



The Texas SF Inquirer

Issue 46

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Wellcome to issue #46. Somehow, we've found our way back to being on schedule. What a concept! Now if it will just stay that-a-way.

Allergy sufferers everywhere around this area are agreeing that the pollen's been especially nasty this year, especially right now. Even people who didn't consider themselves allergy sufferers are able to commiserate and finally understand a little of what the more pollen-sensitive among us have been going through. It's been a royal pain in the head.

I just hope that this colophon is at least semi-lucid. I've been off my drugs for the second time in three weeks, so hopefully I'm making a little sense. Anyway, all I can say is that whoever said "Misery loves company" was the worst of sadists and should've been keelhauled. I'm looking forward to the first frost, and I hate cold weather.

Maybe you will be picking this up at ArmadilloCon. If so, enjoy yourselves. If you don't get it until later, I hope you made it to the Con, and that you did enjoy yourselves.

Looks like I should've written that editorial about Perot — he's decided to run for CEO of our country after all. He's got to watch out, though. The way he keeps changing his mind, we might mistake him for a politician. He's definitely lost a lot of credibility with the people who were going to vote him in. What chance he had to win probably went away when he did the first time. Still, I want to see his *first class campaign*, and I dearly hope he can rattle both Bush and Clinton. Washington needs to be shaken up real bad, and neither of the two main Presidential candidates can do it.

Anyway, get out there and vote this November. Vote for someone, or vote against someone, but vote. If nothing else, talk to someone who's views you despise, find out who they're voting for, and counteract their vote. Just vote.

-Dale

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Boondock Central:

Random Observations: New Hobbies and Political News

by Alexander R. Slate

Well, as you may or may not be aware of, Laurel and I recently bought a house. We bought a VA repo. That's an interesting process, made worse by the fact that we were going to leave for our vacation on the 4th of July weekend; first to attend GalaxyFair, then to head up to New England.

VA repo houses are listed on Thursdays. You can't even look at a house or make a bid on them before they are officially listed. Once they're listed you can go through any real estate broker to bid on them. The bid has to be in by the following Tuesday. If you win the bid, you still have to qualify for the mortgage and then close on the house.

Laurel gave our landlord our intent to move at the beginning of June. We didn't get the first house we bid on, but did win the bid on the second house the following week. We pushed the mortgage company to get approval quickly, and were able to close on the house with the VA on the 25th of June. Not much time left.

Fortunately, we had started packing up stuff a while back and started moving boxes over the evening we closed. The movers came for the majority of our stuff Saturday the 27th. There were still at least 10 car trips afterwards to finish moving our possessions. We had to get stuff set up and get the old house cleaned in the next couple of days.

Add to this the fact that I had to get a lot of work done during this time period because I would be away from my job for the following 2-1/2 weeks (and I've already told you how busy my new job is keeping me); and I think you can get the idea that this was a stress-ful time. On top of this, the vacation entailed a lot of driving; from SA to Dallas, then from Dallas to Winchester, VA in an all-nighter, from there to Philadelphia, from Philly to Central New Hampshire, NH to Calais, Maine, then to Boston, back to Philly, followed by a 3-day drive back to SA. After we got back I was home for just over a week, then off to Ohio for a 2-week course. Oh, the fun never ends.

The upshot of all this is now we own our own place again. A definite plus. A place we can really call our own. No more worries about increasing rent (the house payments including taxes and insurance are \$100 cheaper than the rent payments alone would have been on the rental house in Converse after they upped the rent on us by \$35 like they wanted to in July). And definitely the last move for a number of foreseeable years to come.

Everyone please note the new address: 8603 Shallow Ridge, San Antonio, TX 78239, (512) 654-9604. Also, in November our area code changes to 210.

Anyway, as Leah Zeldes Smith (among others) can attest, a new house means lots of work. Now most of my friends don't particularly think of me as too much a handyman. It's not that I can't do fix up things around the house, it's just that I've usually figured I had better things to do with my time. However house repairs cost money. Particularly if you are going to pay someone else to do them for you.

So guess what I got for Father's Day. Three how-to books; **Decks & Patios**, **Children's Play Equipment**, and **All About Trees**. For my birthday I got a large tool chest and two more books, **How to Install Ceramic Tile** and **Basic Plumbing Techniques**. Get the idea? I've since bought a few more books.

Actually, I've found I really like working on the house. Except for mowing the lawn, I can do without mowing the lawn (and can hardly wait until Josh gets old enough). So far I've changed two door locks, put in a dead bolt (from scratch), put up mini-blinds in the kids' rooms, hung a curtain on the front door, fixed a leaky hose in the master bathroom, temporarily fixed a gap between the patio door and the frame (I've still got to fix it permanently.), replaced part of the fence, and replaced a number of roof shingles that blew off in a windstorm. I've also started to troubleshoot the dishwasher, which won't work.

Stuff left to do is almost endless. Repairs include finishing troubleshooting the dishwasher, replacing more roof shingles, plugging a small leak in the roof over the garage, putting blinds up in the office area (really the dining room), our bedroom and the master bath, and a curtain over the patio door. Other plans include putting ceiling fans in the kids' rooms, painting the girls' room (Josh likes his white), building the kids a swing set/play equipment, and shelves for the kids' closets. Long term, we intend to enclose the patio and make it into an office (that we'll let someone else do) and make our selves a new covered deck (that I'll do). We haven't decided on a wood or flagstone deck, yet.

(continued on page 10)

Profile:

Judith Tarr

by Alexander R. Slate

Usually, I get a good feel for the people I interview. I really didn't with Judith Tarr. Judith prefers answering questions about her work to ones about herself. That is understandable, yet I feel that to understand the writer offers a better insight into their work.

Most writers have an inner core that is alone unto themselves, and no matter how much they interact with the outer world they all keep a little bit of themselves set aside. With Judith this may be more so, and is likely the result of two, related factors. The first is that she was very much a loner growing up in central Maine; something she knew, but didn't fully appreciate until she got to college. The second, which undoubtedly contributed to the first is that she is almost completely deaf, having developed congenital nerve deafness around age 5.

The latter is evident in conversations. She is an apt lip reader and had no trouble understanding my mumbled speech during our talk; but her own speech is mildly slurred. As a result Judith can't be reached by phone, and conducts long distance business by way of the mail or on the GENIE computer net. One of the reasons she likes working with her current publisher, TOR, is because most of the editorial staff are also on the net, which makes communications easy.

Anyway, Judith Tarr was born in Augusta, Maine in the latter years of the baby boom. Her father was a civil engineer who ran the local waterworks in Lewiston Harbor, where they lived. Judith's mother was an elementary school teacher. Judith's hobbies were horses, books, and writing. She wanted to be a teacher, until she reached college and her advisors talked her out of it (though she would eventually end up teaching).

After high school, Judith went to Mount Holy Oak College in South Hadley, Massachusetts. Part of the reason for attending Mount Holy Oak was her deafness, but the major reason was that the college had a good classics department and Judith was going to be a Latin and English major. Though Mount Holy Oak was nominally a women's college, its location amid other schools in the area meant that there were males who attended classes at Mount Holy Oak, and students from Mt. Holy Oak sometimes attended classes at one of the other colleges. Yet the school provided some thing of a safe haven for Judith, away from what was an otherwise male dominated academic world and let her slowly integrate herself into the social society.

After graduating from Mt. Holy Oak, Judith went to Cambridge University in England for 2 years. It was here that she first met organized fandom and got the idea that those stories she had been writing for herself just might be publishable.

