buck was there too, not looking too unlike his photographs. Gene and Juanita Deweese were in evidence also, as so was Bill Beard with whom I had been exchanging secondhand magazines and pocket-books. We didn't stay long enough for the conversation to touch on more than superficialities, which was disappointing. Buck and I, for instance, have been exchanging letters and fanzines for two or three years, and I'd like to have tried my hand at chess against Gene Deweese.

At departure time, the convention flowed into the street, where I did manage to get in a few words with Juanita Coulson about teaching, and with Buck about Yandro. Jerry DeMuth, with his flourishing beard, passed us and got into a car. I looked in at the window and found myself talking to Frances Light, with whom I'd exchanged letters on the strength of an appeal in Imagination.

I climbed in beside Jim and Fred, full of a sense of wonder that it is possible to meet fans en route across America, and at three something in the morning. Jim, who was driving, must have been feeling much the same way. Roger Sims told us later that the following cars had seen us drive through at least two red lights.

.. Ron Bennett

---

VOTE NOW !



# I DON'T DIG THE BEATS

by Will J. Jenkins

I don't dig the Beats, like, nor the Angry Young Men;  
I'm just one of the bewildered science-fiction fen.  
Don't own a hi-fi, have no interest in jazz;  
But I buy another fanzine to see what it has  
About Science Fiction, or Sam's 'Sense of Wonder'  
-Doesn't even bother me if it's full of thud and blunder.  
I don't read the 'Worker' and I don't get 'Road & Track';  
And I'm not even sure how to pronounce Jack Kerouac.

Talk of politics and religion bore me to tears  
-Except when I'm oiled with half-a-dozen beers.  
I've no hopes of buying a Mercedes-Benz SL,  
And all the talk of 'classic films' can go straight to hell.  
Prefer Player's to weed, and have never slugged a cop;  
If I want to know the Angrys, I'll read 'Room At The Top'.  
I don't mind a fan who is a real true fake,  
But I'm certain I've had too much of Jack Kerouac.

Colin Wilson, the 'Outsider' - he leaves me cold  
(Always thought that was Lovecraft, until I was told).  
Getting fed up to here with reports on folk-music,  
And to all fanzine editors I say 'Man, you sick!'  
I shall quietly gaffate or commit Hara-kari\*\*\*  
If I read another word about 'Happy As Larry'.  
I don't dig the Beats nor the Angry Young Men,  
So please bring s-f back to the fanmags again.

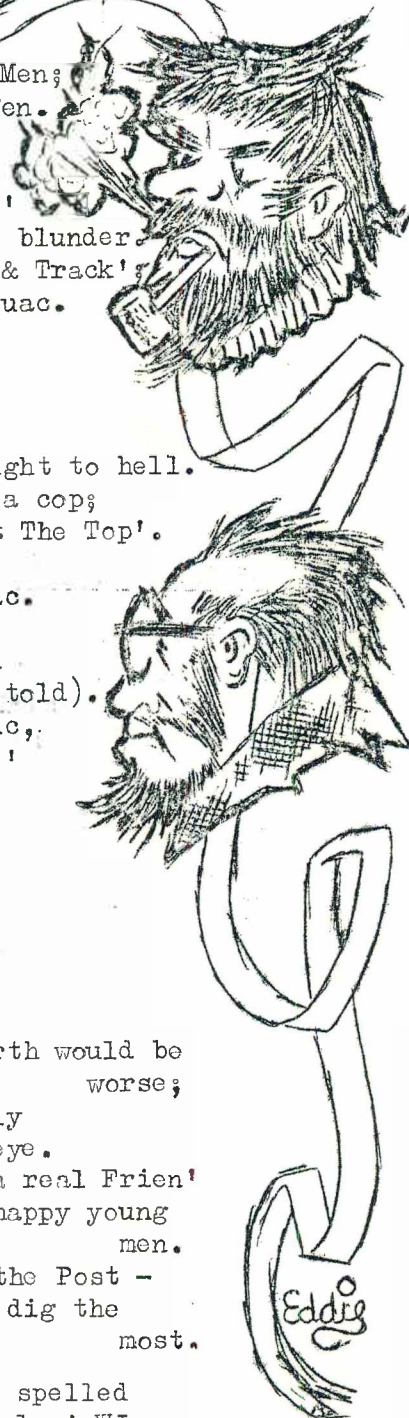
\*\*\*\*\*

I intended to write another stanza or verse,  
But the first three are lousy; I'm sure the fourth would be worse;

Anyway, I'm afraid that this really doesn't apply  
To the 'zines from Britain that have caught my eye.  
If Shorrocks (that Stamp Collector) wants to be a real Friend  
He would print something, first, about these unhappy young men.

But it's all written in jest, so don't burn up the Post -  
'Cause, like, I'm hip to the Angrys, and jazz I dig the most.

\*\*\* According to my Dictionary Hara-kiri is here spelled incorrectly - but I take my Poet's license seriously ! WJ.





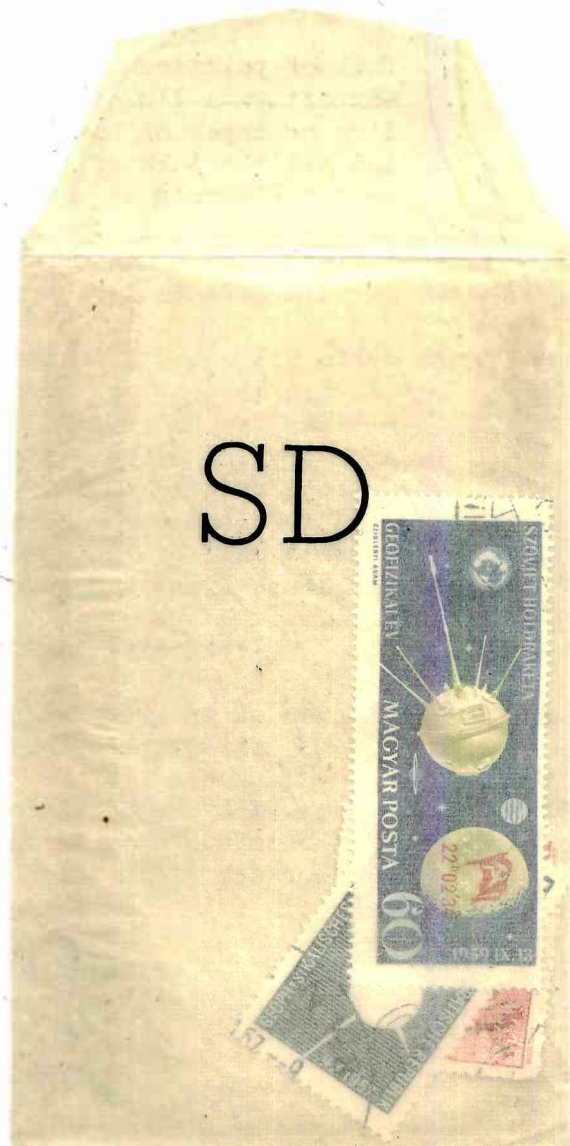
SPUTNICUS GRATIS (Number Two)

Absolutely the last stamps to  
be given away with S.D.  
(Some lucky recipients will  
get a LUNIK also)

N.B. Harry Warner - Envelopes!

- These are courtesy of  
the Sanitation Dept, although  
we don't know what they use  
them for !

SD



# I'LL NEVER BE A WOODT-DUNNED VIEW

The weak Autumn sun was an inquisitorial arc-lamp that brushed aside my lowered eye-lids and ate its way into my brain.

The gentle rush of the tide became the grinding, destructive roar of a city laid in ruins. The cool harvest breeze was a force nine gale veering from Greenland to the Sahara. The clean sand I lay on was a bed of red-hot rivet guns. And nearby some stray black feline Casanova was making a Hell of a din stamping its feet.

I sat up, with all the caution of a porcupine about to make love, and tried to think. A party, of course, and by all the signs it had been a good one. They had laid me out here to dry with a dirty great rock on my chest on which was daubed some facetiousness about Chinese vengeance. I vowed to exact a reckoning just as soon as I remembered who had done it. I tried to wipe my forehead and discovered, after some panic, that I was wearing a Hallowe'en mask. Nearby was a notice - "Please remember the Guy" - an old hat (mine?) for, presumably, remembrances. I investigated the contents. A ha'penny (South African), a cancelled tuppenny Postage Due stamp (now THERE'S a clue), and Glory be, a cigarette and a match. Sundry other bits and pieces left by passing seagulls and the various night denizens of the beach are not worth mentioning, except for the baby crab that bit my finger when I reached for the fag and then staggered hiccupping down the shore. I was becoming a bit compos mentis by this time and had the good sense to regard the gasper with some distrust. Too convenient really. I lit with caution, barely tasting it. It had evidently been dipped in the sea and carefully dried. Cunning swines, LASFAS. Best thing was obviously to just sit quietly until the little men in my head went home.

All of a sudden the sea in front of me stood up and waved.



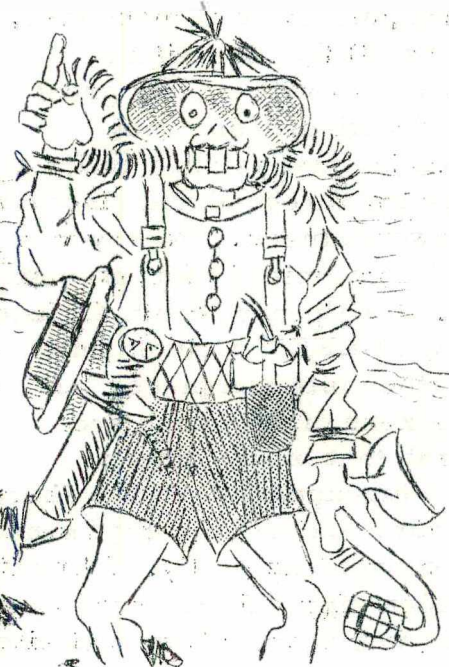
A great black thing, it was, with one huge eye, humanoid enough in general outline, I suppose, but a bit of a facer when you're just a teensy-weensy bit hung over and not even sure who you are.

"Gubble gubble blah", it said, "Blee ayah bleeble?" and, before I could even wonder whether I'd really been as clobbered as all that, it was beside me, there in the wilderness. Just me and it - me sitting down of necessity and it, with its one great hungry eye glaring glassily down - Ugh!

"I'm sorry", I said, "I can't take you to my leader just now because I'm not quite sure where I am or who he is or even if I can stand up and in any case...." It took no notice of me whatsoever, but calmly reached up and - took its face off! I cast one horrified look into the enormous hole. "Oh God", I whimpered, "It's eaten Bob Richardson".!

"Clot", said the Beast. "Its me - in me frogman's suit". And indeed it was - no Beast, no drunkard-eating monster from the infinite green depths of the unknown, but good old Bob, jolly old Bob with whom I was wont to share many a merry sally - or whatever her name is. I could have cried with joy, but I had a headache and was narked. "What the Fantasy and Science Fiction do you think you're doing", I whispered viciously. "Writing another of those fishy serials for New World"?

"Not on your Carnelly", he beamed, and flopped down beside me with a sort of lolloping squelch, rather like a half-filled hot water bottle being kicked out of bed. "Some of us have been skin diving this morning and I just thought I'd see if you were awake. Some party, huh"?



"Yeah", I said thoughtfully. "Some party. Tell me, is this skin diving - sounds a bit naughty, that - is it good for a hangover?"

"Good? Its the best thing out, Dad". And he went on telling me all about the great benefits to my health that I would receive by trying to breathe under water. He went on, and on and on and on and on.... I got worked up to a state of hysterical indifference.

"If this thing is all you say it is, why hasn't all fandom got this nauseating clobber and why aren't they all busy chasing mermaids and that?"

I warmed up a bit; it was my turn now.  
"Why, we could hold under water parties with the alcohol in those sealed things with tubes to suck. I can just picture all the gang sitting round on the sandy bottom, if he turns up, with our Schnookle tubes bringing us great dollops of air down from the distant surface. As a refinement, a hired serf could, from time to time, send down food for the weaklings who must have it, or even..."

"If you mean Schnorkel tubes", says good old Bob, "You've had it. You can't use them more than about a foot below the surface. You'd have to have the whole works - air or oxygen or something similar in cylinders on your back, like this, see? " And he twisted round to show me that the dirty great lump on his back, which I had at first taken to be the initial outward signs of a mis-spent youth was, in fact, two powerful-looking cylinders and various bits of associated plumbing.

"I'll bet that lot's damn heavy", I remarked, "and damn expensive, to boot".

"I suppose so", says me boyo, "but the weight comes in handy to counteract your buoyancy in the water and you can hire them if you join a club".

"Ah, good. Well, then, just imagine spending a lazy afternoon crawling around the sea bed with —".

"Can't stay down more than an hour, even with this lot", he interrupted, "and for safety's sake only three-quarters. You're supposed to carry a waterproof watch, you know".

"Oh, Well then, I can just picture myself sliding deeper and even deeper into the cool green...."

"Can't go below about thirty feet or so, Dad, even with all this gear. Have to carry a depth gauge on your other wrist, you know."

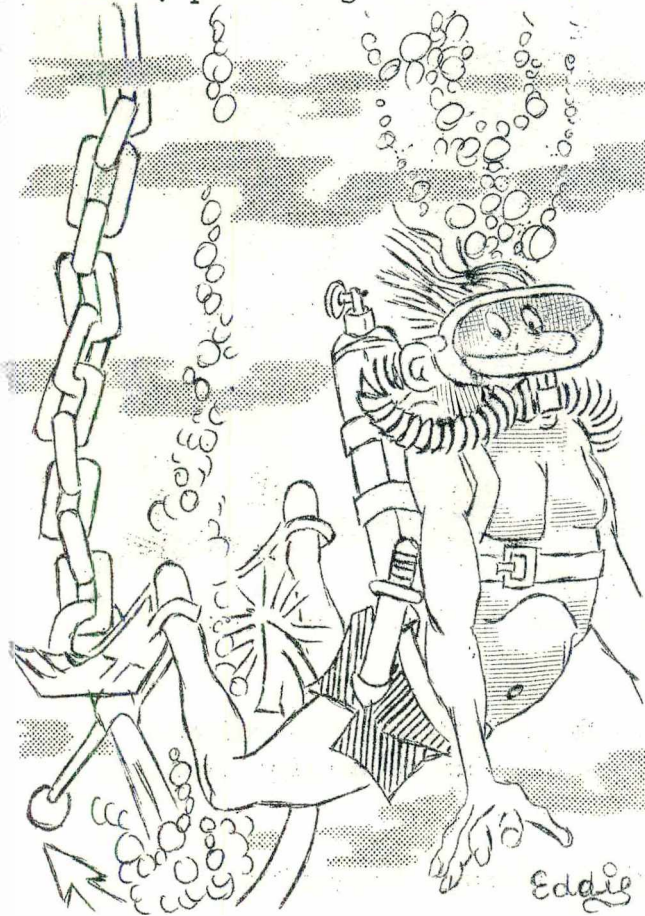




"Indeed, Pity. Where was I? Ah, yes, frolicking about the rocks in the shallows- lurking behind the weird forests of the sea to swoop out on some passing...."

"Weeds can be dangerous, cock. Most people carry a sheath knife strapped on somewhere about them in case they get stuck in a patch of weed."

" — and soaring up to the surface in a gay cascade of bubbles", I went on, pretending not to notice.



