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The

INVENTION

Report

(Official Versions)

Being a summary of the events and happenings at the First Science Fiction Invitational Convention as reported by two members of the Convention Committee appointed by the Committee at large.

The contents of this official report consists of the official Convention program as it occurred, the experiences of Preparations Committee chairman, Richard Elsberry and impressions of the publisher, Hal Shapiro. They had been asked to prepare this report because they were the ones most responsible for the Invention.

Now that you have been warned, you may delve into the First Invention Report. Other reports will be appearing in various fan journals. Watch for them. This report is slated to appear in OPUS # 5, published by W. Max Keasler. Conditions permitting, OPUS is where the majority of you will be reading this.

Additional copies may be obtained, as long as the supply lasts, by writing to either, Richard Elsberry, 413 E 18th Street, Minneapolis 4, Minnesota, or to the publisher, S/Sgt. Hal Shapiro, 790th AC/W Squadron, Kirksville, Missouri.

FOR SAFS MLG NC. 20

THE OFFICIAL CONVENTION PROGRAM
(being a resume rather than a
schedule for the Invention)

FRIDAY, the fourth day of April, 1952:--

2:00 P. M. Tour of Hamm's Brewery to see how beer is made.

7:30 P. M. First session--

- a. Talk by Clifford Simak. Subject:
The Fine Art of Collecting Rejection Slips.
- b. Tape recordings of two of a series of thirteen
forthcoming S-F radio programs.
- c. Motion picture. Title:
Dreams That Money Can Buy.

SATURDAY, the fifth day of April, 1952:--

11:30 A. M. Preview of new motion picture. Title:
The Twonky.

7:00 P. M. Second session--

- a. Talk by Dr. Alfred Neir, U of Minnesota. Subject:
Cracking the Atom.
- b. Talk by Poul Anderson. Subject:
How to sell to the different editors.
- c. Panel discussion. Subject:
Who is the better editor, HL Gold or JW Campbell?
- d. Motion picture. Title:
Orpheus.

SUNDAY, the sixth day of April, 1952:--

1:30 P. M. Official auction.

7:00 P. M. Third session--

- a. Panel discussion. Subject:
Can Fandom get along without homosexuals?
- b. Talk by Judy May. Subject:
The Tenth Anniversary Science Fiction Convention.
- c. Skit by the Minneapolis Fantasy Society Players. Title:
MacSaari.
- d. Motion picture. Title:
Metamorphosis.

PROLOGUE

The First Science Fiction Invitational Convention - the InVention - came about because of a conversation between some no forgotten Fen in room 770 of the St. Charles Hotel at the MoLacon. Sentiments were expressed that "Anyone can attend a StfCon" and "Why must these conventions be open to everyone?" The question was thrown about with the general consensus of opinion being that, if some objectionable characters were kept out, S-F Conventions would be a heck of a lot better.

This precipitated a correspondence between several people and nothing but talk ensued until one fateful day last December when Hal Shapiro received a letter from Rich Elsberry mentioning the matter. Came back the usual postcard with: "An invitational convention? Why not? You can call it the InVention."

Serious talk in letters was then the order of the day with everyone agreeing that an InVention was a fine thing, if Fen could be located who would do the work necessary for such an undertaking. Shapiro set up an incessant howl that the Minneapolis Fantasy Society sponsor the affair, and Elsberry finally said that he'd talk to the group. He mentioned it to Rodd Boggs, who was his usual non-committal self, but who did agree that it would be a lot of work.

With the help of Boggs' minco, letters were sent out along with a tentative program and the tantalizing news that attendees would not have to put up with any neo-Fen.

The response? Surprising, to say the least. But, then again, not so surprising. If people could take time off to go to SouWesterCons, MidWesterCons, BuffaloCons, ChiCons, etc., they could certainly take the time for an InVention. The time did not seem to be too important to most, just so long as it was well before the ChiCon, as most people wanted to attend that and couldn't attend another which occurred in too close proximity.

So, with a handful of letters, Elsberry descended upon an MFS meeting. Giving an impassioned speech he told them how Minneapolis was going to have its first convention. Some of them seemed rather leery. They could smell work. But when it was announced that Elsberry, Boggs and Grossman would be shouldering the majority of the work load, they all perked up and seemed quite enthused.

Early January found Elsberry in charge of the preparations committee with the title of Secretary-Treasurer. Then the work really began. More information was mimeographed by Redd Boggs in Minneapolis and by Hal Shapiro in Missouri. The dates were set as April 4, 5, and 6, and the price was two dollars. It was figured that the attendance would be nowhere near a national con, and if a Fen could travel several hundred miles to attend, he could spare \$2.00 to support it.

The activity was pretty feverish as convention time drew near. "Bogging" letters had been sent out early. Movies, auction items, etc., were still needed. The response on these, though, was better than we had dared expect.

Tuesday, April 1, saw several of the exhibits from Shasta, Gnome and other companies ready to be set up. All the preparations were complete. The Convention booklets were ready to be picked up. All we had to do was to sit back and wait. And that wait was not very long. The first attendees arrived early Wednesday and there were plenty of pre-convention antice Wednesday and Thursday. The Convention proper began Friday afternoon and was a success beyond our wildest dreams.

Others can tell you of the convention better than I.

John Grossman

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

This first InVention Report (official version) is being published through the courtesy of the United States Air Force.

When the convention was over, a group of conventioners got together and decided that what was needed was an official convention report to help some befogged memories remember. Suggestions were submitted and equipment volunteered. The matter of selection took only a short time for, with three mimeograph machines, an embosser, a spirit duplicator, and a flat-bed press to work with, we seem to have presented the best outlook.

Told to "get that report out before any of these regional conventions take place so that the report might be distributed there," we have been working like mad fiends to have this ready and in the mail in time for the MidWesternCon which will/did take place at Indian Lake, Ohio, May 10 and 11.

The full story of how the Convention came about is contained in the following reports.

Since it does not seem to have been mentioned in any of the reports, let us state that a site for the 1953 InVention was selected after the final official business session. Naturally, we cannot reveal it here. But, if you are one of the favored few, or live in the convention city, you will hear about it. Otherwise, you will read of it in the Second Invention Report, slated to appear just about one year from now.

If we may be permitted to use a preface for this purpose, we would like to state that the InVention was one of the best Fangatherings ever attended by us and all the people we have talked to and to we have written since that time.

The idea, while probably bandied about in fun many times in the past, was an excellent one, and only needed the proper parties to put it into effect. While we do not want bigger InVentions in the future, there is a possibility that they may become better.

Hal Shapiro

INTRODUCTION

It has been stated that all pieces of writing, whether fact or fiction, must have an introduction so that people will know what they are reading. I have been called upon to do the introduction for this InVention Report.

How the InVention came about is related in detail later in the report, so I need not go into that here. All I really want to do is give credit where credit is due.

The InVention could never have come about had it not been for the unselfish devotion of Poul Anderson, John Grossman, and many other members of the Minneapolis Fantasy Society, too numerous to mention here, as well as Hal Shapiro and W. Max Koasler.

The parts that everyone played in the preparations for the con, and of the actual running of the gathering can never be fully told. However, as this report unfolds, you will realize what a tremendous undertaking it was and appreciate it for that.