After earning the equivalent of a masters' degree at Cambridge, Judith got an assistantship in the classics department at Yale where she stayed for a year. She then spent 2 years teaching Latin at a Maine high school before returning to Yale. She completed her PhD in 1988.

During the time that Judith worked on getting a PhD, she was also writing. After returning from England she got an agent. The agent didn't particularly care for the novel that Judith had sent, but she liked the partial work that came with it. Judith completed *Isle of Glass* a year later, and it saw in print in 1985. It was also during this period that Judith started attending her first SF conventions.

Judith has been a full time writer (not counting being a student) since 1984. Yet she also teaches part time because she likes it. Currently, she is a visiting professor in the classics department at Wesleyan; also a visiting writer with the liberal studies department. She teaches 2 courses a year. That is she did, up until just recently. More on this later.

Isle of Glass, like the majority of Judith's published work to date, is a primarily historical novel with a fantastic element. Note that this is a fantastic element, not a fantasy element. The *Hound and Dagger* trilogy, along with the related works, are SF, not fantasy. The main characters are (contrary to what most readers think) not elves, but human mutants. Works like these take a lot of research, but are actually easier to do (contrary to what Judith believed at first) than her books which are set in a totally made up world, such as the *Avaryan Rising* series. One of her books, *Ars Magica*, which is about Pope Silvester II, is "a term paper gone bad."

Being a classical scholar, the tone of Judith's books is realistic and believable. What is also interesting is the way she weaves the stories into actual history. Significant action occurs, and the characters interact with major historical figures of the time, yet this doesn't affect the actual flow of history. Judith accomplished this by setting the kingdom of Gwynedd in the place of Brittany, an area which was relatively isolated in terms of historical impact.

(Continued on page 10)

Book Reviews:

2 Recent Books

by Lynn Ward

Lost Futures by Lisa Tuttle (Dell Abyss; \$4.99) is marketed as psychological horror. It could as well have been marketed as SF, dark fantasy or slipstream. Whatever the name, it's a damn good book.

Borrowing from quantum physics, the story posits that at certain crucial points in our life we "split off", both sides of either-or choices existing as parallel time lines. The book's protagonist is a woman whose life has been emotionally stunted since her brother's death. She starts to glimpse her alternate lives, then to slip into them.

Finally, she is literally displaced by the darkest of her alternate selves. Her salvation lies in what she's long avoided: taking responsibility for herself.

Tuttle's crisp, economical style entraps you, its pace accelerating until you share the woman's dilemma. Who is whom? How are reality and identity created and maintained? And how is the worst horror of all confronted — the loss of Self.

Not a new premise, nor new questions. Tuttle asks them, though, with style and subtlety. A good read; recommended.

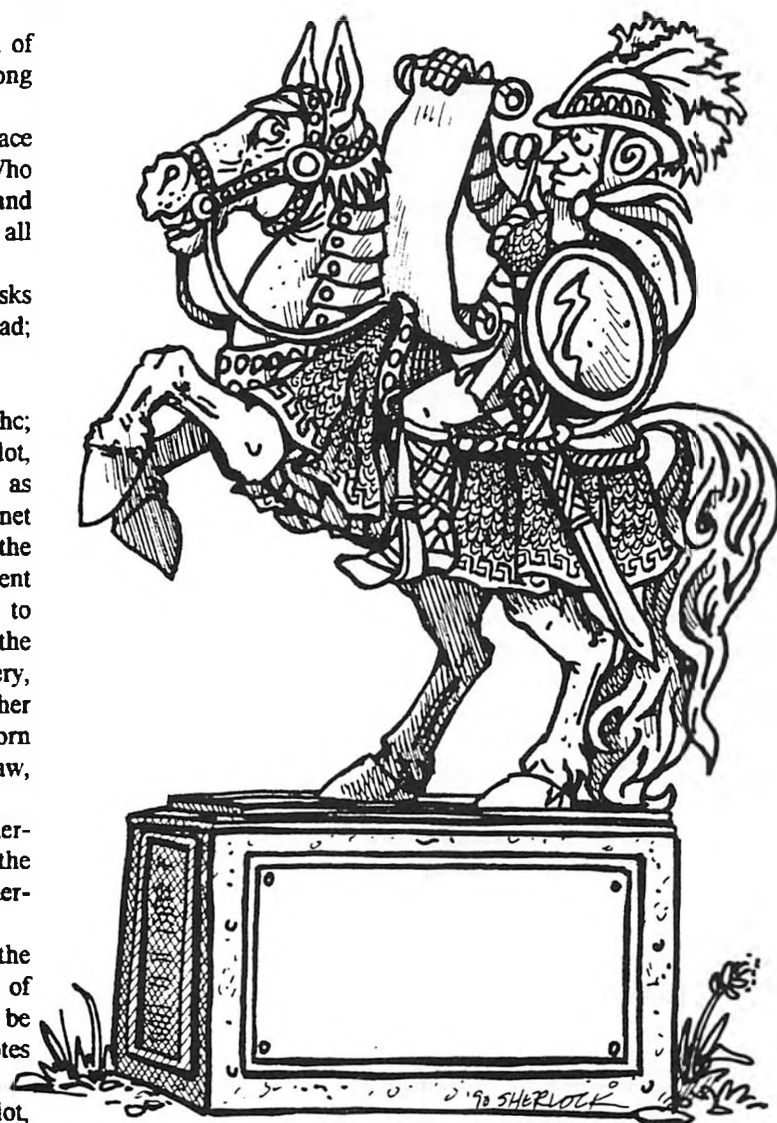
Sideshow, by Sherri S. Tepper (Bantam Spectra hc; \$17.50) sprawls all over the place, crammed with plot, philosophies and diatribes. In the same universe as **Grass** and **Raising The Stones**, it's set on the planet Elsewhere. Here, cultural pluralism is practiced in the extreme. Societies/cultures exist as totally independent entities. The central government functions mainly to see none of the separate societies interfere with the others. Sounds good, until you realize that slavery, brutal male chauvinism, child sacrifice and every other human evil exists untrammelled. Nor can anyone born into a given society leave. By the luck of the draw, you're condemned to misery.

Into this extreme non-melting pot comes an external threat; a polite request by parties unknown for the government to "reconsider its position" of non-interference. And then ...

That is as far as I go. Tepper's plot weaves the moral question of interference with other cultures, of whether good and evil in fact exist and can be interpreted, of whether organized religion promotes moral behavior or sabotages it.

As I said, it sprawls, weaves subplot on subplot, stops along the way to hit the reader over the head with

Tepper's biases (some of which I share, but less extremely). **Sideshow** defies a clean, neat review. It enthralls, angers, bores, baffles. It's worth the trip. If you are a Tepper fan, buy the hardcover. If you're less of a fan, buy the paperback. You won't read a better (or more untidy, self-indulgent) brain exercise this year.



A Gaelic Experience

by Carol Stepp

I hear from Alex and a couple of others that my new column seems to be well received. I am grateful for the chance to write it, and hope to continue doing so until I am given reason not to any longer.

Alex also tells me there is a letter from someone in Winchester, but I have not seen it and won't comment on it at present. *[Actually, London, about Winchester - ARS]* Perhaps after I read it I may want to reply.

I will comment on why Winchester is one of the places I most want to see. It is a place with very historical significance in very early English history as it was the first capital of England under Saxon rule. But there is also a *sf/f* reason for my interest. I got into *sf/f* quite late in life - when I was 40-something and read my first science fiction series (Asimov's *Foundation* series). When I discovered the genre, I had to dabble in every facet of it to find out what pleased me the most. One of those facets was gaming - RPG and board.