"Have to come up slowly, Dad, and watch your stops, or you'll get the bends."

I looked at him - hard. Bends.

"You enjoy this lark, don't you, Bob", I said.

"Sure do, Dad, almost like fanning".

"Only it's just occurred to me that there is a local wreck you might like a look at - no, not Shorrock - its out thataway", I said, pointing. "Under that marker buoy."

He thanked me profusely and took his leave, offering all sorts of help and advice if I ever wanted to "have a go myself".

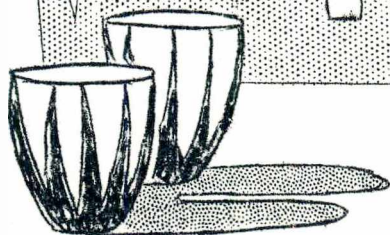
As he sogged back whence he came, I settled back happily onto the beach and began to think of many things - like, for instance, Archimedes, and whether that big rock with the inscription about Chinese vengeance on it would make any difference to the length of time that Bob could stay under, now that it was tied to his gas cylinders.

Suddenly, I felt that I could sit there no longer.

That crab was back, with the family.

- PETE DANIELS and BOB RICHARDSON.

# I Heard the Beat of FANNISH DRUMS



A SOLACONREPORT BY

terry Carr

THURSDAY

At 9:00 a.m. the day before the Solacon, I was on a Greyhound bus rolling through the streets of Los Angeles toward the downtown depot. I'd made the trip from San Francisco alone, since all the other Bay Area fans had made other plans for attendance - the Gibsons and Grahams were probably just starting their trip by car, Ron Ellik had been south for two weeks already on a tour of duty with the Marine Corps, Dave Rike and Pete Graham weren't coming till later etc. The bus ride had been harrowing, with the bus breaking down and extending a dull ten-hour trip out to twelve hours, and I'd had little sleep the whole night. I'd brought a couple of Heinlein books, but either they were pretty bad or I wasn't in the mood, because I'd given up on both long before. I was tired, bus-weary, and depressed, as is usual at the end of a long trip.

But I reflected with mounting anticipation that within the hour I'd be getting off the bus, walking a few blocks to the con hotel, and thence plunging directly into the fannish melee of the Con. I knew there'd be fans there already - Boyd Raeburn, for one, had passed through San Francisco the weekend before on his way down - and since the Con hadn't started yet I presumed there'd be some up by the time I got there. It was a fine feeling.

And it turned out as I'd hoped - almost. I almost got lost walking the four blocks or so to the hotel, but I asked directions and inside of ten minutes of leaving the bus was walking into the lobby of the hotel Alexandria. I looked around, but saw no fans I recognized nor even any people who looked like fans. I went to the registration desk and asked if Raeburn had checked in. They said no. Then I asked if Ron Bennett had checked in. Yes, he'd been there, but he wasn't around just now - he'd probably be back later that morning.

So I walked over to a bank of telephone booths and called Mirian Dyches, as arranged, to let her know I'd arrived. It was a rather hectic phone conversation



during which I asked a sleepy Miriam who was in town yet and she told me in snatches of meeting Dave and Ruth Kyle, Bob and Barbara Silverberg, Bob Bloch, and others, when two people walked by the phonebooth who looked familiar. "Just a minute," I said to Miriam, and stuck my head out.

"Noreen?" I said to a retreating back. Noreen Falasca turned around, recognized me, and came back with Nick. I hadn't seen them since the SFCon in 1954, and felt quite happy to see them again. I asked them to wait a minute while I finished talking with Miriam. Miriam said she'd get ready and take a bus downtown from South Pasadena, and would arrive in a couple of hours. I said I'd meet her bus, hung up, and went out to talk to Nick and Noreen.

"Where's Carl Brandon?" they asked immediately. "Is he here yet?"

This was it. I'd been looking forward to breaking the Brandon hoax at the Solacon ever since we'd decided to do so over a year before.

"Carl doesn't exist," I said.

"What?"

"Carl doesn't exist. He's a hoax."

Noreen sat down. "You mean - there's no Carl Brandon? You made him up? He isn't real?"

I nodded. "He's a hoax concocted by me and Dave Rike and Pete Graham and Boob Stewart and Ron Ellik," I said.

"But this is fantastic," Nick said.

"We've been looking forward to meeting Carl Brandon for months!" said Noreen. "He's one of the reasons we came all the way out here! And now you tell us he doesn't even exist! He's just you and a lot of other people I've already met. Damn you, Terry Carr!"

I grinned.

"Have you met Ron Bennett?" asked Nick. I said no. "Well turn around and meet him," said Nick.

I turned around and there was Ron Bennett, smiling. "This is Terry Carr, Ron," said Nick. Ron and I shook hands.

"Yes," said Noreen, "and he's just told us some fantastic news. I don't think I even believe him!"

"You're just wishful-thinking," I said mildly.

"What's all this?" asked Ron.

"I told them Carl Brandon doesn't exist," I said. "He's a hoax."

Ron just looked at me. "That's inhuman," he said.

"We came all the way from Ohio to meet Carl Brandon!" said Noreen.

"I came from England," said Ron.

The conversation developed into a questioning of me on who had written the Brandon material, and I did my best to explain the rather confused system of actual authorship, what with me writing 75% of it and the rest being authored by Ronel or Pete or Boob or Dave, often in collaboration.

"By the way," said Bennet, "I might as well tell you now that Eric Hartman doesn't exist either."

"Who's Eric Hartman?" I asked.

"I just made him up," said Ron.

I finished my coke and excused myself to go out to the desk and check on my reservation. I didn't want to check in until after 1:00 that afternoon, thereby saving a day's rent, but I wanted to be sure I had one reserved.

"A reservation for Carr?" said the desk clerk. "Let me see..." He riffled through some pages. "G.M. Carr?"

"No," I said shortly.

"Hmmm...ump...ah yes, Terry Carr, yes you have a reservation."

I thanked him and went back to rejoin the Falascas and Bennett. I met them

coming across the lobby. They said they were going to their rooms. I asked them if they'd store my luggage till that afternoon and they consented, so I gave them my suitcase but kept the large sackful of INNUENDOS I'd brought for distribution. I handed copies to the Falascas and Bennett as they left.

I turned around and wandered into the coffee shop again, looking for more fannish faces. I didn't see any. Coming back out into the lobby, I encountered two beards. One of them I recognized from photographs.

"You're Ted White," I said, extending a hand.

"You must be Terry Carr," Ted White said, shaking it. "I recognized you from photographs."

"I'm Jerry DeMuth," said the other beard, and I shook hands again.

Then Ted and I eyed each other. We'd been sniping at each other more or less goodhumoredly in the Cult for some time, and in the previous issue of INNUENDO I'd printed Pete Graham's dissection of Washington D.C. fandom, "Clayfeet Country". Our meeting certainly didn't have to be a friendly one, one might say.

But neither of us felt much like arguing, and we soon got into a pleasant three-way conversation with Jerry. They told me of several incidents in their cross-country trip, including the now-famous one of the motel manager who stuck a gun in Bill Donaho's gut.

Before long, a somewhat larger group began to collect. Bob Shaw came in, followed a little later by Boyd Raeburn (who, it developed, had registered at a nearby hotel instead). I was fascinated by Bob Shaw's pleasant Irish accent, and the way every statement came out sounding like a question, due to his natural rising inflection at the end.

About that time I noticed a fellow wandering around the fringes of the group, but not talking to anyone.

"Isn't that Wally Weber?" I asked Ted.

"I don't know," said Ted.

It being the day before the con, nobody was wearing identification badges, and also the atmosphere hadn't quite warmed up to the point where anyone would ordinarily walk up to someone who might turn out to be a nonfan and ask him who he was, so we had to wait for the fellow to introduce himself. He did, and it was indeed Weber. But a few minutes later he wandered off with some Seattle fan and I never did get to exchange more than two words with him.

We all moved into the drugstore's soda fountain which connected with the hotel lobby and continued our conversation over coffee. Bennett, as soon as he sat down, pulled out a sheaf of postcards and started sending wish-you-were-here cards back to England, passing them around to the rest of us to be signed. As Raeburn, who was on my right, passed the third one to me, I got an idea. I signed it, and under that signed "Carl Brandon" in the special signature I'd concocted two years before for Brandon letters. This signature doesn't look at all like mine. Then I passed the card on to Ted White.

He started to sign it and stopped short. "What," he said suspiciously, "is this doing here?"

"I put it there," I said. "You see, Carl doesn't exist - he's just a hoax."

"I don't believe you," Ted said flatly.

Raeburn grinned and said, "I found it hard to believe myself."

Boyd, of course, had been convinced when I'd handed him the first ten pages of a Brandon parody I was working on when he came through San Francisco. But his statement was ambiguous and didn't go far in convincing Ted.

About this time someone came in and started talking to Raeburn. It turned out to be Walt Liebscher, he of CHANTICLEER fame, and more recently the poem "I Want To Pass Away In Pasadena" in A BAS. He'd heard of the con and decided



to drop by. But he had to get back to work right away, since he was just on a coffeekick.

Somewhere around this time I left and met Miriam at the bus. She was wearing a bright red dress, and rather low-cut. This was all very nice, but I immediately had premonitions of the wolves at the convention making a bee-line for her with intentions which would shock a clean-cut Englishman like our TAFF guest Bennett.

Well, we entered the lobby and I left her alone for a minute while I checked to see if my room was ready yet, it being past 1:00 by this time. It wasn't: the residents who were supposed to be former residents by this time hadn't checked out yet. So I turned around and Miriam was gone.

I spotted Ted White and asked him if he'd seen where she'd gone.

"Oh, sure," said Ted. "Bennett introduced himself and took her to coffee."

In a little while Ron and Miriam came back from the coffee shop and I suggested as forcefully as I could to Miriam that she check in and change her dress. She went off to do so.

Meanwhile, I checked on the status of my reservation a couple more times, until the clerk finally decided to give me a different room to that which I'd been assigned originally. Safely ensconced therein, I then went up to the Falascas' room and retrieved my luggage with many thanks and apologies for unwittingly waking them up from their pre-con siesta (smart people, those Falascas).

Back in my room, I looked round with satisfaction. Yes, a nice room for \$5.00. At least, I said to myself, it'd better be a \$5.00 room - that was what I'd reserved, and I doubted that I'd have the money to pay for a more expensive one.

Nothing much happened that afternoon. That evening, Miriam and I went to Clifton's restaurant for dinner, but finding it closed wandered into a Thrifty Drug Store or something for hamburgers. The waitress was a goofy type who nattered on in a loud voice to all the customers. I pulled my beanie out of my pocket and donned it, to catch her reaction. She was delighted. "We don't get many people in here as crazy as me," she said.

On the way back to the hotel we passed through Pershing Square, where various types discoursed from soapboxes on religion, politics, and the second coming of the serpent. I wondered briefly if any of them ever ate at Thrifty Drug.

There was to be a LASFS meeting and party at Forry Ackerman's house that night, but it was already pretty late and the hotel seemed deserted - presumably because all the fans were already out at Forry's. Miriam said she wasn't feeling well anyway and didn't feel like going, but I decided to go myself if I could get a ride. I finally picked up the phone and asked the hotel switchboard for Forry's number.

"I'm sorry, sir," said the operator, "but a Mr. Stark just called that number and it's still busy."

Stark! I said to myself. I hadn't expected Larry Stark to make it to the Con! Why, maybe Andy and Jean Young were there too!

"Will you give me Mr. Stark's room when he completes his call?" I asked the operator. She said yes.

A few minutes later the phone rang. "Hello?" I said.

"Hello," said a voice. "The operator said you wanted to get in touch with me."

"Ah," I said, "Larry Stark?"

"No, Ben Stark," he said. "From Berkeley."

Good grief, I thought; I live in Berkeley, and I forgot about Ben Stark.

"Well, hi, Ben," I said. "This is Terry Carr. Are you going out to Forry's?"

"I will if I can get directions," he said. So I told him I'd get ahold of someone at the party myself for directions.

I called Forry's then, and after much background-noise and confusion someone succeeded in getting Bjo to the phone. I told her that I wanted to come out but that I didn't know how to get there.

"Wait in your room," she said, "and I'll see if I can get someone to come get you."

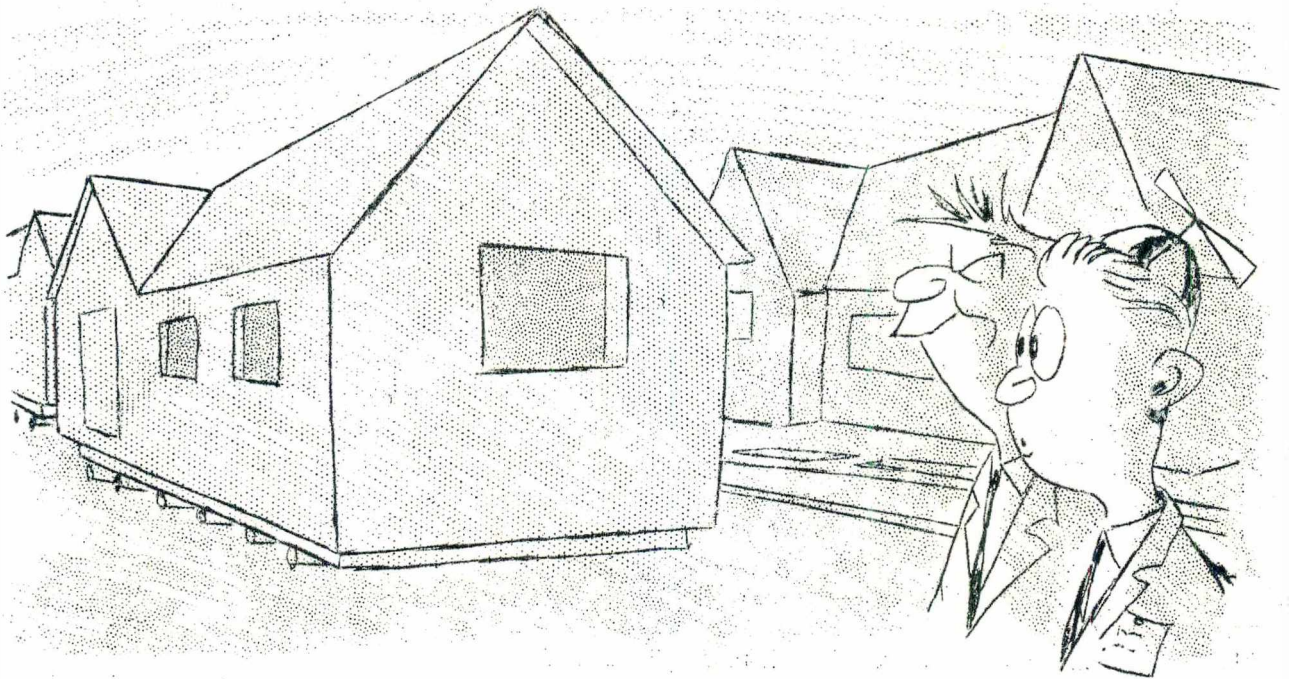
"I don't need a ride," I said. "I just need directions to--"

"What? I can't hear you!" Bjo said over the uproar. "Just sit tight and someone will pick you up. Don't worry!" And she hung up.

Well, true to Bjo's word, a little later Milo Mason came by in his car to get me. I got in touch with Ben Stark and Milo gave him directions to Forry's place, and we set off. We stopped on the way to get some beer and soon were turning into Sherbourne Drive.