Those of you who were invited and could not attend, we feel sure will not miss next year's InVention. Those of you who did not receive invitations should not feel slighted. We were aiming at a small, select group. It will be up to the sponsors of next year's con to decide who they will and will not invite. It is more than possible that some attendees of the First InVention will not be invited to the Second. It is also known that many who were not invited to Minneapolis this year will receive invites to the Second InVention.

The InVention was not a con just for BNF. There were many invited on the strength of recommendations of friends and other trivia. The fact that you may not have been invited does not mean that you are not a BNF. It may merely be that you were overlooked, or that one or more of the convention "whools" objected to your presence. It is regrettable, but it was necessary that nows should not leak out. I hope that you understand.

Rich Elsborry

INVENTION

By
Richard Elsberry

The events leading up to the Invention have been fairly well covered. Ideas were bandied back and forth at MFS meetings. A list was made of people who should be invited. Most of them I had never heard of and were Fen who had long since descended into fannish limbos. Minneapolis fans were still living in 1943!

How Boggs, Shapiro and I managed to coordinate work and get out three con bulletins I'll never know. They weren't the best in the world, but they did suffice as their main purpose wasn't publicity, just to let people know what we were going to do. And to convince some who weren't sure. We backed down on no promises.

Bruce Publishing Co. in St. Paul (who also print the University of Minnesota humor mag, Technolog) did the Con booklet. Nothing large and pretentious, but then we weren't trying to impress anyone either. Just entertain them. However, Grossman did some beautiful illios for it and, despite the lack of ads, I thot we'd done a far superior job to the one put out by the NolaCon committee.

Ackerman provided the initial thrill. An airmail letter came saying he'd been out talking to the movie men and had arranged a showing of Arch Obler's latest movie, the filmed version of Kuttner's, "The Twonky." That almost called for a special bulletin, but I restrained my boyish enthusiasm. Later, the conapny's representative wrote to confirm dates and make arrangements for the showing. I did my damndest to get a movie house for us with no success. So plans were made to have it shown in the ballroom.

Then there was the wild storming night I got John Gergon to drive me and a couple of other MFSers out to Clifford Sinak's place. Before I left, Sinak was slated as guest of honor at the Convention.

Meanwhile, I was having a hell of a time getting Grossman to paint. He'd be alternately too busy and then the weather would be too nice. Finally, toward the end of March, I threathed to get Horrie Dollens. That seemed to sober up John a bit and, coupled with a nice spiel that week end he went out on the roof of his studio in the Andrus building and painted a backdrop. I was a little disappointed in that it wasn't suitable to be cut up into sections and sold. So John obliged with a bunch of smaller paintings, and Jon Arfstrom gave us half-a-dozen pics that Wierd hadn't liked quite well enough for covers, but which were quite superior for our purposes.

Lining up the rest of the program was relatively easy and I won't bore you with the details. It'll all come out as the story of the Convention unfolds.

The week before the Con things were about as well coordinated as I could expect with the help on hand. Knowing I would have to cut most of my classes at the U the latter part of the week, I poured on the studying Monday and Tuesday. After classes in the afternoon I'd stop at the Andrews to see what new reservations had come in.

Tuesday night I called up MFS members to see who I could get to help me set up the hall. There wasn't too much work, but still in all I didn't feel like doing it myself. I thot I'd set up the backdrop, get the exhibits ready and get the other illios squared away. Then too, I had to get a car to pick up the Con booklets over in St. Paul. Luck wasn't with me. Grossman said he'd stop by and Kenny Gray said he would help. No one else could get away.

Wednesday morning I was going from the Physics Building over to Experimental and, since the Technolog office is on the way, I decided to stop in, have a smoke and see if the April page proofs were back. The usual bridge game, with about ten kibitzers was going on. Two of the kibitzers wore Air Force uniforms. They were the first two arrivals. Hal Shapiro and John Shay.

They had driven into town early in the morning and checked in at the Andrews. Then they'd called my house to find I was at school until about 2:00. Not wanting

to sit around, they drove over to the U. Shay, who had been an Engineer major at the U prior to the activation of his Minnesota Air National Guard unit, helped them find the Technolog office. This precluded my going to any afternoon classes.

Gathering up my slide rule and assorted notebooks, we piled into Hal's car and then to my place. My mother informed me that a Jim Blakedoff had called and wanted to see me at the Andrews as soon as possible. From what I could figure out, he had something to do with the Obler movie. I was afraid it was canceled.

Since none of us had eaten, we raided the ice box. Leaving the mess to be coped with later we went upstairs. Shapiro poked among my books and mags and Shay read some old Logs while I changed clothes. After all, a convention chairman should look like a man of distinction, and I didn't know who else might be arriving. We killed some more time looking at assorted brick-bats, including a treatise I was writing on Electrical Mountain Climbing.

Suspecting that maybe Blakedoff was becoming a trifle impatient, I ushered the airmen down to Hal's car and we made the jaunt over to the Andrews. Hal could not seem to get over Cogswell's article on "Mana" that I ran in Snulbug, and wanted to meet Ted at our earliest convenience. There was even some talk bantered about to start a club to exploit "Manaism." I was rather happy, though, that Hal and John liked Mana, because we definitely seemed to be in the minority. The only other people who would admit they understood it and liked it were Max Keasler and a couple of FAPA members. It rather eluded or bored the rest of FAPA.

At the Andrews I found out from the desk clerk, with whom I was well acquainted by now, that Blakedoff wasn't in. I was annoyed, but not having anything to do but wait for him, I took Hal and John up to the hall to see what we'd done. There wasn't much to look at so we went back down to the lobby to wait for the Obler publicity man. Shapiro began to pump me about the program and as soon as I told him of the first day's program, Friday afternoon, he was ready to proclaim it the greatest convention ever. It was one thing every true fan was interested in, shouted Hal, even though he denied being a beer drinker. Shay almost drooled on his bib. To tell the truth, I wasn't in much better condition.

I was nervous, and sitting in that hot lobby wasn't making me feel any better. Finally I told the desk clerk that if Blakedoff came in we'd be in the penthouse of the Andrus Building, and that we would be reached there. Then we walked the little more than two blocks to Grossman's studio.

Grossman was doing typical Grossman things at the drawing board. Nothing. He wasn't in the mood. I could understand how he wasn't inspired to do any lettering. If I were dressed up in a new suit, white shirt, bow tie, and all I wouldn't feel like doing anything either. But Grossman always works that way. I doubt if I could — Effectively, that is.

John looked up and saw us. He uttered one of his usual warm greetings: "Oh, god, is there no escape?"

"You were expecting maybe Margaret Truman?"

"Well, even that wouldn't be so bad. But now that you're here, pull up a wet easel and sit yourself down."

I introduced John and Hal and coaxed Grossman into pointing out the finer aspects of several of his oils that were hanging on the wall. He has several that I would like to see on the cover of ASF or Fortune. They're nothing to be ashamed of. But he had a new one hanging up. "What in hell is that montage?" I squinted toward the picture, "A Can of Beans Resisting Arrest by a Mexican Arsonist;" I imaginarily read off for the benefit of Shapiro and Shay.

"You've got it all wrong. That's 'Saraband for Two Bagatelles and a Mountain at Anchor," John corrected.

John and Hal sat by helplessly.

