

'THE WSFA JOURNAL

The official organ of the Washington Science Fiction Association - Issue Number Nine
Editor and Publisher: Don Miller Mid-September, 1965

LONCON II REPORT

It was magnificent, a triumph of the conventioning art -- which is something like necromancy, if you've never tried it -- and if you weren't at the LONCON II you missed plenty.

Actually, things began with a traditional gathering at the Globe Thursday evening, when a significant fraction of Britain's BNF's rallied there to make the overseas visitors feel welcome and, incidentally, to down a few pints of the best themselves.

The official opening, however, came at 8 P.M. Friday when Ella Parker called things to order and, with assistance, introduced a host of attendees not only from Britain but from the U.S. and Germany as well. No believers in underprogramming, the Londoners had an excellent item scheduled for this evening in the form of a speech by Harry Harrison, who, after ducking the odd meat pie, set forth persuasively the idea that SF is now the only avenue open for the creation of living novels: the impact of science is the feature of the modern world, and only through SF can the writer say something -- as opposed to the more or less elegant nothings created by the mainstream, alias backwater, novelists.

Saturday morning started with a short panel discussion among German, Austrian, Czech, and Yugoslav fans on "SF in Europe", which concluded that it was in a parlous state: most continental SF was translated material. After a reminiscent talk by Forry Ackerman a fan panel discussed fandom -- "All Things to All Fen" -- and wound up, apparently, in a consensus that fanzines were the most important single feature of fandom.

In the afternoon a Transatlantic Quiz ("The U.S. Against the World") kicked off, Our Side losing to superior numbers by a final score of 26-20. The Delta Group, British amateur film makers, followed up with a chuckle-worthy farce, "Castle of Terrors", and John Brunner finished the day in style with a keen analytical dissection of the elements common to SF and Mainstream: "How to Get High Without Going Into Orbit". Evening was reserved for a fancy-dress party with a numerically small but qualitatively excellent turnout.

Sunday morning I myself opened the proceedings with a lecture, in my most obnoxious schoolteacherish manner, which was calculated to get the members of the panel I was chairing irritated enough to assail the topic of automated decision-making ("The Robot in the Executive Suite") despite the fact that it was 10 A.M.

The Banquet which was Sunday's feature was the most edible that's been offered to a convention for an age and a half, but the speeches were better still -- at one point it seemed that Tom Boardman, Brian Aldiss, Terry Carr, Arthur C. Clarke, and Bob Bloch were each resolved to make a more dreadful pun than the others. Awards followed: the Big Heart Award to Walter Ernsting, the eminent German steffnist, and Hugoes to Fritz Leiber (Best Novel, The Wanderer), Gordon Dickson (Best Short, "Soldier Ask Not"), ANALOG (Best Prozine), YANDRO (Best Fanzine), Schoenherr (Best Artist), Ballantine (Best Publisher), and "Doctor Strangelove" (Best Dramatic Presentation).

When the program started up again we had the best amateur film yet, the Delta Group's "Breathworld" -- a parody of Harrison's Deathworld that had the most blase and cynical fans rolling in the aisles. This was followed by Ted White, denouncing the reactionaries who are simply not able to plot and who are especially prominent in British magazines. (Trust Ted...) He was followed by a panel, "Cradle to Collector", which featured a clutch of high-level talent, started excellently -- tearing up criticism -- and got better from there. On no predictable basis, some panels seem to take off and hit escape velocity; this was the one that did it at the LONCON, lasting till people had to desert from hunger.

Evening saw the solemn Ceremony of the Most Noble and Illustrious Order of Saint Fantony, followed by a party at which those initiated were dosed with restoratives lest the Holy Water of Saint Fantony overbear their spirits, hem hem.

Monday morning the big event was the Business Session, which was sort of spoilt when, after Dave Kyle's impassioned challenge to Tricon to dare accept a little competition, Ben Jason pointed out that he wasn't going to enter the slightest objection to Syracuse bidding. Instead of a nice gory fight, therefore, we had a simple vote which Tricon won, 60-49.

In the afternoon the panel was "The Man on a White Horse", with John W. Campbell, Jr. playing the title role. The British had not been -- er -- exposed to JWC for several years and were somewhat crogged by his victory-at-all-costs style of debate. On the other hand, Campbell sort of forgot his audience, too: in the midst of a ringing defense of the desirability of treating the underdeveloped countries like the dirt they are he made the error of citing Britain's Firm Imposition of Righteous Ways in Nigeria as an instance of the beneficial effects of this policy and was instantly set upon and torn limb-meal -- dialectially, at least.