There were two houses in the middle of the street.

"Oh," said Milo, "I forgot about them. They're moving those houses away, but they were in the middle of the street at quitting-time so they just left them there. I'll have to park here and we'll walk the rest of the way."



He parked, and we started walking the block or so to Forry's. Already we could hear the noise of the party.

I looked at the houses in the street. "Man, you talk about fan-parties!" I said. "This one is driving the neighbors away, houses an all!"

We walked into Forry's and encountered an unghodly crowd of people, many of whom I recognized and many of whom I didn't know from Alexander Blade. Ronel was there, and Bjo, and Charles Burbee, Ted White, Jack Harness, Joe and Robbie Gibson, Karen Anderson...many, many more, too. Dave and Ruth Kyle, George Fields, Ted Johnstone, John Trimble, Alex Bratmon. And Sylvia Dees.

"Well, I don't care if Carl Brandon doesn't exist!" she said to Ronel. "All I know is, I certainly do, only nobody would believe me until they met me! I do too exist!"

"That's your one hold on reality, eh?" said Ron.

"It's guys like you that make people suspect every new fan who comes along!" said Sylvia.

"Meet Terry Carr," said Ron as I walked up to them. "He's another one of us guys who compromise your very existence."



"I do too exist!" Sylvia flared at me.

Sylvia was a cute, petite blonde, and I was quite content to admit her existence and let the subject drop there.

Seeing Burbee in the crowd near us, I asked Ron, "Does Burb know about Carl yet?"

Ron snapped his fingers. "No!" he said. "I haven't told him yet!"

So we went over and told Charles Burbee that Carl Brandon, upon whose works He had looked favorably, was just a hoax.

"I don't believe you," said Burbee. "How can that be?" He looked at us calmly. "Carl Brandon is a talented Negro fellow who lives with Dave Rike in Berkeley and writes things which I like to read between issues of my own fanzine. I know Carl Brandon very well, though of course I've never met him."

"Carl Brandon doesn't exist," said Ron.

Burbee looked at him. "Carl Brandon is more real to me than you are, and I've met you," he said.

His calm denial withered us, and the subject wandered onto hoaxes in general. We talked of Joan Carr and John Bristol and other non-existent fans. Sylvia said she did too exist. I said something about "Jacob Edwards" and "Ron Archer" to Ted White.

Burbee came back. "You know that woman I've been living with all these years who you think is my wife?" said Burbee. "That's not my wife. It's all a hoax. In fact, it isn't even a woman. It's just E. Everett Evans in a disguise."

About this time I plowed my way into the kitchen to get another beer. The icebox was empty - someone had taken my last beer. I looked around angrily, looking for the telltale half-quart can of Lucky Lager, a brand which no one else had brought. I began to dream up all sorts of cutting remarks I could make when I found the culprit.

Then I saw Tony Boucher drinking a half-quart can of Lucky Lager.

I slunk back into the front room, abashed. "Tony Boucher is drinking my beer!" I said proudly to whoever would listen. (Well, what would you have done?)

A little later George Fields, a fan four-square, got me a couple of cans of beer, and I felt better all around.

Ron and I spotted Steve and Virginia Schultheis in the crowd. They had heaped extravagant praise on Carl Brandon for his "My Fair Femmefanne" in A BAS and "The Pig, The Ostrich, And The Rat" in RUR. In fact, when Ron had seen them at the Midwescon, he had told them they they comprised Carl Brandon Fan No. 1, Ltd. "Let's break the sad news to Schultheis," I said.

Ron drew him over to where we were. He checked Steve's temperature and pulse, told him to sit down. "Take it easy, boy," he said. "This might be hard to take. Now brace yourself." Virginia looked on inquisitively as Ron went on elaborately preparing him for the shock. "Breathe deeply," said Ron. "This will only hurt for a minute."

"What will?" asked Steve.

Ron leaned down and looked Steve directly in the eyes. "Carl Brandon...does...not...exist!" he said.

Steve looked at him. "You mean the guy who wrote 'My Fair Femmefanne' and the piece in RUR?" he asked mildly.

"Yes!" said Ron.

"Then who wrote them?" Steve asked.

"Carr wrote 'My Fair Femmefanne'," said Ron. "I wrote 'The Pig, The Ostrich, and The Rat'."

"I never would have suspected," said Steve. "You have my word as a GDA op. Can I go now?" And he got up and wandered away, talking calmly to Virginia, who still looked perplexed. Ron and I watched him go, awestruck.

"It's finally happened," I said. "We made a big deal out of it to somebody who didn't care."

Ron's eyes narrowed. "He cares, all right," he said. "Look how carefully he's walking. See how he's got his arm around Virginia - he's actually leaning on her for support. He cares all right. It's just that he's a trained GDA op, and he can't disgrace his calling by showing emotion."

I watched him disappear into the melee of the party, his head still high. "You've got to admire a man like that," I said.

Well the party went on, we talked of many things and had a fine time meeting people, and eventually the party started to break up, so a bunch of us piled into John Trimble's car and he drove us back to the hotel. There was John, Ronel, Jack Harness, Ted White, Jim Caughran and me.

I think it was staid ole Bennett who brought up the subject of Sylvia Dess.

"A very nice-looking girl," he mused. "I guess she does exist."

"Does she ever exist!" enthused Ted White, who probably hadn't the faintest idea that she'd be engaged to him within the month.

#### FRIDAY

I'd meant to be down at the registration desk when it opened at 10:30, but I slept a little late and didn't make it till 11:00. After registering, I turned around and saw an unfamiliar beard. Looking at its I.D. tag, I found it to be F.M. Busby, one of my favorite people. I introduced myself to him and met Elinor too. We chatted a bit, and then the usual happened.

"Where's Carl Brandon?" asked Elinor.

"Carl doesn't exist. He's a hoax."

"A hoax?! You mean we came to this convention just to meet you?"

I was getting to know the pattern by this time.

I went downstairs then and into the soda fountain for breakfast. Walt Liebscher dashed in and out again on his lunch hour.

Back upstairs, people were milling around on the balcony where the registration desk was, and in the room to which it connected, where auction material was displayed. The convention was to begin soon, but no one was in the convention hall, which the balcony overlooked.

I saw a woman sitting off to one side whom I recognized from photos, so I went over to her.

"Grandma?" I said. "It is you, isn't it?"

G.M. Carr looked at my name-tag and smiled. We talked a bit about fans who think we're related. (We're not).

About this time Len Moffat came up and asked me if I'd help some members of the committee to move some materials up from the basement. I went off to do this.

Coming back, I was waiting for an elevator when an odd woman came up and peered at my name-tag. "Terry Carr!" she said. "Well, hello, Terry Carr!"

I just stared blankly at her in as friendly a manner as I could. I hadn't the faintest idea who she was and she didn't seem to be wearing a name-tag herself.

She must have noticed my perplexity, because she said, "I'll bet you don't know who I am!"

"Well, no," I admitted.

"Well, you've probably never heard of me anyway," she said. "My name's Jean Bogert."

"Jean Bogert," I said. "Yes, I've heard of you." I couldn't remember what I'd heard, though. I still hadn't the faintest idea who she was, really.

"Aha," she said. "Nothing good, I'll bet."

"Oh no," I protested. "Believe me, if it were anything bad I'd remember it--" And then I stopped, because I'd just remembered what I'd heard about Jean Bogert.



When Boyd Raeburn had come through San Francisco before the con, I'd taken him over to Berkeley, where after visiting Dave Rike We'd gone over to visit the Gibsons. Rog and Honey Graham had also been there. They'd fallen to discussing past conventions, and the subject of Jean Bogert had come up. "She's really quite bearable for the first day or two of a convention," they'd said, "but pretty soon she just starts getting goofier and goofier, and wearing her name-tag in her hair and so forth, until it's painful to be around her. When she's got her name-tag in her hair, that's the time to avoid her."

I looked at Jean Bogert. Her name-tag was in her hair.

Fortunately, an elevator came then, and we parted ways quite naturally a few floors later.

Back on the balcony, I ran into Miriam, who acted intermittently during the con as a Hostess. Stan Woolston, who was supposed to conduct interviews over the loudspeaker system right about then, had sent her off to round up some interviewees. She asked me to help her. So we looked around for people for awhile, and rounded up a few who mysteriously disappeared soon after, and returned to Stan to find him still needing someone to interview.

"Tell you what," he said, "I'll interview you to get things going, while Miriam brings some people to follow you."

I agreed, somewhat reluctantly. I'm just as afraid of microphones as the next person, and I hadn't the faintest idea what to talk about.

Stan turned on the mike, said, "As our first interview of the afternoon, I present Terry Carr," and handed the mike to me.

I handed it right back to him. "Ask me questions," I whispered.

Stan took the mike and asked me how I got to be a Publishing Giant, as I and several other Berkeley fans are sometimes termed. I didn't know what to say to this that would be of much interest to a casual audience composed so largely of non-fanzine-fans, and I'm afraid I wandered all around the subject in my reply, to no great effect.

Stan then asked me something about the Tower To The Moon Of Bheer Cans which we in Berkeley are supposed to be building, and I nattered boringly on about that, realizing all the time just how boring I was being and wishing I were somewhere else. I'm certainly not the greatest public speaker in the world, though I was a whiz at it in grammar school, and somehow I was feeling far less capable than usual at that time, just out of bed an hour or so after partying far into the previous night.

Stan and I both were looking around all this time for Miriam to come back with some other interviewee, but neither Miriam nor interviewees were in evidence.

Finally Stan said, "Thank you, Terry Carr," and turned off the microphone, giving up on the interviews. I wandered off, wishing he hadn't mentioned my name.

But I was cheered to note that there was only one person in the convention hall, which was the only area where the loudspeakers could be heard very well.

It later developed that Miriam had sent several people over to be interviewed, but either they'd got lost or had heard the way I was verbally tying myself in semantic knots, and didn't want to get mixed up in a mess like that themselves, because none of them ever got there.

It was getting on into the afternoon by now, and Miriam asked me if I'd go out with her to the place where the LASDS meets, to pick up her fanzine, MENTAL MARSH-MALLOW. Bjo had run it off and left it there for assembling and stapling. I said sure, and so off we went.

The trip to and from, and the assembling, took about three hours. There was no stapler around, so we brought the assembled copies back to the hotel, borrowed a stapler from the Committee, and settled down in the lobby to staple.

Miriam was sitting next to Lou and Cynthia Goldstone, and Dave and Ruth Kyle and maybe some others. She and Lou were doing the stapling. On the other couch sat Jerry DeMuth, Boyd Raeburn, and Ted White. I joined them, sitting on the floor.

Noreen Falasca came by. "Terry," she said, "I woke up this morning and thought about Carl Brandon, and I almost cried! And I came all the way to California just to meet you!" She went away.

I looked at Ted and Boyd. "That's what they all say," I said sadly. "We built Brandon into such a fabulous fannish genius that everybody's mad when there's nobody to meet but us."

"Well," said Ted, "you're hardly the brilliant type of fan that Carl seemed to be, with those wonderful squelches he got off all the time."

I nodded sadly in agreement.

"Why don't you sit on a seat?" asked Ted. "We could squeeze over. You look uncomfortable on the floor."

"Yes," said Boyd. "And seeing as how it's still early in the convention, the hotel staff probably isn't used to people sprawling on the floor in the lobby yet."

"Yes, let's see if we can move over," said Ted.

"No, don't bother, Ted," I said. "To tell the truth, I've always wanted to be able to look up to you."

"Boyd broke out laughing, as did Ted. "Does he sound more like Carl Brandon now?" Boyd said to Ted.

A little later the crowd thinned out and I got a seat. Bob Bloch came by, said he'd heard that Brandon didn't exist, and heaped egoboo on me for writing "The Purple Pastures", which had just been distributed in FAPA.

"I was talking to Tony Boucher about that piece," said Bob. "He'd love it - it's just the sort of thing he likes. Why don't you send him a copy? He said he wanted to read it."

"It just so happens," I said, "that I have a copy of it in my room. I'll give it to him when I see him next. Oh, and by the way, Bob, I brought those old Paul Whiteman records that I promised to give you a year and a half ago."

"What?!" said Bob. He reeled and fell back against the couch. "You did!?" I'd promised him long before that I'd mail them to him, but had never been able to figure out how to package them so they wouldn't get broken in transit - they were 78's.

So we went up to my room and I gave him the records and he staggered off to his room, thunderstruck.

It was evening by now, so I found Miriam and we went to dinner at Clifton's, which was open this time. Arriving back at the hotel, we heard that Burbee was in the bar, so we went there.

Burbie was surrounded by fans -- Raeburn, the Busbies, Bob Pavlat, Elmer Perdue, and so forth. Miriam and I squeezed our way into the booth, I ordered beers for us, and we listened to Burbie for awhile.

"Have you all met TCarr, my benefactor?" asked Burbie. "TCarr is the reason I'm at this convention, you know. He discovered me to modern-day fandom. For this reason I say TCarr is a fine fellow, even if he does try to tell me that Carl Brandon doesn't exist. I know that Carl Brandon exists. He is more real to me than TCarr himself, and I've met TCarr, you know."

"Terry didn't have to rediscover you to modern-day fandom," said somebody. "You'd have been known anyway, for your pieces about Al Ashley."

"Well, many fans already had heard of me," Burbie admitted. "But they didn't know who I was. One fan wrote in INNUENDO that he'd thought I was an NSF-type person." Everybody laughed. "And anyway, my stories about Al Ashley were all lies. Al Ashley isn't like I depicted him. That Al Ashley never really existed."

I looked at Burbie. "But Burb," I said, "that's fantastic. Why, Al Ashley



is more real to me than you are, and I've met you!"

Burbee looked around the table. "TCarr is a great fan of mine," he said. "He can even quote what I say. Of course, he gets it wrong sometimes."

I turned around, and saw Elmer Perdue, who is sometimes known as God in certain circles. "Hello, my son," he said compassionately.

"God!" I exclaimed, by way of greeting. So we talked for a bit and he bought beers for Miriam and me. Mostly we talked about "Ah, Sweet Idiocy," Perdue giving some sidelights on the various incidents recounted therein.

There was to be a big party in the Detroit suit, so a lot of us made ready to decamp and move up there. Elmer said he'd stay in the bar.

The Suite was crowded, as might be expected. There were probably a lot of people shifting back and forth between the Chisago and Detroit parties, but at no time was Detroit's room very uncrowded.

We had just been there a short time when I saw Bill Rotsler standing in the doorway to the next room, so I excused myself from Miriam, who was talking or listening to someone, and joined him.

"You know, Terry," said Rotsler, "I've been here for almost two hours now, and I've just realized that I'm at a science fiction convention. I was just driving by tonight and remembered the convention, so I thought I'd drop by. And now look at me - standing here with fans moving back and forth past me all the time, talking to people, drinking blog. It's been like this for two hours, and I'm just now realizing that I'm at a con! It's an uncanny feeling!"

I made it a point to mentally stop in my tracks and realize that I was at a convention. I hadn't had time to stop and think about it like that since getting to L.A., and it was indeed an uncanny feeling.

Bill was drawing cartoons on a seemingly never-ending pad of paper he had, tossing them off rapidly. I was pocketing them. I'm no fool.

"Where'd you get the blog?" I asked.

"In the next room," Bill said. "They have it all mixed up from wine and ghod knows what else. I suppose it's drinkable."