While playing around with the RPG, I developed three different alter-egos. One of those three belonged to a medieval world (I thought, although I now think she is earlier). Her name is Lady Caroline Ashley of Winchester. The Lady is for royalty, the Caroline is for my own (legal) name of Carolyn, and Ashley came from my subconscious. I decided to put her at Winchester because the time of its greatest importance was a very romantic time, in my personal opinion. In an unexpected development, when I looked for a place called Ashley in my British Ordnance Survey Road Atlas, I found there are two villages, or townships, and one of them is right outside Winchester.

One other historical note about the name of Ashley. During the reign of Charles II, he disbanded the Chancellor form of government and the group called the CABAL was established. The five originators of the CABAL - from whom the name derives - were Clif-
ford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lancaster. So I chose a family name that was quite important in English government.

My interest in active gaming did not last because I didn't have the time to spend to do it properly. However, all three of my alter-egos still exist, and perhaps I'll find a way to use them someday.

As stated in the last column, my trip to Britain has indeed expanded. It seems now I will leave here about 1 June and stay until mid-September. Since that last

column, I have joined an organization called the "St. Andrews Society of New Hampshire". They hold Highland Games at Loon Mountain, New Hampshire, the second Saturday after Labor Day every year. Next year they will be held on 18 September. So I think I will time my departure from Scotland to be in New Hampshire for the games next year. I hope to have a full kilt made in Glasgow from my family tartan, and that would be a great place to wear it for the first time.

Something about my trip I have not mentioned before - I plan on writing a book about the trip through Scotland upon my return - historical, anecdotal, and travelogue. I also want to establish an informal class at UT wherein I will show slides and talk about the places I went. With that in mind, I am including a day trip to the Orkney Islands and a bus trip across the top of Caithness.

I have also enquired about a 2-day stop in Glencoe where they have 2- to 7-day meeting which include "all room and board and instruction". I don't know exactly what that is about, but for those who don't know, Glencoe is a valley where the Campbells under the order of James I of England slaughtered 38 MacDonalds because they believed, wrongly, that the MacDonalds had not taken oaths of fealty to the English king. The MacDonald Chief had taken the oath at the local garrison, but on the last day he was allowed to, and the garrison did not get the word to the proper authorities that the oath had been given. Thus, the massacre.

I will be staying with a Gaelic-speaking family on Skye as headquarters to move around the island for about a week. I also have a couple of addresses in Stornaway, Lewis (Steornabhagh, Leodhas), to write to, so that part of the trip may expand a little. Lewis is, of course, where the Standing Stones of Callinish I have spoken of earlier are.

Lest I offend anyone because of my emphasis on the Scot part of my trip, England and Wales hold interest for me as well. But those two places have been written of and visited by many and there is little I can say now that isn't already known. I will talk more of that part of the trip from a personal viewpoint on my return. But my ancestry is Scots-Irish (and German) and I have a great interest in learning about my Scots background.

One last comment this time around - in order to keep costs down, I will be backpacking, and camping

where I am not staying in hostels or personal homes. If there is anyone out there who might be interested in joining me for any or all of the trek through Scotland (at your expense), let me know. I will be traveling alone, and my itinerary in Scotland itself will be pretty loose (except for Glencoe and Skye, and even those places allow for other travelers, with reservations.).

My Druidry training is sort of on hold. Mostly because I don't want to spend the money necessary right now to take the training. I am continuing to do personal reading. I am finding that the more I read about one philosophy, the more I am led to others in the same subject. Paganism includes Druidry, Wicca, Shamanism, Freemasonry, and other philosophies, and it does *not* preclude Christianity. It all really depends on one's attitude toward God and the gods. But I'll say no more now about this at the present time.

I have not got a specific god to talk about this time. Lately, I have been reading several different books which speak of magic and gods and high fantasy - *The Adept, Book Two: The Lodge of the Lynx* and *The Mabinogion*, and am currently re-reading the Patricia Kennealy *Keltiad* trilogy. So I've got a head stuffed with Brigid, Tuatha de Danaan, Math, Don, Dana, Lir, and many more names of godly and/or sacred entities. Perhaps by next column I'll have some of them sorted out and can talk intelligently about them.

I haven't been to any movies lately. There have been several I wanted to see, but I haven't had time, and not really the money, to see any. So I can't give any opinions this time around.

The latest Star Trek Austin Regulars newsletter has a rather nice bit of advice this month. I wrote it in calligraphy and put it up on my office wall. It says, and I quote from the newsletter, "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by things you didn't do than by the ones you did. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

Laurie Cabot

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I don't want to make this column a place where I philosophize on my thought about life and politics, etc., so I won't. But I will tell you what this advice says to me. Far too many of us stay in jobs or situations we are unhappy in because of "security" and we rarely do what we really want to do. We are stuck in our own personal prisons. I am guilty of this. I recently got fed up with my job where I have been unhappy for a long time and turned in a resignation. I decided to buy a car and do something with my dealership business, but it meant no trip next year. It was a very trying time for me, and people I work for and with began giving me a hard time about leaving without security (and in truth, because they don't want the bother of hiring and training a new person). I have, therefore, decided to stick to it for another 7-9 months, strictly for the sake of the trip. But when I return from Britain, I am going to try to survive doing only those things I want to do — arts, crafts, writing, artistic endeavors, the dealership — with the knowledge that I can register with a temp for enough work to keep from starving or living on the street. I may even decide to leave Austin, but I can't make that kind of decision now. The informal class I want to have may best be done here in Austin at UT where I am known and where I know people and procedures. But the main thing is that I don't to ever get back into a situation where I continue to be unhappy for the sake of "security".

Sorry about the soapbox. I'll try not to do it again.

Books: *The Adept: Book Two: The Lodge of the Lynx* by Katherine Kurtz and Deborah Turner Harris. This book was easily as good, if not better, than the first of the series. After reading Katherine Kurtz's *Lammas Night* between the *Adept* books, I am struck with her interest in the black magic of Hitler and his minions. For this book does continue that concept which I first read of back in *Lammas Night*. I can't explain further why I make this comment because it would give away a very important, and telling, part of the plot, but the story leaves one "chilled". And, of course, the way is left open for more books. I don't know how many stories the two authors have planned for this series, but it seems to me it could go on for a long time.

The story takes place in Scotland, with the major characters from the first book. This time, instead of the Highland and Islands, the action takes place in Edinburgh, Perth, Montrose Abbey and town, and the Cairngorms (a set of gorgeous mountains in the western part of the Fife district — or southern part of Moray — I'm not definite on the dividing lines in that part of Scotland). There are a couple of scenes at Balmoral, the Scots home of Britain's royal family.

The book carries through the magical abilities of Adam Sinclair, the Adept, and his far-seeing artist

protégé, Peregrine Lovat, and of course, the police chief friend Noel McLeod, and gives a great deal of information about the Freemasons — an organization I was not familiar with and am now interested in learning more about. On a more practical level, the book reads smoothly, and will keep your attention — it is another one you won't want to put down. I recommend it, but read the first one, if you haven't already, as it lays the groundwork and makes the characters more understandable. (The new book also mentions an event or two from the first story as background for certain events.)

As for reading other than that mentioned previously, I read a couple of mysteries — one of which had a plot line that included some things about Wayland the Smith, and *The List of Adrian Messenger* which I had seen on television, but never read.