Afraid that someone was going to start taking us seriously, I lead Hal and John out on the roof to get a good look at the city from ten floors up. It was breezy out there and Grossman wasn't making things and less so with his running line of chatter, ranging from really profound remarks to Martin-and-Lewis-type prattlings.

"Do you believe in religion?" Grossman looked slightly bewildered. It was a rather wierd question to pose on a roof top, I suppose, but fans are liable to say anything. Subsequently, though, I found that Hal asks the same question of everyone upon first meeting them. Just as good, and a damn sight more provocative than "How do you do?"

It was chilly out there and we went back in, with Shapiro stating that he had something in his car that would warm us up and that we should send a bell boy or Shay down for it. "But this is an office building, Hal. They don't have room service here."

"Yeah, but if someone goes down to get it, they could also pick up some mix."

"You didn't want to work anyway this afternoon, did you?" I asked, helping Grossman on with his coat. "Let's go over to Hal's room and talk over this extremely interesting question."

Shapiro's room wasn't what you'd call big, but it suited our needs. So did the bottles. "This is a hell of a hotel. No room 770," said Hal after a while. "I got the closest I could, 742."

"Well, we can have John here paint up a new door number to read '770.' In fact, I was thinking . . ."

"With what?" interrupted Hal.

". . .of having about twenty-five of them made up and sticking one on the door of every fan's room. Then, everyone could say he stayed in 770 overnight."

We were still mulling over such weighty problems when the desk called to let us know that Blakedoff had arrived. I told them to have him sent up. Not being sure what type of a person we were coping with, we put all the bottles and glasses in a dresser drawer.

"I'll bet he's a jerk," said Shay.

He couldn't have been further off base. Blakedoff is young, about 28, rather large and well built. The blue double breaster made him look larger than he actually is. Blakedoff is a good publicity man too. He proved that right away.

"Well, I got a theater for the movie." I almost fell off the bed.

"How? I tried every angle and couldn't get a rise out of them."

"If you promise them enough publicity, anything is possible."

"But who would give us a Saturday afternoon?"

"Well, not exactly an afternoon. The Gopher is going to let 'The Twonky' replace their first show. You can get in at 11:30. And a couple of columnists from the Tribune are supposed to be there to review it. Without their help it would have been rather ugged, I guess. The time won't bother you, will it?"

"No, we'll just have a little more free time Saturday afternoon, but I don't think anyone will mind that at all."

"Well, if you're not busy now, ah, could I buy you a drink?" Blakedoff was rather cautious about the way he said it.

He should have known better. He was talking to fans. We let him buy about three rounds. Blakedoff supplied all sorts of usual information about S-F movies that Hollywood was making. According to Jim, the tremendous success of "The Day the Earth Stood Still" which came in among the top sixteen of the year, is encouraging other companies to try their luck, in the best Lippert manner. But everyone isn't turning out crud. 20th Century Fox's filming of "E For Effort" was the best news that Blakedoff had for us. He'd also heard of something called "The City in the Sea" that a major company is putting out, starring Mala Powers. Somehow, I don't think it's the Tucker epic.

Blakedoff was also certain we'd like "The Twonky." He explained that Opler had kept the original title of the story because it was a new and different word and would attract a lot of attention. He expected all the columnists to comment on it, and half the fight for publicity was won right there. Blakedoff couldn't seem to get his mind off his pet subject.

With everyone feeling rather mellow, I hauled them all over to the hall to get the last of the preparations set up. Kenny Gray was there with his shopping bag full of library books and he was talking to Poul Anderson. With all this support, we polished off the job by 8:00 and, after checking to see if anyone else had checked in, we all went across the street to the Paradise to drink Premium.

Blakedoff didn't know the program scheduled, so when Poul asked him what he thought of the Friday afternoon show, he got nothing but a blank look. We let him guess for a while, and then I told him. We'd chartered several busses and all the conventioners were to be hauled out to Hamm's brewery for an inspection trip. Of course, the high point of any such trip was the end. Hamm's has their own private bar where guests can drink all they want. The only thing I was afraid of was that some fan would choke -- drinking too fast. When I told Jim, I thought he'd collapse. A convention at which the drinking started before the first scheduled program. He couldn't get over it. I couldn't either when I first thought of it.

After a while Kenny and Poul left and I suddenly realized that the next day was Thursday, and that meant Physics quiz fourth hour. It was after eleven and Grossman decided he'd better leave too. Blakedoff, Hal and Shay had no place to go and bid us a fond farewell, after making arrangements to meet us at the Andrews for lunch the next day.

I caught a yellow rocket home and hit the sack.

Thursday morning I got stuck after the quiz and had to look over the April page proofs for the Technolog before leaving, arriving late in the Andrews lobby. Hal was gabbing with Grossman and Shay was trying to play the part of a disinterested bystander. He had that morning after look. Blakedoff wasn't anywhere around.

They spotted me and Hal asked, "What do you think Boggs would do if someone went to his house in the middle of the night to use his mimeograph?"

"Throw them out on their ears, I suppose. I would."

"Hmmmnn, maybe I'd better not show you the bulletin we mimeo'd last night."

"Oh, no. You didn't!"

"Well, yes."

"What time?"

"Oh, about one or two or something like that. He hadn't been asleep too long."

"Couldn't you have waited until morning?"

"Well, we wanted to see Boggs. Never met him before you know, even though we did correspond through the old Michigan-Minnesota feud days. He's a nice guy. I thought he'd throw us out too."

Shapiro then brought me up to date on who had pulled in that morning. He'd been scanning the registration book. A carload of southern fan had arrived after an all-night drive and checked in. Hal thought that they were all asleep. I was more than a little surprised that Hickman had six other people in his car: Lee Hoffman, Shelby Vick, Henry Burwell, JT Oliver, Ed Guthrie and Ian Macauley. After making some cracks about how it must have been some all night drive, Blakedoff put in an appearance and we walked up to the Gopher Cafe for lunch.

When we got back, around 2:00, two strangely familiar characters stood at the desk. I think it was the first time I ever saw Kerkhof sober. Him, not me. The sight was almost unnerving. Briggs was pretty tired after the train ride, but I told him I thought we could get a bunch of fans together for dinner that night. Both were agreeable and they finally went up to their rooms.

Then I realized that I hadn't picked up the con booklets yet. So it was back into Shapiro's car to go over to the printer. Blakedoff had to do something else.

It took us about an hour and a-half, for I had to talk to some of the office help for a while. Hal and Shay toured the plant. I'd seen it before, so I paid the printing bill. We carted the booklets up to the ballroom and stacked them in a locker in the corner. I wasn't afraid of anyone taking some since I figured we had more than we could use.

It was a little too early to eat yet, so we went down to the lobby and sat there, hoping to catch the newcomers as they arrived. Tiring of sitting down, we decided to go up and annoy Lynn Hickman. After all, he couldn't expect to sleep all the time.

Hickman came to the door in a state of half-undress and greeted us cordially pointing toward the bottle of Cream of Kentucky sitting on the dresser. He was just getting dressed after a short nap, so we came in and quizzed him on the trip up, sampling his liquor at the same time. Hickman's main point was that it was too damn crowded in the car with half-a-dozen other fans. Then too, that much close contact can become quite wearing after a while.

