

2020 Introduction to Walt Willis speech at Chicon II (1952)

by Joe Siclari

Although Walt Willis was prolific, the quality of his writing remained very high because he was diligent. In several articles, Walt Willis described some of his writing procedures. Despite what so many people thought was his facile and relaxed style, he worried over pieces and rewrote them. See *Warhoon 12*, p 23

- <http://www.fanac.org/fanzines/Warhoon/Warhoon12-22.html?>

Walt's quality writing was why Shelby Vick created the first really successful campaign to bring a foreign fan to a US Worldcon, "WAW with the Crew in '52". You can imagine the excitement when this was successful. You might also imagine the stress when Walt realized that he would have to speak at the TASFiC/Chicon II.

So it seems he wrote a speech beforehand. Not only did he work on it in advance and rewrite and edit it, but seems he sent it to at least one friend. During his research into Vinc Clarke's papers, Rob Hansen discovered this presentation that you are about to read. It's probably the closest we will get to what Walt Willis said at the TASFiC. As Rob indicated in a note: "What **isn't** included, obviously, is whatever off-the-cuff thanks he added after he'd finished reading."

Not seen in close to 70 years, here is what Rob has called:

The Harp Speaks