Clannad has a new tape (and CD) out called "Anam". Fans of *Clannad* should get it. Non-fans of *Clannad* will become so if they get it. Anam means "Life, Soul". (See the Latin influence? "Life" in Latin is "anima".)

Since my last column, the concept of the Scots Gaelic classes has changed somewhat. In fact, I'm not sure what I'm going to do. I couldn't get one suitable time for everyone to meet, so had decided to hold it three times a week - same lesson each time - so everyone would have a choice on which time to attend each week - besides having to find a place to have it. But, I have three cats that live indoors, and my place isn't exactly where I want to have people in, for the moment. So the class is on hold temporarily, while I try to figure out something. In the meantime, I have received my first set of books and tapes from *The Gaelic Echo*, and have received my first newsletter from "An Comunn Gaidhealach Ameireaga", "The Gaelic Society of America". In addition, I have the address for the Scots branch of the Gaelic Society and will be in contact with them. So I will be learning the language while I try to work out a class.

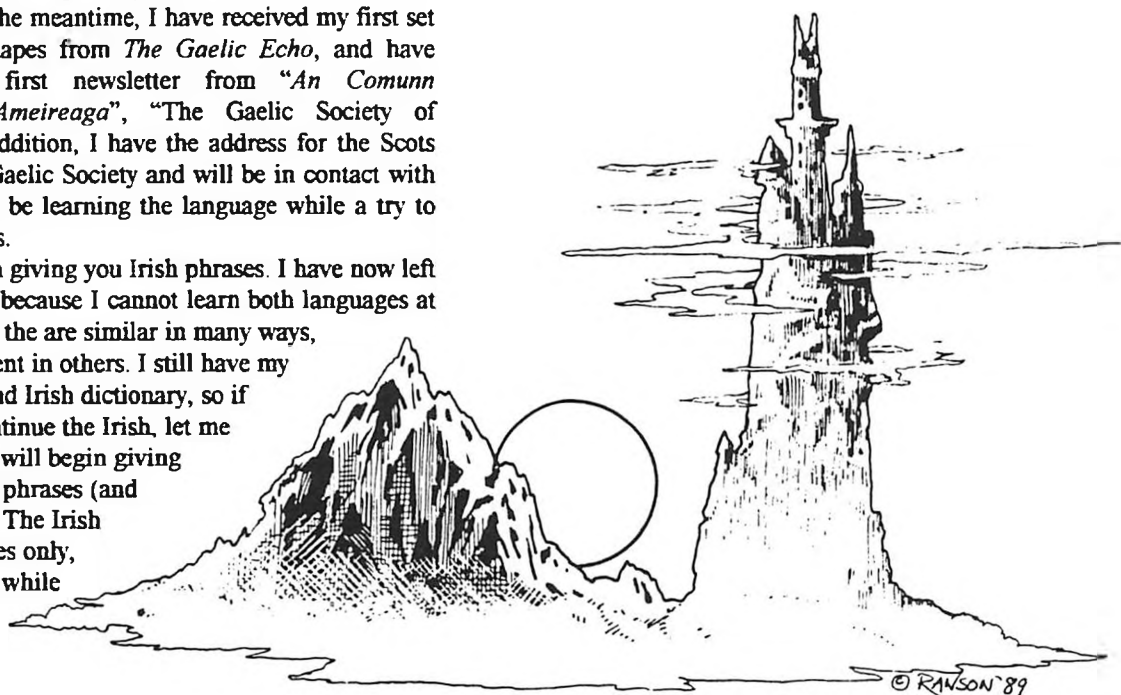
I have been giving you Irish phrases. I have now left the Irish group because I cannot learn both languages at the same time - they are similar in many ways, but quite different in others. I still have my phrase books and Irish dictionary, so if you want to continue the Irish, let me know, please. I will begin giving you some Scots phrases (and minor lessons). The Irish would be phrases only, while they last, while the Scots will be on-going and a

little more detailed. Until I hear otherwise, I'll stick to the Scots Gaelic (Irish Gaelic is pronounced "Gaylic", the Scots, "Gallic").

Beannacht leat, beannacht deithi's mhuintire. "My blessings of farewell on you; the blessing of the gods and the people..." That comes from the Patricia Kennealy *Keltiad* and is Celtic of some kind - but I don't know which, and she does not specify. Rough pronunciation is "Bah-nakh let, bah-nakh di-hi svinteeeri". "How are you" is Scots is "Ciamar a tha thu?" (kimmerrra ha oo?). "I am fine" is "Tha mi gu math" (Ha mee goo mah - note the similarity to the Irish). "Please" is "Na 'se do thoile" (nah sheh daw hol eh). Finally, "goodbye" is "beabacht leat" (bah-nakh let - see above). "Ch" is always pronounced like the ch in loch, never like choose. "C" is always hard, like k, never soft like s. G is always hard, like guess, never soft like gee. Mh and bh are usually pronounced like v, but may sometimes sound like w. I'll let you know which when I teach a word.

LOCs about this column should go to *The Texas SF Inquirer*. However, personal comments, suggestions, or criticisms can be sent to me at 1817 E. Oltorf #2012, Austin, TX 78741-4022.

Slainte math.



Convention Review:

LibertyCon 6

by Bob Reedy

The convention was at the Comfort Hotel in downtown Chattanooga, TN, near the Tennessee River. The Tennessee Aquarium and a natural history museum are in the area.

The Guest of Honor was Katherine Kurtz, author of the Deryni series, *The Adept* (two books), and other works. Art Guest of Honor was Kevin Ward. Special Guest was Will Bradley (Brad Strickland) and Toastmaster was Wilson "Bob" Tucker.

The art show and dealers room opened at 3pm Friday. I bought Katherine Kurtz's book *The Adept: Lodge of the Lynx*, and visited the art show. The masquerade trophies were on display in the art show. The art was equal to ArmadilloCon's art.

Programming began about 7pm, although by then the gaming was already going strong. Chris Appel gave an interesting computer art demonstration, showing how he did the artwork for a computer role-playing game. At eight o'clock were the guest introductions. Wilson Tucker suggested we give our clothes away as donations to go to a nudist camp on the bus. After the introductions came casino night where one purchased, where one purchased Libertybucks (\$1,000 for every dollar). The proceeds go to charity but could be used for the charity art auction which occurred after the gambling. A lip sync contest also took place during the casino action. There were only 5 entries in the contest, but they did well.

At the charity art auction, bidding was pretty spirited. Minimum bid was usually \$10,000 Libertybucks, but that varied on some items. A dance followed the auction.

Saturday began with breakfast and a swim. Some of the programming included: children's art workshop, writer's workshop, costuming workshop, science workshop, various panels and the Guest Artist Hour. I attended a humorous reading by Will Bradley and Thomas Fuller, and followed it up with a personal interview of Katherine Kurtz by Jerry Page. Katherine Kurtz was the only reason I attend this convention. I enjoy her novels greatly, and was able to get her to autograph a book I brought with me. After that, I attended a panel on Psi or Sci-Fi with Wendy Webb.

Channel 3 on the hotel's cable TV was the video channel and there were three days of programming. In

the lobby, video monitors gave convention information. The cafe had its regular menu while the dining room served buffets for breakfast and dinner. The consuite served beer and soft drinks.

There was a banquet Saturday evening, with a game of Sci-Fi Jeopardy just prior to it. Three contestants were selected at random from those who wanted to participate. At the banquet, the Guests of Honor gave short Thank-yous for being there.