With Lynn once again looking like a man, we used him as a guide to scout up the rest of the rooms his cohorts were in and soon routed out the bunch. His time, Lee Hoffman got no strangled greetings. And Hal didn't ask his question.

The only place I could think of that would accomodate us comfortably was the Gopher, so eleven of us walked over there. Guthrie, naturally, was annoyed because they didn't serve beer, and doubly annoyed when he found out they wouldn't sell it to him if they did have it. Minnesota is rather strict about its 21-age limit.

After dinner, I and Grossman walked the group around downtown Minneapolis to point out places of interest, of which there must be at least four. It finally wound up down on Washington Avenue, and it was a fight to see who could spot the most red lights. The somewhat dubious honor was won by a sharp-eyed Guthrie.

I figured I might as well pass out a few con booklets to those present when we got back and went up to get them. When I came down it was easy to see that the Detroit delegation had arrived. There seemed to be dozens of them but the only ones I recognized were Ray Nelson, Rog Sims, Ed Kuss and Martin Alger. Introductions further proved we had Ben Singer, Nancy Moore, Tom Sherrred, Alice Douglas, and a few other non-entities.

The first thing Sims wanted to know was: "How wide open is this town? What're the best hot spots? Where's Skid Row?" and so on.

I had to tell him the bad news. They roll up the streets in Minneapolis at one o'clock, "But that shouldn't make any difference to fans," I told him. And it didn't. The Detroit boys had brought the stuff with them, taking no chances. "We do have a burlesque house here though," I added modestly.

"As good asinsky's?"

"From what I hear, it's better," I said, depreciatingly.

"I'll have to keep that in mind," was Sims' reply. "Yes."

The Misfits went off to their rooms, Shapiro in tow, so I talked Lynn Hickman into a drink. Picking Bob Briggs up on the way we were soon in Lynn's room jawing about TIMA. Lynn was explaining the multilith process when the usual knock sounded heavily on the door. No privacy. Hoffman, Grossman, Macauley and a couple of others fought their way inside. John had several small signs he'd done during the afternoon. We tacked a '770' sign on the outside of the door.

The conversation was brilliant and the whiskey smooth. But after a while we ran out of the latter. Lynn suggested we toddle out to some bar and everyone agreed, feeling that the least they could do would be to throw us out.

In the lobby we found Kerkhof wandering around. "Ah, some people."

"Where is everyone?" I asked.

"Ah, all those crazy Detroit people went to someplace called the Alvin."

"Oh, the burlesque house."

"That must be it. And all those Chicago guys are up in their rooms or someplace. Anyhow, they just got here. I think they're looking for you."

"The hell with them. There's nothing I can tell them that they don't already know. I'll be around tomorrow if they want me. Are you coming with us?"

"Where are you going?"

"Where do you think?"

"Well, why didn't you say so? Let's go."

We went

I was sleeping very soundly Friday morning, for I had no reason to do otherwise. Nothing was scheduled for the morning, and I expected to get down to the Andrews about 11:00 to bring out the registration book. I figured to distribute the con booklets then and everyone could see the starting times, etc. I didn't think we'd need a real meeting until Friday night. A lot of people were probably still tired and would want to sleep in the afternoon. I just wanted to sleep in the morning.

"Come on, Elsberry, time to get up. How in hell can we start the Convention without you?" came Shapiro's sickeningly sweet and happy voice from my bedside.

"Drop dead. That would be a novel beginning," I snorted, believing it all to be a bad dream.

"Always the joker. Come on, let's get the convention on the road."

"You're going to be out on the road if you don't shut up, sit down and let me wake up," I said, sitting on the edge of the bed. "What've you been reading, Sunshine and Health?"

"Well, just thought I'd drop over and give you a lift to the hotel."

"My, aren't we the helpful one, though. Play some records or something while I get some clothes on."

Twenty minutes later I was ready to go and Hal had just completed "The Red Shoes." Shapiro's driving didn't do my early morning nerves any good. But I was rather happy that a group of fans hadn't decided to come over to my place for breakfast. Well, there were still two more mornings.

The first sight that greeted me on entering the lobby was that of an old man whose whitish-gray hair was crew cut. He was smoking a large black cigar. I was pretty sure I hadn't sent him an invitation, but I knew these things were bound to leak, and there wasn't much one could do about it.

We went up to the convention hall. It was about ten o'clock and some early birds were milling about. I suppose that someone had talked the manager into opening the doors early.

Lee Hoffman was talking to Bob Tucker and a lot of people were standing around listening. Others were looking at exhibits or talking in smaller groups. After much greeting and handshaking I fought my way to the locker and broke out the Convention booklets. When people saw the Friday afternoon program there were cries of amazement, admiration and disgust. Well, you can't please everyone.

"Does everyone know about this?" said someone behind me. I turned to see Harry Warner. I was a little surprised. This was the first convention he'd ever attended.

"No, but I think the news will move fast enough. Besides, everyone will be expecting an afternoon session of some sort and I suspect that they will all get here eventually, if they're coming. I guess it's my fault that everyone didn't know in advance. Anyway, Kenny Gray was due to take over the chairman's duties this evening for the rest of the week end and I could relax.

"I think that the rest of the programs are pretty complete, but I didn't want to rush anyone the first afternoon. If they want to sleep, they won't be missing anything that's too important."

"Say, did you hear who came?" said Lee Hoffman.

"Probably not. No one ever tell me anything. Who?"

"Burbee and Laney."

"They did!" I exclaimed elated. "Well, I'll be damned. Boggs has been threatening to go out to the coast, and so they take this opportunity to come here. Fine. I can get them lined up for one of the panel discussions."

Some of the others present didn't share my enthusiasm for the LA twosome.

The rest of the morning and early afternoon was taken up in getting people to register, giving out the booklets and meeting and talking to people. In between, we ate lunch with a bunch of fans and someone poured a couple of drinks into us.

By 1:30 I'd managed to herd everyone I knew of who were around into the ballroom. Almost no Minneapolis fans were present because they were all working or at the University. I again announced the afternoon program and, after the customary short delay, the chartered busses arrived. Everyone seemed in excellent spirits and Poul Anderson, who arrived just before we left, was welcomed aboard.

Of course, the trip to the brewery in St. Paul gave the fans a chance to see part of the city, something they normally wouldn't do on their own. I still regret that I never saw more of New Orleans. I'll have to go back there again some day and see what it's like outside of the St. Charles hotel area.

The trip through the brewery was extremely interesting, even though our main object was the free beer. I think most of the fans who attended now know a lot more about their favorite drink. The tour lasted nearly forty-five minutes because of all the questions, and we finally wound up in the Dutch Room. The Hamm's people were in no hurry to have us leave and we spent another hour drinking and talking. To the few who didn't drink beer, I suppose this was considered a wasted afternoon.

From what I heard on the bus going back everyone was extremely pleased with the opening of the con. Mack Reynolds, who had stopped on his way to New York, already considered it the best convention he'd ever been to, not withstanding the fact that it was his first. He also turned over to my care the manuscript copy of "Ponce deLeon's Pants" for the auction. Seeing that there were no females on our bus on the return trip, I read it aloud. That assured its getting a high bid Sunday.