So I made my way into the next room, and in between talking to Ted White, Ron Ellik, Alex Bratmon, and others, and meeting Trina Castillo and Bill Donoho, I got some blog. It was horrible stuff, but it went down and fans will drink anything at a con-party. I know. I'm a fan and I did.

"This batch didn't turn out so good as the last time we made it," explained Bill Rickhardt. I nodded and assured him I wouldn't hold anything against Detroit if I got ptomaire poisoning.

Well, I talked to Rickhardt and DeMuth and others, until I decided to take a drink back into the next room for Miriam, so I got one and made my way back. I'd been gone almost an hour.

When I got back I found Miriam quite drunk. Apparently the blog had been flowing quite freely in that room, too. Right then and there I decided it was time for her to leave, because that blog was not stuff to mess around with and Miriam tends to drink more and more as time goes by. So I suggested we leave, but she wanted another drink first and we went back into the other room and she had another drink and then another and Rotsler drew a cartoon on her bare shoulders and she was having a fine time but I could see the end was near, so I renewed my efforts to get her the hell out of there.

"Just go on into the other room and out the door," I said. "Don't stop to say goodbye to anybody or we'll never get out of here."

So we went into the next room and Miriam said goodbye to the Goldstones and Bratmon and about everybody in the room, and by the time we got to the hall we were in the middle of a group of fifteen fans, all hell-bent to head for the

Chicago party and continue the festivities. This wasn't exactly what I'd had in mind - a few more drinks and Miriam would be sick. I knew it - I wasn't feeling tiptop myself.

So we wandered the halls, and about the time most of the fans would wander away and I'd think maybe we wouldn't have to go to that party after all, along would come several more fans. In about a halfhour we were all back at the Detroit party.

"Back again?" said Rotsler, who had been digging the scene.

"Yes," I said tiredly.

"Um...you responsible for Miriam?" he asked. I said I supposed I was. "Funny, I feel responsible myself," he said. "Let's see if we can manage to rescue this fair damsel from distress."

So once more the campaign to get Miriam out of there began, and this time it was more successful. By the time we got her to the hall there were only six or seven fans with us.

So once more we started wandering the halls. There was me and Miriam and Rotsler, and the Goldstones, and Forry Ackerman, and several others.

We ran into Kris Neville in the hall. He looked at Miriam and said, "I'll bet she sings union songs." So right there in the hall at some unghodly hour of the morning Kris and Miriam broke out with "Solidarity Forever".

Then Kris started talking about a party in his room. Now, I've been to Neville parties. People drink at Kris Neville's parties. So right then I spirited Miriam away and deposited her at her room with a forceful suggestion to go to sleep.

I went back to the Detroit party, but that was dying, so I went up to some other room where I'd heard there was a party. There was: Len Moffatt was in the corner holding forth with the Busbies and Palascas and so forth, and Bob Leman was sitting on the bed talking animatedly with some people, and Bill Donoho extricated himself from this discussion to join me.

"You want a drink?" he said. Since the Detroit blog had left a bad taste in my mouth - I think there must have quite a bit of citric acid in it - I said yes, and Bill started looking around for something drinkable for me. The only liquor left at the party was a fifth of gin Leman had clutched to him in a death grip.

Leman was pretty high and so was Donoho, and neither of them are exactly tiny. Donoho asked for the bottle, and Leman said no bigod it was his, and there ensued an animated discussion which wasn't very serious I don't think, because dire threats were passed back and forth, and finally Donoho wrestled the bottle away from Leman, who then shrugged and turned back to his conversation.

And that was how Bill Donoho got me a drink at 3:30 a.m. during a convention.

He then found a paper cup and filled it halfway up with straight gin. I asked if there was any mix, since I absolutely loath straight drinks, and Bill said no, there wasn't even any ice left. So I eyed the gin and though I didn't especially want it I resolved to drink it bigod, after the trouble Bill had gone through to get it. And during the next halfhour I did manage to drink it too, meanwhile listening to tales of the trip from New York from Donoho and later listening to Len Moffatt holding forth in the hall outside the door as the party broke up.

Then I made my way in a very dignified manner to my room, where I fell into bed.

#### SATURDAY

I got up around noon, as usual, and went down to have breakfast. I found Rotsler and Miriam having pancakes or something, and joined them. Miriam wasn't feeling too well on this morning-after, and she looked decidedly green when I had a milkshake for breakfast.

We wandered around doing nothing much of interest for awhile, until we heard Burbee was in the bar again, and headed there. We spent almost the whole afternoon there, talking to Burb, Perdue, Gus Willmorth, the Busbies, Pavlat, &co. Somehow



though, the whole afternoon is a blank. I guess that milkshake I had for breakfast must have plain bravado, because my subsequent lapse of memory suggests that I wasn't really in top shape.

I do remember that that was the afternoon Dave Rike and some of his friends got to the con. With him were J.G. Newkom, Jim Barclay, and Arlene Brennan; all four of them were connected with the Beat Generation scene in Berkeley, and they brought their bongo drums and so forth.

Jim Barclay, more usually known as Jim-Barclay-from-Berkeley, is a Negro fellow just about right in age and looks to be Carl Brandon. In fact, for the first day or so he was constantly being mistaken for Carl Brandon and the rest of us were getting dirty looks from people who thought we'd been lying when we'd said Carl didn't exist. But Jim knew of the Brandon hoax and wasn't confused by it at all.

Sometime around here I ran into Boucher again, and gave him a copy of Brandon's "Purple Pastures". He seemed delighted.

That evening Miriam and I had dinner with Lou and Cynthia Goldstone. We went out to a small place nearby and had hamburgers, I think. We talked about things unfannish and in general enjoyed an hour or so of respite from the fannish hubbub. A very pleasant interlude.

At 9:00 that evening, the Auction Bloch was scheduled, so a group of us collected in the convention hall. Professionals such as Bob Bloch, Tony Boucher, E.E. Evans, Richard Matheson, Fritz Leiber, and E.E. Smith were auctioned off, the highest bidder getting one hour of the author's time. The bidding, under the auctioning guidance of Sam Moskowitz, was spirited in most cases. E.E. Smith at first drew only low bids, until Moskowitz gave a big spiel on the excellences of Smith's writing, pointing out that "His books have Sex!" and quoting some of the more torrid love-scenes where herces and heroines vowed Undying Love in trembling voices, and "His characters Cuss!" at which point Sam quoted the famous line "May I be kicked to death by little red spiders!" This brought down the house, the bidding rose higher and higher, and Doc Smith was finally sold for \$23.00, the highest of all.

Bob Bloch, who had suggested the whole thing, sold for \$17.00 or so. He was bought by a corporation of seven fans, I believe it was, all of them chipping in money. Djinn and Bjo were the instigators of this corporation, and were quite excited about it. In fact, when it seemed that Djinn's bid of \$16.00 was going to win, Bjo got so excited she jumped up and bid \$17.00, not realizing she was bidding against herself.

After this the program closed down for the night and everybody went looking for a party. Miriam and I and several others had been invited to Neville's room for a party, so we went up there. It was crowded, there was much good liquor and mix and ice and glasses, and much stimulating talk. Dave Rike, J.G. Newkom, and Jim-Barclay-from-Berkeley were beating their drums, creating a loud but rhythmic background to the waves of conversation which drifted past my ears.

I was standing in the middle of the room when I heard somebody near me say, "How do you do? I'm Dick Ryan." By Ghod! I said to myself, Dick Ryan of 6th Fandom fame! I went over to him.

"Not the Dick Ryan?" I said.

"Is there a Dick Ryan?" said Dick Ryan with a big toothpaste smile on his effeminate face. He had blonde, curly hair and was wearing a black, open-neck gaucho shirt, very Hollywoodish and faggish. It very soon developed that this was some other Dick Ryan, and moreover that he was of doubtful masculinity.

"I'll be here tomorrow, too," said Dick Ryan ingratiatingly. "Will you be here then?" He still had that sickening smile on his face and was practically snuggling up to me, which wasn't hard, considering how crowded the party was.

"I guess I'll be here tomorrow," I said, and spotting Miriam nearby, put my arm around her waist quite affectionately, wandering off to the other side of the room with her as soon as I could.

Somebody peered at my nametag and said, "Terry Carr! Why, I've always wanted to meet you!"

As was usual with people I didn't know by sight, he wasn't wearing a nametag himself. I smiled and said howdyado, and asked him why he'd wanted to meet me, meanwhile asking somebody nearby as quietly as I could who this guy was. I just got a grin back and the information that I'd Find Out.

"I've always enjoyed your Face Critturs," said this person. "Are you still drawing them?"

I said no, I'd pretty much given up on them, having become dissatisfied with the whole idea, and he said that was too bad because he'd always enjoyed them, and I reflected that at every convention I'd ever attended I'd always run into somebody who'd seen my Face Critturs and was glad to meet me. Every time.

Finally I collared somebody and asked him just who I'd been talking to.

"Why, that was Roy Squires, the fellow who put out FANTASY ADVERTISER," I was told. Stunned, I went back and talked to Roy Squires some more.

A little later Miriam and I were out in the hall outside the room talking to Pete Graham, who had just arrived that evening. I'd been filling him in on who was at the con and what had been happening and so on, and a fiendish idea came to me.

"By the way," I said, "Dick Ryan's here. He's at the party in there. Blonde hair, wearing a black shirt."

"Dick Ryan, eh?" said Pete, and went in to introduce himself.

Miriam and I stood out in the hall for awhile, enjoying the cool air as a contrast to the stuffiness in the crowded room. About five minutes after Pete had gone in I said to Miriam, "I think you'd better go in and rescue Pete."

So we went in and sure enough, Ryan was talking up a smiling storm with Pete, who seemed uneasy. Miriam joined them, to Pete's relief. "Hi, doll," he leered at her, and put his arm possessively around her. "Let's you and me go get lost on a two-month safari into some dark closet." So saying, he extricated himself from the conversational clutches of his suitor.

A minute later I extricated Miriam from the clutches of Pete. "Enough is enough," I muttered. "We just wanted to help you out."

"Serves you right, Carr," said Pete, and added as an afterthought, "You bastard."

A large portion of the party decided to adjourn to the Detroit room, which was larger, and we followed them down there. After a short time there, however, Jim-Barclay-from-Berkeley announced that they were throwing a party in their room and invited everybody up. A lot of us headed for the elevators to take him up on it.

While waiting for an elevator we got into some very pleasant shenanigans involving kissing. I don't recall how this started - I think it was when Arlene Brennan decided to bait Miriam and rushed up to kiss me, but within minutes I was gaily fighting off Arlene, Miriam, and Bjo all at once, hollering "One at a time, girls, please!" and in general enjoying myself no end.

Somebody, taking all this in, said, "What have you got that I haven't got, Carr? Are they dazzled by your big name, or what?"

But I said modestly, "Why, I'm no Big Name. It's just that these fine, right-thinking females want to pay me back for my services to fandom, such as publishing THE INCOMPLEAT BURBEE, and FANAC, and INNUENDO, and discovering Burbee to modern-day fandom, and so forth. I really expected to be paid for my labors in free beers at this con, you know, but kisses will do."

All of a sudden my many female admirers deserted me, and I've never yet been able to figure out why. Maybe I was being too modest.



Anyway we all went up to the party, where Rike and J.G. Newkom and Jim-Barclay-from-Berkeley were settling down to pounding the drums. We got in the door, got halfway settled in seats, more and more guests came until the room was cram-packed, and then the last guest came. The house detective.



He said people had been complaining of the noise of the drums, and the party would have to break up. Somebody started to object heatedly, but Lars Bourne prevented what might have been a bad scene by cutting him off and assuring the H.D. that we'd quiet down and move half the party elsewhere.

I decided then that I didn't feel like party-hopping for the rest of the night, trying to keep one jump ahead of the house detective (we'd had trouble at the Detroit party just before leaving, too), so I went off to bed. It was only 2:30 or so and really quite early to go to bed at a con, but I figured the parties were pretty dead for the anyway.

Apparently I was wrong, though, because I could hear several parties going full-blast till I got to sleep.

#### SUNDAY

I got up late again, as usual, but feeling quite rested for once. A shave and a shower made me feel even better, so I headed downstairs in fine fettle. A quick check of my finances, though, made me feel a little poorly: save for room rent, I was almost flat broke. But I decided to have breakfast and worry about it later.

Once again, Bill Rotsler was on hand for breakfast. By a cosmic coincidence, he offered to buy me breakfast this morning, and I gratefully took him up on it. Over pancakes, Rotsler drew cartoons and we talked. I pocketed the cartoons. I was compiling quite a sheaf of them, and had more back in my suitcase.

"Here - caption this," said Rotsler, handing me a cartoon he'd drawn and at which he'd been staring quietly for awhile. It showed a male crittur jumping on a female who is lying flat on her back; the male bounces off her into a pool of water. I wrote, "If there's anything I like, it's swimming," and Rotsler laughed.

Bill apparently likes to have others caption his cartoons at times, because I saw him doing it with Bob Bloch sometime during the con, too. He drew another one then and handed it to me for a caption. It showed a man lifting the head of a female off her shoulders, and looking down the hole of the neck into the body.

I captioned it, "Hmm, nothing in here, either."

After breakfast, we went upstairs to the meeting hall, where we caught the tail-end of the fan-panel, moderated by Rog Phillips. Shortly afterward, the business session of the convention was to begin. Rotsler and I found seats with Miriam, Ron Ellick, the Goldstones, and so forth.

During the preliminary fool•rah before the meeting started, Rotsler continued turning out cartoons at two a minute. Miriam and I continued to pocket most of them.

I had mine in my shirt pocket, and after awhile Rotsler looked quizzically at the bulge and said, "My, you have an interesting profile." Then he looked at Miriam, who was wearing an ivy-league blouse and had her cartoons in her breast pocket. "But hers is even more interesting," he said.

"Fantastic is the word," I observed.

The meeting began. Dean McLaughlin spoke for Detroit's bid for the next con, seconded by E.E. Evans, and finally Bjo. Earl Kemp then spoke for Chicago, seconded by Rog Phillips and Bob Bloch. McLaughlin was serious and very sincere in his bid; Kemp probably lost votes for Chicago by the tone of his talk, which seemed based on the premise that people were planning to vote for Detroit just because they were nice guys and everybody felt sorry for them because they'd been trying for a con for so long and had never got one. To Kemp, it seemed, Chicago was the only logical choice, and a vote for Detroit would be a Mistake.

Well, the voting began. Honey Wood stood at a large blackboard chalking up the votes as they were called out by Rick Sneary. "Detroit, Detroit, Detroit, Detroit, Chicago, Detroit, Detroit..." It was a landslide. Rotsler drew a cartoon of Honey filling the blackboard with votes for Detroit and going on to chalk up more votes on the forehead of someone standing nearby. The final vote was 125 to 45.

After this, George Nims Raybin read his resignation from the office of Legal Advisor of the WSFS Inc. aloud to the assemblage. It mentioned illegal maneuverings on the part of some of the WSFS Inc. officers as his reason for resigning - presumably he was referring to some of the smoke-filled-room type conferences that had been held during the con, at which Forry Ackerman, Dave Kyle, and E.E. Evans had decided that the WSFS Inc. meeting in London had been extralegal, being held outside the U.S. At any rate, Raybin resigned his position, to a huge ovation.

It took him maybe fifteen seconds to realize why everybody was clapping.