The regular art auction was at 8pm. The art at the auction had low-priced bids, but the bidding drove some of the prices up. However, only 2 items went for around \$100. A piece I bid on was not at auction so I purchased it Sunday morning. There was a Masquerade, which was shown on channel 3, followed by a dance. Channel 3 was available in all the rooms.

That night, I went to two room parties — Atlanta in '95, and ConCat.

Sunday morning, I attended a panel on the news report from July 12, 2042. The panelists played like newscasters giving the news of that year; it was well done. Next, Katherine Kurtz gave a reading from her new book, which is due out in November. The book is called *King Javan's Year* — he is king for a year.

Katherine Kurtz is a beautiful lady, and gave a marvelous reading. Everyone wanted her to read more, even the whole book. However, the book is her longest at about 810 pages. She said we have a monster read in store. She is planning another *Adept* book with Deborah Turner Harris, and is also planning another *Kelson* trilogy, after *Heirs of Saint Camber* is finished. I got another autograph and talked with her.

Uncle Timmy and his staff ran the convention. The closing hour was a let's bitch at Uncle Timmy session — everything is his fault. They said that attendance was down to 308 from about 400. The limit was 550. There were various gripes and suggestions.

I left for the airport about 3:30pm Sunday. I felt it was a good convention, but I think I am more satisfied with ArmadilloCon. ArmadilloCon has more panels and readings. I probably won't go back — it was a one-time affair because of Katherine Kurtz being there.

(continued from page 3)

One of my favorite places to visit has become Builder's Square. I love just going through the place and imagining the various projects I'd love to do on the house if we only had the time and money.

On to politics. I'm miffed at the press. They've told us a little about the presidential race. Damn little, they'd rather cover the petty squabbles and the 'star factor' version of things, then tell us what the candidates believe in and stand for (aside from the mudslinging the two parties are trying to do on each other). Meanwhile they've told us nothing about any of the other races. All the members of the House of Representatives are up for reelection (and I'm in a brand new Congressional district), a County Judgeship is up for grabs here, as is the Post of Texas Railroad Commissioner (an extremely powerful and important post in this state), as well as a slew of other positions. We've heard nothing on candidate positions for these races. And there probably won't be anything until the League of Women Voter's pullout guide in the paper the Sunday just before the election.

I'd like to hear a little more than what will be in this guide (it's a help, but space in it is too limited to cover but the barest of issues for each race). I'd also like to have it sooner. There's a chance I may have to be away on election day, in which case I'd have to vote absentee earlier. And I would like to make an informed decision, DAMN IT!!

But, that's enough for this rant. Enjoy the issue.



(continued from page 4)

Judith is currently working on a number of different projects. She is writing a novel about Alexander the Great in Egypt, she is collaborating on a novel for Jerry Pournelle's *War World* series, she is in the planning stages on a short story, and is also working on a sequel to *Fall of Princes*.

All this may seem like a lot, but Judith actually doesn't work every day. When she does she tries to write at least five pages in one stretch. But there's a lot to occupy her time besides the writing and the teaching. Judith likes to travel, she also trains horses and reads, mostly murder mysteries. Judith also spends a lot of time on GENIE (the computer net).

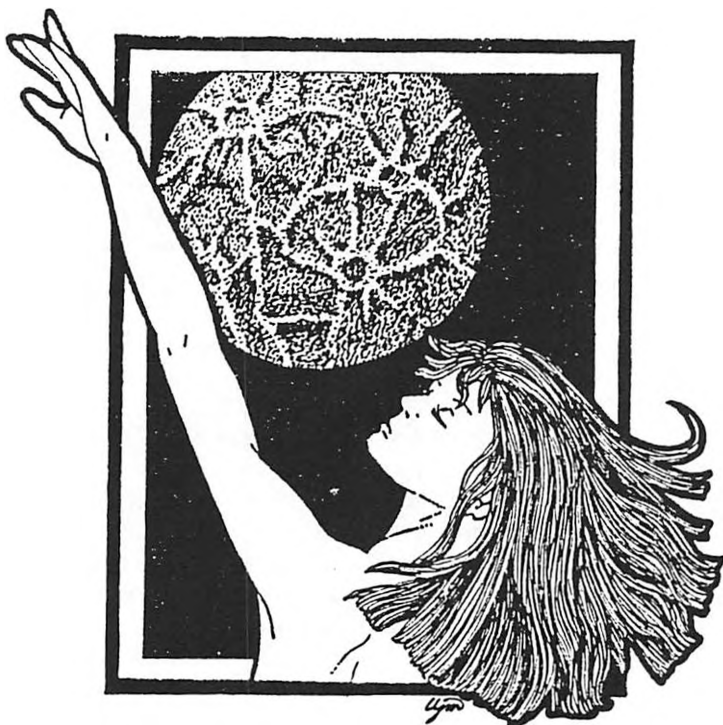
Recently, Judith has had a few other items to occupy her time as well. She's acquired two cats (one from a sibling, and one from the Humane Society) and is in the process of acquiring a horse (she's looking at Andalusians). As if that weren't enough, she just completed a move from one corner of the country to another.

When I asked Judith about her outlook on life, she responded, "I don't have a philosophy of life, I just live it. I don't have time to think about that. I'm not a philosophical or theoretical person. To hell with theory, go out and do it."

"I'm an intuitive, seat of the pants writer. My purposes in writing are; one, to have a good time, two, to make money, and three, to tell a story that I couldn't have told in any other way."

Intuitive she may be, but Judith notes a lot of influences on her works. They include Katherine Kurtz's *Deryni* books, the myths about Alexander the Great and LeGuin's *Earthsea* trilogy (on the *Avarian Rising* trilogy), Poul Anderson, some of Anne McCaffery's books, and Andre Norton's *Witch World* books.

Which just about finishes the interview I had with Judith Tarr. I learned a lot, but I still don't feel that I really know her. There's more there...waiting...hidden.



Convention Review:

GalaxyFair 92 & ArtCon IV

review by Alexander R. Slate

It's two, two, two cons in one! Yes, Galaxy Fair 92 and ArtCon IV were held concurrently (that means together) at the Sheraton Park Central in Dallas over the 4th of July weekend. These two cons were not held last year and it's good to see it back (from here on in the article I'm going to refer to them as one convention)..

This years offering was a little less ambitious in scope but a lot better organized, at least to the casual observer (me). The con offered something for almost every aspect of fandom, no lets make that a lot for almost every aspect of fandom. The only group not represented were the faanish fans, though there was one panel on "Fanzines, APAs, and Other Works of Masochism". It was very heavily oriented towards media zines, though.

The convention is very much due to the labor and inspiration of one person, Teresa Patterson (ex of the FACT Board of Directors) and she is to be credited for a good effort and a job well done (not always the same).

There are many things good about Galaxy Fair and ArtCon; the fact that there is almost something for everyone, having a variety of panels running at the same time, running writers' workshops as part of the con, and bringing in a variety of interesting guests.

Speaking of which, here is the guest lineup. For GalaxyFair, Author Guest Diane Duane, Special Guest Peter Morwood, Media Guest Majel Barrett Roddenberry, Editor Guest Kristine Kathryn Rusch, Another Special Guest Dean Wesley Smith, Artist Guest Alan Gutierrez, ArtCon Guest of Honor Keith Birdsong, Toastmaster Robert Lynn Asprin, Yet Another Special Guest Jack W. Crain, Gaming Guest Aaron Allston, and a host of others.