It was fast approaching five when we got back to the Andrews. Kenny Gray was placidly sitting in the lobby waiting for us. He shoved a bunch of telegrams and cable grams at me which had been delivered while I was gone. Most of them were congratulations and such from Walt Willis, Australian Fandom represented by Roger Dard, etc. I told Kenny to read them before he got around to the introductions.

Leaving Gray to puzzle out the names on the registration book, I tried to dig up someone to eat dinner with. It wasn't too hard. Keasler, Shapiro, Hickman, Macauley, Alice Douglas and Wrai Ballard were quickly recruited and we ran hurriedly from the lobby so that people wouldn't follow us. We went over to the 620 club and found Briggs, Kerkhof, Bishop and Bob Johnson sopping up some beer with their roast turkey. We shifted a couple of tables around and pulled in with them.

Kenny opened the evening session around 7:30 by reading the messages and then by introducing the 20-some MFS members who were sitting down front. Then, he began to read off the rest from the register. Kenny was at the TorCon but doesn't know everyone by sight, even though he has a remarkable memory.

With formalities over, Cliff Simak was given the speaker's platform. Cliff has been writing S-F for twenty years now and certainly deserves to be guest of honor. He was no bum choice, either. The talk, "The Fine Art of Collecting Rejection Skips," had nearly everyone engrossed. Simak gave pointers on how he wrote Stf, the different run-ins he'd had with Campbell over rejections, etc. Simak used to scrap a story if JWC wouldn't buy it. No longer, though, now that he has an agent and Galaxy is around. Simak too assured us of getting favorable press comment, if any. Both he and John Chapman of the MFS are on the editorial staff and had permission to write up the proceedings for the Minneapolis Star Journal.

Noel Loomis also works for the Journal as a linotyper, but he was working nights and couldn't come to the first evening session.

After Simak, we played two tape recordings of a new S-F program that will start this summer. It's untitled so far but will run thirteen weeks. Scripts are by Ted Cogswell, Poul Anderson and Gordie Dickson. The two we heard were "The Frontier" and "Outpost at Infinity," both by Poul. They're two of his very best and the shows rate technically with some of the "Dimension X" programs like "Courtesy," "Nightfall," and "And the Moon be Still as Bright." You'll like this summer series.

To end the first night's program the movie "Dreams That Money Can Buy," a 16 mm experimental film, in color, produced by Hans Richter was shown. This is a full length movie running 84 minutes. "Dreams" is made up of seven sequences loosely held together by interlocking scenes in the office of a psychiatrist. Talent borrowed for the picture includes such artists as Max Ernst, Alexander Calder and Marcel Duchamps, with music by David Diamond, Paul Bowles and Josh White. The best sequence was "The Girl With the Prefabricated Heart" in which love in the atomic age is satirized by using two department store dummies. Other sequences included "Narcissus," "Ballet and Circus" and "Desires." Most experimental photography in the film is of a fantastic nature and is therefore doubly pleasing to the fan. I doubt if any of the attendees would ever have seen the film had we not shown it.

Immediately after the movie Laney and Burbee approached me. "Does this town have any decent jazz?"

"You're kidding, of course," I replied. "There isn't much, but what there is is good." I then proceeded to get them directions toward Mitch's where Harry Elons and his Men were hanging out, along with Doc Evans, famous trumpet player. The mention of those two names seemed to click, because they left immediately. Not being a dixieland man myself, I couldn't quite appreciate their enthusiasm. Then too, Bruce Dybvig was over at the Flame, if you wanted music.

"Wanna talk about Kenton?" said Lee Jacobs over my shoulder.

"You know what happened last time. Do you have a nice closet picked out?"

"It won't be so bad this time. Come on up to Metchette's room. Some of the San Francisco and Detroit boys are getting together."

Surprisingly enough, we did get to talk about Kenton, and that is no small matter. Kenton has done so many things that you could talk all night and not cover everything. It was too bad that Ed Cox couldn't have been in that room instead of in Japan.

Eventually, though, we were discovered and a couple of other rooms emptied into ours. Max Keasler came running into the room and took the only good picture: I've seen him take yet. One of Redd Boggs sitting on a bed next to Lee Hoffman and listening attentively.

The strange lack of other Minneapolis characters in the crowd prompted me to begin a small search for them. It was soon revealed that most of them were over in the back room of the Club Casanova renewing old acquaintances with Ollie Sarri and Neil DeJack. Not even a Tucker offer of a poker game could disturb them.

Around three, people began to thin out, so we went down to Shapiro's room with Grossman, Keasler, Briggs, Bok, Kruger, Hal and a couple of others and we racked Philip Wylie over the coals. Shapiro had the annoying habit of referring to Hannes as "Box."

I spent the night sleeping on Hal's floor, and it felt good to get up early in the morning. Hal didn't want to get up and was swearing revenge on the little men with trip hammers who filled his mouth with kitten excretion just before he woke up. I opened a bottle of beer and held it under his nose. Clutching his mouth he made a dash for the bathroom. It works every time. After that he looked a little better, even though in appearance he looked as if he slept in his uniform. He had. ((Publisher's note: I did not.))

Saturday morning I ran across a number of interesting people I hadn't seen before. Bruce Lane and Joe Kennedy, from Great Lakes, had arrived, as had a fellow in an Army uniform claiming to be Russ Watkins. It was then I realized that someone had squealed. The other incident that made the morning complete was the sight of Vernon McCain parading around with a large button which proclaimed him to be Lemuel Craig. I wondered if anyone cared whether or not he was Vernon McCain or Lemuel Craig.

The Gopher Theater was about three blocks away and Blakedoff was in the lobby waiting for us. As we paraded up Hennepin Avenue people may have thought that we a group of draftees if it hadn't been for the women.

As you can well imagine, Obler's "Twonky" and Kuttner's "Twonky" are two different stories. Obler must have thought he was making another "Five," for this black and white film has just about as many characters. Nearly all of Kuttner's original story is there. You just have to hunt for it. Originally it was a short story. Obler had to cut it up and stretch it to fit. But I'm not writing a movie review. Besides, the picture will be released in June. Suffice it to say that William Phipps and Jean Veblen are the principles. But in this story it's not the principles of the thing that matters.

The picture was over around 1:30 and I went over to talk to Kenny while Blakedoff passed out criticism sheets. We finally decided not to move any of the evening program up to fill the gap. They could kill the time until seven in any manner they wanted. That would mean six hours of eating, drinking and screwing around. "Quo Voids" was in town, so I imagine some fans killed three hours that way.

Again there was the usual group of us storming the Gopher Cafe. By this time they'd come to recognize us and it didn't take too long to get three tables set end to end. Waiting for the food, Lynn Hickman announced to all that Atlanta was putting on a party in room 770, which was just off of 740. Shapiro protested, saying that he wasn't allowing his room to be used for no rebel activities. After a while the fight was settled as most everyone realized they were talking about two different 770's.

Back at the hotel, Ben Singer had the strangest damn tale to tell us. According to Singer, he'd been sitting in the lobby when a little guy walks up to the desk clerk and asks for a room. The clerk tells him that they're full up. "Well, maybe I can stay with someone. You see, I'm a fan." The clerk says, "Oh," and calls up someone to ask if it's all right to have another guy in his room. The guy at the other end apparently says yes and the clerk asks the little man his name. "Ashley" is the reply, which the clerk relays on the phone. Pretty soon the clerk looks bewildered and finally he says, "We'll have a room for you just as soon as this man checks out." Ben sits by taking it all in. Pretty soon, down comes Laney, carrying a suitcase. He checks out and stalks out of the lobby. I never did check on this story. It was too fantastic. Still, Laney did move over to the Nicolett hotel.