In too-short sum: the convention was superb. All of you out there, sit down and write the Con-Committee urging them to produce a Proceedings. A transcript of this con, for the Americans who couldn't make it, will really be something worth having.

Dick Eney

If only we could have afforded to go - - - but - - - now we'll have to settle for the Proceedings -- if enough of you people out there will write to the Committee urging that they be published. Address of the Committee Chairman, Miss E.A. Parker, is 43, Wm. Dunbar House, Albert Road, London, N.W.6, England; address of the Committee Secretary, Miss E. Lindsay, is Courage House, 6, Langley Avenue, Surbiton, Surrey, England. Deluge them with letters, please.

-ed.

IN MEMORIAM:

EDWARD ELMER SMITH, Ph.D.
May, 1890-September, 1965

"Doc" Smith, as he was affectionately known to Science-Fiction fandom, passed away on the first of September, 1965, at the age of 75, while vacationing at Seaside, Oregon. Born on May 2, 1890, in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, Doc spent his early years in Washington State and Idaho, and most of his later life in Washington, D.C., Michigan, and Illinois. He was married in 1915 to an Idaho girl, Jeannie Craig MacDougall, and was the father of three children -- Roederick, Verna Jean, and Clarissa -- who served as models for some of the characters in Doc's last "Lensman" novel, Children of the Lens.

Doc graduated from the University of Idaho as a chemical engineer, procured his M.S. at Harvard and Johns Hopkins, and received his Ph.D. from George Washington University in 1919. He performed numerous types of work as a youngster, saw limited service in both world wars, and spent the major portion of his adult working years as a cereal chemist in the doughnut mix business, from which he retired in 1957.

Sometimes referred to as the "father of modern Science-Fiction", Doc Smith was responsible for the breakthrough in Science-Fiction which moved the setting for S-F stories out of the limited confines of the solar system to the far reaches of the universe. He was the father of "space opera", and was one of the pioneers in the concept of the "galactic community"; he freed the S-F plot from the near-sightedness of the early Twenties and was responsible for the entrenchment of many concepts in the Science-Fiction field -- gigantic space ships miles in length, force screens, the inertialess faster-than-light space-drive, the ion space-drive, "prime movers" as manipulators of the destinies of entire worlds -- he even described an atomic explosion back in the Twenties.

Doc Smith was the guest of honor at the Second World Science-Fiction Convention which was held in Chicago during September, 1940. He was recently honored at the 21st World Science Fiction Convention, in Washington, D.C., during September, 1963, when First Fandom presented him with the first "Hall-of-Fame Award" for his outstanding contributions to the field of Science-Fiction and Fantasy literature.

His best-known works include the four-novel "Skylark" series and the six-novel "Lensman" series. The "Skylark" series includes The Skylark of Space, Doc's first novel, which was written during the period 1915-1920 in collaboration with Lee Hawkins Garby, the wife of a former classmate, and was serialized in the August, September, and October, 1928, issues of AMAZING STORIES; Skylark Three, which appeared in the August, September, and October, 1930, issues of AMAZING STORIES; The Skylark of Valeron, published in seven installments in ASTOUNDING STORIES beginning with the August, 1934 issue; and his last-published work, Skylark Duquesne, which was serialized in the June through October, 1965, issues of IF.

The "Lensman" series includes Galactic Patrol, which was serialized in ASTOUNDING STORIES in six installments, beginning with the September, 1937 issue; The Grey Lensman, in ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION, October, 1939 through January, 1940; Second-Stage Lensman, ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION, November, 1941 through February, 1942; Children of the Lens, ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION, November, 1947 through February,

1948; Triplanetary, which was serialized in the January through April, 1934, issues of AMAZING STORIES and was not originally part of the "Lensman" series, but later had several chapters containing "Lensman" material added for the hardbound version in order to make Triplanetary a part of (and the first story in) the "Lensman" series; and First Lensman, which never appeared in magazine-form, but was especially written for Fantasy Press as a link between Triplanetary and the first novel in the original series, Galactic Patrol.

Doc Smith's other magazine works include Spacehounds of IPC, serialized in AMAZING STORIES, July, August, and September, 1931; The Vortex Blaster, in the July, 1941 issue of COMET; Storm Cloud on Deha, in the June, 1942 issue of ASTONISHING STORIES; The Vortex Blaster Makes War, in the October, 1942 issue of ASTONISHING STORIES; The Galaxy Primes, serialized in the March, April, and May, 1959, issues of AMAZING STORIES; Subspace Survivor, in the July, 1960 issue of ANALOG; and Masters of Space, which Doc revised and published for the widow of the author, E. Everett Evans, and which was serialized in the November, 1961, and January, 1962, issues of IF.

