

The FIRST Night TIMES

My First WisCon

One of the first times I attended a con with my

Back when I went to

college there was, I heard, a science-fiction club at the school. So I found out when and where it was meeting, and went.

By a strange coincidence, a week before the meeting, I was in a chemistry class and heard a book fall off the chair that the next guy over was using for his books; it turned out to be *The Stainless Steel Rat's Revenge* by

The first time I read a Star Trek book

was both a good and bad time.

Last weekend I drove

to a con for the first time. Legally, that is. True enough, this last spring I drove our 1991 Ford Escort, named Boswell, to Madison for Wiscon. Yet I was engaging in procedures relating to gas, brakes, and steering without state sanction. There Martha and I were, tooling down the two-lanes with me at the wheel, the least likely outlaw: who would dream of holiday-weekend, big-city driving without ever having had a license?

This last weekend, though, after decades of being

The first place I went after (eventually) registering was the dealer's room, and I found it amazing! I was seeing books and fanzines I had never known existed. I spent my few meager dollars, including my lunch money.

The convention was a kind of Woodstock for Mensa members ... Al Schuster, who fronted the money

First Time Fanzine

Having helped bring the Walter Coslet fanzine collection to the UMBC library in 1973 (I was the collection's founding Curator) I got to put together a display for Discon II — a fanzine display of historically significant fanzines. We had Ray Bradbury's fanzine, we had *Snide* — Damon Knight's first fanzine — we had

My first SF convention

was Boskone VI in 1969. I was dating enchanting Evelyn Chimelis, whom I had met in high school, met again at college, and had introduced to the UMass SF Club just a few months before. I had been a member for maybe two weeks longer than Evelyn had. The two of us were interested in science fiction and heard about this concept of a convention. Neither of us had much money. She stayed at the YWCA near the convention hotel, the Statler-Hilton. I stayed at the YMCA several grubby, pimp-ridden (I found) blocks away and a perilous night walk for a weird-looking nerd with heavy luggage.

That weekend we found to our relief that there was a

The first time I saw

a Wild Leafy Sea Dragon was at the Boston

Why *Sleight of Hand* #3 Is So Late Or ... Excuses, Excuses, Excuses

Truth to tell, *Sleight of Hand* #3 has been something of my own private set of chains, much like poor Marley of *Xmas Carol* fame. It's never far from my mind as something I want to put together and publish, but at the same time it's not the only chain weighing me down. These days I'm running a fairly successful little freelance typesetting enterprise. The money is pretty good, and pays for all sorts of extras my girl and I would otherwise have to forego. Most of my freelancing is for a company called Bearmanor Media which puts out books on Old-Time Radio and Hollywood nostalgia. It's been fun work putting out books on Paul Frees, Daws Butler, June Foray, Albert Salmi, Walter Tetley, and Spike Jones.

Boston: A Belated Memoir

[The writer recalls a 1987 trip to the Boston area.]

My then-girlfriend, now-wife Elaine's home town, Lexington, Kentucky, was named by a group of hunters who were on the spot in 1775 when they heard the news of the battle of Lexington. I was born on the anniversary of the battle and take great joy that in Massachusetts, at least, my birthday is a holiday.

Not Quite a First

I am an unusual person; as are many fans. One

The Taff Trip Ting

So far the most amazing aspect of my trip, my first trip to an American Worldcon, has been the warm welcome and friendly disposition of all American fans that I have come into contact with.

I immediately volunteered, sure that's the

**William Tenn Almost
Ran Me Over**