A lot of fans were sitting in the convention hall hoping something would happen. Nothing did--there. Some were looking at a huge wall map of the Twin Cities we had tacked up. It had the locations of all the book stores circled in red crayon. That was one way to spend the afternoon.

The rest of the afternoon was spent talking fanzines, layout, articles, mimeography, etc. with the same old group: Hickman, Briggs, Shapiro, Keasler, Hoffman, Boggs and Tom Collins. The latter doesn't say much, but he packs an immense intellectual wallop.

The evening session opened with a bang. Shay gave an exploding cigar to Ed Walthers and the latter smoked it. It sounded just like a gun shot and Keasler took the time to pitch forward on his face and shout that he'd been shot and for someone to call Doc Keller.

Kenny Gray started the meeting on time and read the names of those who had registered since the last formal meeting. He also announced registration at 107. And there were many who hadn't signed the book yet. Of course, most of this group were from Minnesota, Michigan, Illinois and Ohio. Financial matters were being disgusted when Boggs leaned over and pointed out a visitor at the back of the room. It was professor Luyten of the University Astronomy Department. Luyten once did some writing for a Dunkleberger magazine and probably read the news item about the convention in the morning paper.

Dr. Alfred Neir, of the University's Physics Department, was the first speaker of the evening. Neir invented the Mass Spectrometer and was the first American physicist to get pure U-235 in 1940. His talk, "Cracking the Atom" or "Meil's Bohr," consisted of humorous situations in which he found himself while working in atomic projects in Chicago, Oak Ridge and Los Alamos. Neir, who is only 41, looks even younger and has a good delivery. Almost any audience would have found him entertaining, fans even more so.

Poul Anderson followed with a short and humorous talk on how to sell to the different editors. The general concensus of it was the way Anderson sells is just to write and send it in. If you know limericks, that helps too.

The panel discussion was unique, to say the least. Two teams were picked without telling them the subject. When the six characters and the moderator heard the subject and the side they were to support, there were a lot of grins. The topic was: "Who is the Better Editor, HL Gold or JW Campbell?" Picked to support Gold were Keasler, Harry Warner and myself. Supporting Campbell were Boggs, Tucker and Ray Palmer. We wanted to get GO Smith for Campbell's side, but he never showed up. Frank Kerkhof was chosen as moderator, seeing how he'd be the least likely to keep order.

Half of the time you couldn't tell which side was supporting who. It never did quite get down to name calling, but sarcastic remarks were the order of the evening. Keasler kept referring to Gold as "Iron Pyrites." Nothing was settled, but a lot of fun was had by all.

Movie for the evening was the brilliant "Orpheus," directed by Jean Cocteau. "Orpheus" is an excellent example of fantasy and symbolism. In the film, Orpheus is a poet living in Paris. He is happily in love with his wife, but a chance encounter with Lady Death changes his perspective and he becomes engrossed in persuading her and Cocteau's elusive concept of Hell. The ending, however, is happy, with the Black Lady releasing Orpheus to the living world, with the help of her chauffeur-accomplice, who is in love with Orpheus' wife. The sets, and symbolic ones they are, are tremendous. There is the black automobile, the black people and the blonde people, the houses both above and below ground, the mirrors, the bystanders -- everything is done simply, and with the greatest effectiveness. The dialogue is in French, but English subtitles are quite competent. The film runs about ninety minutes. Most fans were of the opinion that "Orpheus" was the best film we showed at the Convention. I thot so too.

Atlanta's party was crowded, and not without purpose. Naturally, before things got very far along, Hickman mentioned that Atlanta would be pleased to have the World Convention after Chicago, and he hoped we would all remember that come picking time in September.

First fireworks started when Laney somehow got started talking to Watkins. Laney began to shell the CCF unmercifully and Watkins just sat there getting hotter and hotter. Finally, Watkins jumped up and shouted, "My name is Tom E. Watkins." Laney apologized and said that he really didn't look like a fugghead anyhow.

Shelby Vick got everyone's attention after a while and reminded them that he still needed more dough to bring across Walt Willis. Then he passed the hat. Rostomily, sitting next to me, tossed in his "I Like Ike" button and I saw Burbee dollfully giving up his "Doc Evans for President pin. After throwing out the buttons, slugs and other paraphernalia, there was a few dollars in change.

Only other things I can remember were Burbee canvassing people for "Animal Comics," Bob Johnson telling how he watched Ray Palmer sneak around the lobby cautiously leaving copies of Other Worlds lying unobtrusively around where people would accidentally stumble on them.

Spent the night with Keasler and found the bed much too small.

It was one of those gloomy Sunday mornings and I sat around Max's room after breakfast reading the funny paper. It was the second week in a row that "pogo" had been left out, so I finally had to take a walk and buy a Chicago paper.

The auction started at 1:30 with Korschak appointed auctioneer, since Moskowitz couldn't make it. The choice was a blow to Bloch, Evans and Eshback, who wanted to play poker.

"Ponce deLeon's Pants" was the first item to be auctioned, by popular request. Eshback bought it for \$28.00, but said he didn't plan to publish it. Covers from Gold, Browne, Palmer and Hamling went next. Hickman, adding to his collection viciously, took an Emsch cover from Galaxy for a mere \$36. Max, in an effort to get the bidding up, got stuck with a Fate cover for \$8. I did the same thing at the NoLaCon, but it was cheaper then.

Then there was a Shaver manuscript for sale. Bob Tucker had to bid all of \$2.50 for it. He seemed quite happy and immediately took it to the back of the hall, found a wastebasket, and burned it with much pomp and ceremony. Palmer was rather aghast at the spectacle.

After the Grossman pics had been sold, prices ranging from \$7--\$18, Lynn suggested we drive around for a while in his convertible. I wasn't hard to convince. Macauley, Max and Shapiro made up our happy fivesome as I directed Lynn into some of the more sordid areas of the city of lakes and parks. We also got to see them.

We ate at deNapoli, for contrast, and got back to the hall about 6:30. Gray informed us that the total auction proceeds were about \$350, which wasn't too bad, considering we didn't have too much and the prices weren't very high.

To start off the evening session I had to get the panel together. And that wasn't easy. First I had to tear JM Fillinger away from Ken Kruger. Then I had to tear Ben Singer from Nancy Moore, and that wasn't easy. But, to get Russ Watkins to leave his bottle was a real battle.

Lining up the teams, we told them the subject and the side upon which they were to argue. The question, "Can Fandom Get Along Without Homosexuals?" didn't get the discussion it should have, but it created a lot of enemies. On the yes side stood Singer, Fillinger and McCain. No were Burbee, Laney and Russ Watkins. EEEvans was moderator. It was pretty bad when both sides began to argue "yes," but when the no group started to fight among themselves it was time to quit. Evans, of course, proved to have no control over the proceedings and was shouted down more than once by irate panel members. A better group of more opposing personalities couldn't be found anywhere.