Bill Donaho then presented a petition to the assemblage which would formally request the Board of Directors of the WSFS to de-incorporate the Society.

At this point Belle Dietz rose with a point of order. She said that if Ackerman, Kyle, and Evans had decided the London meeting of the WSFS had been extralegal, then obviously no meeting of the WSFS could be held at the Solacon, since Southgate had won the bid at the London meeting.

Chairwoman Anna Moffatt coolly told her that this was not intended as a meeting of the WSFS Inc. "This is the Sixteenth World Science Fiction Convention, held in the state of California," said Anna, thereby officially severing all connection the convention had with the WSFS. There was a brief surprised silence while this sank in, then the whole meeting-hall broke up into clapping and cheering. Belle sat down.

Events were rapidly showing that the attendees of the Solacon wanted nothing to do with the WSFS Inc. Donaho's petition was read once more for clarification, then Mrs. Moffatt called for a voice vote on it.

There was a resounding chorus of Ayes. There were a few scattered Noes. The petition had passed, officially recording the reaction of convention-going fans to the WSFS Inc.

Anna then called for more business, but there didn't seem to be any. A motion to adjourn was made, a chorus of Ayes passed it, and the meeting was over. Fans clapped each other on the back, shook hands, laughed, cheered - there was a happy pandemonium in the convention hall.



The entire meeting had taken perhaps half an hour. In that time Detroit had won next year's convention by a landslide, and the WSFS Inc. had been all but decapitated. Most fans had foreseen a long, dull business meeting at which the whole WSFS Inc. question would be thrashed out at exasperating length - the quick and decisive way the business had actually been conducted left us all relieved and elated.

Anna Moffatt was the star of the afternoon, because of her handling of the meeting. She smiled and protested that Anthony Boucher, who had served as Parliamentarian, had actually mapped out the meeting in advance and she'd merely followed his suggestions.

Rotsler and I then headed for the bar, along with many other fans. When we got there the place was crowded with fans enthusiastically talking. I felt so happy that I went and bought myself a beer, and one for Rotsler, too. Unfortunately, I then discovered that Bill doesn't drink beer. So I shrugged philosophically and prepared to drink them both myself.

Burbee, as usual, was in the bar. The Busbies were there too, and Buz wanted to take a picture of Burb. He and Rotsler posed in front of the bar and Buz snapped it. "There," he said, "I got you both in the picture, from the waist up."

Burbee looked disappointed. "You didn't get the best part of me in the picture," he said.

I sat down with my two beers next to Bob Pavlat, Elmer Perdue, and several others, including Lee Jacobs. We talked about the business meeting, and Pavlat and I exchanged friendly invective over the FAPA Presidential election, in which we were opposing candidates. (Pavlat later proved to be the victor by a 2 to 1 margin.)

A slender young man in his 20s joined the group, and Jacobs greeted him with a surprised, "Max! What are you doing here?" It was Max Keasler, who said he'd been in town, had heard of the con somewhere, and had decided to drop by. He outlined plans for reviving OPUS in early 1959, after finishing college.

"I've got most of the issue on stencil already," he said. "It's been ready for years - material by Hoffman and all of them. I've just been waiting till I got my degree before I enter fandom again."

So we brought him up to date on what had been happening in fandom during his absence.

"By the way," said Jacobs, "this is Terry Carr. This is Bob Pavlat--" he went on to introduce us all.

"Terry Carr..." mused Keasler. "I think I remember you. Weren't you in FAPA when I was? You put out some damned postcard-sized fanzine that always fell out of the mailing and got lost?" I acknowledged it. Such is fame.

A little later Pete Graham showed up, and I introduced him to Keasler, who knitted his brows and tried to remember who Pete was.

"Remember that damned postcard-sized fanzine?" I prompted him. "Pete was co-editor of that."

Max's face cleared and he said he remembered Pete.

I spent the rest of the afternoon in the bar, and my memory of it is a bit kaleidoscopic. I remember Ron Ellik coming by with a tape recorder and recording a tape to Mervyn Barrett.

Then Ted White came in and said to me, "Terry, how'd you like to run for TAFF?"

That moment is quite clear in my mind. I remember taking the pause and then muttering something about how I'd love to, and I remember Ted saying that he and Raeburn and Ed Cox and others had dreamed up the idea the night before. But mostly I remember that the thought which kept running through my head was, "If someone had told me one week ago that Ted White would nominate me for TAFF, I would have told him he was crazy."

So Ted said fine, he'd start collecting signatures, and I said thanks, and Ted went off.

The Masquerade Ball was scheduled for that evening, and Miriam had to go out to her place in South Pasadena to pick up her costume, so we went over to where Dave Rike and Jim-Barclay-from-Berkeley were sitting and she asked Jim if he'd drive her out. He said sure.

"Are you going in costume?" I asked Jim and Dave.

Dave shrugged and said probably not, but Jim said he thought he might pin a card on his shirt saying, "I Am Carl Brandon."

So Dave and Jim and Miriam took off for South Pasadena and I went into the banquet room, where the dinner was over and the speeches were to be starting in a few minutes. I ran into Ron Ellick, who suddenly remembered that he had this check from Dave and Ruth Kyle for \$2.00 which they'd sent for a sub to FANAC, and which she'd planned to sign over to the Con Committee with a note that they could have back some of the money that Kyle was supposed to owe them. This was strictly for a gag, of course, so first we went over and told Dave and Ruth of our plans, and they grinned and said it was okay. So we went up to the rostrum and signed the check over.

Anna didn't think it was very funny, though, protesting that Kyle didn't owe them any money. So the gag didn't go over with the Committee, though the Kyles liked it.

During the convention, too, we'd been placing signs around which said, DAVE KYLE SAYS YOU CAN'T SIT HERE, and Dave got a bang out of them. We had an alternative sign, too, saying DAVE KYLE SAYS YOU CAN SIT HERE. Credit for the whole idea goes to Dean Grennell, who'd suggested it to us in a letter months before.

Well, the after-dinner speeches began, and they were fine. Boucher was distinguished and amusing, Bloch was sharp and witty, Bennett and Mike Hinge were brief but pleasantly humorous. The awards were announced, Rick Sneary got a standing ovation (started by Rog Phillips), and Richard Matheson was introduced. I'd heard him speak before, and knew him to be one of those people who read a prepared speech in a monotone, so I left with Pete Graham and we went up to Kris Neville's room, where there was supposed to be another party.

As it turned out, there was, but it was a small intimate sort of thing, just five or six people sitting around killing time till the speeches would be over and the parties proper could start. The only people there whom we knew were Neville and Ron Smith. There was almost no liquor left, save half a bottle of vodka and a dab of orange juice to which Kris directed us. Pete and I split the orange juice in loaded Screwdrivers and sipped them while Kris told us that at the party the night before somebody had got loaded and given him ten dollars with which to get more liquor. "Tonight," said Kris, "I'm going to suggest we take up a collection. Why, gentlemen, I'll make a killing! I've always served free liquor before at my parties, but that incident was like a Revelation! My sons, it opened up new vistas to me. People will drink my liquor and then give me fantastic sums of money for more! I feel reborn! Tonight I shall give a Party!" And he filled up my half-emptied glass with straight vodka.

Well, I've mentioned that I don't like liquor straight, and I was feeling a bit down that evening anyway, so I finished my drink as soon as I could and suggested to Pete that we go away. We did.

I went back to my room and changed clothes for the Masquerade Ball. Not into costume - just different clothes. It refreshed me a little. As I left the room I wondered again if it was really only a \$5.00 room. I'd been seeing a lot of other rooms during the con, and mine was looking more expensive all the time. Miriam was back and in costume, and we went to the Ball.

There were some fabulous costumes. Karen Anderson had rigged up a vampiress costume complete with a cape which she opened out into a ten-foot span of bat-wings. Rory Faulkner came dishevelled, beaten, scarred, and stooped, wearing a



a burlap sack and carrying a sign saying "Survivor". ((John W. Campbell took a pic of Rory, and it has been shown round over here. We like Rory!)) Trina Castillo had a very cute costume with nice futuristic rings circling down around her whole body. Ellie Turner looked very fetching in a satin getup with a long flowing tail. I suppose obvious comments were made. Someone came as a very realistic mummy, and stood perfectly still, arms folded across his chest - it was extremely effective.

But the sensation of the Ball, outdoing all these (and outdoing Karen's costume was really something!), was John Lackey, who stands close to seven feet tall and who had contrived an ingenious alien costume complete with a bald headcap and face make-up, flowing robes, and a brazier filled with something smoking. He burst in through the windows from the balcony, shouting in an alien tongue, and strode through the hall to the judges' stand where he continued his weird harangue. He had a slate too, on which he wrote messages with unhesitating facility in a strange script. Throughout the Ball he stayed in character, always talking in that strange outworld tongue. As Cynthia Goldstone said later, his greatest charm lay in the way he seemed to want to communicate with us, and continually wrote notes and symbols in an effort to establish some sort of understanding.

Rotsler was there, drawing cartoons offhandedly. As usual, I pocketed as many as I could get. Rotsler has the quickest wit for cartoons of anyone I've ever seen.

"Why don't you draw some Face Critturs?" he said to me. I shook my head.

But a few minutes later I asked him for one of his 3" x 5" cards and did a quick series of them, in expressions progressing from repose through being struck with a thought, to pondering, frowning, looking amazed, and finally in the last one saying "Why, these are nothing but incomplete Rotsler cartoons, strung end to end!" I gave it to Rotsler, who recognized the allusion to an Insurgent coverline of a few years back, and laughed.

Burbee and his wife Isabel showed up soon after. It was Isabel's first appearance at the con, and she went around saying hello to old friends and acquaintances she hadn't seen for years. Willis has written of the Ghost Fans who appear once a year at conventions to walk the halls of Fandom once again; the large number of ex-fans in the Los Angeles area occasioned an even larger number of such Ghost Fans at the Solacon.

Rotsler told us Liebscher was inviting people out to a place in Santa Monica for a party there, and if we asked him about it he might invite us. I said fine, he'd already invited us, and we'd go out there. Rotsler said he'd drive us out.

A little later I got to talking with Ron Ellik and we got the idea of borrowing one of the mimeographs at the hotel (the Chicago fans had one, as did Rich Brown) and putting out an issue of FANAC right there, with the news from the business meeting that afternoon. It would be a worthy service to fandom and all that.

We got all wound up on that idea, and Ron was checking on getting some stencils and paper, when Miriam said, "You're not going to skip Liebscher's party just to put out a fanzine, are you?" That brought me to a halt and I said I didn't know. Miriam turned to Rotsler and said, "He doesn't want to go to the party. He wants to put out a fanzine! Isn't that fantastic!" Rotsler shook his head sadly and said it was fantastic.

I thought a moment and decided that it was fantastic. So I went and found Ron and said to hell with special issue of FANAC, Miriam and I were going to Liebscher's party, and Ron shrugged and said okay. I don't think he minded a bit.

I rejoined Miriam and she said Rotsler should be back in a minute. Ronel came by, and I noticed that he'd had Bjo draw a cartoon on his I.D. card. It showed a squirrel saying, "I just love cons - there's so many nuts around!" So I asked Bjo to draw one on mine, and she drew me shouting at Ron, "How many times have I told you, it's not a root beer tower to the moon!"

I began to notice that all sorts of fans at the con had had Bjo do cartoons on

their I.D. cards. I looked at Bjo's own. Rotsler had drawn one on hers; it showed Bjo, cute and pugnosed and with lots of freckles, shying away from Rotsler, who was saying, "Look, a walking connect-the-dots game!"

Rotsler came back with Alex Bratmon and Sylvia Dees, who were also going out to the party. We all left and piled into Rotsler's car and set off.

We stopped by Rotsler's place on the way out, since Bill wanted to pick up some liquor on the way. Miriam said she was starving and Bill tried to scrounge up something for her. "Just a sandwich would do," said Miriam. "We have no bread," said Rotsler. "But we have...ummm...a couple slices of ham, and a carrot, and..."

"That's fine!" said Miriam. She took the carrot and folded the slice of ham around it. "There," she said, "I've got a sandwich after all!" She took a bite.

We all looked at her in dismay.

"But it's good!" said Miriam. She took another bite.

Rotsler started to laugh. "My God," he said. "This is fantastic, but that does look good. I'm glad I'm not hungry, or I might eat something like it myself."

We got back into the car and drove on out to Santa Monica. Rotsler told us anecdotes about Gerald Fitzgerald on the way, like the time he put a dime in an ice-cream bar machine and an ice-cream bar shot out and landed ten feet across the room. "Fitzgerald is incident-prone," said Rotsler.

The place where the party was being held belonged to Bob Stevens, a non-fan friend of Liebscher's who was a quite successful architect. We walked up a long gravel walk through the grounds surrounding the house, with fire-lanterns along the walk. The house, when we got inside, proved to be fabulous: an indoor fountain, indirect lighting throughout, greener, a glass roof on the dining room giving a view of the steep wooded hillside behind the house, on which spotlights were trained for illumination at night if it was wanted. The furniture was all modern, there was an indoor fireplace, etc., etc., etc.

Outside was a swimming pool, lighted. A long curving ramp led from the house down to it, through the garden.

There were many guests there already: Bob and Barbara Silverberg, Bob Bloch, Joe and Robbie Gibson, Les and Es Cole, Karen Anderson, and several others, many of whom I didn't recognize and some of whom were undoubtedly nonfans.

Karen was intrigued by that long ramp leading down to the side of the pool. She was still wearing her vampiress costume, and she went to the head of the ramp. She looked down it musing, then spread her wings out to their full span and ran down the ramp.

The assembled guests oohed and ahed at the sight. It was something out of fantasy, that black silhouette going down the curving ramp, ending up starkly outlined against the turquoise of the lighted pool. Karen folded her wings again slowly and we all burst out clapping.

"Do it again!" someone said. Karen came back up and repeated the performance, getting another round of applause.

Later she said, "It was the closest thing I've ever felt to actually flying." And she signed.

Back in the living room, Liebscher sat down to the piano and played. He played mostly dinner-music type stuff, very florid but nice. Then he played his Pacifico concerto, which he'd been working on since 1946. I asked him to play the blues, and he played them, rocking the left hand, swinging with the right in a style that was mostly traditional but with strong touches of modern jazz piano in it. It was fine.

A joke session began then. As Bob Tucker can undoubtedly testify, Liebscher is a good joke-teller. Others of the party joined in.

Eventually the party broke up into small groups again, and I talked with Bob Bloch about the business session that afternoon, and with Robbie Gibson about how much we liked Liebscher's pianistics.



Nobody was at the piano, so I went over and began to play myself. Let me explain immediately that I'm no pianist, don't know the first thing about music, and can do nothing but fake it at the piano. I play moody stuff, never knowing just what I'm going to play, and that's why I like to play so much, especially on a good piano, and that piano was a good one.

No one laughed when I sat down to play, in fact, no one paid any attention. So I played softly for the most part so as not to disturb anyone.

Miriam came over and was entranced. "You play piano?" she said, all impressed. I guess I wasn't playing too badly. But anyone who's listened to me for very long knows I play the same thing over and over most of the time. Miriam said it sounded like something by Beethoven.

Pete Graham and Arlene Brennan arrived at the party then. Pete came over and said, "Carr, the moment I heard that piano, I said to myself, That's Carr playing - I'd recognize that lousy piano anywhere." He'd heard me play enough to be sick of it. I just grinned at him and went on playing. He went away.