All of Doc's works except The Galaxy Primes, Masters of Space, and Skylark Duquesne have appeared in hardback-form, with the Hadley Publishing two editions of The Skylark of Space (1946 and 1947); Fantasy Press publishing Spacehounds of IPC (1947), Skylark Three (1948), The Skylark of Valeron (1949), The Vortex Blaster (consisting of "The Vortex Blaster", "Storm Cloud on Deha", and "The Vortex Blaster Makes War") (1960), and the entire "Lensman" series, both individually (1948-1954) and as a boxed, half-leather bound set, costing \$30 and entitled The History of Civilization (circa 1955); Canaveral Press publishing Subspace Explorers (consisting of "Subspace Survivor" and a heretofore unpublished work, "Subspace Explorer") (1964); Julius Unger's Fantasy Fiction Field Publishers publishing the third edition of The Skylark of Space (circa 1950); and Gnome Press also publishing The Vortex Blaster (1960) after Fantasy Press folded.

The works of Doc Smith are just beginning to see paperback publication, with Pyramid Books publishing The Skylark of Space, Skylark Three, The Skylark of Valeron, and just starting publication of the "Lensman" series, and Ace Books publishing The Galaxy Primes.

For additional information on the life and works of E. E. Smith, the reader is advised to consult the excellent article by Sam Moskowitz, The Saga of "Skylark" Smith, which appeared in the April, 1964 issue of AMAZING STORIES as one of the "S-F Profiles" series, and was one of the primary sources consulted by this writer during the preparation of this article, for background information on the life of Doc Smith.

Don Miller

Book Review - THE STAR DWELLERS, by James Blish (Avon, G-1268, 50 cents)

This is a juvenile. By analogy then: Dean Rusk is about to negotiate an alliance with Russia against China, assisted by Jack Armstrong who needs a merit badge in diplomacy to become an Eagle Scout. At some point Rusk is called back to Foggy Bottom, and guess who is left to negotiate with the Russians?

The mind boggles. I did not finish the book, and I probably won't. My wife says the Angels are a nice conception, but the story was a waste of time.

Alexis A. Gilliland

REPORT ON THE NONCON

I first heard of the NONCON at one of the WSFA meetings. Since I wasn't planning anything in particular for the Labor Day weekend, I decided to drop in on the con for a couple of days. Attempts to hitch a ride from the other members of WSFA met with no success, so I ended up at the Greyhound Terminal on Saturday morning.

Harriett's house is near the elevated line, I was told. So it was, but which one? The subway doesn't supply maps, so I called the PTC office and asked how to get out to N. Hancock Street. "Take an eastbound elevated train." "Where's the elevated?" "Go down two flights from 15th and Market Streets, and take the elevated." "Oh, yeah. Down two flights. Yeah." So I did, and found myself in a large underground shelter, with stations branching off in several directions, but with the train directions unmarked. I solved this problem by asking every cashier I came across which was the eastbound train, until I found one who could tell me.

I finally arrived at the Kolchaks' and registered. I walked upstairs into the top of their "barn" just as a panel on something or other was breaking up, and was quickly drafted to speak in favor of Boston for the 1967 Worldcon. After first explaining why my statements were unofficial (the matter has since been cleared up), I proceeded to demolish any hopes the BOSKONE may have had for votes from the attendees. We took another break, which was followed by a speech by Robert Lowndes, the guest of honor. A submeeting of the Great Wall SFS was then organized, and we ate amidst the cramped confines of one of the smaller restaurants of the city. There were not enough tables to put together to take care of all of us, so we sat down all around the restaurant. The only notable event was the remark of a lady who found herself surrounded by talking, gesturing fans -- "Oh, I thought this was a religious group, and that that man over there (pointing to Jerry Jacks!) was the reverend."