Judy May next was allowed a few minutes to talk about ChiCon. Besides urging people to come, she also gave some info on the program. Of course, this Science Fiction ballet deal was brought up again. I can't see it myself. And if it's going to be performed by fans, the title should be "The Fairy's Kiss."

The MFS Players, and a more motly assortment you won't find, then put on that epic tragedy, "MacSarri." MacSarri was performed by Ollie himself, with Kenny Gray as Richard the Lion Harted, and also Dale Rostomily, Ted Cogswell, Poul Anderson, Gordie Dickson and Marv Larson. If you haven't seen MacSarri, I can't describe it to you. It's humor, formerly just for the localites, was dressed up for general consumption. Written by Poul Anderson, it wanders in and out of history, confounding everything and everybody.

The final programmed attraction was another experimental 16mm film, "Metamorphosis," based on the story by Franz Kafka. It's a full length film, running a little over an hour, played by amateurs and made at a cost of only five thousand dollars on borrowed and rented equipment.

The story begins with the words: "As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from troubled dreams, he found himself changed in his bed into some sort of monstrous vermin." Although little of the Kafka tale remains, it is essentially the story of a man who turns into an insect. The film has few actors, few sets, and it would naturally tend to, with the extremely limited budget.

There are plenty of things to criticize about this film, yet it is a highly commendable effort and worth the hours time it took to watch it. If audience reaction is any indication, future conventions will show less of the old fantastic films and more of these new experimental jobs, which can be rented just as cheaply. "Metamorphosis" was made last year by William J. Hampton.

And so the convention was officially over. And officially or not, it was an unqualified success.

The last evening was just like any evening at any other con. I didn't stay to see it. After checking with Gray to see that everything was paid up and put away, I stopped by to shake hands with most of the fans and have a couple for the road, even though I ride the streetcar. It was the first time I'd been home in nearly three days, and it felt good to climb into my own bed for once.

And Monday, well, it was rather nice to get back to school.

QUOTABLE QUOTES:--

Telling how Bishop and Walthers were always together: "All during the evening they were an insufferable pair." -- Keasler

"Yes, John Grossman is the greatest fan artist today." -- Grossman

Speaking of Laney: "Oh, don't mind him. He has halitosis of the intellect." -- Shay

"My, Shaver uses an excellent grade of paper." -- Tucker

Cablegram: "If all the fans were laid end to end, I wouldn't be a bit surprised." -- Chuck Harris

"Detroit has better burlequys than the Alvin." -- Sims

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SIDELIGHTS

by Hal Shapiro

After reading over the account which Richard Elsberry wrote of the Invention, I can fully realize that no two people see the same thing in exactly the same manner. There are many incidents mentioned in his report which I cannot recall, and probably as many in mine which he has forgotten.

I believe that this report is prepared wisely in that it gives you more than one view of the affair. There is more than one instance I note where contradiction of fact occurs. This, no doubt, is merely due to faulty memories and the fact that extensive notes were not taken.

Enough of this prologue, however, and on to the actual impressions from the typer of your publisher. This is actually an appendix to Elsberry's report.

Managing to swindle a five-day furlough from Wednesday through Sunday, John Shay and I took off for Minneapolis Tuesday afternoon, determined to arrive early. Since Shay was a native Minneapolitan, I was all set to see the town with a native guide to point out red lights and other points of interest.

We arrived early Wednesday morning (about four ayem) and checked into the Andrews, learning we were the first to arrive. Shay decided to stay at the hotel since his home way "way out in the sticks."

Grabbing a few hours sleep, we then called Elsberry's house and learning he would be in school (University of Minnesota) until late afternoon, we wandered over. Shay was an Engineer major at the U before his Air National Guard unit was activated and he knew his way around. We groped our way into a smoke-filled room, which turned out to be the editorial office of the Minnesota Technologist, campus humor mag, and waited for Rich, the humor editor. It didn't take long. We dragged him to his place, ate his food, and drove back to the Andrews to see Jim Blakedoff.

Followed a trip to see John Grossman, a drinking session and gab fest with Blakedoff.

Wednesday night was a humdinger. Elsberry said he needed something called sleep and left us to our own devices. So Shay, Blakedoff and I wandered about the town for a while. We stopped in a few bars and book stores and raised a little hell trying to think of something to do.

As soon as Blakedoff left us, my Detroit ingenuity thought of something. I had always wanted to meet Redd Boggs, and there was no time like the middle of the night. Finding our way out to his place was not too difficult, considering the complexity of Minneapolis streets. So, about one-thirty Shay and I stormed Boggs' place, gained admittance through his father, who we cowed with our looks, and crept up to Redd's room to awaken him. He wasn't at all what I had expected.

Shay, who had heard much concerning Boggs and I in our respective states remarked: "Shapiro and Boggs met face to face. Neither ran screaming. This testifies to the innate intestinal fortitude of fen."

Anyway, the vitriolic Redd of the fanzines turned out to be nothing more than a yes-man in polite conversation. However, in celebration of the event, we cut four stencils and turned out a one shot in an edition of fifty copies which were later distributed on the convention floor. The zine contained an account of that night's adventures by Shay and Shapiro, a treatise by boggs on the Michigan-Minnesota feud of 1947-48-49, and an acid rebuttal by Shapiro.

Leaving Redd a few hours later, we went to the Andrews and hit the sack.

Thursday morning I slept late, woke and later woke Shay. Ate breakfast about one, picked up Grossman and returned to the hotel. A rebel group from Georgia had arrived but were all asleep. Elsberry and Blakedoff finally showed up, so we went to the Gopher Cafe and ate again.

To St. Paul to pick up the convention booklets. Having previously worked at a printing plant in Alaska and being active in editing and publishing activities, I was interested in seeing what they had. I toured the plant. They didn't have much.

Picked up Hickman, Burwell, Macauley, Hoffman and other rebels add back to the Gopher. This time, we ate supper. Afterwards, we toured downtown Minneapolis afoot, ending up in the red-light district, where we lost some rebels.

I left the group after a while and headed back to the Andrews in time to greet the Michigan delegation. This was the first time I had seen several of them in over three years. Most I had seen just last February during a furlough. The greetings were warm and liquor flowed freely, Michiganders having the foresight to lay in a supply.

Wearing buttons proclaiming them to be staunch Sexocrats were Ray and Perdita Nelson, Ben Singer, Nancy Moore, Alice Douglas, Aggie Harook and Steve Metchette. I seem to remember two or three cars in the group, but can't recall who rode with whom outside of the fact that Martin Algiers had picked up the Nelsons when he passed through Chicago. They are attending the University of Chicago.

We scudded up to the rooms, unpacked, yakked, drank and decided to go, en masse, and compare the Alvin Burlesque Theater with the Detroit variety. The Minneapolis strippers are no good. I guess that it is due to the angelic expression the city tries to wear.

Coming out into the sun again, I seemed to recognize a passer by. Questioned, it turned out to be Wrai Ballard, the North Dakotan. He didn't look too different from the pic he had sent me two years ago and Alice was quite taken with him. She said something about he being the first real farmer she had ever met, despite all her traveling. They made a nice pair the rest of the InVention. I don't think that Alice was bored with the arrangement and, knowing her, I'm sure Wrai was as happy as he could hope to be.