As it turned out, Pete and Arlene shouldn't have bothered to come out so late, because the party began to break up shortly after they arrived. They piled into Rotsler's car with the rest of our group and Rotsler drove Pete to the house from which he was to get a ride the next day back to Berkeley. We drove all around the area looking for it, all of us half-asleep, peering dimly at street-maps. Finally we stumbled onto the desired address and dropped off Pete.

Rotsler drove us all back to the hotel. We cracked tired jokes on the way which seemed alternately hilarious and irritatingly bad, both reactions being due I'm sure to our state of exhaustion. It must have been 5:30 by the time we got back. We all went off to bed immediately, and I'll bet that everybody fell into bed like I did.

#### MONDAY

I didn't get up till 1:00 that afternoon. I had a tired breakfast, and hurried upstairs in hopes of catching some of Bjo's Fashion Show, but it ended as I walked into the hall.

I had to be checked out of the hotel by 2:00, so I went up and packed my luggage, then came down to the lobby with my suitcase and went to pay my bill. I was handed a bill for \$24.00. I had just \$20.00, enough to pay for the four nights I'd stayed in a room presumably costing \$5.00. It turned out that it had been a \$6.00 room. I protested that I'd reserved a \$5.00 room, and while I sweated blood briefly, the clerk checked my reservation, saw that I was right, and said there must have been some mistake. He changed the bill back to \$20.00, and I paid it, realizing only then how worried I'd been about a possible change in the cost of the room. I walked off, relieved.

Miriam and Forry Ackerman came through the lobby. Miriam said she was putting her luggage in Forry's car and Forry said I could too if I wanted. He gave me the keys and we went out to store them. I locked the car carefully and we went back and returned Forry's keys.

Then we headed for the bar, where Elinor Busby told me she was disappointed because she'd come all the way to the Solacon to meet Carl Brandon and just met me, and so forth. I resolved never again to deceive Fandom.

The Busbies then had to leave to go up and take part in Karen Anderson's play "Alice in Thrilling Wonderland". A little later Burbee, Rotsler and I went up to watch it. Karen had written it and had given the title role to herself, but as she pointed out later, the real starring role was that of E.E. Smith, who was cast as the Upstage Lensman. His part consisted of walking across stage every few minutes, deadpan, carrying a sign saying HAVE LENS, WILL TRAVEL, and similar quips. That went over big.

The acoustics in the hall weren't the best, and I didn't catch much of the dialogue - which no doubt considerably damaged the effect of the play, since I've

heard that it contained a lot of involved punning. Karen says she's going to publish the script, and I'm looking forward to that.

Rotsler, again, was drawing cartoons, this time captioned by Burbee. Most of them were esoteric.

After the play the Westercon business session was scheduled, but we skipped that. Seattle, it turned out, won the bid handily over San Diego.

In the hall, Ted White was collecting signatures of fans to support me for TAFF. The usual quips were made about getting me out of the country and so forth, and Ted collected something like thirty signatures. I somehow doubted that they meant much -- after all, quote-cards and suchlike had been passed around all during the convention, and I suspect that at that point fans would have signed any collection of signatures put before them, merely out of habit.

Burbee was inviting a few fans out to his house for a party that evening, and I latched onto an invitation. When the point was made that he wanted it to remain a small, informal party, I asked hesitantly if it would be all right to bring Miriam along. He raised an eyebrow and said, "Why, I'm only inviting you so you'll bring along my fiancée, you know." I'd forgotten that Miriam was supposed to be Burb's fiancée (the story behind that is involved and beside the point here).

I knew that the party at Burb's would last till all hours, so I figured that I'd better say goodbye to people before going out there. I went around to do so, saying goodbye to Bennett, Rickhardt, the Falascas ("It was nice to see you again, but I'd rather have met Carl Brandon"), Ted White, Bill Donaho, and so forth.

Then Rotsler came by to get us and we went out to the party. Rotsler had brought a date, a young woman named Mina. Very attractive and charming she was, too.

Everybody else was there already when we arrived: Burb and Isabel, Bob Pavlat, Boyd Raeburn, the Busbies, and Ed Cox. Isabel served dinner and it was great. Burb told stories of fans and foibles. We played piano rolls and sang a bit.

At one point I asked Burb to tell a story which was one of my favorites. Burb frowned and said there were ladies present, reminding me that the story involved certain crude invective which might shock them. Mina immediately said she'd like to hear the story, and Elinor was positively dying to hear it. Burb protested for awhile, but Elinor persisted and he finally gave in.

He began to tell the story, but had hardly got started when Isabel in the kitchen called Elinor in to check on something. While Elinor was gone, Burb sidetracked onto something else. In five or ten minutes she came back and Burb, without looking up, said, "And that is the story of how I met him."

Elinor uttered a little scream of disappointment, and the rest of us broke up laughing. "You didn't tell it while I was gone!?" wailed Elinor. We all continued to laugh.

"Well," said Burbee, "I have just told this story, but for you Elinor, I'll tell it again, at the risk of boring my discerning audience." And while we chuckled he went ahead and told the story.

Once again, I got fascinated by a piano, and I sat down to doodle around on Burb's player piano. Raeburn walked by and grinned, "That sounds a little like Thelonius Monk."

Miriam said, "Play that thing by Beethoven that you wrote."

Well the party went on and on. We drank home brew, we talked about this and that. It got to be quite late, and Burbee had to go to work the next day, so we decided to break up the party.

The Busbies, Miriam, and I returned to the hotel with Ed Cox. We were all too aware that this was the last night of the convention, that a lot of people had left already and most all would be gone by tomorrow. It was 2:30 in the morning, but we decided to look for a party anyway.



Surprisingly enough, we found one immediately. In the Detroit suite were the Falascas, Roger Sims, Ron Bennett, Bill Rickhardt, and so forth. Bennett was playing brag with someone, maybe Ted White and Bill Donaho, and Bob Pavlat - who had left the Burbee party earlier - was there too. We all sat around for awhile talking about the end of the WSFS and the end of the con and plans for the Detroit convention. Everybody was dead-tired, though, and the party lacked that joyous uplift which makes most con-parties so enjoyable. I was weary and Miriam was practically asleep, so we took Ed Cox up on his offer to drive us out to Forry's house, where we'd been invited for the night. We said goodbye to everyone again.

It must have been close to dawn by the time we got there. Everybody fell into bed again.

#### TUESDAY

Forry waited till both Miriam and I were up and comparatively awake before he sprang his bombshell.

Someone had broken into his car the day before and stolen all our luggage.

Forry said he's lost his best suitcase, a suit, and assorted sportclothes which had been hanging in the car too. We spent the day lounging around disconsolately, with the post-con letdown, remembering all the things which we'd had in our luggage. I'd lost an electric shaver, two pairs of slacks, several sportshirts, and so forth. They'd cost money to replace. And some things couldn't be replaced: my autographed copy of THE INCOMPLEAT BURBEE, the close-to-100 Rotsler cartoons. The first ten pages of a Carl Brandon story I had been working on.

Miriam too, had lost quite a few valuable things. And she too had lost a thick sheaf of Rotsler cartoons. Between us we'd probably had over half the cartoons Rotsler had done at the con.

Bob Bloch phoned. He was trying to get in touch with someone who had deposited Bob's wallet in a safe-deposit box for safekeeping. Bob had to leave and hadn't been able to find him to get the key. We couldn't help him.

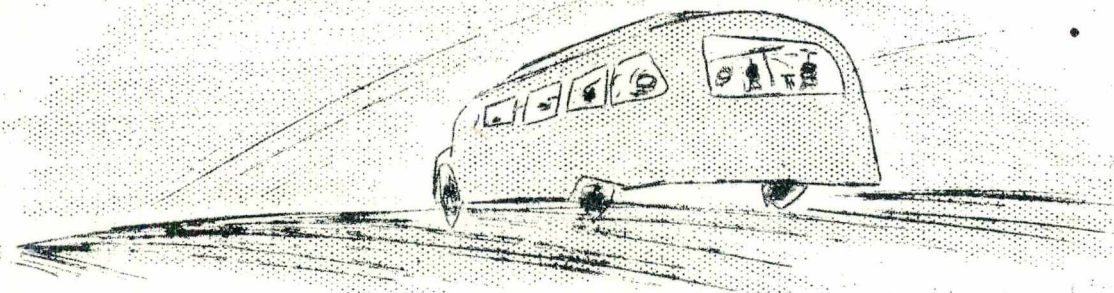
It was an overcast day. We walked around with little clouds of smog hovering over our heads.

Forry told us he was very disappointed over the whole WSFS Inc. affair. The fuss it had involved, the feuding, the lawsuits - all these saddened him. "All this isn't necessary," he said. "Fans got along for over ten years without it, and they still can. They can just keep on putting on conventions like they always have." We nodded morosely.

The afternoon dragged to a conclusion, and I left to catch my bus for San Francisco. I got a seat next to a woman who complained all night that she couldn't sleep. I couldn't sleep either. I watched night-time California pass by the bus windows, and read a book of Theodore Sturgeon short stories which Forry had loaned me.

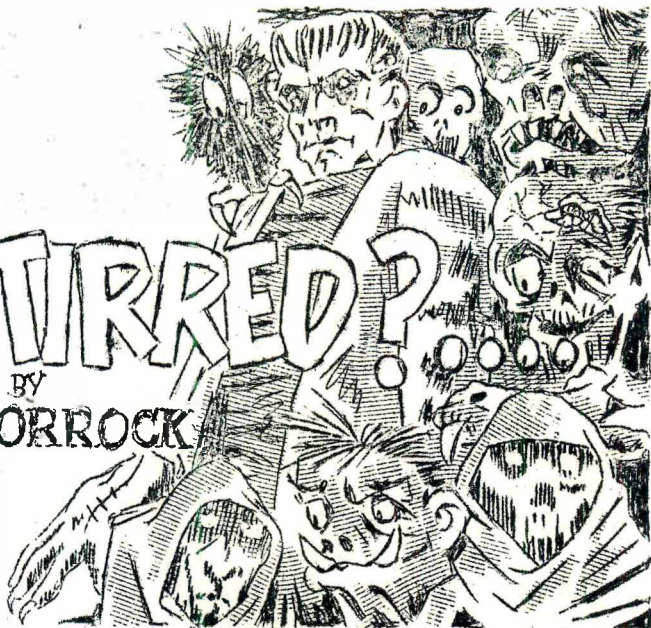
Sturgeon was the right author to read on a night like this.

---Terry Carr



# ...SOMETHING STIRRED?...

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS, COMMENTS BY  
**JOHN OWEN & NORMAN SHORROCK**



Rory M. Faulkner,  
7241 East 20th,  
Westminster, Cal.

I've been one of those "old, tired fans" ever since getting home, and very lax in corresponding, but this superb fanzine really requires a prompt acknowledgement.

"Drums Along The Mersey" (Drake's Drums?) was most informative & highly amusing. You British fen seem to have a hell of a lot more fun than we do. I wish I'd been along on that pilgrimage to St. Fantony's hide-out. I could have spent months in England if only my shekels had held out, and Cheltenham was one of the places I had to miss due to lack of time. I'll never forget the effect on me of that drink from the Sacred Well - haven't been the same since... Walt Willis's brilliant idea of how to foil the hotel staff during a room party would never work here, as we're too damned democratic; everyone who works is as good as the next guy, if not a little better!... Dave Newman's punch recipes sound good. Pass on to him this note on a concoction I once drank at a Mexican wedding: two quarts whiskey, three gallons wine - bring to the boil in a bucket, then add 6 lbs chopped oranges, grapefruits and avocados. Serve hot and often. Eddie's drawings are wonderful... Please remember me to all the gang. -As ever, 'the old hag with the time lag', Rory.

We should have more such 'old hags' in fandom! Thanks for the recipe, Rory, and here's one for you: two parts vodka, and one part each of mandarin liqueur & any fortified wine, garnished with sliced orange & cherries. Drink in moderation and keep well away from a naked light.

Arthur Thomson,  
17, Brockham House,  
London, SW2.

That's a real good cover; I liked the way it went and the effect achieved; the only thing I can mention on the artistic side that might have been better, was that the

line of 'eye' to the complete cover was broken by the rocket trail... St. Fantony: Mmmm. Whilst I consider that all praise should be given to Eric and all at Cheltenham for the beautiful way they've presented every St. Fantony occasion... I personally don't go for the almost religious seriousness it's invested with. There's no pretence of 'deadpan' or tongue-in-cheek in it... Walt's piece "Scion's Fiction" went down well with me. How true, too. Hi-fi I pass; due, of course, to the lack of cash that would enable me



to enjoy such things. Toper's Treasury was (hic) wunnerful shtuff, and I have a question to put to the Toper himself: Dear Toper, A few days ago, between twelve noon and one p.m., I consumed one pint of Guinness, two tots of whisky, and four brown ales. As it was dinner-time, I also consumed two Cornish pasties; an hour later I threw up four times. Do you consider that Cornish pasties should be banned from pubs?

Cornish pasties, in our view, should be banned from just about everywhere. In re St. Fantony, though: knowing the Cheltenham crowd as we do, Arthur, we hardly think they'd take the thing too seriously. We feel it's excellent 'deadpan' ritual, something akin to our own Ex-Chairman Investitures, in fact. But perhaps Cheltenham could give us an expert word or two?

Boyd Raeburn,  
89 Maxome Avenue,  
Willowdale, ONTARIO  
CANADA

Thanks for the copy of SD 10. Most extravagant of you to send it airmail. Please pass on any egoboo I may give to jolly John Roles, who produced a really fine issue... So he's sitting on the fence in current feuds? A pretty safe place to be at the moment, considering the bitterness of some of the tangles...I was present when Walt orally composed "Scion's Fiction" on tape to Grenell - nice to see it again. Wish I could compose things offhand like that... I tasted the first Topers' Tonic ever concocted; ah, that mad, mad night at Vat 69A with the American Peter Reaney enchanting us all with his renditions of Russian folk songs - the brew was made with ordinary gin and orange-juice, and it tasted fine. This insistence on orange gin is mere pettifogg-ing. And a remark above reminds me to compliment John O. on his deft touches in "Mead 'N' Mountain Dew" - even the title is fiend-ishly esoteric... The Hi-Fi article. This was jolly good and interesting and all, although I have no practical need for it; now I wait for the author to do an article on tape-recorders. Ha! Watch out, Shorrock, I'm challenging you. I now have two tape-recorders; recently got a new Ferrograph 3.A/N. Am madly busy editing my collection and transferring things from this tape to that... I wonder at Don Ford writing to you, in view of his declaration that fanzine fans are fuggheads. Maybe your fanzine activities are atoned for in his eyes by your being an S-F Club?

But honestly, Boyd, we don't really think we're either keen fanzine fans or an out-and-out Science Fiction club! We've been trying to define ourselves for years without success; perhaps our readers can help us in this, bearing in mind that the use of obscene language will render them liable to prosecution, Re your tape-recorders, but Shorrock now has a 4 S/N - nyah!

Keith Freeman,  
183 Crayford Rd.,  
Crayford, Kent.

From one extreme to the other: SD 9 with thick covers, and then SD 10 with a thin front-cover; necessitated by the printing-process, I assume? ...Did you try WAW's theory in practice to get the manager of the Star Hotel in such a good mood when you were at Cheltenham?