There is also a very big and varied art show. There are a lot of big name artists who send art to this convention, in part because of Teresa's group, Pegasus Management, who are well known and respected for the art shows they manage and the fact that Teresa brings in one of the best art auctioneers available, one Bob Asprin. Watching Bob work a crowd is really amazing. Yet there's a lot of room for the artist who's not as well know either.

The dealer's room is also of good size, if a little light on book dealers. The consuite is large and comfortable and has more than just chips and dips (even if it isn't up to the Portland Westercon consuite or the Ar-

madilloCon consuite standards). The masquerade was also enjoyable.

The Sheraton is a good place to hold a convention. There is lots of room and the staff is very courteous. Granted the hotel restaurant is a bit pricey, but since the hotel is on the loop, there are lots of alternatives nearby. There's also a pool on the third floor with a hot tub, and fortunately the weather was great. It being the weekend of Independence Day there were fireworks displays easily viewable from the hotel on both Friday the 3rd and Saturday the 4th. Room rates weren't bad, approximately \$50 a night.

If GalaxyFair has a problem, its with the 'special presentations'. The opening ceremonies are not just the normal "here's who's here". That's good, there's inventiveness, but the performances sometimes drag on. Example, Teresa's brother plays the role of the Phantom from The Phantom of the Opera (Andrew Lloyd Weber version) and sings one of the songs from the show, while a dancer performs on the level below him. He had to have picked the longest song from the show, it just went on and on; and while Troy is not a bad singer, he's not particularly spectacular either. There was also a play "Silence of the Romulans", first performed during the masquerade. It wasn't bad, but had they shortened it up some, and taken one or two characters out (particularly the ones who didn't fit into either the ST or Silence categories) it would have been both funnier and more effective. Prior to the closing ceremonies there was also a radio play which dragged.

These few rough edges aren't enough to mar a good convention, though. And overall, this was a good convention, well worth attending. Let's hope it's back again next year.

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Nelson Bond

Harvey Haggard

Art Saha

Arthur L. Widner, Jr.

John W. Campbell Award

Ted Chiang

Hugo Awards

Novel: Lois McMaster Bujold for **Barrayer**

Novella: Nancy Kress for *Beggars in Spain*

Novelette: Isaac Asimov for *Gold* (*Analog*, Sep 91)

Short Story: Geoffrey A. Landis for *A Walk In the Sun* (*IASFM*, Oct 91)

Non-Fiction Book: Charles Addams for **The World of Charles Addams**

Best Original Artwork: Michael Whelan for the cover of *The Summer Queen*

Dramatic Presentation: *Terminator 2*

Professional Artist: Michael Whelan

Editor: Gardner Dozois

Semiprozine: *Locus*

Fanzine: *Mimosa* eds. Dick & Nicki Lynch

Fan Artist: Brad Foster

Fan Writer: Dave Langford

Chesley Awards

Best Cover Illustration (Hardback): Michael Whelan for *The Summer Queen*

Best Cover Illustration (Paperback): David Cherry for *Sword and Sorceress VIII*

Best Cover Illustration (Magazine): David Mattingly for *Amazing*, Sept 1991

Best Interior Illustration: Bob Walters for *It Grows on You*, *Weird Tales*, Summer 1991

Best Color Work (Unpublished): David Cherry for *Filia Mea*

Best Monochrome Work (Unpublished): Michael Whelan for *Study for All the Weyrs of Pern*

Best 3-Dimensional Art: Clayburn Moore for *Celestial Jade*

Award for Contribution to ASFA: Richard Kelly

Best Art Director: Betsy Wollheim & Sheila Gilbert/DAW Books

Writers of the Future

Gold Award for 1991 - Brian Kurt of Kalamazoo, MI for *The Last Indian War*

Illustrators of the Future

Gold Award for 1991 - Evan T. Thomas of Glencoe, IL



Conventions:

Conventional

Sep 3-7 **MagiCon (Worldcon 50)**

Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, FL

Guests: Jack Vance, Vincent DiFate, Walt Willis, Spider Robinson

Info: \$125 att, \$25 sup., PO Box 621992, Orlando, FL 32682-1992

Sep 92 **Justice Con II** - Dallas, TX

Info: 2116 E. Arapaho #555, Richardson, TX 75081

September 12-13 **Trekfest 1992**

???, Houston, TX

Guests: John Vorholt, Carmen Carter

Info: \$15 til Aug 1, c/o Starbase Houston, PO Box 981701, Houston, TX 77098-1701, 713-527-9277

Oct 9-11 **ArmadilloCon 14**

Wyndham Southpark, Austin, TX.

Guests: Neal Barrett, Jr., Darrell K. Sweet, Al Jackson, Gardner Dozois, Kim Stanley Robinson

Info: \$25, PO Box 9612, Austin, TX 78766-9612, 512-453-2241

Nov 20-22 **Sooner Con 8**

Central Plaza Hotel, Oklahoma City, OK

Guests: L. Sprague & Catherine DeCamp, Frank Kelly-Freas, Mark Schulzinger, Martha Beck, Wilson "Bob" Tucker

Info: \$15 til May 30, PO Box 1701, Bethany, OK 73008-0701

Nov 27-29 **Contex X**

Hilton Southwest, Houston, TX

Guests: James P. Hogan, G. Harry Stine, Patti Prevett, George Alec Effinger

Info: \$18, Friends of Fandom, PO Box 266996, Houston, TX 77207-6996

Apr 8-11, 1993 **Houston Future Fest**

Hyatt Regency, Houston, TX

Guests: Michael Pondsmith, George Alec Effinger, Sidney Williams, Roland Mann

Info: \$22 until Jan 1, 93, STS Corporation, PO Box 1770, Friendswood, TX 77546-1770

Apr 16-18 **Con-Troll**

Marriott Astrodome, Houston, TX

Guests: Larry Niven, Steven Barnes, Ed Greenwood, Del Harris, Judy Dugas

Info: \$20 until Jan 15, PO Box 740969-1035, Houston, TX 77274

Sep 2-6, 1993 **Con Fransisco (Worldcon 51)**

Parc Fifty Five & Le Meridien Hotels, SF, CA

Info: PO Box 22097, San Francisco, CA 94122

Sep 1-5, 1994 **Conadian (Worldcon 52)**

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Info: PO Box 2430, Winnipeg MB, Canada R3C 4A7

WORLDCON BIDS:

1995 - Atlanta, GA, USA & Glasgow, Scotland

1996 - Los Angeles, CA

1997 - San Antonio, TX & St. Louis, MO

1998 - Boston, MA, Baltimore, MD & Niagara Falls, NY



Fanzines in Trade:

Trades Listing

8-1/2 x 11 Zine #6-9/10

Teddy Harvia, PO Box 905, Euless, TX 76039. Teddy's 1-page personalzine with his account of the Chicon Hugo awards and the evening that followed.

BCSFazine #230

ed. R. Graeme Cameron; British Columbia SFA, PO Box 35577, Stn. E, Vancouver BC V6M 4G9. R. Graeme puts out a very consistant product month after month after month. It is a performance which will probably never win him the fanzine Hugo, but should be noted for his accomplishment anyway.

DASFAx V.24, #7, 8

eds. Fred Cleaver & Rose Beetem; Denver Area SFA, c/o Fred Cleaver, 153 W. Ellsworth Ave., Denver, CO 80233-1623. Less of the articles are getting to be club news, more space is being given to articles. Many of these are a bit off-the-wall.