The party was dull most of the night, until Ron Bounds mentioned to Phil Harrell that he couldn't get to sleep (which wasn't strange at all, considering the noise he was making!). Phil offered to mix him a nightcap, and the "neutrino fizz" was born. The Kolchaks' bar was full of everything, and everything went into the glass! Ron took a sip, and immediately ran for the bottle of Baltimore water he had brought along. Mark Owings took a sip and did likewise. Phil tried it and was unable to do any more. Then Jerry Jacks came along, saying, "What's wrong with you guys -- can't you drink anything?" He picked up the glass, and sniffed. "Glurp. That was good -- mix me another one." "Glurp. How about another one?" We couldn't believe it -- Ron was barely able to get down his glass, while Jerry took another drink -- this time, an 8-ounce metal tumbler. "Glug-glug-glug." Jerry then proceeded to walk a straight line, and I went to bed on my comfortable pallet on the floor of the 2nd-floor rear bedroom. Just as I fell off to sleep, I heard the unmistakable sound of Jerry . . .

The next morning (Sunday) we went walking out around the streets of Philly after having brunch, turning corners by random chance. Some guy pulled up to ask the way to Hancock Street. Surprise -- it's Jim Harper! Double surprise -- he was already on Hancock Street, but going in the wrong direction! We finally made our way back to the con, to see the SF movies brought over from Haddonfield, New Jersey. After "20,000,000 Miles to Earth", we went out to the Wagon Wheel Restaurant for dinner, and passed by the skin flick theater; after some negotiation we got in for a special group rate.

When we got back, the party was just starting. After a couple of hours, Ron disappeared, finally returning with a 16mm film can, and a special showing of a Hugo-

deserving movie, "Looking For a Needle in a Haystack", was arranged. Just as the movie was ready to go, however, the lights went out all over the house. A committee was sent downstairs to check the fuses, but all were in order. At last someone found a main fuse hidden behind a secret panel, and the lights were restored. This time the movie was run without a hitch -- twice, in fact!

I am not too sure what happened after that. I seem to recall promising to mail something into APA F, and taking Mike McInerney to task for the nasty things he said about the Boston '67 movement without sending us a copy of the article so we could rebut his statements.

I woke up early the next day, feeling not-too-bad. After gathering some info for the 2nd MIT Index from the Kolchaks' collection, I put my stuff in Ned Brooks' Corvair and prepared to hitch a ride with him as far as Alexandria. By the time we left we had gained Ron Bounds and Steve Patt; by some miracle we were able to fit all of the luggage into the trunk in the front of the Corvair, but it was pretty crowded in the back seat! After an uneventful trip I was deposited at home; Ned and Phil refueled themselves at The Trencher, and disappeared into the sunset.

Mike Ward

REPORT ON NOVACON I

When I discovered that my parents planned to go down to Williamsburg, Jamestown, and Yorktown, I decided to go along for the ride, and drop in on Ned Brooks in Newport News and Phil Harrell in Norfolk. I had been corresponding and taperesponding with Ned for some time, and he promised me a spare room for the night of August 21.

I left Springfield, Va. early in the morning; spent a couple of hours in Yorktown, which I had never seen; and was dropped off at Ned's pad at about noon. While Ned and I were talking, Herman S. King and Phil Verell came over. The four of us then went over to Phil Harrell's house in Norfolk, where Jack Chalker was also visiting.

While sitting in Phil's bedroom we argued Clark Ashton Smith and comparative World-con sites, until Red Avery and his art editor dropped over. Avery and his "beat" friend had to leave after only a short visit, after which the rest of us collated copies of VENTURA II and dropped as many names as we could.

We finally adjourned to the Venice Restaurant for a meeting of the Grand Canal SF Society, where the six of us decided that eight people were enough for a local con -- after all, there were only six at the 1964 DEEP-SOUTHCON -- so we named it the NOVACON, for Norfolk, Virginia.

After the others had left, Phil, Ned, and I made a tape for a friend of Ned's. The next day I copied some of Ned's con tapes for the MITSFS tape library, admired some of his books, and caught the family car for a ride home.

Mike Ward

Would someone out there please send us reports on the 1965 DEEPSOUTHCON and the 1965 ASH-HEAP? It looks as if Ron Bounds isn't going to come through - he has let us down for two successive issues. We must have the reports no later than the 24th of September, or we will have to wait until the 1966 cons are held. Lon Atkins? Cindy Heap? Help! Also needed is a report on the BOSKONE '65.

-ed.

TREASURER'S REPORT

On hand, 1 September \$73.77
Dues, Regular members \$7.00
Dues, new Regular member50
Dues, new Corresponding member 1.00
Dues, new Associate member40
Dues, transfer Regular membership
to Corresponding membership 1.00
WSFA JOURNAL advertisement25
Expenses: THE WSFA JOURNAL \$6.17
On hand, 15 September \$77.75

Remember, dues for the September-November quarter are due -- any member whose dues are not paid by the first meeting in October will be removed from the active roster.