It's WAW's idea, let HIM try it! About the last cover: after months of painstaking research and experiment with various inks, paper-finishes and duplicators, we found the thin stuff is cheaper.

Harry Warner Jr.,  
423 Summit Ave.,  
Hagerstown, Md. USA.

...I found this issue most enjoyable, in spite of the feeling that I had been hit in the pit of the stomach when I turned to

page Six and found your postage-stamp insertion. I like steel engravings, particularly those in compatible color, you must understand. But from the ages of about seven to ten I was a stamp collector, and the use of hinges to affix stamps to paper became so innate a part of my way of life that I can barely bring myself, today, to stick a stamp to a letter for postage purposes. I realise that under certain circumstances, as in SD, stamps must be pasted down, just as beautiful butterflies must occasionally be caught in order to find out which worm was responsible; but it's still a terrible thing for an old stamp-collector to experience without previous warning. I liked very much all the fannish articles in this issue, defining 'fannish' in this instance as those which tell of club activities, the visit to Cheltenham, and the Willis gem. I am particularly anxious to see a lengthy biography of St. Fantony... But which of his miracles have been accepted, and which are still undergoing investigation? Are St. Fantony relics available at black-market rates? Is intercession possible directly through him to the departed gods like Wells and Burroughs, or is it necessary to go through channels? ...The latest Hi-Fi article interested me, because I see so little on the British equipment situation. As to stereo, my reaction is quite lukewarm: it is a distraction rather than a benefit (to my ears) on orchestral music, it's ludicrous when used with soloists or extremely small groups, and so far it isn't available on the only material that would interest me: operas and plays... I hope BSFA has better luck than the national fan-groups that have been attempted in this country. A British-based group, in any event, should have one major advantage over the US efforts: the size of the geographical area involved. Solidarity is much easier when it doesn't take a three-thousand-mile trip for representatives on opposite sides of the nation to confer in person over some troublesome point.

You wanna bet?.... About the stamps, Norman says: As a professional philatelist, Harry, I stuck 'em on and said "What the hell, these bums won't care"; and then... But this sees a more enlightened approach. Envelopes yet!

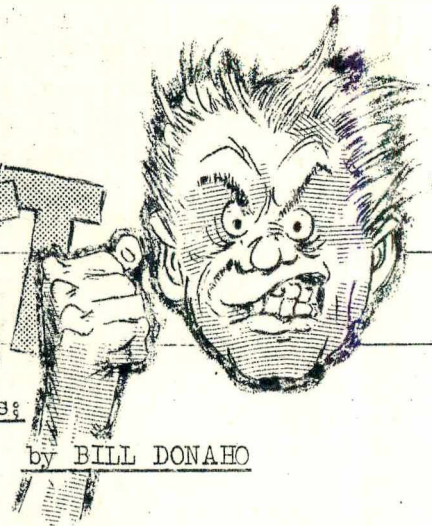
Bob Shaw,  
c/o. Walt Willis  
(this letter  
written whilst he  
was in Canada):

I really enjoyed SD. Thought the cover was very good and very well reproduced. Those fan meetings described in 'Drums' seem to be pretty much up my street. They made me thirsty enough to drink water, and then I came to Toper's Treasury, which left me weak with the craving for British beer. No kidding, the stuff you get out here is hideous... Dave's remarks about the kick in home-made wines recalled an incident the other night at a party. We were sitting around drinking the ghastly Canadian beer, and occasional shots of rye, when the host brought out a bottle of stuff which he guaranteed would need to make you need to sit down after one glassful. He called it Chanty. When the bottle came my way, I found that it was Chianti, and to show these people it was quite harmless I drank a little of it. You should have seen the looks of awed respect I got when I'd finished and not fallen down! Unfortunately, I had to get home early that night, so when I left about eleven, I didn't tell anyone I was going, because they won't let you walk anywhere, seemingly under the impression that it wears away the bottoms of the legs; and I didn't want anyone to leave the party simply to drive me home. You can imagine my mortification next day, when I discovered that the official reason in the

(Contd on page 52)



# MY LIFE WITH BENNETT



Or, The Care And Feeding Of English Fans;

by BILL DONAHO

Nobody had slept much on the Monday night, and the dreary dawn on that never-to-be-forgotten Tuesday found us pale and hollow-eyed. Hastily assuming beaming smiles to mask our faint hearts, we sallied down to the "Queen Mary" to meet the current TAFF representative. Our recollections of the descent of the Bulmers, Ted Carnell, Bert Campbell and a Certain NeoFan from Northern Ireland had made us all suitably apprehensive, and we awaited the arrival of Mr. Ronald Bennett with some trepidation. Finger-nails bitten to the quick, we'd decided beforehand to lessen the strain by passing him on from hand to hand as rapidly as possible. But alas! Little did we know...

We bravely closed our ranks, inched our way to the Tourist Gangplanks, and waited. And waited. And waited...

Dark suspicions began to descend upon us. Could Bennett be trying some hellish Ploy? Could he be leaving by the First-Class Gangplank? Could that be it?

But see! There, by the railing, stood a tallish, slender figure with a sensitive, fannish look about him. "Forward - 'tis he!" shrieked Pat Ellington. We rushed upon our visitor; he, in turn, fell upon us with great cries of joy, and fannish talk waxed merrily for a while.

Introductions completed, we headed for the customs-line, which was a formidable queue about fifty people and three hours long. Bennett, however, could not brook this delay. Imperiously, he summoned a passing steward. "This young lady," quoth he, "can't stand here for three hours holding a baby! Can't something be done?" (Marie Louise, as if on cue, gurgled and cooed at the man). Overawed, the official took us to the head of the line and whisked us through. Funny: I'd always heard that the British were a modest and unassertive race...

Soon afterwards, at the home of Dick and Pat Ellington, our little band of fen began to gather. United, we faced Bennett - and united, were conquered by his puckish humour and almost Harrisonian charm. A little later, Sandy Cutrell took Ron sightseeing; and here, a brief but far-reaching little incident must be related. It took place in a Restaurant, where Ron, naturally, ordered tea, and was served with a steaming pot of the beverage. He took one look at the teapot, told the waitress that there seemed to be a bit of string or something in it, and requested a fresh pot. The waitress looked bewildered, and Sandy had gently to explain the Facts of Life to Ron: tea-bags, and all that... It was a shattering, traumatic experience for our guest, from which I fear he never fully recovered.

After further harrowing adventures that left him a palsied old man, Sandy brought Ron back to Dick and Pat's, and staggered off home. A new shift took over; Larry Shaw came to dinner, Dave Kyle dropped in, and the rest of us began to trickle in to see Ron, and incidentally help him to finish the wine left over from dinner. (The British, I may say, seem to be very good at infighting). The party, now, was becoming more convivial and fannish, and all manner of questions concerning various British fen were being fired at Ron. He was, however, charmingly evasive. He remained charmingly evasive during his entire stay, damn him. In fact, I never met anyone so consistent at being charmingly evasive...

Sandy, stout fellow, took Ron sightseeing again on Wednesday and Thursday. We also thoughtfully provided Ron with a girl, Sandra Ritter. We didn't see very much of him after that; in fact, he only just managed to make the big party we threw in his honour on Thursday night...

However, once he arrived at the party, he overwhelmed our massed might (reinforced from Philadelphia and Baltimore) with as much ease as he'd conquered our advance-guard. We all got drunk; blissfully, stinkingly drunk; Ron, however, determined to uphold the honour of Britain, managed (just) to stagger back to Dick and Pat's.

On Friday morning, we picked up Rickhardt and Sims and took off for Cleveland. Ron couldn't seem to accustom himself to our driving on the right-hand side of the road, and kept making strange, gurgling noises. After we got onto the Turnpikes, though, things began to run more smoothly; he still seemed dazed, however, and kept muttering something which sounded like: 'Not a bit like Harrogate, not a bit'...

We finally arrived at Cleveland; and here, Ron charmed the Falascas. (We, of course, were by now accustomed to this routine success.) Sipping his coffee - he never again drank tea in the U.S. - Ron became talkative; so talkative, in fact, that he nattered the night away as the rest of us fell asleep one by one. The vocal stamina of the man!

\*\*\*\*\*

On Saturday morning, Ron, who was in a disgustingly energetic condition, dragged everyone off sightseeing. So busy did he keep us, in fact, that it wasn't until eight p.m. that we finally pulled off to Chicago. We met the Detroit crew along the way, and Ron started talking again... Finally, he decided to get some sleep, and snored through most of the trip to Chi. The only time he awoke was when we were leaving that city's Outer Drive, and happened to roar across six lanes of traffic against the light. Perhaps it was the screams that awoke him; or maybe six cars hurtling directly at him aroused some latent ESP mechanism...

At any rate, when we drove up to Earl and Nancy Kemp's, he didn't seem to be quite his usual buoyant self. He was still strong enough to mow down Chicago and Indiana fandom, but somehow his heart didn't seem to be in it. After coffee, cake and more fannish talk, we continued on our merry way, our guest snoring lustily in the back.

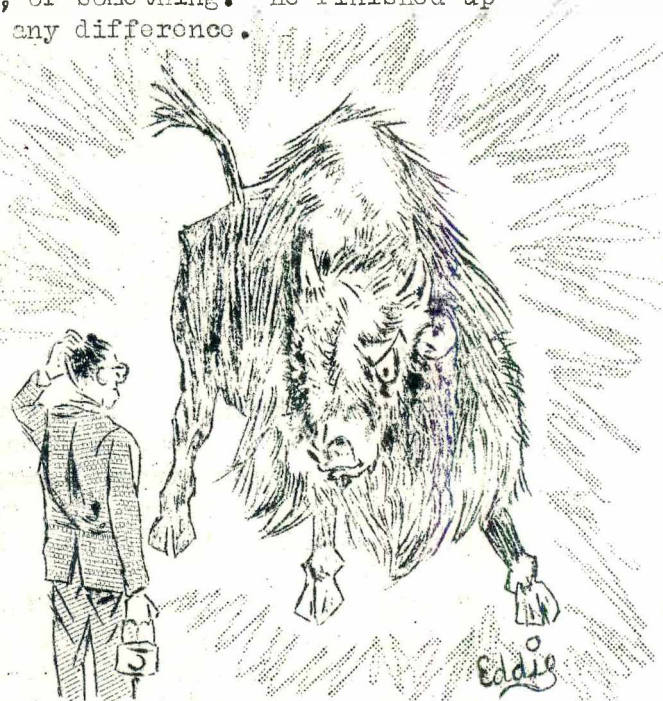
On Sunday morning, we stopped for breakfast with Tucker. Ron was in such a daze at meeting his hero that he almost forgot to bowl him over... He recovered in time, however, and before he left Tucker had presented him with a free autographed copy of 'The Lincoln Hunters'. Ron, as we left, wore a beatific smile. He had achieved - Nirvana.



Sunday wore on, and Ron seemed to be getting more and more nervous. He had barely gotten used to driving on the right side of the road, and now we were driving on the left (it was a four-lane divided highway). He seemed to find our 80 m.p.h. a trifle fast, even though the sign had said: "Speed Limit - Reasonable & Proper." Due to our r. and p. speed, we arrived at Springfield, Missouri, much earlier than we'd expected. Here, Bob Pavlat and Ted White joined us, and Sandy (who'd left at Cleveland to go to Indianapolis) rejoined the group. That evening, everyone retired rather early; staying up for two nights in a row had exhausted us all, which probably proves that fans aren't what they used to be, or something. He finished up talking to himself, but I'm not sure he noticed any difference.

We all got up at four a.m. (Ron once again displaying an almost obscene exuberance), and went out into the cruel, cold mountain mist. Monday passed much like Sunday, except that our boy insisted on stopping at a buffalo-ranch, where he came close to being trampled by an indignant buffalo who objected to being photographed. Ron, however, merely stood still and stared the critter down. The two-ton animal hung his head and slunk off, abashed. Still, after Cecil I suppose buffalo are small game to Bennett.

We knew how the poor beast felt, though. Almost every time you looked at Ron, he was clicking that camera. As far as Eastman-Kodak is concerned, he practically stopped the Recession single-handed.



On Monday evening, we had dinner at Amarillo, Texas. At first, we'd tried to feed our charge well - steak, and all that - but he kept ordering fried steak; and then, when argued out of that, well-done steak; eventually, therefore, we let well enough alone, and allowed him to go back to his beloved fish-and-chips.

On Tuesday, we drove through the semi-desert country of New Mexico and Arizona. It grew so monotonous that after a while even Ron stopped taking pictures. The motel where we stayed that night wasn't equipped with the swimming-pool so beloved of Mr. Bennett, and he was extremely disappointed about it. So disappointed, in fact, that his traditional English facade of reserve finally cracked, and the ensuing racket drew the Manager's attention to the fact that there were far more of us staying in the rooms than had actually paid... Ah, well.

\*\*\*\*\*

We were up bright and early again on Wednesday morning, when a most unseemly incident occurred. Ron was making a great deal of noise and jumping up and down in his usual chipper, before-dawn manner (ugh!), when the Motel Manager came out, pulled a gun on us, and ordered us in no uncertain terms to leave. Ron, far from being disconcerted, seemed to be genuinely delighted at this little encounter with the true spirit of the Old West.

Later that day, we stopped at the Grand Canyon and at Boulder Dam (whenever Ron was nearby, needless to say, I kept well away from the edge). It was rather hot at about that time, but was beginning to cool slightly. Ron enquired as to just how hot

it really was; somebody told him that "it must be down to ninety by now", and for some unaccountable reason he seemed to find this statement wildly hilarious...

We pulled into Las Vegas, found the nearest swimming-pool, and all jumped in. All, that is, except Ron. I guess he was too shy to come in without a bathing-suit. We all very kindly tried to splash him, but he didn't seem to appreciate our efforts.

We all liked Las Vegas. The prices were reasonable, the food superb, the service excellent and the entertainment wonderful. Ron enjoyed it, too, especially the roulette-tables and slot-machines. (It's a good thing they had the Auction Block at Southgate; for some reason or other, Ron's funds were rather low when he reached LA)...

We finally tore ourselves away from the blandishments of Vegas, and headed across the desert, which was fortunately cooler by this time. Ron slept all the way into LA (sometimes I suspect these English fans lack stamina), and was still snoring when we reached Southgate.

Now, Ron has made certain Con-reports, but don't believe a word of them; it's all hearsay on his part. The truth is, he wasn't aware of what was going on. The only time he pulled himself together was at the Business Meeting, when he helped to collect the ballots at the Consite voting. Shaky as he was on this occasion, tho', he did a noble job of stuffing the ballot-box for Detroit.

Let us draw a veil over the sad spectacle of uncontrolled tippling, unhallowed talk and riotous behaviour that constituted the '58 Convention, and skip hastily to the following Tuesday. This was the day that Ron sobered up a little. He'd heard that Sylvia Dees was to be a fellow-passenger on the car trip, and he even took the unBennettlike steps, I remember, of shaving and combing his hair. On this same, memorable day, Bjo Wells took us all swimming in the Pacific, when Ron once again refused to get wet. Again we took pity on him; this time, though, we grabbed him firmly and began wading into the ocean. We were finally forced to stop, however, for his screams would have wrought pity in the hardest of hearts.

Shortly afterwards we all separated, and individual car-owners went home by their own routes. The motorcade was over.