File 770 #93, 94

Mike Glycer, 5828 Woodman Ave #2, Van Nuys, CA 91401. Still the source for news on the fannish scene.

FOSFAx #161

eds. Tim Lane & Janice Moore; Falls of Ohio SFA, PO Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281. Most of the articles have nothing to do with SF or SF fandom, but there are lots of reviews, many of which are on sfnal items.

Instant Message #515, 516

New England SFA, PO Box 809, Framingham, MA 01701-0203 [new address]. A short newszine.

The Journal for Space Development V.14, #1, 2, 3

ed. Richard Braastad; Houston Space Society, PO Box 266151, Houston, TX 77207-6151. Information and articles on anything related to space exploration, including a review of Niven, Pournelle, and Flynn's *Fallen Angels* (in #1) and an article of Martian clocks (#2). #3 has a blank petition form for full funding for space station Freedom, and an application form if you want to join the Texas Space Commision and get a fancy liscence plate.

Matrix #99 & 100

eds. Jenny & Steve Glover; British SFA, c/o the Glovers, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds LS12 2NP. A new addition to our trade listing. An interesting read, the zines contain news, articles and reviews of conventions and media (evidently, BSFA has a separate zine which handles book reviews). The type is crisp and clear, though it appears on the small side. The art seems spartan and the layout breaks many of the rules that I follow. Overall, though I am glad to see *Matrix* and find its plusses to outweigh any negatives.

Opuntia #9, 9.1

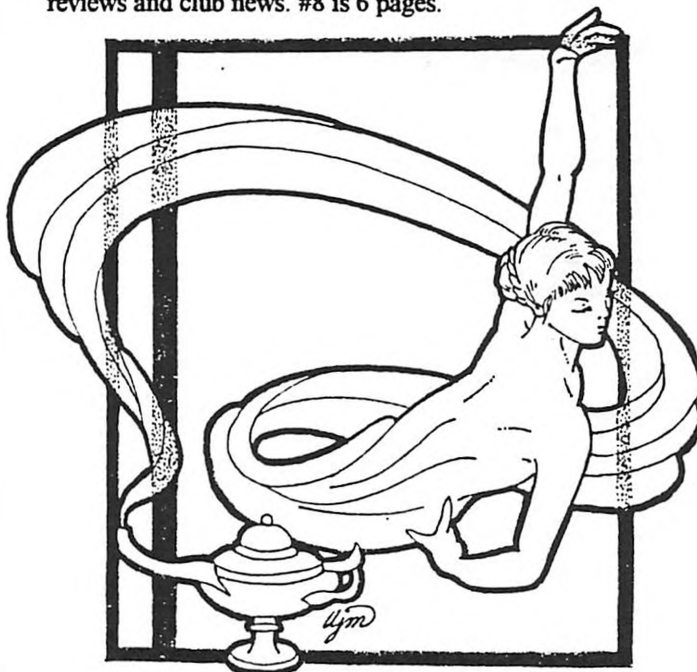
Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, ALberta T2P 2E7. Dale continues with more on British Columbian fan history in 9.0 and more fanzine news in 9.1.

Rambling Way #21, 22

W. Andrew York, PO Box 2307, Universal City, TX 78148-1307. A Diplomacy zine, but Dip zines, like SF zines, are not only about the supposed subject. Andrew also has a couple of columnists from overseas.

SNAFFU V.11, #6, 8

eds. Aileen Forman (& crew); Southern Nevada Area Fantasy & Fiction Union, PO Box 95941, Las Vegas, NV 89193. A four page newsletter with 2 Silvercon reviews and club news. #8 is 6 pages.



Letters of Comment:

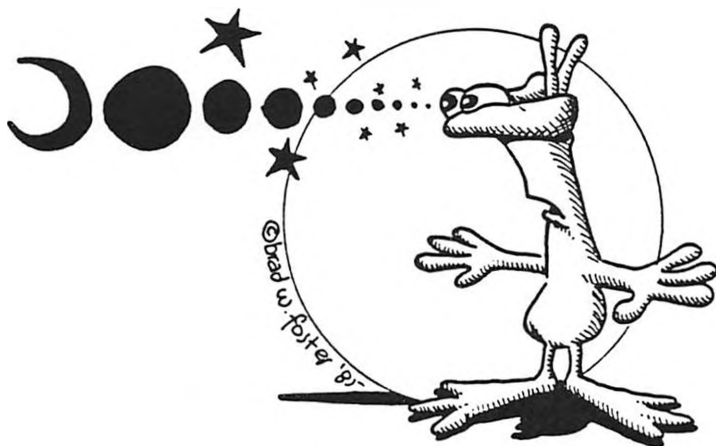
LOCS

Joseph Nicholas
5A Frinton Road, Stamford Hill, London N15 6NH
7 July 1992

Dear People

I note Carol Stepp's intention, in Texas SF Inquirer 44, to visit Winchester's "ancient castle and cathedral", but would advise her that while she'll have no trouble finding the cathedral (with the foundations of the previous Norman cathedral right next to it), she'll look in vain for a castle, ancient or otherwise. There is a hill, called St. Catherine's Hill, to the south of the city, across the River Itchen [spelling unsure, ed.], which looks as though it ought to have been the site of a Neolithic fortification, but as far as I know the only structure found there is the foundations of an early Christian chapel. The Norman castle, built into the southwest corner of the city walls was subsequently demolished to make way for the Tudor royal palace, parts of which were later removed to make way for council offices. And so it is with many English castles; those which weren't slighted by Cromwell's forces during and after the Civil War (because of their occupants' Royalist leanings) were later transformed by their owners into stately homes, and few now remain to give much flavour of their mediaeval heights. Dover, Windsor, and the Tower of London retain much of their mediaeval flavour, and are noted tourist attractions thereby; there's also Edinburgh in Scotland; and the four castles of Conway, Caernavfon, Beaumaris, and Harlech in North Wales which are included in the World Heritage List as masterpieces of military architecture. But otherwise

Joseph



Teddy Harvia
PO Box 905, Euless, TX 76039
10 July 1992

Dear Alex and Dale-

I have taken my children to a number of science fiction conventions, Christopher in his teens, Matilda preschool. At ArmadilloCon, my son and a friend's spend the con running up and down the stairs, surviving on snacks out of Steve Jackson's hospitality suite. Matilda, with an ego to match my own, cannot understand why I get to sit on panels and she not. At SoonerCon, Matilda actually made a dollar or two sitting behind a dealer's table with Margaret Middleton's daughter and selling original crayon art. Other friends, Pat and Dennis Virzi in particular, have helped me keep tabs on both children at cons, allowing me at least a few moments to myself to enjoy.

Don't lose this card. When I bought it and told the young female sales clerk that I was mailing to friends, she responded, "Yeah, right." A similar card I sent to the editors of RUNE they had to wrestle out of the hands of the club mail clerk in order to read the comments I'd written on the other side. I don't hesitate parting with such cards because I myself much prefer holding the real thing in my arms.

Beast wishes, Teddy

Brian Earl Brown
Detroit, MI
August 17, 1992

Dear Dale and Alexander,

It's been said, and truly so, that fanac is based on the underemployment of fans. If they have no job then they have no money to publish fanzines. And if they are working of a job that requires their full concentration then they have no time for fanac, even though they now have the money. It looks like nothing quite so proves this as the two of you, writing separate editorials complaining about an improved job situation and the loss of time to work on TSFI.