Philip N. Bridges

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Present at the unofficial meeting of September 3 were 18 persons: Bill Berg, Phyllis Berg, Phil Bridges, Elizabeth Cullen, Al Gechter, Tom Keefer (guest - with his pet boa); Mary Kramer, James Latimer, III (guest); Joe Mayhew, Banks Mebane, Don Miller, Elliott Norman, Karen Summerfeldt (guest), Paul Taylor (guest), Mike Ward, Kim Weston, Robert Weston, and "Wendy". The attendees included 10 Regular members in good standing (nine short of a quorum), 3 Regular members whose dues are delinquent, 5 guests, and one boa. One of the Regular members (Michael Ward) transferred to Corresponding membership, and one of the delinquent members (Joe Mayhew) paid up.

Elizabeth O. Cullen

REPORT OF THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

1 new Regular member: Jay Sattel.
1 new Associate member: Stephen Patt.
1 new Corresponding member: Bruce Taylor.
2 transfers from Regular to Corresponding membership: Mark Walsted, Mike Ward.

Bill Berg

The meeting of September 3 was unofficial, so there will be no President's report this issue. The major portion of the unofficial meeting was consumed by a discussion of the proposed WSFA Constitution and By-Laws, which were printed in THE WSFA JOURNAL Number Eight, and distributed to attendees at the Sept. 3 meeting.

The next complete roster will be published in the October issue of the JOURNAL. Additions and corrections to the roster in issue number five are as follows:

Patt, Stephen - 6106 Westcliff Drive, Baltimore, Md., 21209; phone FO7-4014 (Assoc.).
Sattel, Jay - 3905 Bancroft Road, Baltimore, Md., 21215; phone RO4-3065 (Reg.).
Taylor, Bruce - 4831 Willett Parkway, Chevy Chase, Md., 20015; phone OL6-7464 (Corr.).
Mayhew, Joseph - Change status to Regular membership.
Walsted, Mark and Ward, Mike - Change status to Corresponding membership; new addresses will appear in next issue.
-ed.

EDITOR'S NOTES

In brief - -

Due to the length and the importance of the con reports and the article on the late E.E. Smith, we have been forced to postpone publication of much of the material originally scheduled for this issue until the next issue - Part II of the series of book reviews by Al Gechter, "Spies at Large"; more book reviews by Alexis Gilliland; the WSFA fanzine sale listing; and our own ASTOUNDING sale listing.

Correction to issue #7 - In "Spies at Large", change "LIVE AND LET LIVE" to "LIVE AND LET DIE".

In case you are wondering what happened to issue #8 of the JOURNAL, it was a special, limited issue dealing with the proposed new WSFA Constitution and By-Laws, which was and is being distributed only to WSFA members in good standing as they attend the unofficial WSFA meetings. As soon as a quorum is present and the proposed Constitution and By-Laws are formally presented to the club, the remainder of the WSFA members will be mailed issue #8.

A local phone-call, D.C. area Diplomacy game is being formed to be played through the JOURNAL - see Don Miller for details; two more spots are open. Baltimoreans interested in forming a second game of their own should also see Don Miller.

September/October Calendar -

WSFA Meetings - September 17; October 1, 15, 29 (party) (at home of Miss E. Cullen, 7961 West Beach Drive, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20012; phone RA3-7107).

The Gamesmen - September 24; October 8, 22 (at home of D. Miller, 12315 Judson Road, Glenmont, Wheaton, Md., 20906; phone 933-5417; call before coming).

BSFS Meetings - September 25; October 9, 23 (call Jack Chalker or write him for info; 5111 Liberty Heights Ave., Baltimore, Md., 21207; phone 367-0685).

THE WSFA JOURNAL is published ^{weekly} bi-monthly, and is free to all active Regular and Honorary members of the Washington Science Fiction Association; for Associate members the JOURNAL is \$1.00 per year via third class mail, and \$1.50 per year via first class mail, with the payments being credited to the member as advance dues for the year; Corresponding members receive the JOURNAL via third class mail, but may receive it by first class mail by paying an extra 50 cents per year; all other persons (except those with whom trades have been arranged) receive the JOURNAL as determined by the WSFA membership. Third class mailings are sent two issues at a time, at the end of the month. For advertisement rates, see the #7 issue or the ed.

Don Miller

THE WSFA JOURNAL

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First Class Mail