Ate dinner somewhere and all trooped over to the University where, eight or ten abreast, we ran across campus fields, screaming bloodily at every fourth step, just for the heck of it.

Tiring of this sport, we got over to Hennepin Avenue, picked up Shay, Betty Sullivan and a couple of other Michigan sympathizers, and sang snatches of Gilbert and Sullivan's operettas until the wee sma' hours. Returning to rooms, the party continued until laster that morning.

About eight, someone wondered aloud if Elsberry would make it down in time. I was elected to pick him up, so I went over, told his mother I had an urgent message, and woke him up. Dragging him back to the Andrews, I spotted someone who was identified to me as the notorious Claude Degler. I did something I had always wanted to do. I borrowed Boggs' wire recorder and got Degler to answer candid questions concerning the old Cosmic Circle. The spool, which I turned over to Boggs, is probably now in circulation among wiresponding fen. The conversation was taken down and will be published in the InVention Memory Book. Watch for an announcement on it later in this report.

I was also informed that Leney and Burbee had deigned to attend this con, which caused no end of discussion and consternation among conventioners.

The trip to the brewery that afternoon was interesting to me, but as I am not a beer drinker (can't stand the stuff) the hour at the tap room was wasted liquidly. They wouldn't let us bring in anything. The brilliancy of the conversation, however, more than made up for that.

A few of us ate dinner at a local booze house and returned in time for the first session. I won't go into the happenings at any of the sessions as Elsberry covers all that very well. However, after the first session I seem to recall something about Kuttner telling Betty Sullivan that he actually was Jack Vance.

There was also a short period during which I pretended to sleep in a chair while nearby, Betty, Nancy Moore and Alice Douglas discussed various male Fen in extremely great detail.

Burwell, Vick, Keasler and I, as well as a couple of others, spent an hour or so sharing liquor and politicking for the sites of the '53 and '54 cons.

Later, as the southern boys and I parted company, Keasler and I ran into a Philip Wylie discussion group and, like the Pied Piper, led them to my room. With Keasler, Grossman and I defending the erstwhile author, we slashed the arguments of Hannes Box and others to ribbons. Although, the other side says the same of us.

The next thing I remember is waking Elsberry who was sleeping on the floor next to my bed. He warned me against stating that he had passed out.

Breakfast at the Gopher Cafe and a trip to the Gopher Theater ((note: Minnesota is the Gopher State)) to see *The Twonky*. Personally, I think Obler did an excellent job on the picture.

Meal at the Gopher again and a discussion of reproduction, fanzine and sexual. Liquor too put in a surreptitious appearance. You know, although there was more liquor consumed at this convention than at any other FanVention I have ever attended, there was surprisingly little drunkenness.

The evening session followed and was itself followed by a party thrown by the Atlanta Fen who were passing out campaign promises as to what an AtlantaCon would be like, passing out cigars, passing out liquor, and passing out.

I seem to hazily recall Lancy chasing Russ Watkins down a hall brandishing a broken beer bottle.

An impromptu speech by Poul Anderson on limericks in Science Fiction was warmly received with limericks being bandied back and forth between Poul and myself. Samples:

An eager young rapist named Hal	An asinine shoemaker named Poul
Attacked what he thought was a gal.	Actually possessed the gall
Said that one: "My friend,	To give naught but a tack
You are at the wrong end,	For his wife's slender back,
For I'm only your <u>very</u> good pal.	But for his mistress, he gave his awl.

Other remembered incidents of the evening include Ed Walthers regurgitating and Sims mopping up muttering, "Somehwre this happened before." It seems to me that various members of the Chicago delegation presented a preview of the Science Fiction Ballet with Tucker in tights. This time, I remember going to my room and hitting the sack, alone.

Sunday afternoon was the auction. I was going to bid on Ronce deLeon's Pants, but after going up to five bucks, I decided to quit.. This was followed by a ride in Wickman's convertible with numerous stops to take pictures. I don't know where we were during the tour, but apparently Minneapolis has more lakes than any other part of the country, or else we saw the same fish pond from 21 different vantage points and drove in 21 different ways.

Following the evening session, I somehow managed to scrape Shay off the ballroom floor, get us into the car and, after a few good byes and promises to meet again, I somehow managed to navigate the 400 miles back to the radar station in time for duty at 7:30 Monday morning.

Other impressions of the con are too blurred to be placed in any sort of chronological order, so shall just take the rest of this space to list a few lingering mangy memories.

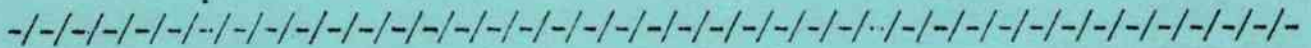
Alice Douglas, Max Keasler, John Shay and myself were busy throughout the con selling memberships in the BACHELOR'S StF ASSOCIATION OG THR WORLD. . . Metchette took over the Andrews bar once when theregular bartender was rushed. Steve is a

bartender in a plush Detroit eatery . . . Wrai Ballard and Martin Alger were closeted more than once comparing personal arsenals . . . Don Ford giving Fen a last chance to get the Cinvention Memory Book . . . Poul Anderson selling limericks at four-bits each . . . Don Day hawking his index to Stf stories . . . Tom E. Watkins asking someone, "Hell no. Why should I want to clean up Fandom . . . Bob Tucker reported as consistently losing at poker . . . Frank Kerkhof suggesting that the only proper way for a convention chairman to open a convention was with the sentence, "As the first item of business we shall adjourn to the bar for an hour, after which we will re-convene." . . . A telegram arrived signed: HJ Campbell, member, British Horticultural Society . . . etc, ad infinitum.

Thus endeth the First Science Fiction Invitational Convention. Bottom's up!

-THIRTY-

Don't miss it, the Invention Memory Book. The IMB will be on sale at the ChiCon, money and printing schedule permitting. A book containing all the speeches and the text of the panel discussion, plus many other items of interest from the Invention. Price will be one dollar. If you were there, this will prove an invaluable memory aid. If you were not there, this book will tell you in full detail what did go on when real Fen get together.



Join the BACHELOR'S StF ASSOCIATION OF THE WORLD, Fandom's Fun Organization. Membership in the BSAW is not limited due to sex, marital status, race, religion, or lack of any of these.

There are no dues in the BSAW. Only a 25¢ initial fee to cover the cost of a membership card and bulletins.

Write for information today to the chairman of the board of directors. Write and/or send your quarter to S/Sgt. Hal Shapiro, 790th AC/W Squadron, Kirksville, Mo.

The BSAW is an international organization composed of local chapters. Find out who the BSAWers in your locality are. Then, join them for more fun in Fandom.

Started early in 1952, the BSAW is Fandom's fastest growing organization, with membership fast approaching the hundred mark. Memberships received so far from Fen in North America and Europe.

Membership is free to Fen outside of the continental limits of North America.

Learn the facts. Write now. The board of directors consists of the chairman, Hal Shapiro; A/2C John Shay, at the same address as Shapiro; W. Max Keasler, Box 24, Washington University, St. Louis 5, Missouri; and Alice Douglas, 5037 Maplewood, Detroit 4, Michigan. Anyone can help.

Get in on the fun. Don't be left out in the cold. Join today. Send that quarter to Hal.

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