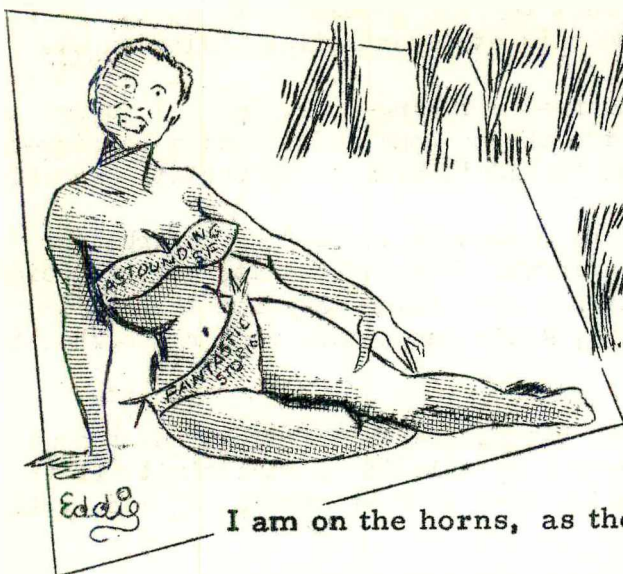
I don't know exactly what happened to Ron on his homeward trip; but there was a story concerning a water-pistol duel between Ted and Ron... Sylvia, Sylvia, what hast thou wrought? Whatever took place, though, when Ron got back to New York he started chasing Sandra Ritter again as if nothing had happened. Fickle lad...

We threw another Giant Binge for Bennett on the day before he left. Pavlat had brought him up from Washington, the Falascas had come down from Cleveland, and it seemed like old home week. It was a real swingin' affair; Nick nearly fell off the roof, although Ron wasn't anywhere around at the time, and there was much noise and jollity.

The next day, hung-over and dejected at his leaving us, we bade Ron a sad and reluctant farewell; he tottered onto the plane and departed for England, leaving us broken in health and spirit... And that was that.

I'll certainly remember Ron Bennett with great affection. So, I think, will a lot of other U.S. fen from coast to coast.





# A FEW ME FAVS FARACO

BY PATTY MILNES

I am on the horns, as they say, of a dilemma.

You see, I adore fandom and (nearly) all the glorious off-beat individuals who inhabit it; but - whisper it softly - I'm afraid I no longer enjoy reading science fiction itself. To be honest, I'm frankly beginning to detest the bloody stuff.

I must confess I sometimes feel rather guilty about this - even at LaSFaS meetings. Now LaSFaS, as you may have heard, is not the most serious of fan-groups; conversation at Society meetings usually ranges from women, drink and movies, to drink, movies and women; but occasionally - just occasionally mind you - s-f has been known to raise its ugly head. At such times, when I see the enthusiasts of the group aglow with zeal and Sense of Wonder, I feel positively traitorous. I've often wondered what these zealots would do to me if they could read my thoughts - hang, draw and quarter me no doubt, and be damned to the mess on the new linoleum. Still, after they read this little True Confession they won't need ESP any more, will they?

To resume, I no longer like or read s-f; and I think the rot really set in about two years ago, shortly after I became Mrs. Frank Milnes. Before this, I'd been an absolutely avid reader of the genre - I mean it, absolutely avid! However, soon after my spouse and I moved into our rose-covered cottage in Maghull, I gradually found that I was reading less and less of the stuff; moreover, I began to acquire the heretical notion that it might be considerably over-rated....

Why this change of opinion? Perhaps it was due to the fact that Frank, my husband, brought to our new abode innumerable back numbers of Astounding, F. & SF, &c. (not to mention a small library of hardcovers), and I had the unenviable job of keeping the damn things tidy; or it may have been that he rarely had - or has - his nose out of Heinlein, Asimov and Sturgeon; but no, I don't really think these are valid reasons. I honestly believe that I no longer read s-f because I've suddenly become bored

to tears with Outer Space, Hyperspace, Aliens (both sluglike and godlike), New Technologies, and the half-baked conjectures of pulp-magazine hacks on the Future of Civilisation; most of all, I'm fed up to the back teeth with hackneyed plots and situations which are transferred to another time or solar system and glibly labelled s-f. \*\*

Also, I like my fictional characters to have at least some semblance of reality - I'm funny that way. Now, I'm genuinely unable to think of more than half-a-dozen s-f stories that I've read wherein the characters were real people, or even credible people! Most of them are merely stock cardboard-cutout figures with no more life in 'em than MaD Productions' new BEM. (Three of the above-quoted half-dozen stories I may add, stem from the pen of Eric Frank Russell, an exceptionally gifted story-teller who is squandering his talent, in my opinion, in this medium).

Perhaps, though, my recently-acquired preference for general fiction is merely a temporary reaction from a surfeit of s-f? But, no, I don't think that's the reason; at any rate, I've recently tried, after quite an interval, to become re-interested in several books and stories by erstwhile favourites, but I'm afraid the old enchantment is just no longer there. Let's face it, I seem to have reached the Dreaded Saturation-Point.

So what? you may grunt; and I'm well aware, dear friends, than many a better fan than I has gone GAFIA and retired from the fannish scene. But the whole point is, I don't wanna retire! I still enjoy fanzines which, as you will readily agree, have very little to do with s-f. I look forward with drooling anticipation to Conventions; the Liverpool gang are like brothers and sisters to me (well, perhaps that isn't quite the relationship, but you know what I mean); and I never miss one of the magnificent local parties if I can possibly help it.

But can one be a fan under false pretences? I'm not alone, I know; nearly half the current LaSFaS crew have rarely, if ever, opened an s-f book in their lives, and good luck to 'em... But you see, I'm more than merely indifferent to the medium; I regard most of it as mind-rotting, barely-literate trash - and yet I still think fen are wonderful!

Am I a schizophrenic?

And please, can I stay in fandom?— — —

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\*\* (Mrs. Milnes may have discovered the succinct and accurate definition of s-f that magazine editors and the perpetrators of anthologies have been seeking for a quarter of a century. - Ed.)



# TIRED OF FANDOM? - TRY THIS!

A Report On An Even Odder Enthusiasm

by Eric Benteliffe, ECLSFS

Historians, you may have noticed, like to give each Era a label - usually one which will trip lightly off the tongue, like the Ice Age (before Ekberg), the Stone Age, etc. Sociologists, have similar tendencies, and I'm inclined to think that one of the many appellations which will be employed to describe the Era we live in will be 'The Age Of The Hobbyist'.

Hobbies such as Philately (of which it isn't true to say "it'll get you nowhere") have been with us for quite some time; but never before has there been such a diversity of hobbies indulged in by so many people. Apart from such mundane spare-time indulgences as Big Game Hunting, Cigarette-Card Collecting, Bird-Watching (the feathered kind, that is), and, er... Science-Fiction Fandom, there are some real weirdies about.

Take, for instance, Omnibology.

Nice, impressive title, isn't it? And, like most of these generic terms, somewhat misleading. The Omnibologist doesn't collect Omnibuses, as one might reasonably suppose; however, I understand that a group of these fanatics has been known to band together and buy a 'bus, rather than allow it to meet an untimely end in the scrap-yard!

The Omnibologist is interested in Omnibuses (I make no apology for the frequent use of these two words; their resonance of sound is sufficient justification); and, like most hobbyists, his interests diverge within the generic term. There are Omnibologists who (pikers that they are) merely collect 'bus-tickets; there are more adventurous types who attempt to follow a certain vehicle throughout its career, from the moment it leaves the factory until (alas) its destination-indicator is torn asunder by evil-minded boys with ritual mouthings of 'Brighton... aagghh,' or 'Who wants to go to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, anyway!'

There are factions within the Omnibologist fraternity which think other factions are fuggheaded (sound familiar?) For example, those who spend their time actually riding on omnibuses, getting first-hand experience, have very little time for people like the compiler of "Omnibologist Checklist (A Complete Listing Of All Buses In Service With The North-Western Road Car Company Prior To 1939, With A Foreword By Conductor 335/M7)"...

And then there are Omnibologists who are interested only in omnibus-engines; Omnibologists who collect 'bus advertisements (these usually end up behind bars, after being unable to restrain themselves from acquiring a current edition); Omnibologists, even, who aren't at all interested in Omnibology but just go along for the ride, as it were. These latter are generally known as 'wives'.

Like the devotees of Certain Other pursuits, Omnibologists are prone to attempts at literacy. Not content with the professional publications issued for their edification and enjoyment, they publish amateur journals and newsheets, which bear, no doubt, titles like 'True Confessions Of A Driver On The Last Bus To RAF Wilmslow', 'Omnibologists Of The World Unite', or 'By Leyland Tiger Through Darkest Patagonia'.

I hear there was even an Omnibologist who collected Bus Stops; but this was carrying things too far, and anyway, he had to give it up owing to a slipped disc.

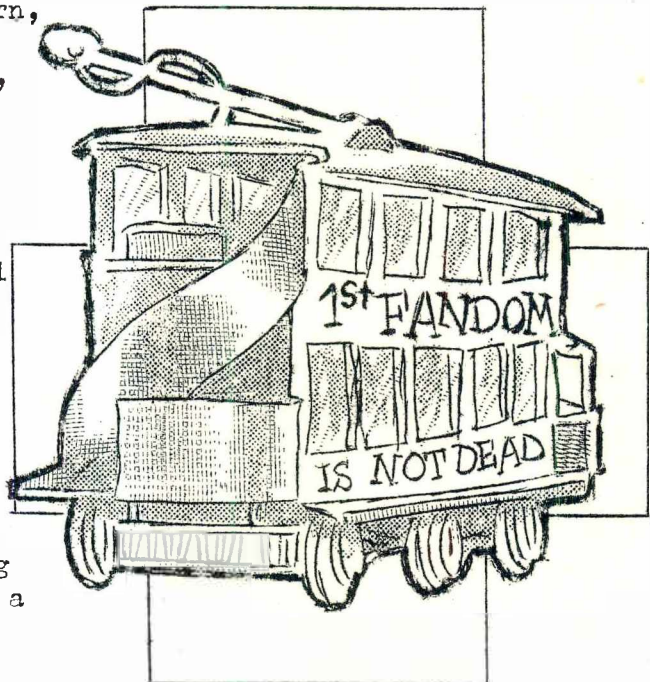
Omnibology, it may surprise you to learn, is International, and its devotees are in constant contact with one another. Imagine, if you will, the messages that must flash from nation to nation... as when, perhaps, a long-serving vehicle of the Stagley, Urpington and Brooksditch Joint Board has become a trifle delapidated and is sold to an African princeling who wishes to take all his wives out together.

"Dear Yves - Saw an old Crossley (red, with brown trim and off-white roof) being loaded on the Cross-Channel Ferry at Dover. Can you try and trace? -Bill."

"Dear Bill: Located your 'bus (1933 model - right?) just outside Lyons. Heading in general direction Marseilles. Will drop a line to Mahmoud in Algiers on your behalf. -Yves."

"Dear Bill - your 'bus ambushed by Tuaregs near Lake Chad; was last seen disappearing into the sunset pursued by Foreign Legion. They were actually shooting at it! Am making immediate protest to French Embassy - suggest you get everyone you know to do likewise."

No mundane hobby, this!



THE TRANS-ATLANTIC FAN FUND REALLY NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT -  
PLEASE CONTRIBUTE TO-DAY .

Cash and votes to Ron Bennett,  
The Cottage  
7 Southway  
Arthur's Avenue  
HARROGATE.



(Extracts from readers' letters, Contd.)

office for my early departure was that the deadly 'Chanty' had floored me, and that I'd slippdd away to conceal the pitiable state it had got me into!

You're back in Belfast now, Bob, so you can tank up to your heart's content with treacly, stygian porter. Are you sure this 'Chanty' stuff wasn't Ashanti? This is a Gold Coast beverage made from coconut-fluff, masticated in the mouths of the Ghanaian women and left to ferment in monkey-skulls...we're told it's pretty potent, too.

Peter Mabey,  
10 Wellington Sq.,  
Cheltenham.

... 'Scion's Fiction'; but why not have some real U-fen? Apart from serving as a dazzling contrast to the I-fen, they could provide the one thing that fandom needs above all others:

MONEY! After all, did not the Duke himself refer to s=f as "splendid stuff"? And are not the Goons the Royal Champions? And did not John Brunner lay down the financial foundations of I.C.I? There was another chap involved called Mond, but I don't think he's a fan...

Harrison writes that he's founding a Fan School of Speech and Etiquette.

Sandy Sanderson,  
7, Inchmery Rd.,  
London, S.E.6.

...Material appears to be somewhat mixed... Best item was undoubtedly the Willis piece, but I don't really know what to say about the rest...

Never mind ; you'll think of something.

Will Jenkins,  
5557 Pemberton St.,  
Philadelphia 43, Pa.

...I enjoyed, especially, the account of our visit to Liverpool. (Ah Egoboo, I love you). That is a very lovely phrase, "with the exquisite politeness of the very drunk", and the best part is that it's all TRUE!

Yes, that was a very lovely binge, post Loncon.

S. Roberts, FBAS,  
19a Courtiers Dr.,  
Bishops Cleeve,  
Glos.

...Just what are you trying to prove? That Science-Fiction and its fellow-travellers are worth more than a passing sickly grin? As for forming a British S.F. Association - well, really! Is it worth it? Even if you do manage to improve the present standard of s.f. literature, do you honestly believe that more people will be interested in joining your Association? And what poor return the member gets for his £1 compared with his Russian counterpart in the S.S.F.Scty...

We can see that you've been talking to your next-door neighbour, or perhaps you wrote this the morning-after-the-night-before with him, mmmmmh?

Jim Cawthorn,  
4, Wolseley St.,  
Gateshead 8.

Ron Brimer's letter was one of the funniest items in this issue. Keith Freeman's comments -so far as I could separate them from their background of eyestraining egoboo (who is Benet Tron, anyway?) - seemed to tie in nicely with the BSFA announcement. Though to judge from the majority of fanmags, s.f. is

just an unconvincing excuse for the existence of fandom. Still, the BSFA might succeed, if only on sheer novelty value.

Yus, mate.

Laurence Sandfield,  
25 Leighton Rd.,  
London, W.13.

...What's this 'THINK'? Advice to Ron Bennett? Or a spelling mistake? ...Liked Eric the Bent's comments, and must agree about the great HARRISON... oh, let us be joyful!

Never before have fans thought of so many different reasons for the duping of one word. We like your theory tho' !

Ethel Lindsay,  
Surbiton.

I read through the imposing list of LaSFAs officials with interest, but what please is a 'London Man'?

A London Man is ~~wha~~ Harrison is.

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Thanks also, for their letters and comments, to the following:  
Don Allen; Ron Bennett; Sid Birchby; Alan Dodd; Dick Eney; Terry Jeeves; Dave and Ruth Kyle; Ken McIntyre; Bob Madle; Archie Mercer; Jim & Dorothy Ratigan; Bob Richardson; Harry Turner; et al.

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(Contd. from page 6)

later the clubrooms on the Monday.\*\* The gang says "Thanks for the three thousand dollar cheque, Dave."\*\* Talking of welcome visitors, we are still wondering when we'll see YOU, John Berry. After your 10,000 mile jaunt to the New World, what about investigating some of the sensitive fannish faces of the Old ? We'll even find you a bed ! (Don't worry you other 'regular' out-of-towners, on that weekend there will still be The Divan !)\*\* Now, complete the Tafform, mail it, and then read on.....

-Norman Shorrocks.

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.....AND POOH TO PANAC !

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[illegible]