Sheryl Birkhead's friend's wish that the federal budget were run like a business, i.e. balanced, assumes that businesses do not run deficits (i.e. losses) when in fact all we ever hear about is one industry after another that's losing money. The federal deficit is nothing more

than the business of government losing money year after year.

I'm glad to see someone reviewing Patricia Elrod's Vampire Files series. It's a pleasantly amusing series, more hard-boiled dick than supernatural horror. Occasionally I feel she puts too much emphasis on the heroes' detective/ally as he's rather too much a blatant Sherlock Holmes clone. I've read the first four in the series and the best so far is ART IN THE BLOOD which reflected a good knowledge of the art world/biz.

Carol Stepp's comment that a central theme of the recent BBC Robin Hood series was "Robin being a son of Elric" has me protesting that Moorcock's character never evinced a connection to Robin Hood or the god Herne. If Ms. Stepp is referring to some other Elric of British folk legend then she might well do to explain what is meant by "a son of Elric".

"...as I think British, so does my vocabulary, grammar and spelling sometimes reflect it." Except, apparently, here.

Regards, Brian Earl Brown

I've referred your comment on Elric to Carol and she will have some response in her next column. About her spelling, grammar, etc.; don't forget her column is edited by myself before it gets printed, and I change things that appear wrong to me (most of the time).

Loyd Penny
412-4 Lisa St.
Brampton, ON
Canada L6T 4B6
August 29, 1992

Dear Alex and Dale:

Thanks very much for the newest issue of TSFI. . seeing you're involved to some extent with the San Antonio in '97 bid, I will bring this letter to Worldcon in the hopes it can be hand-delivered at a party some time. If not, this envelope will have stamps and an Orlando postmark. Let's see what I can say. . .

I know what you mean, Alex, about reduced income. After leaving Sears in 1990, I finally wound up at Butterworths, an international law book firm, making less money, which makes some things we took for granted luxuries. I go to more conventions, and have to admit that I am enjoying them less, because I make more and more commitments to work them, and less to just having some fun. I have no intentions of gaffiating, but I must drop some fanac and some cons an responsibilities, just to retain what little sanity I've got. It's just a matter of readjustments to keep the fun factor at maximum.

Once again, it's tough to keep track of all the Worldcon bids. To add to the short list you've got printed here is Boston in 1998, Kansas City in 2000, and Chicago in 2001. I wish Scott and Jane Dennis would print up the bid chart that used to go into Jane's Fighting Smofs . . . it was the only way I could keep up! St. Louis last tried for a Worldcon for 1099, but lost, I felt, because they seemed distant and uncommunicative, and they started into the race a little late. The San Antonio bid has already established itself, and again, St. Louis might have joined the race a little late. The button I see regularly now, "Friends don't let friends run Worldcons", is become more factual all the time.

Arrrgh! Not even WAHFed! You did get my last loc, didn't you? The way Canada Post operates, they nibble on most letters, and eat some of them whole.

I gather that with some forms of Gaelic, some knowledge of German is helpful. The two languages have some related terms and grammar. I used to know some Gaelic, being of Scottish descent, but it's gone. If you don't use it, you lose it. Just a week or so ago, I saw television reports of Gaels in Quebec, of all places. In the developing days of Quebec, known as Lower Canada then, many Scots married with French, and even in these separatist times, the French of Quebec do pause to recognize their Scottish/Gaelic heritage.

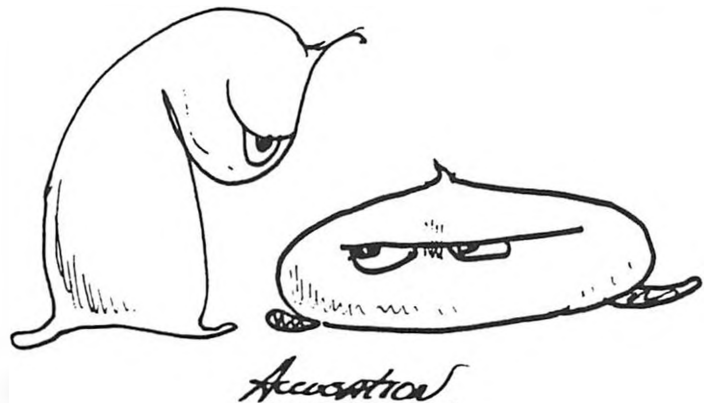
Anyway, the end of the zine is nigh, so the loc is, too. Many thanks for sending it to me, and I hope your Worldcon is/was an enjoyable one. Party, party, party!

Unfortunately I wasn't at Worldcon this year, but Laurel was. Letters given to her, or to any one of the primaries at the SA in '97 parties will make their way to me though.

Well, you've added to my bid info, thanks!

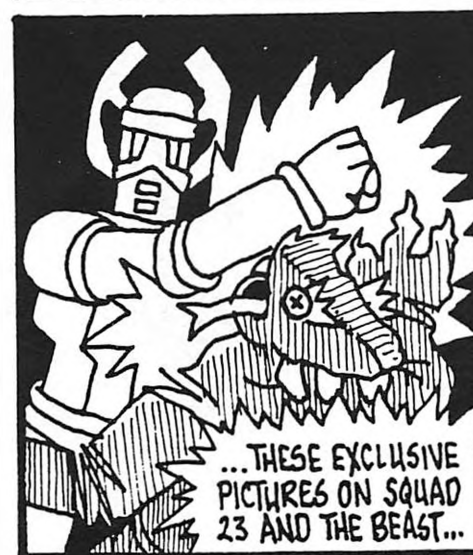
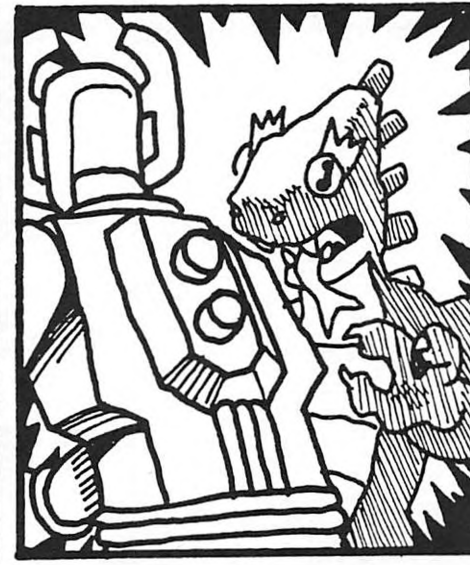
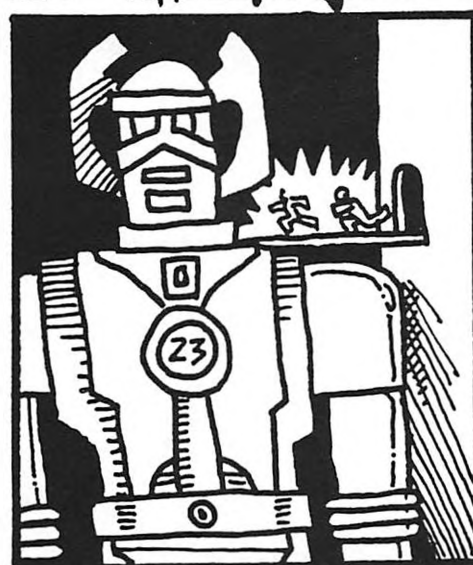
You're last loc must have been ate, either by Canada Post or the US Mail. If I would have got it, I would have printed it.

Don't know about Gaelic's relationship to Deutsch, but I'll pass the comment on to Carol. Maybe she can dig something up.



SQUAD 23

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